# THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD
# 1983–1986

# THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

## VOLUME XIX

140, 141 AND 142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA

21 APRIL 1983–20 APRIL 1986 A.D.

*The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Apia, Samoa.*

*The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Apia, Samoa.*

# THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

AN INTERNATIONAL RECORD

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

VOLUME XIX

140, 141 AND 142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
21 APRIL 1983–20 APRIL 1986 A.D.

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE
HAIFA
1994

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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.

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# 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 and the supervision of the Guardian of the Bahá'í 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.

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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

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

is that of advancing from the barest, baldest unity 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, worldwide 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

[1] George Townshend, *The Heart of the Gospel*, 1939.
[2] ibid.
[3] Habakkuk 2:14.

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 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

[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.

Bahá'í community.'[1] 'A chaste and holy life must be made the controlling principle in the behaviour and conduct of all Bahá'ís, both in their social relationships with the members of their own community, and in their contacts with the world at large.'[2] '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.'[3] '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.'[4]

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.'[5] '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.'[6]

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 observances of its Holy Days and Festivals, the abstention from work on nine such days during the year, the observances 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'[7] 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

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid
[4] ibid.
[5] ibid.
[6] ibid.
[7] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 213.

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, 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 Unfoldment 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 refinement 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 the 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

### I

BEHOLD the disturbances, which for many a long year, have afflicted the earth, and the perturbation that hath seized its peoples. It hath either been ravaged by war, or tormented by sudden and unforeseen calamities. Though the world is encompassed with misery and distress, yet no man hath paused to reflect what the cause or source of that may be. Whenever the True Counsellor uttered a word in admonishment, lo, they all denounced Him as a mover of mischief and rejected His claim. How bewildering, how confusing is such behaviour! No two men can be found who may be said to be outwardly and inwardly united. The evidences of discord and malice are apparent everywhere, though all were made for harmony and union. The Great Being saith: O well-beloved ones! The tabernacle of unity hath been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers. Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. We cherish the hope that the light of justice may shine upon the world and sanctify it from tyranny. If the rulers and kings of the earth, the symbols of the power of God, exalted be His glory, arise and resolve to dedicate themselves to whatever will promote the highest interests of the whole of humanity, the reign of justice will assuredly be established amongst the children of men, and the effulgence of its light will envelop the whole earth. The Great Being saith: The structure of world stability and order hath been reared upon, and will continue to be sustained by, the twin pillars of reward and punishment. And in another connection He hath uttered the following in the eloquent tongue:[1] Justice hath a mighty force at its command. It is none other than reward and punishment for the deeds of men. By the power of this force the tabernacle of order is established throughout the world, causing the wicked to restrain their natures for fear of punishment.

In another passage He hath written: Take heed, O concourse of the rulers of the world! There is no force on earth that can equal in its conquering power the force of justice and wisdom. I, verily, affirm that there is not, and hath never been, a host more mighty than that of justice and wisdom. Blessed is the king who marcheth with the ensign of wisdom unfurled before him, and the battalions of justice massed in his rear. He verily is the ornament that adorneth the brow of peace and the countenance of security. There can be no doubt whatever that if the day-star of justice, which the clouds of tyranny have obscured, were to shed its light upon men, the face of the earth would be completely transformed.

The Great Being, wishing to reveal the prerequisites of the peace and tranquillity of the world and the advancement of its peoples, hath written: The time must come when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all-embracing assemblage of men will be universally realized. The rulers and kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will lay the foundations of the world's Great Peace amongst men. Such a peace demandeth that the Great Powers should resolve, for the sake of the tranquillity of the peoples of the earth, to be fully reconciled among themselves. Should any king take up arms against another, all should unitedly arise and prevent him. If this be done, the nations of the world will no

[1] Arabic.

longer require any armaments, except for the purpose of preserving the security of their realms and of maintaining internal order within their territories. This will ensure the peace and composure of every people, government and nation. We fain would hope that the kings and rulers of the earth, the mirrors of the gracious and almighty name of God, may attain unto this station, and shield mankind from the onslaught of tyranny.

Likewise He saith: Among the things which insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action.

In these days the tabernacle of justice hath fallen into the clutches of tyranny and oppression. Beseech ye the One true God—Exalted be His glory—not to deprive mankind of the ocean of true understanding, for were men but to take heed they would readily appreciate that whatever hath streamed from and is set down by the Pen of Glory is even as the

*An ornamental eagle in front of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí.*

are conducive to unity and concord and will cause the whole earth to be regarded as one country is that the divers languages be reduced to one language and in like manner the scripts used in the world be confined to a single script. It is incumbent upon all nations to appoint some men of understanding and erudition to convene a gathering and through joint consultation choose one language from among the varied existing languages, or create a new one, to be taught to the children in all the schools of the world.

The day is approaching when all the peoples of the world will have adopted one universal language and one common script. When this is achieved, to whatsoever city a man may journey, it shall be as if he were entering his own home. These things are obligatory and absolutely essential. It is incumbent upon every man of sum for the whole world and that therein lie the welfare, security and true interests of all men; otherwise the earth will be tormented by a fresh calamity every day and unprecedented commotions will break out. God grant that the people of the world may be graciously aided to preserve the light of His loving counsels within the globe of wisdom. We cherish the hope that everyone may be adorned with the vesture of true wisdom, the basis of the government of the world.

The Great Being saith: The heaven of statesmanship is made luminous and resplendent by the brightness of the light of these blessed words which hath dawned from the dayspring of the Will of God: It behoveth every ruler to weigh his own being every day in the balance of equity and justice and then to judge between men and counsel them to do that which would direct

their steps unto the path of wisdom and understanding. This is the cornerstone of statesmanship and the essence thereof. From these words every enlightened man of wisdom will readily perceive that which will foster such aims as the welfare, security and protection of mankind and the safety of human lives. Were men of insight to quaff their fill from the ocean of inner meanings which lie enshrined in these words and become acquainted therewith, they would bear witness to the sublimity and the excellence of this utterance. If this lowly one were to set forth that which he perceiveth, all would testify unto God's consummate wisdom. The secret of statesmanship and that of which the people are in need lie enfolded within these words. This lowly servant earnestly entreateth the One true God—exalted be His glory—to illumine the eyes of the people of the world with the splendour of the light of wisdom that they, one and all, may recognize that which is indispensable in this day.

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]

## II

JUSTICE is, in this day, bewailing its plight, and Equity groaneth beneath the yoke of oppression. The thick clouds of tyranny have darkened the face of the earth, and enveloped its peoples. Through the movement of Our Pen of glory We have, at the bidding of the omnipotent Ordainer, breathed a new life into every human frame, and instilled into every word a fresh potency. All created things proclaim the evidences of this world-wide regeneration. This is the most great, the most joyful tidings imparted by the Pen of this Wronged One to mankind. Wherefore fear ye, O My well-beloved ones? Who is it that can dismay you? A touch of moisture sufficeth to dissolve the hardened clay out of which this perverse generation is moulded. The mere act of your gathering together is enough to scatter the forces of these vain and worthless people.

Strife and conflict befit the beasts of the wild. It was through the grace of God and with the aid of seemly words and praiseworthy deeds that the unsheathed swords of the Bábí community were returned to their scabbards. Indeed through the power of good words, the righteous have always succeeded in winning command over the meads of the hearts of men. Say, O ye loved ones! Do not forsake prudence. Incline your hearts to the counsels given by the most Exalted Pen and beware lest your hands or tongues cause harm unto anyone among mankind.[2]

## III

PRAISE be to God that thou hast attained! ... Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile ... We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment ... That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? ... Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come ... Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold? ... Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind ... These strifes and the bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family ... Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.[3]

[1] Excerpted from *Lawḥ-i-Maqṣúd* (Tablet of Maqṣúd).
[2] Excerpted from *Lawḥ-i-Dunyá* (Tablet of the World).
[3] Words attributed to Bahá'u'lláh by Edward Granville Browne (ed.), *A Traveller's Narrative*, vol. II, xxxix–xl.

# 2. THE BÁB

## I

ISSUE forth from your cities, O peoples of the West and aid God ere the Day when the Lord of mercy shall come down unto you in the shadow of the clouds with the angels circling around Him, exalting His praise and seeking forgiveness for such as have truly believed in Our signs. Verily His decree hath been issued, and the command of God, as given in the Mother Book, hath indeed been revealed...

Become as true brethren in the one and indivisible religion of God, free from distinction, for verily God desireth that your hearts should become mirrors unto your brethren in the Faith, so that ye find yourselves reflected in them, and they in you. This is the true Path of God, the Almighty, and He is indeed watchful over your actions.[1]

## II

O MY servants! This is God's appointed Day which the merciful Lord hath promised you in His Book; wherefore, in very truth, glorify ye abundantly the name of God while treading the Path of the Most Great Remembrance...[2]

## III

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...[3]

## IV

GLORY be unto Thee, O Lord! Although Thou mayest cause a person to be destitute of all earthly possessions, and from the beginning of his life until his ascension unto Thee he may be reduced to poverty through the operation of Thy decree, yet wert Thou to have brought him forth from the Tree of Thy love, such a bounty would indeed be far better for him than all the things Thou hast created in heaven and earth and whatsoever lieth between them; inasmuch as he will inherit the heavenly home, through the revelation of Thy favours, and will partake of the goodly gifts Thou hast provided therein; for the things which are with Thee are inexhaustible. This indeed is Thy blessing which according to the good-pleasure of Thy Will Thou dost bestow on those who tread the path of Thy love.

How numerous the souls who in former times were put to death for Thy sake, and in whose names all men now pride themselves; and how vast the number of those whom Thou didst

[1] Excerpted from the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá* (Chapter XLVI).
[2] ibid., (Chapter LXXXVII).
[3] Excerpted from the Persian *Bayán* (VI, 16).

enable to acquire earthly fortunes, and who amassed them while they were deprived of Thy Truth, and who in this day have passed into oblivion. Theirs is a grievous chastisement and a dire punishment.

O Lord! Provide for the speedy growth of the Tree of Thy divine Unity; water it then, O Lord, with the flowing waters of Thy good-pleasure, and cause it, before the revelations of Thy divine assurance, to yield such fruits as Thou desirest for Thy glorification and exal-

Mother Book, for within the grasp of Thy hand Thou holdest the determined measures of all things.

Thy goodly gifts are unceasingly showered upon such as cherish Thy love and the wondrous tokens of Thy heavenly bounties are amply bestowed on those who recognize Thy divine Unity. We commit unto Thy care whatsoever Thou hast destined for us, and implore Thee to grant us all the good that Thy knowledge embraceth.

*The Shrine of the Báb.*

tation, Thy praise and thanksgiving, and to magnify Thy Name, to laud the oneness of Thine Essence and to offer adoration unto Thee, inasmuch as all this lieth within Thy grasp and in that of none other.

Great is the blessedness of those whose blood Thou hast chosen wherewith to water the Tree of Thine affirmation, and thus to exalt Thy holy and immutable Word.

Ordain for me, O my Lord, and for those who believe in Thee that which is deemed best for us in Thine estimation, as set forth in the

Protect me, O my Lord, from every evil that Thine omniscience perceiveth, inasmuch as there is no power nor strength but in Thee, no triumph is forthcoming save from Thy presence, and it is Thine alone to command. Whatever God hath willed hath been, and that which He hath not willed shall not be.

There is no power nor strength except in God, the Most Exalted, the Most Mighty.[1]

[1] Excerpted from *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, pp. 189–91.

## V

*Thou art God, no God is there but Thee.*

LAUDED and glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! Thou art supreme over the realm of being and Thy power pervadeth all created things. Thou holdest the kingdom of creation within Thy grasp and dost call into being in conformity with Thy pleasure.

All praise be unto Thee, O Lord my God! I beseech Thee by such souls as are eagerly waiting at Thy gate and by those holy beings who have attained the court of Thy presence, to cast upon us the glances of Thy tender compassion and to regard us with the eye of Thy loving providence. Cause our souls to be enkindled with the fire of Thy tender affection and give us to drink of the living waters of Thy bounty. Keep us steadfast in the path of Thine ardent love and enable us to abide within the precincts of Thy holiness. Verily Thou art the Giver, the Most Generous, the All-Knowing, the All-informed.

Glorified art Thou, O my God! I invoke Thee by Thy Most Great name through which the hidden secrets of God, the Most Exalted, were divulged and the kindreds of all nations converged toward the focal centre of faith and certitude, through which Thy luminous Words streamed forth for the quickening of mankind and the essence of all knowledge was revealed from that Embodiment of bounty. May my life, my inmost being, my soul and my body be offered up as a sacrifice for the dust ennobled by His footsteps.

I earnestly beg Thee, O Lord my God, by Thy most glorious Name whereby Thy sovereignty hath been established and the tokens of Thy might have been manifested, and whereby the oceans of life and of holy ecstasy have surged for the reviving of the mouldering bones of all Thy creatures and for the stirring of the limbs of such as have embraced Thy Cause—I earnestly beg Thee to graciously ordain for us the good of this world and of the next, to enable us to gain admission into the court of Thy mercy and loving-kindness and to kindle in our hearts the fire of joy and ecstasy in such wise what the hearts of all men may thereby be attracted.

Verily Thou art the All-powerful, the Protector, the Almighty, the Self-Subsisting.[1]

## VI

GLORY be unto Thee, O Lord my God! I beg Thee to forgive me and those who support Thy Faith. Verily Thou art the sovereign Lord, the Forgiver, the Most Generous. O my God! Enable such servants of Thine as are deprived of knowledge to be admitted into Thy Cause; for once they learn of Thee, they bear witness to the truth of the Day of Judgement and do not dispute the revelations of Thy bounty. Send down upon them the tokens of Thy grace and grant them, wherever they reside, a liberal share of that which Thou hast ordained for the pious among Thy servants. Thou art in truth the Supreme Ruler, the All-Bounteous, the Most Benevolent.

O my God! Let the outpourings of Thy bounty and blessings descend upon homes whose inmates have embraced Thy Faith, as a token of Thy grace and as a mark of loving-kindness from Thy presence. Verily unsurpassed art Thou in granting forgiveness. Should Thy bounty be withheld from anyone, how could he be reckoned among the followers of the Faith in Thy Day?

Bless me, O my God, and those who will believe in Thy signs on the appointed Day, and such as cherish my love in their hearts—a love which Thou dost instil into them. Verily Thou art the Lord of righteousness, the Most Exalted.[2]

[1] Excerpted from *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, pp. 198–99.

[2] Excerpted from *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 200.

# 3. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

## I

KNOW thou that all the powers combined have not the power to establish universal peace, nor to withstand the overmastering dominion, at every time and season, of these endless wars. Ere long, however, shall the power of heaven, the dominion of the Holy Spirit, hoist on the high summits the banners of love and peace, and there above the castles of majesty and might shall those banners wave in the rushing winds that blow out of the tender mercy of God . . .[1]

## II

O THOU who art carried away by the love of God! The Sun of Truth hath risen above the horizon of this world and cast down its beams of guidance. Eternal grace is never interrupted, and a fruit of that everlasting grace is universal peace. Rest thou assured that in this era of the spirit, the Kingdom of Peace will raise up its tabernacle on the summits of the world, and the commandments of the Prince of Peace will so dominate the arteries and nerves of every people as to draw into His sheltering shade all the nations on earth. From springs of love and truth and unity will the true Shepherd give His sheep to drink.

O handmaid of God, peace must first be established among individuals, until it leadeth in the end to peace among nations. Wherefore, O ye Bahá'ís, strive ye with all your might to create, through the power of the Word of God, genuine love, spiritual communion and durable bonds among individuals. This is your task.[2]

## III

O YE lovers of truth, ye servants of humankind! Out of the flowering of your thoughts and hopes, fragrant emanations have come my way, wherefore an inner sense of obligation compelleth me to pen these words.

Ye observe how the world is divided against itself, how many a land is red with blood and its very dust is caked with human gore. The fires of conflict have blazed so high that never in early times, not in the Middle Ages, not in recent centuries hath there ever been such a hideous war, a war that is even as millstones, taking for grain the skulls of men. Nay, even worse, for flourishing countries have been reduced to rubble, cities have been levelled with the ground, and many a once prosperous village hath been turned into ruin. Fathers have lost their sons, and sons their fathers. Mothers have wept away their hearts over dead children. Children have been orphaned, women left to wander, vagrants without a home. From every aspect, humankind hath sunken low. Loud are the piercing cries of fatherless children; loud the mothers' anguished voices, reaching to the skies.

And the breeding-ground of all these tragedies is prejudice: prejudice of race and nation, of religion, of political opinion; and the root cause of prejudice is blind imitation of the past—imitation in religion, in racial attitudes, in national bias, in politics. So long as this aping of the past persisteth, just so long will the foundations of the social order be blown to the four winds, just so long will humanity be continually exposed to direst peril.

Now, in such an illumined age as ours, when realities previously unknown to man have been laid bare, and the secrets of created things have been disclosed, and the Morn of Truth hath

[1] Excerpted from *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 174.
[2] Ibid., p. 246.

broken and lit up the world—is it admissible that men should be waging a frightful war that is bringing humanity down to ruin? No, by the Lord God!

Christ Jesus summoned all mankind to amity and peace. Unto Peter He said: 'Put up thy sword into the sheath.'[1] Such was the bidding and counsel of the Lord Christ; and yet today the Christians one and all have drawn their swords from out the scabbard. How wide is the discrepancy between such acts and the clear Gospel text!

Sixty years ago Bahá'u'lláh rose up, even as the Day-Star, over Persia. He declared that the skies of the world were dark, that this darkness boded evil, and that terrible wars would come. From the prison at 'Akká, He addressed the German Emperor in the clearest of terms, telling him that a great war was on the way and that his city of Berlin would break forth in lamentation and wailing. Likewise did He write to the Turkish sovereign, although He was that Sulṭán's victim and a captive in his prison—that is, He was being held prisoner in the Fortress at 'Akká—and clearly stated that Constantinople would be overtaken by a sudden and radical change, so great that the women and children of that city would mourn and cry aloud. In brief, He addressed such words to all the monarchs and the presidents, and everything came to pass, exactly as He had foretold.

There have issued, from His mighty Pen, various teachings for the prevention of war, and these have been scattered far and wide.

The first is the independent investigation of truth; for blind imitation of the past will stunt the mind. But once every soul inquireth into truth, society will be freed from the darkness of continually repeating the past.

His second principle is the oneness of mankind: that all men are the sheep of God, and God is their loving Shepherd, caring most tenderly for all without favouring one or another. 'No difference canst thou see in the creation of the God of mercy';[2] all are His servants, all implore His grace.

His third teaching is that religion is a mighty stronghold, but that it must engender love, not malevolence and hate. Should it lead to malice, spite, and hate, it is of no value at all. For religion is a remedy, and if the remedy bring on disease, then put it aside. Again, as to religious, racial, national and political bias: all these prejudices strike at the very root of human life; one and all they beget bloodshed, and the ruination of the world. So long as these prejudices survive, there will be continuous and fearsome wars.

To remedy this condition there must be universal peace. To bring this about, a Supreme Tribunal must be established, representative of all governments and peoples; questions both national and international must be referred thereto, and all must carry out the decrees of this tribunal. Should any government or people disobey, let the whole world arise against that government or people.

Yet another of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the equality of men and women and their equal sharing in all rights. And there are many similar principles. It hath now become evident that these teachings are the very life and soul of the world.

Ye who are servants of the human race, strive ye with all your heart to deliver mankind out of this darkness and these prejudices that belong to the human condition and the world of nature, so that humanity may find its way into the light of the world of God.

Praise be to Him, ye are acquainted with the various laws, institutions and principles of the world; today nothing short of these divine teachings can assure peace and tranquillity to mankind. But for these teachings, this darkness shall never vanish, these chronic diseases shall never be healed; nay, they shall grow fiercer from day to day. The Balkans will remain discontented. Its restlessness will increase. The vanquished Powers will continue to agitate. They will resort to every measure that may rekindle the flame of war. Movements, newly-born and world-wide in their range, will exert their utmost effort for the advancement of their designs. The Movement of the Left will acquire great importance. Its influence will spread.

Strive ye, therefore, with the help of God, with illumined minds and hearts and a strength born of heaven, to become a bestowal from God to man, and to call into being for all humankind, comfort and peace.[3]

[1] John 18:11.
[2] Qur'án 67:3.

[3] Excerpted from *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, pp. 246–50.

# II

# EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI[1]

## THE CALL OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

### I

LEADERS of religion, exponents of political theories, governors of human institutions, who at present are witnessing with perplexity and dismay the bankruptcy of their ideas, and the disintegration of their handiwork, would do well to turn their gaze to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, and to meditate upon the World Order which, lying enshrined in His teachings, is slowly and imperceptibly rising amid the welter and chaos of present-day civilization. They need have no doubt or anxiety regarding the nature, the origin or validity of the institutions which the adherents of the Faith are building up throughout the world. For these lie embedded in the teachings themselves, unadulterated and unobscured by unwarrantable inferences, or unauthorized interpretations of His Word.

How pressing and sacred the responsibility that now weighs upon those who are already acquainted with these teachings! How glorious the task of those who are called upon to vindicate their truth, and demonstrate their practicability to an unbelieving world! Nothing short of an immovable conviction in their divine origin, and their uniqueness in the annals of religion; nothing short of an unwavering purpose to execute and apply them to the administrative machinery of the Cause, can be sufficient to establish their reality, and insure their success. How vast is the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh! How great the magnitude of His blessings showered upon humanity in this day! And yet, how poor, how inadequate our conception of their significance and glory! This generation stands too close to so colossal a Revelation to appreciate, in their full measure, the infinite possibilities of His Faith, the unprecedented character of His Cause, and the mysterious dispensations of His Providence... (p. 24)

### II

HUMANITY, whether viewed in the light of man's individual conduct or in the existing relationships between organized communities and nations, has, alas, strayed too far and suffered too great a decline to be redeemed through the unaided efforts of the best among its recognized rulers and statesmen—however disinterested their motives, however concerted their action, however unsparing in their zeal and devotion to its cause. No scheme which the calculations of the highest statesmanship may yet devise; no doctrine which the most distinguished exponents of economic theory may hope to advance; no principle which the most ardent of moralists may strive to inculcate, can provide, in the last resort, adequate foundations upon which the future of a distracted world can be built ... (pp. 33–34)

[1] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.*

III

SOME form of a world Super-State must needs be evolved, in whose favor all the nations of the world will have willingly ceded every claim to make war, certain rights to impose taxation and all rights to maintain armaments, except for purposes of maintaining internal order within their respective dominions. Such a state will have to include within its orbit an International Executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the commonwealth; a World Parliament whose members shall be elected by the people in their respective countries and whose election shall be confirmed by their respective governments; and a Supreme Tribunal whose judgment will have a binding effect even in such cases where the parties concerned did not voluntarily agree to submit their case to its consideration. A world community in which all economic barriers will have been permanently demolished and the interdependence of Capital and Labor definitely recognized; in which the clamor or religious fanaticism and strife will have been forever stilled; in which the flame of racial animosity will have been finally extinguished; in which a single code of international law—the product of the considered judgment of the world's federated representatives—shall have as its sanction the instant and coercive intervention of the combined forces of the federated units; and finally a world community in which the fury of a capricious and militant nationalism will have been transmuted into an abiding consciousness of world citizenship—such indeed, appears, in its broadest outline, the Order anticipated by Bahá'u'lláh, an Order that shall come to be regarded as the fairest fruit of a slowly maturing age... (pp. 40–41)

IV

THE call of Bahá'u'lláh is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices. If long-cherished ideals and time-honored institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.

Let there be no mistake. The principle of the Oneness of Mankind—the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve—is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope. Its appeal is not to be merely identified with a reawakening of the spirit of brotherhood and good-will among men, nor does it aim solely at the fostering of harmonious co-operation among individual peoples and nations. Its implications are deeper, its claims greater than any which the Prophets of old were allowed to advance. Its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family. It does not constitute merely the enunciation of an ideal, but stands inseparably associated with an institution adequate to embody its truth, demonstrate its validity, and perpetuate its influence. It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced. It constitutes a challenge, at once bold and universal, to outworn shibboleths of national creeds—creeds that have had their day and which must, in the ordinary course of events as shaped and controlled by Providence, give way to a new gospel, fundamentally different from, and infinitely superior to, what the world has already conceived. It calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world—

a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units.

It represents the consummation of human evolution—an evolution that has had its earliest beginnings in the birth of family life, its subsequent development in the achievement of tribal solidarity, leading in turn to the constitution of the city-state, and expanding later into the institution of independent and sovereign nations.

The principle of the Oneness of Mankind, as proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, carries with it no more and no less than a solemn assertion that attainment to this final stage in this stupendous evolution is not only necessary but inevitable, that its realization is fast approaching, and that nothing short of a power that is born of God can succeed in establishing it.

So marvellous a conception finds its earliest manifestations in the efforts consciously exerted and the modest beginnings already achieved by the declared adherents of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh who, conscious of the sublimity of their calling and initiated into the ennobling principles of His Administration, are forging ahead to establish His Kingdom on this earth. It has its indirect manifestations in the gradual diffusion of the spirit of world solidarity which is spontaneously arising out of the welter of a disorganized society... (pp. 42–44)

## V

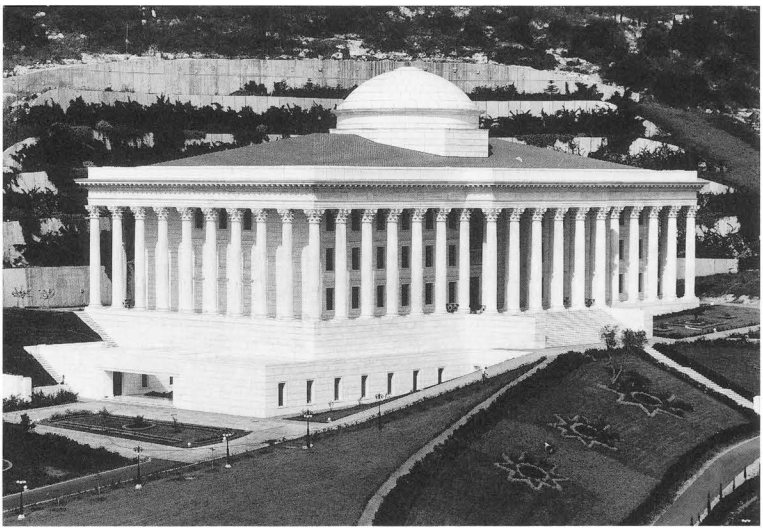
THE Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, whose supreme mission is none other but the achievement of this organic and spiritual unity of the whole body of nations, should, if we be faithful to its implications, be regarded as signalizing through its advent the *coming of age of the entire human race.* It should be viewed not merely as yet another spiritual revival in the ever-changing fortunes of mankind, not only as a further stage in a chain of progressive Revelations, nor even as the culmination of one of a series of recurrent prophetic cycles, but rather as marking the last and highest stage in the stupendous evolution of man's collective life on this planet. The emergence of a world community, the consciousness of world citizenship, the founding of a world civilization and culture—all of which must synchronize with the initial stages in the unfoldment of the Golden Age of the Bahá'í Era—should, by their very nature, be regarded, as far as this planetary life is concerned, as the furthermost limits in the organization of human society, though man, as an individual, will, nay must indeed as a result of such a consummation, continue indefinitely to progress and develop.

That mystic, all-pervasive, yet indefinable change, which we associate with the stage of maturity inevitable in the life of the individual and the development of the fruit must, if we would correctly apprehend the utterances of Bahá'u'lláh, have its counterpart in the evolution of the organization of human society. A similar stage must sooner or later be attained in the collective life of mankind, producing an even more striking phenomenon in world relations, and endowing the whole human race with such potentialities of well-being as shall provide, throughout the succeeding ages, the chief incentive required for the eventual fulfillment of its high destiny. Such a stage of maturity in the process of human government must, for all time, if we would faithfully recognize the tremendous claim advanced by Bahá'u'lláh, remain identified with the Revelation of which He was the Bearer... (pp. 163–64)

## VI

BESET on every side by the cumulative evidences of disintegration, of turmoil and of bankruptcy, serious-minded men and women, in almost every walk of life, are beginning to doubt whether society, as it is now organized, can, through its unaided efforts, extricate itself from the slough into which it is steadily sinking. Every system, short of the unification of the

human race, has been tried, repeatedly tried, and been found wanting. Wars again and again have been fought, and conferences without number have met and deliberated. Treaties, pacts and convenants have been painstakingly negotiated, concluded and revised. Systems of government have been patiently tested, have been continually recast and superseded. Economic plans of reconstruction have been carefully devised, and meticulously executed. And yet crisis has succeeded crisis, and the rapidity with which a perilously unstable world is declining has been correspondingly accelerated. A yawning gulf threatens to involve in one common disaster both the satisfied and dissatisfied nations, democracies and dictatorships, capitalists and wage-earners, Europeans and Asiatics, Jew and Gentile, white and colored. An angry Providence, the cynic might well observe, has abandoned a hapless planet to its fate, and fixed irrevocably its doom. Sore-tried and disillusioned, humanity has no doubt lost its orientation, and would seem to have lost as well its faith and hope. It is hovering, unshepherded and visionless, on the brink of disaster. A sense of fatality seems to pervade it. An ever-deepening gloom is settling on its fortunes as she recedes further and further from the outer fringes of the darkest zone of its agitated life and penetrates its very heart.... (p. 190)



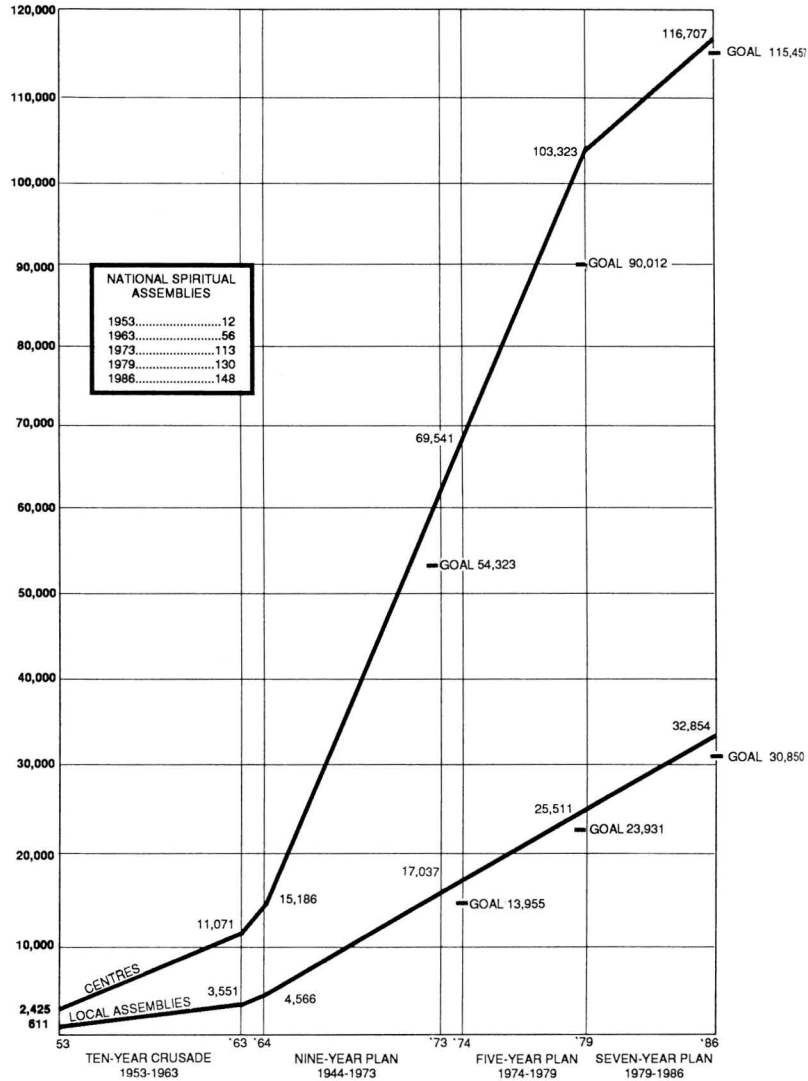
*The Seat of the Universal House of Justice.*

PART TWO

# INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES

140, 141 AND 142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
21 APRIL 1983–20 APRIL 1986 A.D.

## THE GROWTH OF THE BAHAÍ FAITH
## 1953 - 1986



# I
# THE SEVEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN 1979–1986

136–142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
21 APRIL 1979–20 APRIL 1986 A.D.

## 1. THE COMPLETION OF THE SEVEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN

THE Seven Year Plan, the manifold achievements of which brought to a close the third epoch of the Formative Age, ran its course through a period of accelerating change in the Bahá'í community and in the world at large. Significant developments took place in this short span of years. These developments have been described in this survey, compiled by the Department of Statistics. The survey attempts to report on a wide range of endeavour of the Bahá'í world community, and to reflect its increasing diversity, by grouping together similar objectives of the Plan. The Seven Year Plan has been the most complex in terms of the number of goals assigned to the Bahá'í communities. Over the course of the Plan, nearly one million pieces of numerical information, not including descriptive data on properties, pioneers, languages and tribal/minority enrolments, have been collected, and this publication is based on information culled from tens of thousands of reports received at the World Centre from institutions of the Faith.

## A. THE WORLD CENTRE

### 1. THE SEAT OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

THE initiation of the construction of the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice in the Holy Land ranked as the greatest single undertaking of the Five Year Plan; its completion and occupation in January 1983 constitutes one of the major achievements of the Bahá'í world during the Seven Year Plan. On 2 February 1983, upon the occasion of the occupation of this magnificent edifice, the Universal House of Justice in a cabled message to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in every land stated: THIS AUSPICIOUS EVENT SIGNALIZES ANOTHER PHASE IN PROCESS FULFILMENT SAILING GOD'S ARK ON MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD AS ANTICIPATED IN TABLET CARMEL, WONDROUS CHARTER WORLD SPIRITUAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRES FAITH BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

**A. The Building**

The Seat comprises six storeys: lower basement, upper basement, ground floor, first floor, second floor and third floor. Fifty-eight fluted pillars adorn the arcade surrounding the building. Each column, 10.8 metres tall, is crowned with a capital ornamented by a triple row of acanthus leaves, in Corinthian style. A portico supported by six columns projects forward from the colonnade at the main entrance to the building, the point of the axis of the Arc. The proportions of this portico establish the necessary relationship of harmony and proportion with the International Archives building; its depth and height recall similar porticos in Persian architecture, while the space it provides gives an 'impression of inviting all to enter'. The wide window of the Council Chamber, directly above the main façade and entrance, faces the bay and beyond that the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí. The eastern and western wings, currently used as offices, flank the octagonal core which houses the Council Chamber, rotunda, and multi-purpose room. The dome of the Seat, based on an octagon and deliberately subdued so as not to compete with the dome of the Shrine of the Báb, caps the central core which has the Council Chamber as its heart.

The building, clad in marble but with a structural core of reinforced concrete, covers an area of 68 × 36 metres, providing 11,000 square metres of floor space. It has a height of 14 metres, with a total distance of 25 metres from the base to the top of the dome. The structural design allows for future installation, as necessary, of new technological requirements. Terraced hanging gardens have been cut into the mountain behind the building.

In determining the choice of stone for the Seat, a detailed study revealed that Pentelikon marble, the same stone as that used in the Acropolis in Athens, would be the best choice since the Parthenon has retained its beauty for 25 centuries. The white marble was quarried at Mount Pentelikon, cut rough-hewn to fit specifications for the base shafts and capitals of the columns and flat to cover the skeleton of the building. It was then sent to the Industria dei Marmi Vicentini in Chiampo, Italy for carving. The Italian artisans used specially designed machinery, which incorporated newly-devised electronic controls to ensure precision, for fashioning the 2,400 cubic metres (approximately 9,600 tonnes) of marble into the pieces used for the Seat. They turned the columns mechanically against fixed saw blades and shaped the capitals with high-speed computer-controlled saws. They then sculpted the columns with hand-held electric chisels.

In Haifa, a French team eventually placed the marble in position, fixing it to the main structure in a way to protect it from the expansions and contractions of the concrete. This was done with special stainless steel anchors which hold the marble against the concrete but allow it to move independently.

A separate building underneath a landscaped hillside contains the air-conditioning and heating equipment, electrical transformers and main control panels which are anticipated to service all the buildings on the Arc. A 44-car parking garage forms part of this complex.

**B. Chronological Highlights of Construction**

The Universal House of Justice had appointed Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat as the architect of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice in September 1973. Once the Seat's design had been chosen in 1974, Mr. 'Azíz Khabírpúr, the resident engineer, moved to Haifa and set up a site office in the former Minor Archives building. Work on the Seat commenced with excavation of the hillside in June 1975. The earth and stone which were removed amounted to more than 65,000 cubic metres. Large caves found in the limestone required great volumes of concrete to fill them. In October 1976 the hundreds of working drawings, including full-size plans for the Corinthian capitals, were shipped to Haifa; December witnessed the first shipment of finished marble to the building site as well as the shaping of the platforms and terraces. After soliciting bids from a number of firms, the Universal House of Justice chose Paul S. Goldschmidt, Ltd. in Haifa as the general contractor in January 1977.

The first concrete footings were poured in February 1977 and by June construction of the upper and lower basement walls was proceeding. Also in June the workmen poured concrete for the foundation and the floor of the lower basement. By July the upper basement walls were in place and the pouring of central columns, which supported the dome, was completed. The first slab of the outer perimeter at ground-floor level was being placed by October

1977, and in January 1978 concrete was poured on the level of the Council Chamber. The third-floor wall forms were completed by 12 April of that year.

On 29 April 1978, the dedication of the Seat took place during the Fourth International Convention at a befitting ceremony which included the reading of the Tablet of Carmel. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum placed a casket containing dust from the Holy Shrines in a niche of the Council Chamber's outer wall to sanctify the building.

Progress was made toward constructing the roof and the octagon and on 31 July 1978 the first piece of marble, a pilaster base, was lifted into place at the ground-floor level. Part of the building's marble mantle was completed by October, and November witnessed the affixing of more marble plates. By mid-December all the columns on the north and east sides were in place. In April 1979, the exterior concrete construction, except for the entablature, main staircase and annex to the lower basement, was complete. The placing of all marble on the main structure plus the erection of all columns and capitals had also been completed and the interior finishing had commenced. Doors and windows in Italian walnut, as well as plaster element for cornices, mouldings and domed ceilings, were being fashioned in Italian factories at that time.

Work progressed during the summer and autumn, the entablature being completed in July 1979, and on 16 October the first pre-cast sections of the terrace walls could be placed. By 6 December the marble sections for the dome were being laid after the cement surfaces had been painted with bitumen for waterproofing. The roof, heavily coated with waterproofing and a tar-felt blanket as well as other insulation against the sun, had wood-stripping laid down to prepare the way for green ceramic tiles similar to those on the Archives building. On 13 December the marble steps leading to the front entrance were laid and six months later, in June 1980, the marble exterior was completed.

The interior work continued, including the laying of polished Red Nelson granite tiles in

*The supporting base of one of the pillars on the arcade surrounding the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.*

the Reception Concourse (November 1980), Rosso Magnabeschi (Asiago) in the banquet hall, Rosso Collemandia in the anteroom of the Council Chamber, Bottichino in the internal staircases and Jerusalem white in the access plaza and its retaining walls and pavings. The laying of roof tiles commenced in February 1981. Rubbed walnut balustrades at the eastern end of the concourse were erected in July 1981, and the Council Chamber's domed ceiling was also completed that month.

The inauguration of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice took place on 17 July 1982 in a most appropriate manner through the holding of a seminar on the occasion of the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf. From that time onwards, the Concourse of the Seat has been used for some of the Holy Day commemorations in Haifa, and each group of pilgrims has been received there by the Universal House of Justice.

The final stages of this 28-million-dollar project took place through autumn and winter of 1982, including the construction of the main gate in December. After 10 years of planning and construction, the members of the Universal House of Justice were able to transfer their offices to the Seat during the last two weeks of January 1983, as did several of the departments. At Riḍván 1983, during the Fifth International Convention, the election of the Universal House of Justice was held in the Reception Concourse. On 21 October 1984, the House of Justice received President Chaim Herzog of Israel as its first honoured guest in the banquet hall. Various dignitaries and other special guests and groups frequently tour the building by invitation. From 27 December 1985 and 2 January 1986 the Seat of the Universal House of Justice was the scene of the historic Counsellors' Conference at which the Six Year Plan for 1986–92 was discussed.

## 2. DESIGNS FOR THREE ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS ON THE ARC

SHOGHI EFFENDI described the buildings for the Institutions to be housed on Mount Carmel in these words: '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 ... of her Brother..., and of their Mother.... 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.' The Guardian constructed the International Archives building in the classic Ionic order, thus establishing the style of architecture for the Arc. The Universal House of Justice, the 'crowning glory of His [Bahá'u'lláh's] administrative institutions', now has its permanent Seat on the axis of that Arc at its highest and most prominent point.

The task of preparing plans for the three remaining buildings which are to occupy the Arc on Mount Carmel was given by the House of Justice to Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat, the architect of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, who presented a series of concepts. During the summer of 1985, the House of Justice requested that a conceptual report of the project be prepared taking into account a vast number of factors which would impinge on the construction of the buildings, and the resolution of which would be essential before the work could begin. The plans, which had been approved in general, were then further refined by Mr. Amánat as a result of these studies, resubmitted early in 1986, and accepted by the Universal House of Justice as a fulfilment of the goal of the Seven Year Plan. The designs are for the Centre for the Study of the Texts, which will lie between the International Archives building and the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, the International Teaching Centre and the International Bahá'í Library. The buildings of the International Teaching Centre and the International Bahá'í Library will be situated symmetrically opposite those of the Centre for the Study of the Texts and the International Archives building.

# 3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE

ONE of the goals of the Seven Year Plan for the World Centre was stated as follows:

> 'The Institution of the International Teaching Centre will be developed and its functions expanded. This will require an increase in its membership and the assumption by it and by the Continental Boards of Counsellors of wider functions in the stimulation on an international scale of the propagation and consolidation of the Faith, and in the promotion of the spiritual, intellectual and community aspects of Bahá'í life.'

This goal was accomplished successfully through a number of significant developments occurring over the course of the Plan.

In the opening phase of the Seven Year Plan, the Universal House of Justice increased the International Teaching Centre to seven, through the addition of Miss Anneliese Bopp in 1979, joining the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Paul Haney, and 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, and Counsellors Hooper Dunbar, Florence Mayberry, and 'Azíz Yazdí, constituting the nucleus of the Teaching Centre in the Holy Land. After the passing of Mr. Haney in December 1982, the number of resident members of the Teaching Centre was reduced to six. In May 1983, following the Fifth International Convention, this number was raised to nine by the further addition of Counsellors Magdalene Carney, Mas'ud Khamsí, Peter Khan and Isobel Sabri. The services of Mrs. Mayberry as a Counsellor member of this Institution were brought to an end in 1983 when she left the World Centre for reasons of health.

The establishment, on 23 May 1983, of a five-year term for the Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre represents a further step in its evolution.

In April 1984, the International Teaching Centre moved into new offices at 10 Haparsim Street, near the House of the Master, in the historic building which had served for several decades during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi as the Western Pilgrim House and which had been the Seat of the Universal House of Justice for the first twenty years of its existence. This building will serve as the seat of the International Teaching Centre until its permanent home is erected on the Arc, in close proximity to the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

The functions assigned to the International Teaching Centre when it was brought into being in 1973 were expanded significantly in 1983. Among the functions presently being carried out by the International Teaching Centre are the following:

—exercising full responsibility for the direction and stimulation of the Continental Boards of Counsellors and serving as liaison between the Continental Counsellors and the Universal House of Justice. By this means, the guidance of the Universal House of Justice, conveyed through the International Teaching Centre to the Continental Counsellors, reaches all elements of the world-wide Bahá'í community, through the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants.

—preparing reports and recommendations to the Universal House of Justice for the further development of the Bahá'í community, based on the information it receives about the condition of the Cause in all parts of the world.

—taking responsibility for the protection of the Faith. At present, the principal emphasis is being placed on fostering detailed study of the Covenant and the Holy Writings as the impregnable fortress for the followers of the Blessed Beauty and on taking constructive measures to maintain unity in the community.

—determining needs for the enrichment of Bahá'í life, and for the continued diversification of Bahá'í activities within the realms of teaching and consolidation. Exercise of this function includes study of means by which the economic and social life of the Bahá'í community can be developed, determination of teaching approaches which will enable the Faith to penetrate new segments of human society, the fostering of Bahá'í scholarship, and monitoring of trends in current thought as a basis for showing how the teachings relate to the needs of mankind and cast illumination on the currents of the condition.

*The Hands of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and 'Ali-Akbar Furútan with Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre on the occasion of the move of that Institution into its new seat at 10 Haparsim Street in Haifa on 15 April 1984. In front row, left to right: Counsellor Aziz Yazdi, Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Mr. Furútan, and Counsellor Anneliese Bopp. Back row, left to right: Counsellors Peter Khan, Isobel Sabri, Magdalene Carney, Mas'ud Khamsi, Hooper Dunbar.*

—studying the needs for pioneers and travelling teachers, for literature and for audio-visual materials.

Increasingly, the work of the International Teaching Centre extends beyond the quantitative aspect of the expansion of the Bahá'í community, with greater attention being given to raising its qualitative level, promoting the spiritualization of the community, and studying the long-term trends in the growth of the Faith on a regional or international basis. The International Teaching Centre is also concerned with encouraging the rapid deployment of manpower, in the form of travelling teachers and pioneers, and of material resources, in the form of literature and funds, to meet unusual opportunities for promotion of the Faith which arise unexpectedly.

At the beginning of the Seven Year Plan, 13 Boards of Counsellors existed, assigned to zones embracing the entire planet. In June 1979, the Universal House of Justice announced that the duration of the term of office of Continental Counsellors would be five years, to start on the Day of the Covenant, 26 November 1980; this provision of a specific term had been envisaged in the initial appointment of Counsellors in 1968. In November 1980, a total of 63 Continental Counsellors were appointed, and the 13 zones were consolidated into five zones, each of which extends over an entire continental area.

At that time, the Boards of Counsellors were given wider discretion to decide upon such matters as the division of the continental area into smaller zones, the location of offices for each Board, and the manner in which members of the Auxiliary Boards would report to and operate under the Counsellors. This greater flexibility enabled the Boards to apply the widely-varied backgrounds, experiences, talents and capacities of the Board members to the needs and opportunities within each part of the continent. In some areas, teams of two or three Counsellors were formed to deal with special needs in a country, or to facilitate co-ordination of teaching projects.

During the first phase of the Plan, extensive consultations were held between the Universal House of Justice and the Teaching Centre regarding appropriate means of opening the way in the next phase of the Plan for the Teaching Centre and the Boards of Counsellors to have a greater degree of participation in the development and financing of special teaching projects and in the provision of Bahá'í literature. These consultations resulted in each Board having at its disposal an annual special teaching projects fund to draw upon for contribution to National Funds for projects agreed upon by the Counsellors and National Assemblies involved. These projects generally meet special needs or take advantage of unusual opportunities and can be suggested either by the Counsellors, in the light of specific requirements of which they become aware, or by the National Assemblies themselves. The growing experience in the use of this fund makes it evident that this procedure provides great scope for creativity and facilitates quick reaction to unanticipated needs.

Other funds provided annually to the Boards of Counsellors from the Bahá'í International Fund, through the International Teaching Centre, enable the Counsellors to disburse funds to the National Spiritual Assemblies in support of literature and audio-visual subvention. This allows National Spiritual Assemblies to reduce the selling price of certain items of literature to a level affordable by the mass of the community; permits National Spiritual Assemblies to order literature from abroad which would otherwise be unobtainable because of currency controls; facilitates publication of books in vernacular languages; and provides for greater and wider dissemination of audio-visual materials. There has also been an increased emphasis on preparation of literature and audio-visual items which more closely express the Bahá'í teachings within the diverse cultural and linguistic forms of the Bahá'í communities.

The ties between the Continental Pioneer Committees and the Continental Boards of Counsellors have been strengthened, with the work of the Pioneer Committees now being directed by the International Teaching Centre, which has also been given the responsibility of administering the International Deputization Fund. This development will increasingly facilitate a more effective deployment of pioneers and travelling teachers, and improve the accuracy with which needs are identified and results evaluated.

A new five-year term commenced in November 1985 with an increase in the number of Continental Counsellors from 63 to 72. A few weeks later, the Universal House of Justice convened an historic Counsellors' Conference, conducted under the aegis of the International Teaching Centre, at which the Continental Counsellors gathered in the Holy Land from 27 December 1985 to 2 January 1986. This unprecedented gathering, held in the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, consulted on the opportunities and challenges facing the Bahá'í world community, including measures needed to successfully complete the Seven Year Plan, formulation of goals for the Six Year Plan, and new conditions in the Bahá'í community associated with the emergence of the Faith from obscurity, and the dissemination of the Universal House of Justice's statement to the peoples of the world entitled *The Promise of World Peace*. The Conference closed on a dramatic note with the announcement by the Universal House of Justice, in its concluding message, that the Bahá'í world was entering a new epoch in the Formative Age of the Cause. Associated with this transition is the newly initiated process by which the national goals of the Six Year Plan are to be formulated largely by each National Spiritual Assembly in consultation with the Board of Counsellors for its continent.

The Seven Year Plan also witnessed notable developments in the work of the Auxiliary Boards, including an evolving differentiation in the functions of the Propagation and Protection Boards and the institution of a five-year term of office, to commence on 26 November 1986. The Auxiliary Board members for Propagation are increasingly concerned with fostering the goals of the Plan and stimulating contributions to the Fund, while the Auxiliary Board members for Protection devote major attention to promoting deepening in the Covenant, preserving unity, fostering the spiritual profundity of the believers, and preparing the Bahá'í community for the opposition which it will increasingly face as an inevitable concomitant to the expansion of the Faith. The members of these Boards are vitally concerned with the consolidation of the Faith, and their distribution world-wide is as follows:

| | PROTECTION BOARD | | PROPAGATION BOARD | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Continent* | *Allocated* | *Appointed* | *Allocated* | *Appointed* |
| Africa | 81 | 70 | 99 | 95 |
| Americas | 54 | 52 | 117 | 111 |
| Asia | 99 | 77 | 117 | 103 |
| Australasia | 27 | 25 | 36 | 34 |
| Europe | 27 | 27 | 36 | 36 |
| **World** | **288** | **251** | **405** | **379** |

A highly beneficial feature of the Seven Year Plan has been the closer collaboration between the two arms of the Administrative Order in their common pursuit of the advancement of the Plan's objectives. Reports of Auxiliary Board members, their promotion of the plans and aims of the National Spiritual Assemblies in their contact with the grassroots of the community, and their occasional meetings with national committees have all contributed to enhancing this collaboration.

The services of assistants to Auxiliary Board members, whose appointment was first provided for in 1973 by the Universal House of Justice, flourished during the Seven Year Plan. The activities of assistants are monitored, supervised and guided by the Auxiliary Board members, and periodic training sessions conducted by the Board members are provided them. These assistants have played a vital role in the work of stimulating and encouraging the Assemblies and believers at the local level, and the success of the Seven Year Plan owes much to the sacrificial exertions of the thousands of believers scattered over the surface of the earth who have served in this capacity. At present, over 5,000 believers are serving as assistants to Auxiliary Board members.

# 4. THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

## A. Expanding Relationships and Activities

A considerable increase in the activities of the Bahá'í International Community in collaboration with the United Nations has taken place during the Seven Year Plan in major areas of the United Nations programmes, resulting in a further development of ties between the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations, one of the goals of the Plan. Three fundamental trends in the affairs of the Bahá'í world have provided the basis for making this possible: the increased public relations activity arising from the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, the consequent general emergence of the Faith from obscurity, and the introduction of social and economic development activities as an integral part of Bahá'í activity.

A booklet entitled *The Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations*, reflecting the growing Bahá'í presence at the United Nations, was published in 1985.

*Overview of Relationships*

The Bahá'í International Community has, since 1970, enjoyed consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the body responsible for co-ordinating and directing the economic and social work of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and institutions. The Bahá'í International Community also has consultative status with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and working relations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the UN Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS). In addition, it has also been associated with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) since 1948.

In the course of the Seven Year Plan, the Bahá'í International Community considerably broadened its relationship with the United Nations system beyond its headquarters in New

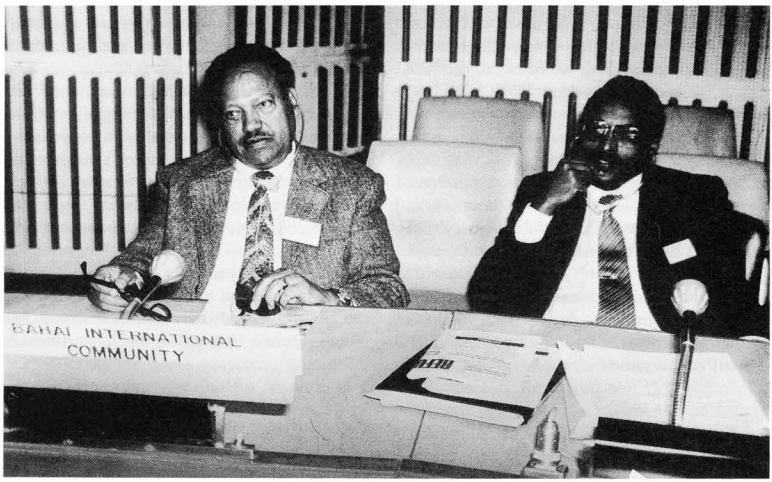
York by establishing UN branch headquarters in Geneva and Vienna, and UN regional headquarters, or Regional Economic Commissions, in Africa (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), Asia (Bangkok, Thailand), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, Chile). It has also increased its contacts with several of the UN specialized bodies and agencies, including the World Food Council (WFC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Moreover, the Bahá'í International Community has been involved with other international bodies. It participated in sessions of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe and was thereby instrumental in bringing the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán to the attention of those institutions. The Bahá'í International Community also enjoys a close working relationship with the South Pacific Commission (SPC), an inter-governmental organization promoting the social and economic development of the countries in the Pacific region.

*Participation in Conferences and Meetings*

An important ongoing activity has been Bahá'í participation in major United Nations and other international, conferences through capable Bahá'í representation at these gatherings and presentation of written and/or oral statements highlighting a Bahá'í view on the conference.

During the Plan, the Bahá'í International Community participated in well over 200 conferences and meetings. Statements were presented at virtually all major conferences and at a great many lesser meetings, while personal contacts with government and United Nations officials were considerably extended. The Bahá'í International Community participation covered numerous subjects in the broad areas of international peace and disarmament, social and economic development, and human rights.




*Bahá'í International Community representatives to the African Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 28 November 1983. Left, Mr. Gila Bahta; right, Mr. Belete Worku.*

*Collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations*

The Bahá'í International Community continues to associate and co-operate with other non-governmental (NGO) organizations at the

United Nations through active membership on many NGO/UN committees in New York, Geneva and Vienna; participation in numerous NGO conferences and meetings; and in the co-sponsorship of statements for various UN conferences and meetings.

A representative of the Bahá'í International Community is, at the time of writing, the Vice-President of the Executive Board of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO), an umbrella organization representing the non-governmental sector at the United Nations. A representative also currently serves on the Board of the NGO Committee on Development. During the Seven Year Plan, representatives of the Bahá'í International Community served (and in some instances are still serving) in the following capacities as NGO committee officers: Chairman of the Human Rights Committee, Chairman and Secretary of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, Chairman of the Youth Committee (Vienna), Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Decade of Women, Vice-Chairman and Secretary of the Youth Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Department of Public Information/NGO Executive Committee, Secretary of the Sub-Committee on Women (Geneva), and Treasurer of the Committee on Human Settlements.

*Collaboration with Bahá'í Institutions*

The Bahá'í International Community UN operations have necessitated, and greatly benefited from, extensive and growing contacts with Bahá'í institutions around the world. Participation in conferences has required collaboration with Continental Boards of Counsellors, National Spiritual Assemblies and individual Bahá'ís with relevant professional backgrounds who have lent their expertise, including drafting statements, and represented the Bahá'í International Community.

The Bahá'í International Community has continued to encourage National Spiritual Assemblies to establish and foster relationships with the United Nations offices in their countries, sponsoring or co-sponsoring activities in observance of United Nations days, years, and other events to make the United Nations aims and programmes better known. Information received about the increased United Nations related activities at national and local levels in the Bahá'í world has been compiled and reported to the United Nations Department of Public Information.

*Bahá'í International Community representatives to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference on the Decade for Women, held in Tokyo, Japan, 26–30 March 1984. Front row, left: Mrs. Kimiko Schwerin. Back row, from left: Miss Yoko Ishihara, Mrs. Mahin Moghbel, and Mrs. Marife Yazdani.*

*Internal Developments*

Concomitant with the growth and diversification of the United Nations operations of the Bahá'í International Community has been an increase in personnel resources, and the development of its structure, necessary to meet the new challenges and opportunities of recent years. The number of persons engaged in the work of the Bahá'í International Community offices and representatives at various United Nations centres grew to some 20 full-time staff, supplemented by a number of volunteers on an ongoing to temporary basis.

In addition to the main office in New York, a European branch office of the Bahá'í International Community was established in 1981 in Geneva, considerably broadening the potential for co-operation with the United Nations. The activities of the Geneva office, focused initially on the area of human rights, have gradually expanded to include other major areas of United Nations work.

Since 1980 the Bahá'í International Community has been represented at the Vienna International Centre, the new United Nations branch headquarters in Austria, which is an important focal point for United Nations activities in the areas of youth, women, the family, the ageing, the disabled, narcotic drugs and crime prevention. In 1985 Bahá'í International Community representation was also established with UNEP and UNCHS at their headquarters in Nairobi; and similar arrangements are being made at the United Nations regional headquarters in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as at the South Pacific Commission.

**B. Peace and Disarmament**

The Bahá'í International Community responded to an invitation to address the United Nations General Assembly at its 1982 Second Special Session on Disarmament. On that occasion it circulated a new edition of *The Promise of Disarmament and Peace*, a statement prepared for the earlier 1978 Disarmament Session. This brochure and the oral statement were mailed later that year, during Disarmament Week—a yearly event beginning on UN Day, 24 October—to UN delegations and members of the UN Secretariat. Copies were also sent to Bahá'í communities around the world, with a letter encouraging Bahá'ís to participate in Disarmament Week and in a World Disarmament Campaign launched by the United Nations. Both before and after the Special Session, the Bahá'í International Community co-operated with the UN Centre for Disarmament Affairs, and participated in the work of the NGO Committees on Disarmament in New York and Geneva, as well as in NGO conferences and meetings organized by these committees.

When the United Nations designated 1986 as the International Year of Peace (IYP) proclaiming it as an occasion for rededication by member states to the goals of the UN Charter, the Bahá'í International Community assured the IYP Secretariat of wholehearted Bahá'í participation in commemorating the year; provided the IYP Secretariat with detailed information on Bahá'í teachings and principles regarding peace, and offered evidence of the efforts of the Bahá'í world community for over 100 years to achieve the goal of peace. As an indication of this collaboration, the Bahá'í International Community participated in all four UN regional seminars held during 1985 in preparation for the IYP, presenting comprehensive statements on the seminar topics of 'Preparation for Life in Peace', and the relationships between peace and disarmament, and between peace and development. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community took part in several meetings in New York and Europe organized by the United Nations for the purpose of consulting with non-governmental organizations on a programme for the IYP.

A major Bahá'í contribution to IYP was made on 22 November 1985 when Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, accompanied by Dr. Victor de Araujo and Mr. Gerald Knight of the Bahá'í International Community, presented *The Promise of World Peace* to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on behalf of the Universal House of Justice.

During her visit to the United Nations, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum hosted a number of luncheons which were attended by diplomats and United Nations officials. A special luncheon for the press was well attended and resulted in extensive media coverage of the General Assembly's consideration of the situation in Írán and, particularly, of the persecution of Bahá'ís in that country.

*Presentation of a copy of* The Promise of World Peace *to Mr. Norberto González, Executive Secretary for ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean), in Santiago, Chile, on 10 December 1985. From left to right: Dr. Alexander Reid; Mr. González; Dr. Paul Öjermark; Mrs. Elena Velásquez; Mr. Robert Siegel.*

**C. Social, Economic and Humanitarian Affairs**

*Social and Economic Development*

Most of the work and financial resources of the United Nations system are devoted to supporting development in Third World countries. The growing involvement of Bahá'í communities in social and economic development as a regular part of their activities has therefore made it possible to broaden considerably the scope of Bahá'í International Community-UN operations by providing opportunities to develop existing contacts and create new ones with organizations active in this area, aimed at exchanging development concepts, providing information about the rapidly growing Bahá'í activities, and achieving concrete collaboration. In this connection, the process of forging closer relationships with the UN Regional Commissions, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, UNEP, UNCHS, UNESCO, and SPC, referred to above, has been embarked upon. In order to develop continuous and solid co-operation with the headquarters of these UN agencies in various countries, the Bahá'í International Community is currently establishing committees of representatives in several of those locations.

The Bahá'í International Community has participated in an increasing number of conferences on international economic relations, general and rural development, community and social development, food and agriculture, health and nutrition, the environment, human settlements, science and technology, forestry, population and other subjects. The Bahá'í statements presented have become more specific in nature, including references to Bahá'í perspectives on development, Bahá'í experiences in the field and tangible project examples. The Bahá'í International Community has also been invited to contribute to the development policy of the United Nations and related organizations in recent years, and has provided statements to UNDP, UNEP and the World Commission on Environment and Development.

In addition, the Bahá'í International Community has given guidance and support to National Spiritual Assemblies, Bahá'í communities, and individual Bahá'ís regarding social and economic development, particularly in relation to contacts and collaboration with the United Nations agencies and projects. Proposals for Bahá'í collaboration with the United Nations and other international development organizations have been made and in some cases such collaboration has commenced, as in the

case of the nutrition programme of the South Pacific Commission, for which the Bahá'í International Community has arranged for training support by Bahá'í volunteer experts and co-sponsored a nutrition poster which has been spread throughout the Pacific region.

The Bahá'í International Community has on several occasions during the Seven Year Plan provided a measure of emergency and disaster relief assistance to countries, either directly to their governments or through the UN organizations.

At the global level, the Bahá'í International Community is actively engaged in the NGO development committees, particularly in support of efforts to strengthen NGO contributions to UN development strategies, and in facilitating concrete development collaboration with such UN organizations as UNICEF and UNDP. In the efforts to foster Bahá'í collaboration with the UN system in social and economic development activities, priority is given to projects especially designed to benefit disadvantaged women, children and youth. Contacts with UNICEF have been particularly fruitful as it has become aware of the extent of Bahá'í activities on behalf of children.

*Women*

During the Seven Year Plan, there was a significant expansion of Bahá'í involvement in United Nations programmes and activities to promote the advancement of women. The Bahá'í International Community participated in two UN world conferences on women held during the period—the first in Copenhagen, Denmark in July 1980, to observe the mid-point of the UN Decade for Women; and the second in Nairobi, Kenya in July 1985, to mark the completion of that Decade, elaborate on its accomplishments and set strategies for the achievement of specific goals by the year 2000.

*Bahá'í International Community representative Dr. Jane Faily is seen giving a workshop on 'Problem Solving Skills for Women in Managerial Positions' during Forum '85, a meeting for Non-Governmental Organizations held concurrently with the World Conference on the Decade for Women in Nairobi, Kenya, in July 1985.*

At Copenhagen, the Bahá'í International Community, represented by three Bahá'í women, submitted a written statement for inclusion in the Conference background documentation.

To the World Conference on the Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, the Bahá'í International Community sent a delegation of ten women and men and presented a report prepared on the advancement of the status of women in the Bahá'í community during the Decade, based on the responses of 77 National Spiritual Assemblies to a questionnaire on women's activities and progress made during

the Decade, as well as obstacles which remain to be overcome. This paper became part of the official background documentation for the Conference. Forum '85, the parallel NGO meeting held in Nairobi, attracted over 50 Bahá'í women from different parts of the world. Planning for Bahá'í International Community participation in the Forum activities was assisted by the Continental Office of the Board of Counsellors in Africa, located in Nairobi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya. An outstanding Bahá'í exhibit on women and development was displayed at the Forum, and a Bahá'í participant conducted a workshop on managerial skills for women. Individual Bahá'ís attending the Forum experienced a rich opportunity to engage in dialogue with women from every part of the world, sharing Bahá'í views on issues related to the development of women.

In addition to the two major UN Conferences, the Bahá'í International Community was represented at more than 25 UN and UN-related meetings on women during the period of the Seven Year Plan, including meetings in preparation for the World Conferences, sponsored by UN Regional Economic Commissions; regular and special sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women; meetings of expert groups; and seminars and conferences sponsored by non-governmental organizations. A growing number of women were given an opportunity to represent the Bahá'í International Community at these meetings, promoting in the process an ever-widening network of cordial relationships with individuals distinguished for their work for the advancement of women.

*Youth*

When, in December 1979, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1985 as the International Year of Youth (IYY), the Bahá'í International Community warmly welcomed this decision, since it permitted an even more substantive Bahá'í expression of the vital rôle that youth can play in bringing about world peace and in building a world civilization. Accordingly, the Bahá'í International Community took part in the sessions of the IYY Advisory Committee, created to formulate a specific programme of measures and activities prior to and during IYY, and established a close relationship with the UN Secretariat for IYY at the Vienna International Centre. It also played an active rôle as a member of the NGO Committees on Youth in New York and Vienna, and participated in the deliberations of the Sub-Committees on IYY, the IYY Tree Project, Street Youth, and the NGO Intergenerational Committee on ageing and youth, all in New York.

During this period the Bahá'í International Community took part in several UN and UN-related conferences in different parts of the world. The Bahá'í International Community representatives attended the 1983 Annual DPI/NGO Conference in New York on 'The Challenge of Youth in Our Changing Society', after having helped plan that event; and took part in an IYY preparatory conference in Costinesti, Romania, as well as in a discussion on 'Improving Channels of Communication between the United Nations and Youth'. In 1985 the Bahá'í International Community sent a delegation to the IYY International Youth conference in Kingston, Jamaica, where it circulated a statement on *The Contribution of Youth to Peace*. It also took part in a Latin American/Caribbean regional meeting for IYY and, in November 1985, made a major contribution to the planning and success of an IYY Non-Governmental Organization Conference at United Nations Headquarters.

Both prior to and during IYY, the Bahá'í International Community provided information and materials to Bahá'í communities around the world for Bahá'í activities in conjunction with this Year. It encouraged the participation of Bahá'í communities on National IYY Commissions and provided guidance and suggestions to assist Bahá'í youth in undertakings that would contribute to the goals of IYY. The Bahá'í International community, in collaboration with the Department of Statistics at the World Centre, has prepared a comprehensive report for the UN and the Bahá'í world on the results of creative activities carried out by Bahá'í youth world-wide in observance of IYY.

*Children*

The International Year of the Child (IYC) 1979 was enthusiastically supported by the Bahá'í International Community. Ninety-four national communities participated, as accounted in a widely distributed report describing the specific activities of the Bahá'í

*The Bahá'í display in the UNICEF exhibition 'Working Together for Children', held at the United Nations in New York, 14–16 April 1986.*

community in promotion of IYC, as well as ongoing Bahá'í programmes and publications on behalf of children. This report prompted the following response from the UN Special Representative, the Assistant Secretary-General for IYC, in a letter of thanks to the Bahá'í International Community: 'I cannot express my feelings of gratitude in more adequate ways to your organization for the all-out cooperation and support which you as an NGO extended to our IYC Secretariat and above all to the children of the world for the promotion of their welfare and development. I pray and hope that the Year 1979 (IYC) was just a beginning of Bahá'í's deep commitment for the child's causes and that your widespread advocacy will now begin to bear fruit on behalf of the child'.

The Bahá'í International Community continued to take part in the annual sessions of the UNICEF Executive Board, submitting statements on pertinent issues in 1984 and 1985, and was represented at a meeting on Children in Latin America and the Caribbean in 1979. It also participated in NGO Forums held at the time of Executive Board meetings.

In addition to serving on numerous committees and participating in special meetings in observance of the Year of the Child, the Bahá'í International Community took part in activities concerning the disabled child, breast-feeding and infant feeding, assistance to children in emergency situations, NGO/UNICEF field-level relations, and the status of women. Bahá'í International Community representatives have also served for some years as assistant editor of the NGO/UNICEF Newsletter and on the Editorial Board of the UNICEF publication *NGO Forum* (now *Action for Children*).

*Other Social Affairs*

During this period the Bahá'í International Community continued its involvement in United Nations activities dealing with problems of crime prevention and drug abuse. It took part in the 1980 and 1985 Congresses on Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders, presenting a Bahá'í view on the issues, while continuing its collaboration with the United Nations Branch on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Likewise, while working closely with the UN Division of Narcotic Drugs

and contributing its suggestions to a report for an international campaign against drug traffic, it participated in the yearly sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, expressing whenever possible a Bahá'í perspective on the spiritual impetus needed to prevent drug abuse.

When the United Nations began considering the well-being of the ageing—persons over 60 years old—the Bahá'í International Community showed its interest by participating in the 1981 United Nations Assembly on the Ageing, as well as in a prior NGO Forum on Ageing. It also welcomed the International year of Disabled Persons by taking part in sessions of a United Nations Advisory Committee convened to prepare a programme of action to improve the conditions of the disabled and by contributing to a brochure on disabled children, published by the NGO Committee of UNICEF. Further opportunities for Bahá'í co-operation world-wide are now possible during the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons (1983–1992). In addition, as the United Nations began to express its concern for the well-being of the family in contemporary society, the Bahá'í International Community established a warm relationship with the responsible UN unit and took part in a UN Inter-regional Seminar on 'Changing Families' held in Moscow.

## D. Human Rights

*Persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán*

The persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán had an immediate and dramatic impact on the activities of the Bahá'í International Community during the period under review. First, the United Nations Office was called upon to contact the United Nations Secretary-General and ambassadors representing friendly countries to enlist their sympathy and support for diplomatic efforts to persuade the authorities in Ṭihrán to put a stop to the anti-Bahá'í activities of fundamentalist elements. Contacts were also made with the Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations. In 1980, when it became apparent that quiet diplomatic efforts were fruitless, the Universal House of Justice called upon the Bahá'í International Community to take the case to public meetings of the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. In September 1980, all these bodies adopted resolutions on the plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

The rôle of the Bahá'í International Community was to co-ordinate the efforts of National Spiritual Assemblies in approaching the members of the above international bodies and to arrange for appropriate representation and statements at their meetings. As the persecution intensified, the Bahá'í International Community co-ordinated efforts to obtain still further resolutions by these bodies. These efforts led to resolutions being adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1982, 1983 and 1984, and culminated in the adoption by the Commission of a resolution in 1985 which called for a report to the United Nations General Assembly in December 1985. On the basis of this report and the debate which followed its presentation, the General Assembly, on 13 December 1985, adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Írán which contained specific references to the situation of the Bahá'ís. This was the first time that the General Assembly had adopted a resolution dealing with the persecution of the Bahá'ís, and was an historic development in the recognition of the Faith and the defence of the long-persecuted Bahá'í community in Írán.

The February–March 1986 session of the Commission on Human Rights took up the matter once again when it conducted its annual review of situations representing gross violations of human rights. It had before it the report of its Special Representative on Írán and decided to renew his mandate and to ask him to report both to the General Assembly in late 1986 and to its own next meeting in February 1987.

In addition to the above resolutions by United Nations and European bodies dealing with human rights, the efforts of the Bahá'í International Community, co-ordinated with those of National Assemblies, resulted in or contributed to:

a. joint representation by governments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the Iranian authorities in Ṭihrán;
b. debates by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in

which attention was specifically drawn to the religious nature of the persecution;

c. discussions of the situation by the Human Rights Committee in July 1982, when it reviewed the question of whether Írán was observing and implementing the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which it is a party;

d. discussions of the situation by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in March 1983, when the Committee considered Írán's report on its implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which includes provisions for protecting freedom of religion;

e. consideration of cases of missing Bahá'ís by the Commission on Human Rights' Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances;

f. hearings held by the International Labour Organization's Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations on Írán's Discriminatory treatment of Bahá'ís in relation to employment;

g. appeals on behalf of Bahá'ís sentenced to death made by the United Nations Special Chairman on Summary or Arbitrary Executions;

h. a hearing on the human rights situation in Írán, including the case of the Bahá'ís, held by the European Parliament in November 1985;

i. the publication of a Minority Rights Group report entitled *The Bahá'ís of Írán* revised and updated in 1985.

The Bahá'í International Community prepared a number of publications concerning the persecutions in Írán which were distributed at United Nations meetings and to National Spiritual Assemblies. These included *The Bahá'ís in Írán: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious*

*Mrs. Olya Roohizadegan is seen presenting testimony before the European Parliament Public Hearing on 'Respect for Human Rights' in Írán. The Hearing was held in Brussels, Belgium, on 28 November 1985. From left to right: Mr. Barry Waters (European Parliament Secretariat); Mrs. van den Heuvel (Co-Chairperson); Mr. Christopher Sprung (Bahá'í Spokesperson); Mrs. Rouhizadegan (Bahá'í Witness); Mr. Kazem Samandari (Translator); Mr. Jamshid Samimi (Bahá'í Witness).*

*Minority* (first published in 1981, revised and updated in 1982); *Major Developments, July 1982–July 1983* (updating the preceding publication); and *Persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, 1979–1985: A 6-Year Campaign to Eliminate a Religious Minority* (published in September 1985 for use at the 40th session of the United Nations General Assembly).

*Refugee Activities*

A new development in the rôle of the United Nations Offices of the Bahá'í International Community was brought about through the steady flow of Iranian Bahá'í refugees seeking asylum in other countries. This necessitated the development of contacts and effective relations with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and in 1984 a refugee desk for this purpose was established in the Geneva office. This desk has been working with the Geneva headquarters of UNHCR, as well as with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Inter-governmental Committee on Migration, to increase general understanding of the reasons for the persecutions and the true nature of the Faith. More specifically the Bahá'í International Community refugee desk, in close collaboration with the International Bahá'í Refugee Office (IBRO) in Toronto, Canada, has co-operated with UNHCR on Bahá'í refugee movements and has attempted to secure their agreement and co-operation in regard to Bahá'í refugee programmes. The activities of the IBRO have been reported elsewhere in this section.

*Problem Situations in Countries other than Írán*

Part of the ongoing activity of the Bahá'í International Community is to deal with problems being experienced by Bahá'í communities in countries other than Írán. During the Seven Year Plan, considerable effort was exerted on behalf of the Bahá'í communities in Morocco and Egypt. United Nations representatives of the Bahá'í International Community met with the ambassadors of these countries and sought their favourable intervention with their governments. Some National Spiritual Assemblies were called upon to contact the ambassadors of the same countries in their capitals. When these efforts failed to produce the necessary results, the Bahá'í International Community co-ordinated the efforts of a number of National Spiritual Assemblies to enlist the diplomatic support of their governments in these situations.

*Contribution to Human Rights Issues*

Since it obtained consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1970, the Bahá'í International Community has regularly participated in meetings of the Commission on Human Rights (one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council) and of the Commission's subsidiary organ, the Sub-Commission on Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. During the Seven Year Plan the Bahá'í International Community delivered statements at the annual meetings of these bodies on a wide range of human rights issues, including racism; religious intolerance; economic, social and cultural rights; rights of the child, minorities, the mentally ill, indigenous populations and the disabled; genocide; torture; and the status of the individual in international law. In addition, the major concerns of the Bahá'í International Community—to eliminate racism and religious intolerance—found expression respectively in the United Nations Second World Conference to Eliminate Racism and Racial Discrimination, held in 1983, and in the United Nations Seminar on the Encouragement of Understanding, Tolerance and Respect in Matters Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief, held in 1984. The Bahá'í International Community also participated in five other seminars on human rights topics.

*Recognition of the Faith*

The efforts of the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations have also contributed to efforts to gain recognition of the Faith in a number of countries. These efforts have included contacts with ambassadors of these countries as well as visits by Bahá'í International Community representatives to some of the countries concerned for meetings with high-level government officials. It is often through such interventions—which the respect accorded the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations makes possible—that the true nature of the Faith can be conveyed to government officials, thus contributing to its protection.

# 5. EMANCIPATION AND PROTECTION OF THE FAITH

THE deliberate efforts of the revolutionary leaders of Írán to exterminate the Bahá'í community through economic intimidation, legal harassment, mob violence, and the imprisonment, torture and execution of prominent Bahá'ís, a campaign which has continued unabated from the beginning of the revolution in 1978, have been the most intense and prolonged attack on the Faith since the time of Bahá'u'lláh. The valour and fortitude of the Iranian believers have been a major motivating force of the Seven Year Plan. Their suffering has evoked the sympathy of governments and those in authority, leading the Faith out of obscurity; and the example of their willing self-sacrifice has inspired the Bahá'ís all over the world to new service and dedication to the Faith. Oppression of the Faith has not been confined to Írán, however. The recrudescence of Islamic fundamentalism in many nations has led to increasingly explicit and virulent statements against the Faith, which threaten the safety of the believers in these lands. During the past seven years 4,053 Bahá'ís in ten nations have been imprisoned for their Faith (more than 100 outside of Írán). Bahá'í institutions have been banned in nine nations and Bahá'í properties confiscated in six. The status of the Bahá'í community in some of these countries and the efforts being made on their behalf are outlined below.

*Algeria*

The official decree of 1969 which banned the Bahá'í Faith is still in effect.

*Congo*

Unremitting endeavours have been, and are still being made to regain official recognition of the Faith. In response to applications made by several religious organizations, including the Bahá'í community, the Supreme Court is considering conferring general freedom of religion in the country. Once the decree is confirmed, the way will open for the Faith in the Congo. Its reinstatement in the very near future is earnestly hoped for.

*Egypt*

To the constraint of lack of recognition of their institutions over a period of many years was added, at the end of February 1985, a direct attack in the form of the arrest of 41 Bahá'ís from various parts of the country, charged with offences against laws introduced by the late President Nasser in 1960 banning activities of Bahá'í institutions in Egypt. All have been released while their case has gone to the courts. In recent months sinister developments have been noted as progressively more virulent attacks from Muslim fundamentalists appeared in the press, not only in Egypt, but throughout the Middle East. Twenty-five National Spiritual Assemblies have been instructed by the Universal House of Justice to bring this denial of human rights to the attention of their respective governments and to focus world-wide on the situation of the Bahá'ís in Egypt who have broken no law and are being persecuted solely on the basis of their religion. (See 'The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Egypt' elsewhere in this volume.)

*Indonesia*

The administrative institutions of the Faith were banned in 1962 by President Sukarno. A similar ban was imposed at the same time on many other internationally-affiliated organizations. When the new regime came to power, the ban on other organizations was rescinded but, despite many appeals to the authorities, the ban on the organized activities of the Bahá'í Faith remained in force.

In 1972 the Attorney-General confirmed the ban and added a further prohibition against organized Bahá'í teaching activities. In 1975, several Bahá'ís in various parts of the country were arrested, given light sentences and released. A few months later four believers were sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Each of them remained in prison for the full five years.

Meanwhile, the Bahá'ís understood that the prohibitions contained in the two above-noted decrees constituted a ban on the administrative activities of the Bahá'í Faith and on teaching activities organized by Bahá'í administrative institutions. Accordingly (and in conformity with the fundamental Bahá'í principle of obedience to government), all Bahá'í administrative institutions in Indonesia were disbanded by the Bahá'ís, and organized teaching likewise ceased.

However, these two rulings did not legally prevent the friends, as followers of the Bahá'í Faith, from practising its laws and precepts (such as the laws of prayer and fasting) in their personal lives, from replying to individual questions from friends and associates about the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, or from deepening in the teachings of the Faith and helping other Bahá'ís to do so. Therefore, small Bahá'í gatherings were held in various parts of the country to deepen the friends and to lift their spirits. Women's classes were held regularly.

In 1984, four Bahá'ís—one of whom had already spent five years in prison—were arrested and sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from one to five years on charges of (1) membership in a banned religious group, (2) teaching and spreading the teachings of the said group, and (3) insulting Islám and weakening its spiritual influence in the eyes of the general public.

In July 1985 it was reported that three youths in Mentawai were imprisoned for having married according to Bahá'í law. They were required to do hard labour and were not given sufficient food. When one of them, in the course of his interrogation, cited to the authorities the alleged freedom of religion in Indonesia, he was beaten.

As these false charges stem from misunderstanding or from the fanatical behaviour of local elements of the Government in western Java, various steps are being taken in an attempt to clarify to the Indonesian leaders the true attitude of Bahá'ís towards Islám, and to draw to their attention the fact that the first two charges are at variance with the provisions of the Constitution of Indonesia which grants freedom of individual religious belief.

*Írán*

The oppression of the Bahá'í community of Írán, subtle but ever-present during the pre-revolutionary period, escalated in the years since 1979 into a systematic and organized effort to destroy every trace of the Faith in the land of its birth. Through the desecration of Bahá'í Holy Places, through mob violence, through economic and legal intimidations that have disrupted the life of every single believer, and through the imprisonment and execution of prominent Bahá'ís, the revolutionary authorities in Írán have sought to demoralize the Bahá'í community and force its members to deny their Faith. Although a storm of international protest has caused the Iranian Government to try to conceal its persecution of Bahá'ís, and the number of believers being killed has been somewhat reduced since 1984, many of the seven hundred and sixty-three or more Bahá'ís who remain in prison are being subjected to brutal torture, and thousands more have been made homeless and deprived of any means of support.

Between August 1978 and April 1986 more than one hundred and eighty Bahá'ís have given their lives for the Bahá'í Faith. Of these, thirteen have died in prison, five have been assassinated, twenty have been killed by mobs, and the remainder have been executed for refusing to recant their belief. Fourteen others disappeared without a trace and are presumed dead.

In September 1979, the Holy House of the Báb, one of the two centres for pilgrimage ordained by Bahá'u'lláh, was demolished and its site has been obliterated by construction of a road and public square. Bahá'u'lláh's childhood home in Tákur was destroyed in December 1981, and the site offered for sale to the public. The National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds was made into a 'Free Muslim University', and the Bahá'í Hospital in Ṭihrán was expropriated. Bahá'í cemeteries have been desecrated, and the believers forced to bury their dead in barren land reserved for 'infidels'. All Bahá'í properties in Írán were confiscated soon after the revolution, and by the end of 1981 almost every property owned by the Bahá'í community had been desecrated or destroyed.

Mob violence directed against Bahá'í individuals, families, and even whole communities has occurred throughout Írán. Bahá'í children have been beaten by their fellow students; elderly men and women have been dragged from their homes, beaten and tortured because they would not deny their Lord. Thousands of believers have been driven from their homes, while their property has been stolen or destroyed. All the Bahá'ís in one village were herded into a stable into which smoke was funnelled until they were near death; hundreds of Bahá'ís of another village were held for days in a walled garden without food or water. On one day in December 1978, hundreds of Bahá'í homes near Shíráz were burned, all lootable property stolen, and the friends severely beaten.

Bahá'í literature has been confiscated and its production banned. It is a crime punishable by death to have in one's possession or in one's home 'any book, pamphlet, symbol or picture' of 'this hated underground movement', 'the misguided, Zionist, espionage group of Bahá'ís'. In such terms, as inflated as they are inaccurate, the Revolutionary Government describes the Bahá'í community and its activities.

The life savings of over 15,000 believers were lost when the Government expropriated the assets of the Nawnahálán Society, a banking institution which the friends had organized in the early 1900s and which had been encouraged by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The individual bank accounts of believers have also been confiscated.

The Iranian friends have never had the legal right to be Bahá'ís; the present Constitution is based on Islamic law and it recognizes and protects only the civil rights of Muslims and the followers of officially recognized minority religions. Since the Bahá'í Faith is not a legally recognized religion, Bahá'í marriages are considered invalid. Also, Bahá'ís are denied identity documents; they may not legally leave the country, and they may not sell property. Many Bahá'í pioneers to other countries have experienced difficulties because the Iranian embassies will no longer renew their passports.

Bahá'ís have been excluded from any form of Government employment; retired civil servants have lost their pensions, and some believers have been imprisoned because the Government demanded they return their salaries for many years of employment. Pressure has been put on private employers to fire their Bahá'í employees, and the trading licences of Bahá'ís have been cancelled. Bahá'í shops and businesses have been looted and burned, and the livestock and crops of Bahá'í farmers destroyed. These measures have left countless numbers of believers destitute, and have contributed to the steady flow of Bahá'í refugees to other countries.

The courage of Bahá'í children, who staunchly defended the Faith against the attacks and ridicule of their teachers and who calmly accepted their expulsion from schools as a consequence of their belief in Bahá'u'lláh, has inspired the friends around the world. Bahá'í students may no longer attend any Government school; Bahá'í graduates have been refused their diplomas or degrees, and have been denied the opportunity of taking their final examinations. The Bahá'í youth of Írán have responded to this deprivation by organizing themselves to teach each other, and by joyfully offering their services to the Bahá'í community.

Members of Bahá'í National and Local Spiritual Assemblies and other prominent believers have been especially singled out for persecution since the beginning of the revolution. Early in 1979, all the records of the National Spiritual Assembly, including a complete membership list of all the believers in Írán, were confiscated by the Government. All nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly were kidnapped on 21 August 1980, and it is assumed that they were killed. Another National Spiritual Assembly was elected, and eight of the nine dedicated servants were executed on 27 December 1981. Once again, a National Spiritual Assembly was elected and, with a courage reminiscent of the earliest days of the Faith took up their duties. Hundreds of Local Spiritual Assembly members have been imprisoned; most of the members of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Ṭihrán, of Yazd, of Hamadán, of Shíráz, and of many other towns and cities have been executed. Unable to destroy the institutions of the Cause through imprisoning or even killing the members, the Iranian authorities banned all Bahá'í administrative and community activities and made membership of a Bahá'í Assembly a criminal offence. In response, on 3 September 1983, the National Spiritual Assembly immediately informed the Attorney-General of its willingness to obey the law, and took the opportunity to refute all the false charges that had been made against the Bahá'ís. This bold and confident document has been widely circulated among non-Bahá'í Iranians now living abroad.

Bahá'í prisoners are being tortured in order to force them to confess publicly that they are spies and that the Faith is an espionage organization. Some believers have lost their sight, hearing, or sanity as a result of torture. Since February 1984, nine believers have died in prison; and the prison authorities have not allowed their families to see the bodies, an indication that they were probably tortured to death.

The authorities cannot conceal the suffering of these devoted souls. Each midnight execu-

tion, each secret burial, has been publicized by Bahá'í communities on every continent and has become the object of world-wide condemnation. The Universal House of Justice has co-ordinated the defence of the Bahá'ís in Írán by directing National Spiritual Assemblies and the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations to appeal to the Iranian Government directly and, subsequently, to appeal to other governments and international bodies and to public opinion through the media to condemn the persecutions. On 208 occasions during the past seven years the Universal House of Justice has sent circular letters or cables to all National Spiritual Assemblies asking them to take specific actions in response to the persecutions.

Unprecedented publicity for the Faith has resulted from the heroic steadfastness of the Iranian Bahá'ís and the efforts of the Bahá'í International Community and national and local Bahá'í communities to mobilize world opinion on their behalf.

The United Nations General Assembly, the European Parliament, world leaders and national governments have called on Írán to treat its Bahá'í population with fairness. Great prestige has been won for the Faith as many of those in authority on every continent became familiar with the nature of the cause and expressed their sympathy for the suffering of the Bahá'ís. On the following pages will be found a partial list of the resolutions passed and other actions taken. The numerous expressions of support, coming from every corner of the globe, continuously as the persecution persists, bear witness to the undeniable power of the pure-hearted self-sacrifice of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in His native land, Írán.

The following list does not represent an exhaustive report of actions taken on an international scale on behalf of the oppressed Bahá'ís of Írán, as these are too numerous to detail, but it reflects in some measure the world-wide support and sympathy of those in authority and people of prominence for the plight of the Iranian Bahá'ís, as well as the dedicated efforts of the Bahá'í world community, to draw the persecutions to public attention. The activities of the Bahá'í International Community on behalf of the Bahá'ís of Írán are reported elsewhere in this volume under 'The Bahá'í Faith and the United Nations'.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

I. 1. THE UNITED NATIONS

a. The United Nations General Assembly
   1) Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, 25 November 1981
   2) Resolution on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance, 18 December 1982

b. United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 11 March 1982 and 8 March 1983

c. The United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, 10 September 1980, 9 September 1981, 8 September 1982, 5 September 1983 and 29 August 1985. A resolution was also passed on the topic of Religious Intolerance on 10 September 1982

d. World Federation of United Nations Associations, October 1983

e. United Nations Commission on Human Rights, March 1984—representative to go to Írán

f. United Nations Commission on Human Rights called for report on human rights situation in Írán, including Bahá'ís, 14 March 1985

g. United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted resolution 29 August 1985

h. United Nations General Assembly for first time adopted resolution regarding situation in Írán including reference to Bahá'ís, 13 December 1985

i. United Nations Commission on Human Rights appointing new special representative to replace Andres Aguilar, to report on human rights situation in Írán, March 1986

2. REGIONAL BODIES

a. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
   1) Declarations tabled by members, 29 September 1980 and 14 May 1981
   2) Resolution adopted 29 January 1982

b. European Parliament, 19 September 1980, 10 April 1981 and 10 March 1983

c. World Association of World Federalists, July 1985

# The Legislature of the State of New Mexico

THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION - 1984

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1

INTRODUCED BY
REPRESENTATIVE NICK L. SALAZAR
AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

A JOINT MEMORIAL
EXPRESSING CONDEMNATION OF IRAN'S BRUTAL PERSECUTION OF MEMBERS OF THE BAHA'I FAITH

WHEREAS, the persecution of Members of the Baha'i Faith and the destruction of Baha'i holy places in Iran has outraged the people of New Mexico, the United States and the world; and

WHEREAS, the government of Iran has outlawed all Baha'i Institutions in that country and declared membership in Baha'i administrative bodies a criminal act; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Baha'i Faith, an independent, peaceful and law-abiding religious community, have been persecuted, tortured, imprisoned and executed by the Iranian government for no reason other than their religious beliefs; and

WHEREAS, such genocidal actions violate basic human rights and outrage common decency and civilized people everywhere; and

WHEREAS, condemnations of Iran's mistreatment of the Baha'i Community have been voiced by the President of the United States, the United States Congress, many of these United States and the United Nations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the State of New Mexico, assembled in the seventy-second year of Statehood, express their shock and revulsion at this brutal repression and persecution of this religious minority by the current government of Iran and join the states, nations and peoples of the world in condemning such actions and policies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Memorial be transmitted to the Congress of the United States, the President of the United States, the New Mexico Congressional Delegation, the Secretary-General of the United Nations General Assembly and to the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Incorporated, as representatives of the Baha'i Community.

Signed and Sealed at The Capitol,
in the City of Santa Fe.

REPRESENTATIVE RAYMOND G. SANCHEZ, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STEPHEN R. ARIAS, CHIEF CLERK
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE NICK L. SALAZAR
RIO ARRIBA, SANTA FE & SAN MIGUEL COUNTIES

*Facsimile of a document protesting the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.*

3. NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS
   a. Australia
      1) Senate, February 1981, August 1983
      2) House of Representatives, August 1981
   b. Canada, House of Commons, July 1980 and July 1981
   c. Fiji, Senate, March 1982
   d. Federal Republic of Germany, May 1981
   e. Northern Mariana Islands Legislature, March 1984
   f. Spain, Human Rights Commission of the Senate, March 1982
   g. United States
      1) Senate, September 1982 (published June 1983), November 1983
      2) House of Representatives, September 1982, November 1983
      3) State Senates
         a) Alaska, April 1979
         b) California, August 1982
         c) Hawaii, April 1982
         d) South Dakota, March 1983
         e) Washington, May 1983
         f) Massachusetts, July 1983 (published Congressional Record US Senate)
         g) Maryland, February 1984 Joint Resolution
         h) Colorado, April 1984 Joint Resolution
      4) State Houses of Representatives
         a) Illinois, March 1979
         b) South Dakota, March 1983
         c) Washington, May 1983
         d) Alabama, June 1983
         e) New Jersey, July 1983
         f) Maine, September 1983
         g) New Mexico, February 1984
         h) Minnesota, May 1984
   h. Virgin Islands, June 1983

4. JOINT REPRESENTATIONS
   a. To the Iranian Government In Ṭihrán
      1) On 31 January 1982 by 15 governments—Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom
      2) In July 1982 by 16 governments—all those above, plus Finland
      3) On 27 December 1981 by 15 governments (as in 1 above)
      4) European Economic Community, July 1983, on behalf of the ten member countries plus Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, New Zealand and Australia
      5) Ten member countries of European Economic Community, October 1984
   b. To the United Nations Secretary-General by Ambassadors of the European Economic Community countries in New York, 12 February and 17 July 1982
   c. To the Islamic Conference and the United Nations by European Parliament, July 1983

II. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING IN THE UNITED STATES, MAY 1982

III. 1. ACTIONS TAKEN IN LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS AND PUBLISHED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS
   a. Australia, Senate and House of Representatives, March 1982; Senate, November 1982
   b. Brazil, Senate, April 1982
   c. Canada, House of Commons, November 1979
   d. Federal Republic of Germany, 3 questions to Federal Government, September 1982
   e. Italy, 2 questions to Minister of Foreign Affairs, February/March 1982; motion to Parliament, March 1982, question to Senate, May 1982
   f. Netherlands, statement made by Minister for Foreign Affairs, September 1982
   g. Norway—statement made by Foreign Minister, May 1982
   h. United Kingdom, House of Commons, June 1981, March 1983, June 1983; House of Lords, February 1982
   i. United States, House of Representatives, October 1979, July and September 1981, March 1982, March 1983; Senate, February 1982 and June 1984; Statements in Senate and House of Representatives, 1984; Congressional Record, June 1984 contains extraordinary array of speeches

2. STATEMENTS, APPEALS, ENQUIRIES, LETTERS OF SUPPORT, ETC.

*1979*

1) Swiss Parliamentarians
2) Governor of the Hawaiian Islands
3) Numerous Senators and Congressmen of the United States
4) Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
5) All three Parliamentary parties of Luxembourg
6) Bureau of Human Rights, Trinidad and Tobago

*1980*

1) Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India
2) Government of Western Samoa
3) Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
4) Nine political factions of the Dutch Parliament
5) Minister of Cultural Affairs, Luxembourg
6) Minister of Foreign Affairs, Australia

*1981*

1) Statements made at the 37th session of the Human Rights Commission in Geneva by delegations from Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom
2) King of the Belgians
3) President of France
4) Foreign Ministers of Australia, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Netherlands
5) Under-Secretary of State, Italy
6) Minister of Justice, Costa Rica
7) Minister of Missions and Religious Organizations, Central African Republic
8) Statements made in Third Committee of the 36th session of the United Nations General Assembly by representatives of Australia, Fiji, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom (on behalf of the member states of the European Economic Community), and the United States
9) Various Ministers of Liberia

*1982*

1) Presidents of France and Kiribati
2) Prime Ministers of Belize, France, Western Samoa, and New Zealand
3) Office of President and Vice-President, The Gambia
4) Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Australia, Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Panama
5) Deputy Prime Minister of Swaziland
6) Governor-General of Jamaica
7) Minister of State, the United Kingdom
8) Secretary of State, San Marino
9) Government of Finland
10) Government officials of Mexico
11) Legislators in Luxembourg, the United States, and the Virgin Islands
12) Eleven Parliamentarians of Finland
13) Office of Special Affairs, Chile
14) Minister of Education, Australia
15) A leading jurist in India
16) Commission for Foreign Affairs of France
17) Tallahassee, Florida, Ministerial Association, Resolution, the United States
18) Committee on Church and International Affairs, United Church of Canada
19) Amnesty International
20) President of National Council of Churches, the United States

*1983*

1) Assistant Secretary of State, the United States, to the Congressional Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations
2) Government of Finland to Iranian Representative in Helsinki
3) Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Canada, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden
4) House of Lords, the United Kingdom
5) Presidents of the United States and Austria
6) Mayor of the City of New York, the United States
7) Minister of the Interior, Luxembourg
8) Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations
9) Mayor of the City of Londonderry, Northern Ireland
10) Apostolic Delegate in the United States assures that Pope John Paul is aware of the persecution and that every effort is being made by the Holy See to bring about its termination

11) Resolution, World Congress of Social Psychiatry, Japan
12) Department of Immigration, Panama
13) Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, the United States
14) Inter-Faith Ministries, Wichita, Kansas, the United States, 'week of prayer'
15) Governor and officials of Colorado, the United States
16) American Bar Association publication
17) Statements at 38th General Assembly of the United Nations by Australia, Canada, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, the United States
18) Publication of appeal by prominent people, the Federal Republic of Germany

***1984***

1) Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Italy
2) Minister for Home Affairs, Solomon Islands
3) Senators in the Virgin Islands
4) Notice of Motion, House of Representatives, Australia
5) Foreign Office of Italy
6) Secretary to the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands
7) Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Australia, France, Republic of Ireland, Luxembourg, New Zealand
8) Chief Rabbi, Republic of Ireland
9) Greater Yarmouth Ecumenical Council in Maine, the United States
10) Congressional Hearing in the United States
11) Deputy in Federal Chamber of Deputies, Brazil
12) Central Conference of American Rabbis
13) Petition signed by 70 members of the Japanese Diet
14) Chancellor and three members of Parliament, the Federal Republic of Germany
15) Professor of Ecumenical Theology in the Federal Republic of Germany
16) Report in *Hansard*, the United Kingdom
17) President of the United States at Human Rights Day ceremony

***1985***

1) Parliamentary Question in Austria
2) Visit by the former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and his party to the Shrine of the Báb
3) Letter sent by a physician with signatures of other physicians to the Secretary-General of the United Nations
4) Letter from 47 Senators, 80 Congressmen, to UNHRC, the United States
5) Resolutions passed in Arkansas House and Senate condemning persecutions, the United States
6) Unanimous support in Senate, Australia, published in 5 pages *Hansard*
7) Appeal signed by leaders all political parties and others, Norway
8) International Conference on Religious Liberty, President of the United States and the Secretary of State
9) Prime Minister of Western Samoa
10) Mrs. Simone Veil, Speaker of the Parliament of France, stating that the Sub-Commission of European Parliament on Human Rights was to hold a public hearing on human rights in Írán
11) Fifty-minute documentary, 'The Quiet Revolution', created in the United Kingdom by non-Bahá'í producers
12) Bahá'í delegation before European Parliament Hearing in Belgium
13) United Nations, Ambassadors of the United States, Fiji, representatives of Australia, Luxembourg (for ten member countries European Community) and Canada
14) The United States President Reagan's speech at Human Rights Event features persecutions; President signs proclamation in which Bahá'ís are mentioned

***1986 (to 21 April, Riḍván 143 Bahá'í Era)***

1) United States, statements Congressional record, May, June, July and October
2) 1986 United Kingdom, discussion in House of Lords
3) Announcement by State Department USA of recent killing and calling for a 'world outcry'
4) Official document of the German Federal Parliament, the 'Bundestag' presented motion on general issues of war between Írán and 'Iráq, referring also to Bahá'í persecution

5) West German Chancellor Dr. Helmut Kohl states publicly that persecuted Bahá'ís will receive asylum in Germany

Other reports on the persecution of the Bahá'í community of Írán in the period under review appear elsewhere in this volume. (See 'The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán' and 'Activities of the Bahá'í International Community Relating to the Persecution of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán'.)

*Kampuchea (Cambodia)*

Bahá'í activities have been suspended and there is no contact with the friends in Kampuchea. Refugees from that country are, however, being approached by the Bahá'ís in Thailand and other countries and are given Bahá'í literature in Khmer. Bahá'í activities among the Khmer people in refugee camps in Thailand are described hereafter.

*Laos*

Following a period of six years during which no elections for Bahá'í administrative institutions could be held and the Spiritual Assembly of the Laos People's Democratic Republic simply remained in existence, an election was held in 1982, and efforts have been made since that time to recover lost Local Spiritual Assemblies and re-activate the believers. The first formal meeting held at the Bahá'í centre built on the Temple site took place in January 1982 and was attended by local officials who were very receptive to the Cause.

A number of National Spiritual Assemblies have set up programmes to contact Laotian Bahá'í refugees and to assist them in their re-absorption into the community.

Laos has meritoriously recovered 27 of the original 107 Local Spiritual Assemblies listed in 1975, accomplished despite the political chaos. Considering restrictions on local travel and inter-state movements, difficulties of communication, and the disenchantment of the Government with religions, this accomplishment speaks well for the zeal and enthusiasm of the friends. Many more localities have been identified where there are some Bahá'ís, but due to difficulties of travel and communication it will take time before they can begin again. Much attention is given by the Laotian parents to the education of their children, and children's classes, particularly in Vientiane, are very popular. A new local Bahá'í centre was constructed in Ban Viengkham Tai through contributions of the friends in that country. Since Laos is very poor, this type of achievement is particularly praiseworthy. In addition, the community has decided to become self-supporting. The National Centre in Vientiane, purchased in January 1969, is very well maintained and its gates are open to welcome everyone.

The Laotian Government has officially proclaimed that in Laos three religions may conduct activities: Buddhism, Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith. This continuing good relationship with the Government may be attributable to the policy of the Bahá'í community of informing the Government in advance of any activities they plan to undertake.

As to social and economic development, the community in Sinkhana has started a livestock development project, and in Ban Viengkham Tai, under the sponsorship of the Local Spiritual Assembly, an agricultural project has been undertaken.

*Libya*

The Bahá'í Faith continues to be banned in this country.

*Mauritania*

This National Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1978 and functioned until March 1983 when five Mauritanian and two pioneer believers were arrested, interrogated and held briefly in prison. Since that time no elections have been held, and the National Spiritual Assembly had to be dissolved.

*Morocco*

In April 1983 the Government prohibited all Bahá'í meetings, and in December of that year members of the community were arrested in Mohammadieh and Casablanca; one believer in Tetuan was taken later into custody in June 1984. The believers in Mohammadieh were convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment but were subsequently released. An appeal has been lodged against the verdict, the outcome of which is awaited. In the Tetuan case, a prison sentence of three years resulted and an appeal to the Supreme Court was unsuccessful. The believers involved have demonstrated exemplary fortitude and steadfastness and have been courageously supported by their fellow Bahá'ís.

*Tunisia*

Although it was known that recognition of the Faith was unlikely, nevertheless the Bahá'ís for some years were free to practise their religion quietly. However, in October 1984 the activities of the Faith were curtailed and some members of the community were interrogated. No arrests have been made.

*Vietnam*

The Bahá'ís in Vietnam have been forbidden by the Government to meet and to practise their religion since 1978. All Bahá'í centres throughout the country have been either closed or confiscated by the authorities. When the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Ho Chi Minh City was seized, two members of the National Spiritual Assembly who were there at the time were summarily arrested and sent to 're-education' camps. One of them was released early in 1982 because of ill health, but the other is still in detention and all efforts to secure his release have so far been unsuccessful. A Bahá'í from Switzerland visited the friends in Vietnam and found them to be steadfast and strong in the Faith. Appeals have been made by the Bahá'í International Community, a number of governments and independent agencies to free the Bahá'í prisoners and to grant members of the Bahá'í community the religious freedom guaranteed in the Constitution of Vietnam.

Three of the friends in Vietnam recently approached the authorities requesting permission for the Bahá'ís to meet together for prayers and other spiritual gatherings and have asked for the return of their National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds for this purpose. It is not known whether there has been a response to their application. Recent information has been received that in order to pass the university examinations it is necessary to belong to the 'Youth Movement', membership in which is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Bahá'í youth. It has also been pointed out that the Bahá'í who was released is still, after four years, under the supervision of the local authorities, has not been given back his citizenship and faces many hardships. The friends in Vietnam are very hard-pressed and face economic difficulties.

A number of Bahá'í communities have undertaken projects to contact Vietnamese refugees residing in their countries to distribute literature to them and to meet with them for teaching and deepening purposes. Parcels of medicines, clothes, and other necessities are sent regularly to the Bahá'ís in Vietnam by individual Bahá'ís. The National Spiritual Assemblies of Australia, Denmark, France, Norway, and Sweden have been called upon by the Universal House of Justice to participate in this programme.

**International Bahá'í Refugee Office (IBRO)**

The International Bahá'í Refugee Office, established in November 1984 by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada at the request of the Universal House of Justice, is responsible for co-ordinating the efforts to resettle Iranian Bahá'í refugees. The resettlement process, which involves obtaining a general agreement with the government of each receiving country to accept Bahá'í refugees, finding sponsors (relatives and/or Bahá'í Assemblies) for each individual or family, and which requires consultations on each specific case, has called for high-level collaboration with government officials and international organizations. The immigration authorities of many countries have been sympathetic to the plight of the Bahá'ís and supportive in offering them new homes. The field officers of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees have been among the greatest advocates for the Bahá'í refugees, sparing no effort to assist them in whatever way they can. The Bahá'í International Community in Geneva acts as the liaison for the International Bahá'í Refugee Office with the head office of United Nations high Commission for Refugees in Geneva.

Thousands of Iranian believers have been forced to seek refuge in other countries because of the persecutions by the Iranian Government. In addition to those who have fled from Írán, almost all Iranian believers who had arisen to pioneer were, to all intents and purposes, made stateless when the Government refused to renew their passports, and many were deprived of any form of support when the student subsidies and old-age pensions of Bahá'ís were terminated. In 1981, the first requests for help were made by Iranian Bahá'í students in the Philippines, whose funds from home were cut off, who could not work in the Philippines, and were in danger of being deported. Requests for assistance from Iranian Bahá'ís stranded in India occurred in 1981. In the latter part of

*Hmong Bahá'í women from Laos in the Banuini Refugee Camp in Thailand circa 1985.*

*Iranian Bahá'í refugees in Pakistan circa 1985.*

1981 a new development emerged: Bahá'ís began trickling across the borders of Írán into Pakistan and Turkey, fleeing from the increasing persecutions in Írán. This trickle has increased to a steady flow. At the time of this report, there are approximately 1,500 Iranian Bahá'í refugees in Pakistan and another 70 in Turkey awaiting resettlement. Approximately 30 to 40 refugees weekly are entering Pakistan from Írán.

Thirty-eight National Spiritual Assemblies have been involved in the settlement of these believers. In Turkey and Pakistan, refugees are received and introduced to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees; Italy, Austria and Spain serve as transit centres for refugees trying to enter the United States; and 30 countries have received refugees. Five other national communities are in the process of receiving refugees. According to information provided by the International Bahá'í Refugee Office, Bahá'í agencies have helped some 3,500 Iranian refugees settle in other countries during the Seven Year Plan and are currently working on the resettlement of an additional 1,500 refugees.

Canada was the first Bahá'í community to respond to the plight of the Iranian refugees, and its very successful programme of settling them in over 200 small communities throughout the country has served as a model for other nations. The materials developed by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada to assist its communities in preparing for the refugees have also been utilized by other National Spiritual Assemblies. The Bahá'í resettlement programme in Canada is so highly esteemed by the Government that Canadian Immigration Officers located in other countries have been willing to recommend the acceptance of Bahá'í refugees by those nations.

In 1980, representatives of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly approached officials in Canada's Department of Employment and Immigration; and an agreement was signed which authorized the National Spiritual Assembly to act as a national agency able to sponsor refugees for resettlement in Canada. From 1981 to the present time, the following number of Iranian Bahá'í refugees from the following countries have been accepted into Canada: 215 Bahá'ís from the Philippines, 366 from India, 122 from Spain, 100 from Turkey, 83 from Nigeria, 441 from Pakistan, and 338 from other countries. In total, over 2,100 Bahá'í refugees have been settled in Canada to date.

With the realization that the flow of refugees from Írán was continuing, representatives of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly began making attempts in 1983 to open other countries for the settlement of Bahá'í refugees. Through contact with the Embassies in Pakistan of both the United Kingdom and Australia, the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly representative was able to present the situation of the Bahá'í refugees and gain acceptance for the first few cases to those countries. The same démarche, supplemented by efforts of the National Spiritual Assembly of Austria, was used to open Austria as a processing country for the United States. In April 1983, a representative of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly travelled to Spain and, with the assistance of an international agency there, opened Spain as a processing country for the United States in March 1984. Thirty-seven refugees were accepted into Italy in transit to the United States.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Australia has also been extremely successful in settling Bahá'í refugees. Iranian believers have been placed in goal areas, and a booklet on Persian/Australian cultural issues has been published to assist in their integration into the community. Since the acceptance of the first Bahá'í refugees in 1983, the Australian Government has accepted hundreds of Bahá'ís, totalling 850 to date. The Australian Government will accept refugees who have no relatives in Australia, as long as they do not have relatives in other countries outside Írán.

The first Bahá'í refugees were accepted into the United Kingdom in 1983 and since that time, under a system of dual sponsorship by a relative and the National Assembly, 176 refugees have been settled in the United Kingdom. The Government will accept for settlement only Bahá'ís who have close relatives residing in that country.

A large number of Bahá'í refugees, estimated to be several thousand, have entered the United States, sponsored by relatives or by the Government. At present, no exact figures are available, as the refugees often do not contact the Bahá'í Persian/American Affairs Committee of the United States. Since there is no Immigration and Naturalization Service office in Pakistan to

*Iranian Bahá'ís outside of the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Dublin, Ireland, upon their arrival from refugee camps in Pakistan; 3 December 1985.*

process refugees to the United States, refugees there wishing to enter the United States must travel to processing centres in Austria, Spain or Italy. The National Spiritual Assembly of the United States has made several approaches to its Government, acquainting them with the situation of Bahá'í refugees and requesting both that a larger quota of the total number of refugees be allotted for Bahá'ís, and that the acceptance of refugees be expedited so that the time spent in the processing countries can be lessened. As a result of the United States Government's refugee policy, the National Spiritual Assembly unfortunately has no control over where the refugees are sent to settle within the United States; but efforts have been made to encourage refugees to homefront pioneer to goal areas. Videotaped deepenings and a slide programme have been prepared to foster intercultural understanding among Persians and Americans.

The Universal House of Justice has stated that it would like the Iranian Bahá'í refugees to settle in various countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as Europe and North America. The co-ordinator of the International Bahá'í Refugee Office, Mrs. Mona Mojgani (Muná Muzhgání), has travelled to 22 countries in Europe and Latin America and met with more than 10 government ministers and officials in order to secure acceptance for Bahá'í refugees in these places. These officials often include high-ranking officers of the Immigration Control Department, senior officers of the Foreign Affairs Division, members of the Department of Justice, chief representatives of the UNHCR, directors of the Red Cross, principal officers of the Ministry of the Interior, Ministers of External Affairs, and officials of the Ministry of Labour, to name a few.

As a result of these efforts, 79 Iranian believers have been settled in Europe, and agreements have been obtained for the settlement of at least 370 in Central and South America. Several National Spiritual Assemblies stated that without the assistance of the refugees the Seven Year Plan goals would not have been won. In each of the countries visited, the National Spiritual Assembly worked closely with the co-ordinator of the International Bahá'í Refugee Office, meeting to discuss the implications of the settlement of refugees in their country, and sending liaison members with the co-ordinator to meet with government officials. The National Spiritual Assemblies responded with dedication to the opportunities presented by the plight of the Iranian Bahá'í refugees. They made plans to settle the friends in their countries, often arranged for accommodation, and encouraged their local communities to envelop with loving kindness these homeless believers who have suffered such loss.

# 6. COLLATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE SACRED TEXTS

THE collation and classification of the steadily growing collections of the Sacred Texts and the writings of the Guardian held at the Bahá'í World Centre continued throughout the Seven Year Plan.

To foster the growth of the believers' understanding of the fundamentals of the Faith, to enrich their spiritual lives, and to support their efforts in teaching the Cause of God, the Universal House of Justice instructed the Research Department to prepare a series of compilations gleaned from the Writings of the Faith, which were then circulated to National Spiritual Assemblies:

October 1979—A set of three compilations from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá to serve as samples for translation into other languages
January 1980—*Extracts from the Bahá'í Writings Discouraging Divorce*
March 1980—*The Importance of Prayer, Meditation and the Devotional Attitude*
October 1980—*Attendance of the Members of a Spiritual Assembly at its Meetings*
August 1981—*The Power of Divine Assistance*
November 1981—*Excellence in All Things*
January 1982—*Family Life*
January 1983—*The Importance of Deepening Our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith*
September 1984—*Muntakhabátí az Makátíb-i-Ḥaḍrat-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá* [a compilation from the Persian Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá]
July 1985—*Ḥuqúqu'lláh*
August 1985—*Peace*
November 1985—*Care in Handling Bahá'í Funds*
January 1986—*Women*

These 13 major compilations were supplemented by scores of smaller compilations on specific subjects prepared at the direction of the Universal House of Justice in response to the developing needs of the Bahá'í community.

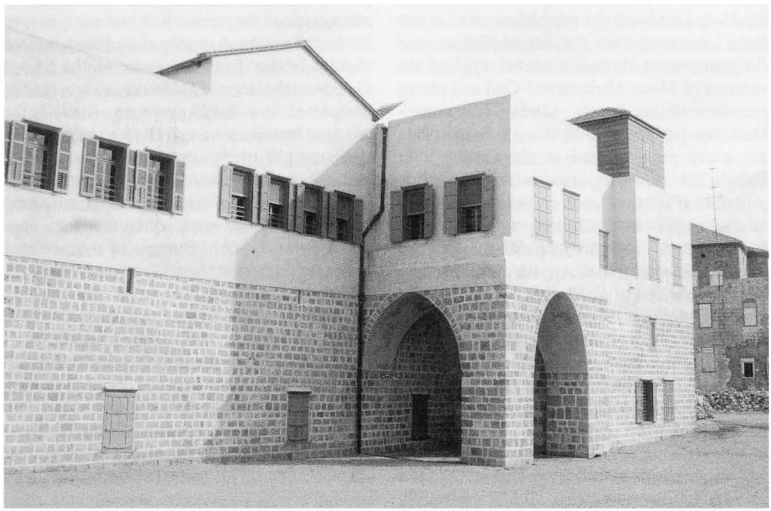
A volume, entitled *Bahíyyih Kh<u>á</u>num, the Greatest Holy Leaf*, containing the letters to the Greatest Holy Leaf and statements about her by Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi as well as her own letters, was published in 1982 to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of her passing. Mrs. Marzieh Gail, and a committee at the World Centre, were responsible for the new translations included in this publication.

The Archives Office at the World Centre cares for the collections of sacred and historical documents and relics, arranges the collections and creates aids to improve access to the records. The history of the Archives has been one of continuing to improve the conditions under which the materials are kept and to make advances in cataloguing and indexing methods. A particularly marked evolution has occurred during the period covered by the Seven Year Plan. The conditions under which both the Sacred Texts and other documents of the Central Figures and the Guardian are kept have been considerably improved, as have those of all other papers in the Archives.

A long-term programme to create a computer database containing the Sacred Writings and letters of the Guardian was inaugurated during the closing years of the Seven Year Plan. In its initial stages, data regarding the English correspondence of the Guardian was entered into the computer and made available for research purposes. Later stages, which will take place over a period of years, will foreseeably include the entry of the full text of the English letters of the Guardian into the database and its gradual development to include the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This programme is supplemented by a project to create a computer database containing the Bahá'í Writings published in English, which will be continually developed and enlarged.

A computer count of the collection of letters written by or on behalf of the Guardian showed that 11,480 letters are currently held, of the estimated 22,500 letters to which the Guardian is known to have replied. As a result of this discovery, in August 1984, the Universal House of Justice made a fresh appeal for National Spiritual Assemblies and individuals to notify the World Centre of any such letters in their files, thus enabling the Archives office to trace those items still required to complete the collection. Three hundred and twenty letters written by or on behalf of Shoghi Effendi have been received in response to this appeal.

# 7. RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE OF HOLY PLACES



*Exterior of the restored south wing of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásh<u>á</u>; 1986.*

**A. Restoration of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásh<u>á</u>**

Plans for the restoration of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásh<u>á</u> have been painstakingly prepared on the basis of historical photographs and documented recollections, including those of Mrs. Zeenat (Zinat) Bagh<u>d</u>ádí who was closely associated with the household in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This has been necessary because in the years intervening between 'Abdu'l-Bahá's occupation of the House and its return to the possession of the Faith, major alterations had been made in the buildings, dividing the upper floor into small apartments and using the ground floor as a fire station; and many parts had become seriously dilapidated.

The roofs and ceilings were replaced: 120 cubic metres of Katrina wood were specially imported from Turkey to construct beams, ceilings and much interior woodwork in accordance with the former patterns. The plaster-work and most of the facing stones of the walls had to be replaced with a local type of sandstone purchased from demolished buildings which was then cut and fitted on the site.

After much searching, furniture of the correct period was collected from many places, and the interior was refurbished under the direction of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih <u>Kh</u>ánum to re-establish the character and atmosphere of the building as it was in the time of the Master.

In a wing of the building which had not been occupied by the Holy Family accommodation for the custodians was constructed, as well as a large reception room for pilgrims.

The restoration of the upper floor of the south wing, that part of the complex where the Holy Family dwelt, was completed in 1983 in time for the delegates to the International Convention to visit.

Since then, a clinic, which had continued to occupy the north wing following the purchase of the property by the Faith, was moved out and plans have now been prepared by Mr. Saeed Samadi (Sa'íd Ṣamadí) for the restoration of this wing, comprised of a large room used for gatherings of the community in the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and a small room used by Shoghi Effendi. The work of restoration is now in process. A small house adjoining the property has also been acquired to protect the site.

**B. Bahá'í Cemetery at Ein Gev**

An important supplemental achievement in the Holy Land was the establishment of a new Bahá'í cemetery near the Sea of Galilee, and the reinterment there in October 1985 of the remains of Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí and eleven members of his family. Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí, the faithful half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, for many years farmed in the Galilee after Bahá'u'lláh and His companions were permitted to leave the prison in 'Akká, and when he died in 1910 he was buried on his land. The farm property, including the family cemetery which was situated along the south-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, in a sensitive area near the border of the new nation, was donated to the Faith by the heirs of Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí. Shoghi Effendi was able to exchange this farmland for vitally needed property surrounding the Most Holy Shrine and the Mansion of Bahjí.

Negotiations with the authorities regarding the re-establishment of the cemetery began in 1972 when it was learned that it would not be possible to restore and maintain the cemetery at its original site, which had become a part of Kibbutz Ein Gev. A nearby plot of land, located slightly farther from the shore of the Sea of Galilee on the slope of Tel Susita, was eventually designated as a Bahá'í cemetery. In 1985, the plot was fenced, stone walls built at each corner, two wrought iron gates erected, gravel paths laid out, and trees and shrubs planted.

On 18 October 1985, the remains of Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí were ceremoniously conveyed from the old cemetery to the new one and were reinterred there in the presence of the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, members of the Universal House of Justice and of the International Teaching Centre. Representatives of the Israel authorities and of Kibbutz Ein Gev, a large number of Bahá'í World Centre staff, and some of the descendants of this illustrious companion of Bahá'u'lláh were also present on that befitting and dignified occasion.

*Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum speaking during the reinterment of the remains of Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí in the new Bahá'í cemetery at Ein Gev near the Sea of Galilee in October 1985.*

**C. Extension of the Gardens**

The gardens that grace and enhance the Holy Places at the World Centre have been extended and improved during the Seven Year Plan. New land has been acquired, new gardens established, and extensive work has been carried out to renovate existing gardens.

A total of 66,265 square metres of land has been acquired during the Plan: 13,150 square metres bordering the driveway from the western gate at Bahjí, 50,000 square metres adjacent to and northeast of the Mazra'ih property, and 3,135 square metres at Ein Gev.

During the Seven Year Plan, the south-west quadrant of the gardens surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh was completed, and two new gardens were planted in the neighbourhood of the Collins gate. New gardens were established surrounding the driveway from the western gate and the parking lot at Bahjí. Thousands of plants have been used to create the 5,000 square metres of new gardens which surround the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The five terraces that form a retaining wall behind the building have become a brilliant tapestry of colours.

At Bahjí, seedlings of the great pine trees have been planted in order to ensure the continued existence of this grove which provided shade for the Blessed Beauty. Fruit orchards similar to the ones that existed in the time of Bahá'u'lláh are being planted at Mazra'ih and in the Riḍván gardens.

Replacement of the cypress trees surrounding the Shrine of the Báb and in the Monument Gardens, has been undertaken, as well as extensive pruning and replanting. The Monument Gardens have also been repaired and new wiring for garden lights installed. The appearance of the garden on Hagefen Street in the city of Haifa where Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent has been enhanced, and many new ornamental plants and more lawn areas have been added to the Bahá'í cemetery in Haifa.

The work of preserving and maintaining the Bahá'í gardens at the World Centre has been strengthened both through the services of professional gardeners who are Bahá'ís, and those who serve as garden apprentices. A plant production facility, begun in 1983, now provides almost all plants and trees needed for the gardens. Plans for a comprehensive irrigation project and professional pest control are now under way.

# 8. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

DURING the past seven years the Bahá'í World Centre has grown in size and complexity in order to meet the challenges of a greater volume and diversity of work. Four agencies of the Universal House of Justice have been established: the Office of Social and Economic Development at the World Centre; the Office of Public Information, based in Haifa with an office in New York; *Comunicación Intercambio y Radiodifusión Bahá'í para America Latina y el Caribe* (CIRBAL), with its head office in Maracaibo, Venezuela; and the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre (IBAVC), based in Toronto, Canada.

**A. Pilgrimage**

The programme of pilgrimage has been expanded during the Seven Year Plan to include a visit to the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásha and the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. Until Naw-Rúz 1984, pilgrims numbered 80 in each group. Since that time the number has been increased to 100. Twenty groups of pilgrims visit the Holy Land each year during the pilgrimage season which lasts from late October through July of the following year. During the Plan 9,440 Bahá'ís visited the Holy Land as pilgrims, and 4,244 as short-term visitors.

**B. Bahá'í World Centre Library**

The Bahá'í World Centre Library comprises the major collection of materials that will become the International Bahá'í Library, in addition to several branch collections in other World Centre institutions and departments. The Library collects all printed and audio-visual materials on the Bahá'í Faith or which include significant reference to it; background material

on Írán, Islám and comparative religions; and general reference works. The materials include: books, pamphlets, journal articles in the original or photocopy, periodicals and newsletters, annual reports and directories, programmes, maps, posters and broadsides, newspaper clippings, cassette and reel tapes, sound discs, videocassettes, motion pictures, slide series and programmes, and filmstrips. National Spiritual Assemblies, their committees, and Bahá'í Publishing Trusts are requested by the Universal House of Justice to deposit such materials produced by them with the Bahá'í World Centre Library in specified quantities. The Library has compiled a number of lists of materials it still needs, including published Bahá'í materials which have not been received at the World Centre and publications on other subjects which contain references to the Faith.

The Bahá'í World Centre library has actively pursued the establishment of contacts with other libraries and cultural institutions throughout the world and has established gift and exchange activities with a number of them.

The holdings of the Bahá'í World Centre Library grew dramatically during the Seven Year Plan, increasing from 5,550 titles in 1979, to 22,427 in 1986; from 21,393 volumes in 1979, to 64,778 in 1986. The number of languages in which Bahá'í literature is available grew from 280 in 1979 to 520 in 1986.

### C. Office of Social and Economic Development

The Office of Social and Economic Development, established in July 1983, has been given the task of assisting the Universal House of Justice in the promotion and co-ordination of various activities in the Bahá'í world intended to uplift the social and economic life of peoples. While a few Bahá'í communities have been undertaking humanitarian and community-oriented development activities since the early days of the Faith, it is only now that the overall growth and development of the Local and National Assemblies has reached a level where economic development can be generally encouraged and become an integral and a regular part of community life.

The basic principles underlying Bahá'í social and economic development differ considerably from those of many international humanitarian agencies. The pace at which such activities proceed depends primarily on the degree to which they are needed and wanted at the grassroots level, as well as on a judicious utilization of available resources. The development and more skilled use of the Bahá'í concept of consultation, with its implications of dynamic unity of thought and action, is one of the most valuable assets to be derived from these new activities. The Office of Social and Economic Development, therefore, deals in the first instance with questions of motivation, resources and consultation, and assists National Spiritual Assemblies in guiding their own local communities toward appropriate projects that will enable the believers to apply the spiritual principles of the Faith to the needs of their communities. In addition, it offers guidance and co-ordination to some of the larger, more established development projects such as the Bahá'í radio stations, academic schools, and rural development projects. Co-operative activities between national communities are also being developed. A fuller report on Bahá'í activities concerning social and economic development appears elsewhere in this volume.

### D. Office of Public Information

In May 1985, the Universal House of Justice decided that it was timely to systematize the handling of information on the Cause at the international level. The result was the creation of the Office of Public Information.

The Office represents the third of the specialized agencies of the Bahá'í International Community (the other two being the Community's Secretariat and its United Nations Office). Its basic function is to disseminate accurate information on the Faith to governments, international and national agencies, leaders of thought, the mass media and the general public. The aim of these efforts is to foster a favourable climate of understanding among the peoples of the world about the aims and achievements of the Bahá'í community as well as to correct misinformation and combat opposition.

The Office of Public Information has its headquarters at the World Centre, as well as a branch in New York City. The work of the latter is primarily concerned with direct publicity through the wire services and major international media. It is also extensively involved

in public relations activities both in New York and other major world centres. The responsibilities of the central office in Haifa include the dissemination of information to Bahá'í institutions around the world, and the production of appropriate printed and audio-visual materials.

**E. Comunicación Intercambio y Radiodifusión Bahá'í para America Latina y el Caribe**

CIRBAL was established by the Universal House of Justice in 1981 to promote the development of Bahá'í radio and mass media activities in Latin America. CIRBAL provides advice and support in the establishment of Bahá'í radio stations, training of media personnel, and encouragement and advice in the exploitation of the mass media for the benefit of the Faith.

CIRBAL consultants assist National Spiritual Assemblies in the technical, management and programming aspects of establishing and maintaining Bahá'í radio stations. The Amoz Gibson Training Centre in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, has held 12 courses since 1982; and CIRBAL has also sponsored or assisted with seven other radio courses during the Seven Year Plan. Efforts to encourage Bahá'í communities in the use of the media include: a travel-training trip by CIRBAL personnel to 11 Caribbean countries in 1984; the publication of cassettes of original music with Bahá'í themes, scripts and recordings for radio programmes, as well as pamphlets on how to use the media; and the dissemination of a media newsletter which was merged with the IBAVC newsletter in 1985.

**F. International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre**

A field agency of the Bahá'í World Centre, the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre was transferred from Rochester, New York to Toronto, Canada by the Universal House of Justice in the fall of 1979. The Centre operates as an information clearing-house and point of co-ordination and stimulation in the audio-visual field, an area of Bahá'í activity which includes both the portable media of film, videotape, audio-tape, slides and posters, and the broadcast media of television and radio. Its initial objective has been to stimulate and assist production and distribution of audio-visual materials at local and national levels, and to keep abreast of new methods, materials, and projects, disseminating such information as widely as possible.

This work involves guidance and consultation on audio-visual methods, identification of appropriate materials, and advice about the production and subsequent distribution of useful items for the assistance of national and local Bahá'í communities. Twice yearly, a newsletter summarizing current audio-visual activities in the Bahá'í world is published and circulated to Counsellors, National Assemblies, national committees, and individual Bahá'ís working and interested in the audio-visual media. This correspondence and news have increased during the course of the Seven Year Plan, bearing witness to the world-wide proliferation of initiatives to exploit the audio-visual media to serve the Cause of God.

The International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre organized four international audio-visual media conferences—in Florida, the United States and the Yukon, Canada in 1984; and in Frankfurt, Germany, and Port of Spain, Trinidad in 1985—which resulted in several major audio-visual projects. The Centre collaborates extensively with its sister agency, CIRBAL. Several media training projects are now being planned, based on two successful radio workshops conducted by the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre at WLGI in South Carolina, United States, in 1985.

**G. Communications**

The records kept regarding the communications of the Universal House of Justice demonstrate the volume of work carried out at the World Centre. Approximately 24,000 items of correspondence were sent to the Universal House of Justice each year. In response, some 6,000 letters to specific correspondents and 70 circular letters were sent out. During 1986, over 3,870 telexes and cables were received and 4,761 were sent out. The developing use of electronic mail for communications with National Spiritual Assemblies and other Bahá'í agencies was inaugurated in May 1985: 1,373 electronic mail messages came in to the World Centre and 1,065 were sent out between May 1985 and Riḍván 1986.

An increasing deployment of computer technology has greatly facilitated the work of the World Centre staff during the past seven years.

Information storage and retrieval systems have improved the capacity and efficiency of almost every office, and techniques are now being developed to catalogue, store and retrieve electronically the Holy Writings, as well as the correspondence of the Universal House of Justice.

**H. Public Prominence of the World Centre**

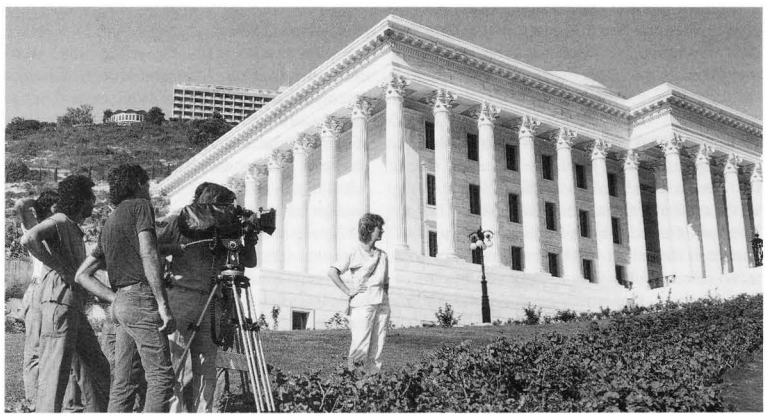
The emergence of the Faith from obscurity, on a global scale; the completion of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice; the persecutions in Írán which engendered world-wide efforts on behalf of the beleaguered friends in the Cradle of the Faith; and the steady consolidation of Bahá'í institutions, have focused increasing attention on the Bahá'í World Centre. During the past seven years, an unprecedented number of diplomats and official representatives of governments and international organizations have visited the World Centre. In addition, many media organizations have sent teams to Haifa to report on the Faith.

Ambassadors from the following 14 nations have visited the World Centre during the period under review: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Liberia, Norway, Peru, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. Embassy officials from France and Japan also visited.

Official visits to the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa were made by the representatives of the Governments of Brazil, Egypt, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, India, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Spain, the United Kingdom and Uruguay. A delegation from the European Parliament was received, as were visitors from the World Council of Faiths, the World Affairs Council, and Rotary International.

International and national media services which have come to Haifa to report on the Faith include: the Associated Press; CBC News; BBC-TV; RAI Italian Television; Australian Television, '60 Minutes' programme; Yugoslavian National Television; French National Television, German National Television; and the World Zionist Organization press service.

Twenty-eight newspapers in 13 countries have sent reporters and photographers to the World Centre including: *Le Monde*, France; *Los Angeles Times*, the United States; *Reader's Digest*, China, France, Spain and the United States; *Aftenposten*, Norway; *Expressen*, Sweden; *Politiken*, Denmark; *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*, Italy; *The Age*, Australia; *The Jerusalem Post*, Israel. National television news teams have come from Australia, England, Italy, Israel, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as from one independent station in Canada and five in the United States.



*A television crew from the British Broadcasting Corporation filming the Seat of the Universal House of Justice for a programme entitled 'Everyman' which aired in the United Kingdom in October 1985.*

# B. WORLD-WIDE OBJECTIVES

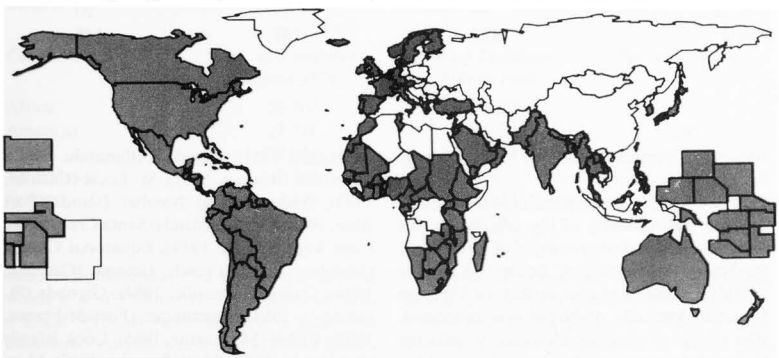
## 1. DIVINELY-PROPELLED EXPANSION OF THE FAITH

THE Cause of God spreads throughout the world as the believers endeavour to bring the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to their fellow men. The success of their efforts is seen in Bahá'í population growth, increase in the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside, increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies, and in the formation of new National Spiritual Assemblies. The Bahá'í world has registered tremendous gains in these important indicators of the Faith's expansion since Riḍván 1979. The work of pioneers and travelling teachers, the successful prosecution of teaching projects and the increasing level of individual teaching activity have all contributed to this achievement. The exemplary victories won by indigenous Bahá'í populations testify to the vitality of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

### 1.1. FORMATION OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

The steady expansion of the Bahá'í community which characterized the Seven Year Plan is clearly evidenced in the growing number of National Spiritual Assemblies. Twenty-two new National Assemblies, comprising one-sixth of the total number of these pillars of the Universal House of Justice, were formed during this period. This brings almost to completion the process initiated by the beloved Guardian, in which large regional Spiritual Assemblies, each composed of a number of independent nations, were established and then divided into smaller, usually national, jurisdictional areas as the national Bahá'í communities grew in strength and capacity. For example, the ten National Spiritual Assemblies of Africa which supervised the affairs of the believers in 47 sovereign states and dependent territories in 1964 have grown into 43 distinct National Assemblies—one in every independent nation where the Faith is not constrained by lack of religious freedom. The same process is evident in the Pacific; the National Assembly of the South Pacific Islands, formed in 1959, has become ten separate National Spiritual Assemblies. In the Caribbean the National Assembly of the Leeward, Windward, and Virgin Islands, formed in 1967, has divided into nine separate National Assemblies.

At the present time, there are seven independent nations where the Faith can be openly practised that do not have National Assemblies: Andorra, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, Nauru, San Marino, and St. Christopher-Nevis. There are 38 other independent nations that do not have National Assemblies; these are either countries where circumstances have not permitted teaching the Faith openly, where the Faith has been banned due to religious persecution, or the national Spiritual Assembly has not been formed for other reasons.



*Shaded areas of the map depict the 148 countries where National Spiritual Assemblies exist, Riḍván (21 April) 1986.*

The successful extension of Bahá'í administrative institutions has been the result of concentrated planning and effort. In its Naw-Rúz 1979 message to the Bahá'ís of the world the Universal House of Justice anticipated the formation of 19 National Spiritual Assemblies during this Plan. They include eight in Africa: Angola, Bophuthatswana, Cape Verde, Gabon, Mali, Mozambique, South-west Africa/Namibia, Transkei; eight in the Americas: Bermuda, Dominica, French Guiana, Grenada, Leeward Islands, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and three in Australasia: the Cook Islands, Tuvalu, the Western Caroline Islands. This list was further supplemented, in March 1981, by the addition of Equatorial Guinea and Somalia in Africa, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in Asia, thus bringing the total to 22 projected new National Assemblies for the Seven Year Plan. By Riḍván 1979, 125 National Spiritual Assemblies had been formed world-wide. Therefore, with the goal to form another 22 National Spiritual Assemblies, it was anticipated that 147 National Assemblies would be functioning by the end of the Plan.

By Riḍván 1981, it was possible to re-establish the National Assembly of Uganda, which was dissolved in 1979 during a period of civil unrest; the National Assembly of Equatorial Guinea in Riḍván 1984; and also in Riḍván 1982 the National Assembly of Nepal was re-formed, after a lapse of six years. However, in 1981 the National Assembly of Zaire was dissolved for a temporary period and became three Administrative Committees; and in 1983 the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán was dissolved as a result of the persecution.

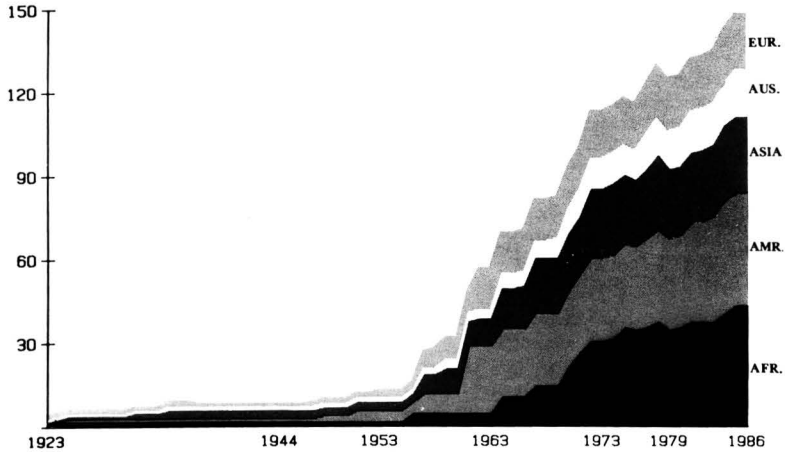
Of the original 22 communities scheduled to form their National Spiritual Assemblies in this Plan, Angola and Somalia, due to circumstances beyond the control of the Bahá'í community, were unable to do so. However, as supplementary achievements for this Plan, in response to propitious circumstances, National Spiritual Assemblies were formed in the Canary Islands, Ciskei, and in one other place.

The table below provides the goals and achievements of the Plan for each continent.

| *Continent* | *No. of NSAs Riḍván 1979* | *Projected total for 1986* | *No. of NSAs Riḍván 1986* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 34 | 44 | 43 |
| Americas | 33 | 41 | 41 |
| Asia | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| Australasia | 14 | 17 | 17 |
| Europe | 19 | 19 | 20 |
| **World** | **125** | **147** | **148** |

The following is a list, by name where possible, according to the year of formation, of the National Spiritual Assemblies established during the Plan. The seat and the formation year of each Assembly are provided in parentheses: Transkei (Umtata, 1980); Bermuda (Hamilton, 1981); Bophuthatswana (Mmabatho, 1981); Leeward Islands (St. John's, Antigua, 1981); South-west Africa/Namibia (Windhoek, 1981); St. Vincent and the Grenadines (Kingstown, 1981); Tuvalu (Funafuti, 1981); Uganda (Kampala, 1981); Nepal (Kathmandu, 1982); Dominica (Roseau, 1983); St. Lucia (Castries, 1983); Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Port Blair, 1984); Canary Islands (Santa Cruz, 1984); Cape Verde (Praia, 1984); Equatorial Guinea (Malabo, 1984); French Guiana (Cayenne, 1984); Gabon (Libreville, 1984); Grenada (St. George's, 1984); Martinique (Fort-de-France, 1984); Ciskei (Mdantsane, 1985); Cook Islands (Rarotonga, 1985); Mali (Bamako, 1985); Mozambique (Maputo, 1985); Western Caroline Islands (Colonia, Yap, 1985).

The following graph, subdivided by continent, shows the number of National Assemblies since 1923, when the first three Assemblies were formed. Each band reflects the portion of National Spiritual Assemblies in that continent.




*Graph showing the proportional increase by continent in the number of National Spiritual Assemblies 1923–86.*

## 1.2. LOCALITIES

Expansion, as measured by the number of new localities with resident Bahá'ís, progressed at an average annual rate of 1.9 per cent during the Seven Year Plan, resulting in opening an additional 14,003 localities to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. A locality, defined generally as the smallest autonomous civil unit, is any area in which it would ultimately be possible to form a Local Spiritual Assembly; and a locality is considered 'opened' if at least one Bahá'í resides there. The table above provides the continental increases in number of localities for the Plan.

Seventy-seven countries or territories contributed to the overall rise in number of localities world-wide by raising their number by 50 per cent or more during the Seven Year Plan. Of these 77 countries, 42 of them more than doubled their number of localities opened to the Cause: 20 in Africa, 4 in the Americas, 6 in Asia, 2 in Australasia and 10 in Europe.

| *Continent* | *No. of Localities Riḍván 1979* | *No. of Localities Riḍván 1986* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 26,508 | 35,657 | 35% |
| Americas | 22,110 | 26,570 | 20% |
| Asia | 49,051 | 48,730 | − 1% |
| Australasia | 2,586 | 2,902 | 12% |
| Europe | 2,449 | 2,848 | 16% |
| **World** | **102,704** | **116,707** | **14%** |

It should be noted that the decrease in Asia, despite the considerable increase in the number of believers taught, primarily reflects a more accurate census of believers in India, and governmental redefinition of areas of civil jurisdiction in Kampuchea, Korea, Laos, Pakistan and Vietnam.

**2.a. Locality Goals**

The overall locality goal for the Seven Year Plan was surpassed by 1,250 localities. Of the total 250 countries or territories of the world monitored, specific goals were assigned to 105, of which 71 countries achieved their goal. The total localities goals assigned to these 105 countries was 49,804, which was surpassed by an amazing figure of 7,514 localities. The table above presents the overall locality goals for each continent and the degree to which the goals were achieved.

| *Continent* | *Overall Goal* | *No. of Localities* | *% of Goal Achieved* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 30,974 | 35,657 | 115% |
| Americas | 25,706 | 26,570 | 103% |
| Asia | 53,068 | 48,730 | 92% |
| Australasia | 2,789 | 2,902 | 104% |
| Europe | 2,920 | 2,848 | 98% |
| **World** | **115,457** | **116,707** | **101%** |

**2.b. New Territories Opened to the Faith**

The light of Bahá'u'lláh continued to spread to new territories and islands, as called for in the Seven Year Plan. Presently believers are residing in 166 independent countries and 48 dependent territories or overseas departments.[1]

| | *World* | *Africa* | *Americas* | *Asia* | *Australasia* | *Europe* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Independent countries | **166** | 51 | 35 | 37 | 11 | 32 |
| Dependent territories or overseas departments | **48** | 6 | 16 | 3 | 13 | 10 |

In order to establish the degree of progress made in opening territories on the homefront, a major effort to determine the precise distribution of Bahá'ís around the globe was undertaken by the Department of Statistics. In consultation with the National Spiritual Assemblies, the major civil divisions[2] inside each country were ascertained, and these were incorporated into subsequent reports sent by each national community to the World Centre.

The more detailed information that has been thus obtained has revealed how close the followers of Bahá'u'lláh have come to covering the entire planet with His Message: out of 2,852 major civil areas within the homefront of the 183 countries and territories, which are monitored by the Department of Statistics at the major civil area level, only 515 are not opened to the Faith. (For the remaining 67 countries information is collected at country level.) In the continent of Africa, of the total 778 major civil areas, 583 are opened to the Cause; in the Americas 781 out of 907 are opened; in Asia 378 out of 472 major civil areas are opened; in Australasia 83 per cent of 244 civil areas are opened; and in Europe 393 out of 451 are opened—the largest percentage of any continent.

All major civil areas have been opened to the Cause in 99 of these 183 countries or territories. This achievement is particularly important as a number of countries in the Plan were actually called upon to open all major civil areas under their jurisdiction.

[1] Refers to political boundaries. Separate statistics are maintained at the World Centre for 235 countries or territories in which Bahá'ís reside; e.g., Alaska and Hawaii which are both states of the United States but have their own National Spiritual Assemblies. See 'Distribution of Believers' under '6. Bahá'í Population'.

[2] A major civil area in this instance signifies the unit of designation used by the government of the country or nation, be it a region, province, state, district, island, etc. Therefore, a major civil area can contain from one Bahá'í locality to thousands of them.

**2.c. Composition of Localities**

World-wide, Local Assemblies numbering 32,854 exist in 28 per cent of the total localities. Of the remainder, there are 19,168 groups with nine or more adults where preparations can be made for the formation of a Local Assembly, 37,335 groups with fewer than nine adults, and 27,350 isolated centres.

It is significant to note that at the beginning of the Five Year Plan, Riḍván 1974, only 19 per cent of localities with resident believers had established a Local Spiritual Assembly. This percentage reached the level of 23 per cent by the beginning of the Seven Year Plan. Therefore, the Bahá'í world, during this Plan, has not only significantly increased the number of localities and Local Assemblies but has substantially increased the percentage of localities which have a Local Assembly. This increase in percentage is a mark of further consolidation of the Cause of God throughout the globe.

In 43 countries or territories a Local Assembly is established in at least 50 per cent of its opened localities. Of this total, in 12 countries there is a Local Assembly established in every locality opened to the Cause.

## 1.3. ISOLATED CENTRES

The first step in expansion of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is the opening of a new locality, and this occurs when an individual believer is a resident of that locality. This believer, isolated from other communities, has, if he will seize it, the challenging task, although at times assisted by travelling teaching teams from nearby areas, of increasing the number of local believers and eventually raising this number to nine in order to form a Local Spiritual Assembly. The number of such isolated believers increased from 19,732 in 1979 to 27,350 at the present time, resulting in a 39 per cent increase for the Plan.

## 1.4. GROUPS

For the first time, during the Seven Year Plan, the National Assemblies in their semi-annual statistical reports distinguished between groups with fewer than nine adults (i.e., groups with 2–8 members) and groups with nine adults or more. This categorization has enabled the institutions of the Cause to know how many groups could be formed into Local Assemblies and how many would require a rise in membership to achieve the requisite nine adults for Local Assembly status. An interesting aspect of the extension teaching goals set by Local Assemblies was the emphasis on helping nearby groups to increase the size of their communities and to become firmly grounded in Bahá'í principles so that when they had grown sufficiently to form an Assembly, consolidation of that Local Assembly could be carried out more easily. The table above provides a world summary of the progress made in forming groups during the Plan.

| *Continent* | *Total Groups Riḍván 1979* | *More than 9 Adults* | *Fewer than 9 Adults* | *Total Groups Riḍván 1986* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 13,761 | 4,017 | 13,356 | 17,373 | 26% |
| Americas | 10,048 | 2,544 | 9,035 | 11,579 | 15% |
| Asia | 33,538 | 12,252 | 13,034 | 25,286 | −25% |
| Australasia | 1,201 | 305 | 940 | 1,245 | 4% |
| Europe | 800 | 50 | 970 | 1,020 | 28% |
| **World** | **59,348** | **19,168** | **37,335** | **56,503** | **−5%** |

## 1.5. LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

The ultimate objective in opening localities to the Bahá'í Faith is to ensure that a Local Spiritual Assembly, that divinely ordained Institution which operates at the first level of human society and is the basic administrative unit of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order, be instituted in due course in that place. The number of Local

Assemblies nearly doubled world-wide during the combined years of the Five and Seven Year Plans. The overall increase of 9,230 Assemblies for the Plan, as noted by the Universal House of Justice in its Riḍván 1986 message to the Bahá'ís of the world, is one of the most important and fundamental achievements of the Plan.

| *Continent* | *No. of Assemblies Riḍván 1979* | *No. of Assemblies Riḍván 1986* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 4,535 | 7,258 | 60% |
| Americas | 5,424 | 6,500 | 20% |
| Asia | 12,473 | 17,524 | 40% |
| Australasia | 578 | 857 | 48% |
| Europe | 614 | 715 | 16% |
| **World** | **23,624** | **32,854** | **39%** |

Sixty-seven countries or territories contributed to the rise in number of Local Spiritual Assemblies by increasing the number they had at the beginning of this Plan by at least 50 per cent: 28 in Africa; 15 in the Americas; 8 in Asia; 11 in Australasia; 5 in Europe. Twenty-eight of these 67 countries more than doubled their number of Local Assemblies during the Plan.

**5.a. Local Spiritual Assembly Goals**

The Seven Year Plan called for the establishment of 30,850 Local Spiritual Assemblies, a goal that was surpassed by 2,004 Assemblies. Of the total 250 countries of the world monitored by the Department of Statistics, specific goals were assigned to 157, of which 84 achieved their numerical goal. These 157 national communities received a total Assembly goal of 28,400, which was surpassed at the end of the Plan by 2,518 Assemblies. The table above shows the achievement of Local Assembly goals.

| *Continent* | *Overall Goal* | *No. of Local Assemblies* | *% of Goal Achieved* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 7,030 | 7,258 | 103% |
| Americas | 7,014 | 6,500 | 93% |
| Asia | 15,124 | 17,524 | 116% |
| Australasia | 868 | 857 | 99% |
| Europe | 814 | 715 | 89% |
| **World** | **30,850** | **32,854** | **106%** |

**5.b. Broadening the Local Spiritual Assembly Base**

The Universal House of Justice not only set numerical goals for Local Spiritual Assembly expansion during the Seven Year Plan, but it also presented several National Assemblies with the challenge of establishing one or more Local Assemblies in each major civil area, that is, in each state or province, etc., by the end of the Plan. This was to ensure more uniform establishment of Assemblies throughout the country. There are 2,852 major civil areas in the 183 countries which report their statistics on a semi-annual basis according to the major civil divisions of the country, and Local Spiritual Assemblies have been established in 1,662 of these civil areas.

In 35 countries or territories, at least one Local Assembly has been established in each major civil area. The principal towns and cities in each civil area are the primary targets for establishment of Local Assemblies, as they provide ease of communication with the National Office and other major centres of the Faith in the country. Furthermore, the Assemblies established in these principal towns and cities are able to adopt numerous extension teaching goals, thereby demonstrating the principle of organic growth.

## 1.6. BAHÁ'Í POPULATION

Although an overall figure of the world-wide Bahá'í population was released during the Seven Year Plan, the number is approximate because the taking of a Bahá'í census is still in its early stages in many mass teaching areas and some developing countries.

National Spiritual Assemblies remain at varying stages of ability to gather information about youth and children in the form of statistical records, the collection and maintenance of which have been especially emphasized during the Seven Year Plan. Not only has this emphasis resulted in more accurate population figures, but it has also increased the awareness of National Assemblies of the importance of including youth and children in the activities of the Bahá'í community. Based on the statistics submitted by the National Assemblies in their semi-annual reports, which include the number of Bahá'ís whose current addresses are not known and estimates for youth and children in those regions which have not yet been able to conduct a purely Bahá'í census, there are now an estimated 4.3 million Bahá'ís in the world. The total Bahá'í population increase for the Seven Year Plan was approximately 1,118,000 believers, 518,000 of them adults. The continental and total Bahá'í population figures comprise the reported number of adult Bahá'ís and estimated numbers of youth and children for those countries where there are 1,000 or more adult Bahá'ís, plus the reported believer figures wherever the adult Bahá'í population is less than 1,000. All estimates for youth and children were computed based on the latest ratios for youth and children in the general population of each country published by the United Nations Statistical Division.

The table below provides the continental increases in population for the Seven Year Plan.

### 6.a. Distribution of Believers

Bahá'ís currently reside in 235 countries or territories of the world.[1] In 51 per cent of the countries or territories opened to the Faith there are under 1,000 believers, while in another 27 per cent there are between 1,000 and 10,000 believers, and in 18 per cent there are between 10,000 and 100,000 believers. In each of the remaining nine countries, there are more than 100,000 believers. The subcontinent of India has the distinction of being the only country in the world with more than 1,000,000 believers.

| *Continent* | *Estimated No. of Believers Riḍván 1979* | *Estimated No. of Believers Riḍván 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| Africa | 603,000 | 969,000 |
| Americas | 665,000 | 857,000 |
| Asia | 1,860,000 | 2,403,000 |
| Australasia | 70,000 | 84,000 |
| Europe | 19,000 | 22,000 |
| **World** | **3,217,000** | **4,335,000** |

## 1.7. SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

In addition to the purely numerical gains and goals achieved in the expansion of the Faith, the Seven Year Plan witnessed many other accomplishments of special significance. For example, Local Spiritual Assemblies were established in areas mentioned in *Tablets of the Divine Plan* or were formed by a special ethnic group, countries or islands were opened to the Faith for the first time, and similar achievements. An exhaustive list is impossible to present within these pages but the following highlights are offered.

*Africa:*

—São Tomé & Príncipe has been reopened to the Faith.

—All the regions of Sénégal have been opened to the Faith.

[1] These are areas for which separate statistics are kept at the World Centre; e.g., Alaska and Hawaii which are both states of the United States but have their own National Spiritual Assemblies. Bahá'ís reside in 166 independent territories as defined by political boundaries.

—Formation of Kosti Local Spiritual Assembly in North Sudan was considered a great achievement by the National Assembly.

—In Uganda, the village of Bundingoma was reported as an all-Bahá'í village.

*Americas:*

—A Local Assembly was established on San Salvador (Watling) Island in the Bahamas.

—Cayman Brac and Little Cayman Islands were opened.

—The island of Gonave, Haiti, was opened by a young Bahá'í from the mainland.

—A Local Assembly was formed at Riḍván 1986 in the Provinciales of the Turks & Caicos Islands on an island originally opened earlier in the Seven Year Plan. The Local Assembly of North Caicos was also elected at Riḍván.

—53 Assemblies were established on Indian Reservations in the United States.

*Asia:*

—Five Bahá'ís currently reside in the Ogasawara Islands, located a 30-hour boat ride from Tokyo. These islands were opened during the Seven Year Plan.

—The first all-native Local Assembly in Sabah, East Malaysia, comprised of members of the Rungus tribe, was elected in Bintasan.

—The islands of Delft and Mannar (Sri Lanka) were opened.

—Singapore has established the total number of Local Assemblies possible.

*Australasia:*

—Local Assemblies were formed on Rota and Tinian in the Northern Mariana Islands. 'These remote islands posed a formidable teaching challenge; however, through the sacrifices of many travelling teachers and pioneers, the goal has been won.'

—The first Local Spiritual Assembly of the Eastern Solomons was established in the Outer Islands.

—The Chatham Islands were opened during the Plan.

*Europe:*

—The first Local Assembly in the German-speaking part of Belgium was formed in Eupen.

—A Local Spiritual Assembly was formed for the first time in Rovaniemi, Finland, 'The Gate of Lapland'.

—The Local Spiritual Assembly of Bremerhaven in a remote area of north Germany was established through long years of labour.

—The island of Corfu, Greece was opened in March 1983.

—The first Local Assembly in Liechtenstein was established in Vaduz in 1984.

—The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Torrevieja, Spain was established; seven of its members are Roma. The Local Assembly of Loja formed subsequently in that country also has a majority of Gypsy members.

## 1.8. INTERNATIONAL PIONEERS AND TRAVELLING TEACHERS

### 8.a. International Pioneering Goals

The devotion and hard work of believers who have left their homes to promote the Faith continue to be essential factors in its growth. During the course of the Seven Year Plan the Universal House of Justice issued four different international pioneering calls and one supplementary call for the third phase. The first phase called for 419 pioneers world-wide, of which 189 posts were identified as having high priority for settlement. To assist with the early fulfilment of these objectives, specific national communities were called upon to raise a required number of pioneers. The second phase called for 286 pioneers, some of which were restatements of the original 419. Others were new posts. In November 1981 the House of Justice called for 264 pioneers to settle in specific goal areas. Again some of the 264 were new posts and others were restatements of the Riḍván call. At the opening of the third phase, Riḍván 1984, a call for 298 international pioneers was raised. This new call relieved the National Assemblies of their earlier unfilled objectives. An increasing number of the Third World countries were included in the list of sending national communities having the primary responsibility for fulfilment of the Plan's objectives. In October 1984 this call was further supplemented by an additional 88 objectives, and eventually the total was raised to 391 for the duration of the Plan. In sum, the Seven Year Plan called for a total of 1,360 international pioneers.

In response to these calls, a large number of believers have arisen and settled in various foreign lands, thus fulfilling the objectives of

the Plan. African, Asian, and Latin American believers in increasing numbers have pioneered to neighbouring countries. More youth are pioneering than ever before. Another trend is that some believers arise to pioneer for a fixed period of time, many of them youth who later continue their education. A summary of the goals and achievements of the Seven Year Plan is as follows:

| *Continent* | *Pioneering Goal* | *Achieved* | *Total Settled* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 398 | 202 | 746 |
| Americas | 339 | 243 | 980 |
| Asia | 152 | 100 | 671 |
| Australasia | 288 | 127 | 256 |
| Europe | 183 | 121 | 1,041 |
| **World** | **1,360** | **793** | **3,694** |

**8.b. Distribution of International Pioneers**

These 3,694 international pioneers have originated from 125 countries and settled in 182 countries. Of the total 125 sending countries, 14 have sent over 30 pioneers who are still in the field, while 15 more countries have sent between 10 and 30 pioneers. Well over 1,900 of these pioneers are of Persian background, with another 900 and 200 being American and Canadian, respectively. Of the total 182 receiving countries, 44 have received at least 30 pioneers, while 62 countries have received between 10 and 30 pioneers each.

**8.c. Travelling Teaching**

Travelling teachers also contributed greatly to the progress of the Cause; over 10,000 teaching trips were made during the Plan. Among the many hundreds of believers who arose to perform this valuable and exciting service are believers who devoted a large part of the past seven years to travelling for the Faith. Although it is not possible to list them all by name or to discuss their many outstanding accomplishments, the Bahá'í world owes them a huge debt of gratitude.

## 1.9. BORDER TEACHING

An important feature of the Seven Year Plan has been the co-operative efforts throughout the Bahá'í world in nationally-organized teaching projects—projects taking place at least in part outside the country of origin. The Universal House of Justice assigned goals to 55 National Spiritual Assemblies urging them to make plans for border teaching. By the completion of the Plan 78 Assemblies had taken the initiative to organize teaching campaigns with other national communities. Some countries formed Border Teaching Committees which organized periodic teaching tours when volunteers were available. This approach was common among the islands of the Caribbean and the South Pacific and in Asia, where inveterate travelling teachers would tour many countries, giving firesides, public lectures and press conferences over the course of several months.

Other countries, such as Colombia and the United States, undertook border teaching projects which were organized through consultation with sister Assemblies. The Enoch Olinga Project in South America operated from 1980 to 1983. This project, jointly sponsored by the National Spiritual Assemblies of Ecuador and Colombia, brought over 1,000 new believers to the Faith in its first month and served to open 25 new communities and to bring the Cayapa Indian tribe closer to the Faith. The National Assembly of the United States conducted regular projects along the southern border with Mexico, resulting in the enrolment of more than 200 new believers and the formation of two new Local Spiritual Assemblies. Along the United States' northern border with Canada, the most notable of a long list of activities are joint projects on the Blood Reserve in Canada and the Grand Portage Ojibway Reservation in Minnesota that resulted in 37 enrolments in Canada and more than 100 in the United States.

*Travelling teachers of the 'Enoch Olinga Project' visit towns along the Mataje River in early 1983. The left bank of the river in this photograph is in Colombia, the right bank is Ecuador.*

*Malaysian travelling teacher Easuary Duraisamy, fifth from left, visits the Hmien Bahá'ís in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp in Thailand, near the Laotian border, in 1985.*

Just as the indigenous peoples throughout the Americas are grouped across international borders, so too are the tribes in Africa linked across borders. Unfortunately, travel in Africa is often difficult and expensive. Despite the hardships, however, the African believers have found ways to gather together. When a Swedish pioneer and his family were forced to leave Chad, they moved to the Central African Republic, where a teaching position became available near the Chadian border. Having left his motorcycle in Chad, the pioneer for four days rode his bicycle the 210 kilometres from Ndélé in the Central African Republic to Chari in Chad. After his motorcycle arrived he set off through many villages, opening up six new ones to the Faith and enrolling 57 new believers. The co-operation between the two countries for border teaching still continues. The National Spiritual Assemblies of Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and Malawi reported good success in their goal to 'continue to expand and consolidate the Bahá'í community in Mozambique in preparation for the formation of its National Assembly', despite the political situation in that country which made teaching work impossible for the Bahá'ís of Malawi. As a result of these efforts, the friends in Mozambique were able to form their National Asembly at Riḍván 1985.

Participants from several West African countries attended an inter-regional conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in 1980. Afterwards the Bahá'ís of Ghana sent a group of travelling teachers across the border into Burkina Faso, leaving four new Local Spiritual Assemblies when they returned home one week later. Then for the first time, in 1982, a group of Bahá'ís from Burkina Faso went to Ghana to teach. They spent some time in a village inhabited entirely by Bahá'ís and left feeling encouraged by a new vision of what teaching could be like. Similar mutual teaching occurred among the friends in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, and between Sénégal and The Gambia.

The ease of crossing western European borders has facilitated an increased co-operative effort on the part of many National Assemblies there. Sometimes this co-operation has been undertaken by individuals, with encouragement from the National Assembly, as in the participation by people from both sides of the border in summer schools in Northern Ireland. At times the co-operation has required minimal organizational effort, such as the teaching of Greenlandic fishermen when they dock in Iceland. At other times, careful planning and much organization were required. This was particularly evident in Scandinavia, where the National Spiritual Assemblies of Norway, Finland, and Sweden organized annual schools held during midsummer. Following these schools, there were proclamation events for the Swedish minorities in Finland and the Finns in Sweden; tri-national teaching trips among the Samé people (Lapps) in the northern reaches of Scandinavia; and frequent teaching trips from country to country. In June 1981, 60 youth from Denmark, Finland, Greenland, Norway, and Sweden gathered in Torsby, Sweden for a youth conference. After a 24-hour prayer session for the Bahá'ís in Írán on the day of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, 22 of these youth went travelling teaching through all the countries represented at the conference. The relatively free borders in western Europe have also allowed for cross-border teaching in areas which would otherwise be difficult of access, such as Corsica and Sardinia from Italy and France.

The proliferation of border teaching activities during the Seven Year Plan has enabled the Faith to grow in areas that are relatively inaccesssible; it has increased the capacity of National Spiritual Assemblies to co-ordinate their activites for the advancement of the Faith; and, perhaps most importantly, it has demonstrated the power of the Faith to overcome man-made boundaries which separate mankind. The border between Kenya and Tanzania was for some time officially closed, but the police gave permission for Tanzanian believers to cross in order to attend a Bahá'í conference. The importance of such examples of international Bahá'í unity was demonstrated when a member of the European Parliament made an unexpected courtesy call on the North Sea Border Conference in Felixstowe, England, in November 1981, where participants from the United Kingdom, Belgium, and the Netherlands were gathered together. The parliamentarian commented that he and his colleagues spent their time trying to break down borders, and that it was gratifying to find a group of people who were having success in working together in this way. He asked for a report of the conference.

## 1.10. TEACHING PROJECTS AND TEACHING CONFERENCES

The heroic fortitude of the believers in Írán and the example of their sacrifices have motivated much of the teaching work of the Seven Year Plan. Around the world, Bahá'ís, local communities, and teaching committees dedicated their efforts to the memory of the martyrs: 38 National Spiritual Assemblies organized national teaching campaigns; 29 organized teaching projects that were specifically dedicated to the friends in Írán. In Chad, a teaching and deepening campaign of this kind in 1984 lasted for 123 days, resulting in over 200 new believers and the formation of more Local Assemblies. World-wide, 60 National Assemblies organized and conducted a total of 145 teaching projects.

'We Cannot Fail Them', a teaching campaign based on the statement of the Universal House of Justice that sacrificial action in teaching and promoting the Cause must follow each instance of persecution, has won great victories in 20 countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean. The goals of the campaign are to enrol new believers, raise up indigenous teachers, and strengthen Bahá'í communities already in existence.

The Olinga Project, sponsored by the Board of Counsellors in Africa, has focused on giving the believers a sense of Bahá'í identity and commitment by increasing their awareness of the spiritual teachings of the Faith and of the importance of these teachings in their lives. By spiritualizing the friends and their communities an atmosphere was created in which teaching and deepening activities have flourished. As these activities continue, exciting results, even entry by troops, can be expected. Olinga Project activities have taken place in many countries in Africa.

Among the most significant travelling teaching activities of the Seven Year Plan has been the 'Trail of Light', an exchange of teaching visits among the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Conferences to stimulate and promote teaching activity are an almost universal fixture of Bahá'í community life: 129 National Assemblies organized 2,755 teaching conferences during the Plan. The total number of Bahá'í teaching conferences exceeded the total number of days in the Seven Year Plan.

## 11. LARGE-SCALE ENROLMENTS

As the Universal House of Justice indicated in its Riḍván message of 1984, enrolments on a large scale will be the inevitable consequence of the world-wide sympathy aroused by the sufferings of the believers in Írán. Although few communities experienced large-scale enrolments during the Plan, the striking similarities among the ones that doubled their Bahá'í population during this period suggest the elements which are the prerequisites for this important development.

One National Spiritual Assembly that reported great expansion during the last years of the Plan described the believers as having a strong desire to teach, to obey the institutions and to fulfil the goals. The ongoing execution of ambitious, long-term projects characterized both the community with the highest number of enrolments—India with 292,000 new adult believers—and the community of more than 1,000 believers with the highest growth rate—Honduras—which increased its Bahá'í population eightfold during the Plan.

Almost every national community which increased its number of believers by at least 100 per cent during the Plan specifically noted the importance of local initiative to their teaching success. In the Central African Republic, most of the 4,500 new believers resulted from locally organized teaching projects; one-third of the Local Assemblies organized their own teaching activities. The National Assembly of Ghana reported that the believers had, more than ever before, arisen to undertake expansion and consolidation work. 'Some, on their own initiative, have been able to form Local Spiritual Assemblies. Some friends have sacrificed time, energy, leisure and money for the advancement of the Cause.' In Benin, the winning of the teaching goals was well in sight after the Lagos Conference when increased confidence and interest in teaching were manifested by the 200 believers from Benin who had participated. In Australia, another nation where the number of believers more than doubled during the Plan, the National Spiritual Assembly noted that the

friends had 'taken up the spirit of enterprise'. Bahá'í youth in Brazil who spent their vacations teaching the Faith were largely responsible for the 13,000 enrolments there; the National Spiritual Assembly estimates that 80 per cent of teaching trips were made by youth. Village teaching teams of local believers were organized in Guyana and were able to maintain continuous teaching activities; their efforts, as well as teaching initiated by Local Assemblies, individuals and teaching committees resulted in a three-fold increase in the number of believers in Guyana.

Production and effective distribution of literature in vernacular languages are reported as other common characteristics of the Bahá'í communities which have grown substantially since 1979. The National Spiritual Assembly of Ghana reported that the believers 'thirst for Bahá'í literature; this has led to the constant scarcity of literature, especially prayer books in the bookshop'. The highly successful teaching activities in Sierra Leone, Benin, Chad and Brazil were fuelled by infusions of Scripture in the indigenous languages. In Malaysia, where over 13,000 new believers have been enrolled during the Plan, a wide variety of correspondence courses, deepening institutes and other activities focus new Bahá'ís on teaching and serving the Faith. Enrolled believers are immediately provided with literature and a prayer book.

The 22 national communities listed above, with each having at least 500 believers, more than doubled their adult Bahá'í population during the Seven Year Plan. As Bahá'í communities continue to expand their vision of the potential of the Cause, foster a sense of responsibility for teaching among individuals, and supply the motivation for teaching through an adequate provision of Bahá'í literature, the number of communities that grow substantially will also increase.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Australia | 144% | Honduras | 452% |
| Bangladesh | 182% | Hong Kong | 111% |
| Benin | 111% | Malawi | 153% |
| Brazil | 129% | St. Lucia | 192% |
| Cape Verde | 1567% | Sierra Leone | 252% |
| Central African Republic | 102% | Singapore | 131% |
| Chad | 250% | Sudan | 190% |
| Dominica | 524% | Suriname | 146% |
| Ghana | 138% | United Arab Emirates | 150% |
| Guinea Bissau | 2142% | Vanuatu | 218% |
| Guyana | 213% | Zimbabwe | 103% |

## 1.12. ENCOURAGEMENT OF INDIVIDUAL TEACHING

Throughout the Seven Year Plan, 77 National Assemblies were encouraged to urge individual believers in their communities to adopt personal teaching goals. By the end of the Plan, 34 countries had reported successes in this area. The National Assemblies of Malaysia, Sweden and the United States each made available a book about personal teaching. Eight National Assemblies sought to inspire the hearts of the friends with stories of successful teaching endeavours which were published in bulletins, newsletters, and Feast Letters. Sixteen communities carefully fostered grassroots involvement using summer schools, institutes, and conferences where the friends gathered to discuss effective teaching. After a systematic course for ten of the friends in Cameroon, one offered to pioneer and the others did travelling teaching.

Half of the communities that achieved this goal mentioned the involvement of Local Assemblies in encouraging the friends to arise and teach. The Auxilliary Board members and their assistants have joined with Local Spiritual Assemblies to develop local initiative. Local activities the world over quadrupled during the Plan. (Details are provided in Section 2.5.)

## 1.13. DIVERSITY OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

Teaching among indigenous peoples, minorities, and other target populations has added to the diversity of the Bahá'í community. Members of more than 300 ethnic groups which had not previously been represented in the Bahá'í community have been enrolled during the Seven Year Plan, bringing the total number of ethnic groups [some of whose members have embraced the Faith] to over 2,100. A distinguishing feature of the Plan has been the degree to which members of minority groups have seized the initiative in spreading the Faith and in consolidation work. The success of the Bahá'í community in reaching out to and integrating the forgotten and downtrodden peoples of the world, and in drawing out their potential, is a convincing proof of the vitality of the Cause—an aspect of the Bahá'í world which the Universal House of Justice specifically presents as a model in *The Promise of World Peace*.

Almost all National Spiritual Assemblies were assigned goals to increase the diversity of their Bahá'í communities. One hundred and two teaching projects designed to attract target populations were undertaken by 31 National Spiritual Assemblies. The number of these projects world-wide grew from 5 a year during the first phase of the Plan to an average of 19 a year during the second and third phases. Other approaches to this goal included appointing special teaching committees, producing Bahá'í publications in a greater variety of languages, and inviting travelling teachers who had special ability and experience in teaching the target groups. The number of summer schools for minority groups or indigenous peoples also increased significantly during the course of the Plan: an average of 20 such schools were held annually during the first phase; 22 a year during the second phase; and an average of 32 were held during each year of the third phase. A total of 169 summer schools especially for target populations were organized by 21 National Assemblies. Bahá'í gatherings organized by and for minority populations, following the pattern of the Indigenous Councils in North America, have also increased during the Plan.

Outstanding success has been realized among the American Indians. The National Spiritual Assembly of the United States reported that 'a major achievement has been the increased activity among the Native Americans which has reached a new level of sustained intensity', with activities continuing from the Continental Indigenous Council/Pow Wow at the House of Worship in July 1980 through teaching projects which were still in progress at the end of the Plan. Many national communities organized long-term teaching projects such as the Jaguar Project in Mexico, a six-month project among the Guajira and Guajibo tribes in Venezuela, the Olinga Family Project in Belize, the Enoch Olinga Project in Ecuador, and the Amoz Gibson Project in the United States. Each of these projects has contributed significantly to the propagation of the Faith among Indians. There were also more than 45 smaller teaching projects lasting less than one week.

The most spectacular Native American teaching project during the Seven Year Plan was the Camino del Sol (Trail of Light). The project began when an international team of American Indian and Eskimo believers from Alaska, Canada, and the United States divided into two units which visited Belize, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador, reuniting and performing at the International Conferences in Quito and Montreal. The teams succeeded brilliantly, travelling from the Arctic Circle, through the plains and deserts, into the mountains, and up the Amazon River, galvanizing native believers all along the way, some of whom had never known of the existence of Indian Bahá'is outside their own small communities. The impact of the Trail of Light was so great that a group of Indians from South America was assembled and sent north through Mexico, the United States, Canada, and Alaska, reciprocating the spiritual energies which had been spread among native friends in the south. Usually beginning with a few days of intense spiritual preparation, each team would travel for months at a time, often attracting crowds of more than 200, usually young people and students. The unprecedented media coverage generated by the group in every country on the tour included television shows, radio broadcasts, and feature articles in newspapers. On at least one occasion (in Colombia) the Trail of Light was able to reach people who, until they came, had been unapproachable by Bahá'ís because of cultural protectionism. The

*Indigenous Bahá'ís of South and Central America meeting in Panama in August 1983 to form a 'Trail of Light' team. The friends represent the Aymara people of Bolivia, the Bri Bri of Costa Rica, the Guaymi of Panama, the Kuna of Panama, the Mapuche of Chile, and the Quechua of Bolivia, Chile, and Ecuador.*

*Mrs. Rihi Barrett, Maori believer of North Island, New Zealand, stands at the centre-post of the meeting hall and calls visiting Bahá'ís from many parts of New Zealand into the Marae at Kaltupeka, a traditional meeting place for the Maori people. The meeting, or 'hui', was held in May 1983.*

Trail of Light showed Bahá'u'lláh's teachings in action; a handful of His followers from remote mountain villages and desert wastelands joining together and influencing a whole continent.

In Europe, long-standing efforts to reach the Romany and Samé peoples continue, and the number of believers from these backgrounds has increased, despite the difficulties in teaching and consolidation created by their nomadic way of life. Joint teaching trips in Lapland and translations into the Samé language have resulted from co-ordinated efforts by the Assemblies of Norway, Finland, and Sweden. Denmark and Iceland responded to the goal to teach Greenlanders and residents of the Faroe Islands by sending travelling teachers; the Danes have also had success in teaching Greenlanders resident in Denmark. In addition to these native peoples, teaching efforts continue among guest workers, foreign students, refugees, and people from overseas territories such as the Netherlands Antilles, Suriname, and South Molucca.

Teaching projects for target populations in Asia have included not only the Amoz Gibson Project in the Yercaud tribal district of India but similar projects in the Wynad tribal district in Kerala State, and in South Bihar and Orissa; as well as consolidation projects in the tribal districts of Dang and Jhabua. Approximately one-sixth of the believers in Malaysia are members of minority groups. Summer schools, institutes, and other gatherings there are conducted in the language of each group. A special effort to provide Bahá'í materials and experiences in Iban has been made during the Plan in support of the goal to spread the Faith among members of the Iban community. In conjunction with Bahá'ís in Brunei, Holy Writings, prayers, and deepening materials have been made available to the tribal believers in their own language, and they have been encouraged to teach others of their own tribe.

Recognizing that the business and professional classes were not significantly represented in their communities, many National Spiritual Assemblies organized committees of Bahá'í professionals who met together to discuss ways of bringing the Faith to the attention of their colleagues. Associations of Bahá'í businessmen, doctors, lawyers, and educators focused the attention of these believers on the relevance of the teachings to their work, and fostered successful individual teaching efforts.

Reaching Chinese-speaking people, who constitute the single largest population group in the world, has received special emphasis during the past seven years. For the first phase of the Plan only Singapore, Taiwan, and Malaysia received goals concerning teaching Chinese people; during the second phase an additional 14 National Assemblies in Asia, Australasia, the Americas, and Africa were given such goals, and the goal was extended to 17 additional National Assemblies, including five in Europe, during the third phase. An International Chinese Teaching Committee was appointed by the Universal House of Justice in July 1981 to assist National Spiritual Assemblies to teach Chinese people, to develop Chinese Bahá'í teachers and encourage travelling teaching among national communities with large Chinese populations, and to develop programmes for enrolling and deepening the Chinese. Highly successful teaching trips in many countries have been arranged by this committee.

Bahá'ís who are members of minority groups or other target populations have joined, and in some cases taken over, the front ranks of the teaching and administrative work of the Faith. The Trail of Light is an excellent example of this important trend; the indigenous staffs of the Bahá'í radio stations are another. The teaching efforts in Burkina Faso among indigenous people culminated with the participation of 19 native believers in the first project of that country to be entirely directed by local Bahá'ís. Since then, the indigenous friends have begun to take part in many activities of the Faith, especially the teaching trips and consolidation. The experience of New Zealand is typical. After concerted efforts to teach Maoris, the growing enrolments among those people allowed for further efforts by the Maoris themselves. This in turn has led to substantial enrolment increases, which have then led to the execution of more plans and a growing confidence of Maori and Polynesian believers to accept responsibility in the teaching and administrative fields.

The Pygmies of the Bahá'í community near Goma, Zaïre, who have been motivated as Bahá'ís to uplift themselves, to build homes, to make their living at least partly by farming rather than by hunting only, and to learn to read, have astonished their fellow citizens. A

succession of Government officials have visited to observe the development of the Bayanda, as the Pygmy Bahá'ís have named themselves. On a recent visit to the Bayanda Bahá'í area, the Commissioner of Social Services of Zaire promised to provide the Bahá'ís with identity cards, an evidence of citizenship which the Pygmies have not received before, and to provide them with more land so that they could continue to enhance the dignity of their lives. He expressed the Government's desire for the Bahá'ís to undertake similar projects among other Pygmies in Zaire.

The Mangyan Bahá'ís of the Philippines are another minority group which has excelled in service to the Faith. The establishment of tutorial schools among them has led to strong local support for the Faith, capable Local Spiritual Assemblies, and the highest rate of enrolments in the Philippines. A long-term goal is to begin an agricultural-vocational technical primary and high school, primarily serving the Mangyan believers and taught by the Mangyans themselves. Nineteen young Mangyans are already receiving education in a Second Parent Programme—ten students in elementary and nine in high school. The National Spiritual Assembly has adopted the ambitious goal of teaching the Faith to the entire Mangyan tribe, estimated to be more than 370,000 persons.

# 2. THE GROWING MATURITY OF BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTIONS

THE continued organic growth towards maturity of the institutions of the Cause has been a hallmark of the Seven Year Plan. As Bahá'í communities around the world strove to defend their brethren in Írán and to win the challenging goals of the Plan, they discovered, to a greater degree than ever before, the inherent strengths and capacities of the Bahá'í Administrative Order. The concrete evidence of this profound development can be seen in the attainment of financial self-sufficiency by a majority of National Spiritual Assemblies; in the conscious movement towards self-reliance in teaching and administration through special programmes and the encouragement of homefront pioneering; in the development of necessary skills for registering births, marriages and funerals, and other records of their communities; in the outstanding and unprecedented development of Local Spiritual Assemblies; in the acquisition and maintenance of local and national properties; and in the progress made in obtaining further legal recognition of the Faith. The status and recognition which will eventually come to Bahá'í institutions when their unifying and energizing capabilities are applied to the problems of society are already foreshadowed by the accomplishments of some national communities.

## 2.1. FINANCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The attainment of financial self-sufficiency by many National Spiritual Assemblies during the Seven Year Plan is a clear indication of the growing maturity of Bahá'í institutions. Having identified an urgent need for Bahá'í communities to achieve financial independence from the Bahá'í International Fund, the Universal House of Justice included self-sufficiency among the world-wide objectives of the Plan, and specific goals for it were assigned to 71 National Assemblies. This goal was considered to be achieved when National Assemblies met all their own regular operating expenses, even though special funds such as literature subvention or inter-Assembly assistance for specific projects might still be received. During the course of the Plan, 59 national communities became financially self-sufficient, reaching a total of 113, and 19 others substantially reduced their dependence on the Bahá'í International Fund.

The noteworthy increase in contributions to National Funds by Assemblies all over the world was an important aspect of this success. A greater understanding of the spiritual importance of contributing, with a consequent rise in contributions from individuals, was another essential factor.

Several National Assemblies cited the inspiration of the sacrifices of the believers in Írán as a crucial stimulus to contributions to the Fund. The practical problem of devising simple and effective means of collecting funds in very rural areas was also addressed by many national communities.

Financial self-sufficiency has confirmed and inspired these 113 Bahá'í communities; many National Assemblies identified attainment of independence from the Bahá'í International Fund to be one of their major achievements of the Seven Year Plan. The friends have become more aware of their own capacity through their success in this area: one national community reported that attendance at conferences went down when believers were asked to pay their own way to conferences and pay a small fee for food, but when some communities pooled resources to send representatives to a conference, attendance reached unprecedented levels. A greater sense of identity with and responsibility for the Faith has also developed.

## 2.2. NATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Fostering a sense of responsibility for the progress of the Cause has been the theme of many special national programmes designed to improve the functioning of Bahá'í administrative institutions. Some National Spiritual Assemblies held conferences on this subject; others prepared and distributed materials on the functions of a Local Assembly. Communities as diverse as Jamaica, Equatorial Guinea, and the Netherlands arranged for each Local Spiritual Assembly to be visited for training in consultation and administrative responsibilities. One common strategy was the appointment of a national committee responsible for Local Assembly development; several National Spiritual Assemblies reported that decentralization of planning through the appointment of regional teaching and consolidation committees had contributed to improved functioning of Local Spiritual Assemblies. The Continental Boards of Counsellors, the Auxiliary Boards, and their assistants were also actively involved in the process of education for administrative maturity. In addition to efforts aimed at strengthening local institutions, National Assemblies strove to increase their effectiveness through strengthening their own communities. In this regard, a higher level of activity and efficiency on the part of national committees, and greater diversity in their composition were reported by many National Assemblies.

## 2.3. HOMEFRONT PIONEERS

A highly significant achievement of the Plan, and one that has immeasurably strengthened the foundations of the Faith in many countries, has been the settling of self-sufficient homefront pioneers in many communities that had formerly relied on pioneering assistance from outside their countries. This, perhaps more than any other achievement, reflects the increased ability of Assemblies to assume responsibility for teaching and deepening in their own communities. Homefront pioneers have been essential in winning the goals of every Plan since the first goals Shoghi Effendi gave to North America and Europe, and on those continents homefront pioneers continue to serve valiantly in the most remote and difficult areas. In some countries this activity received particular attention around the Riḍván period when the formation of Local Assemblies was being considered. During the Seven Year Plan, homefront pioneering was specially emphasized for the first time in some communities through the assignment of specific goals given to 67 National Assemblies: 33 in Africa, 25 in the Americas, 6 in Asia, and 3 in Australasia.

It is important to note that the national communities for whom the encouragement of homefront pioneering was a goal of the Seven Year Plan are for the most part agrarian nations. In these countries, moving from one part of the country to another is much less common than it is in other places; and the homefront pioneer may be the first member of his family to leave the home area to settle in an area where the culture and language are different from his own, and may need to learn a new form of livelihood if he leaves his family farm. In this context, the settlement of approxi-

mately 150 homefront pioneers in countries which had this goal can be seen as an important achievement. Twenty-eight of these pioneers helped to fill part of the 43 numerical goals assigned; the others arose in communities where the goal had been simply encouragement of homefront pioneering. Ninety-four African believers became homefront pioneers; at least 15 of these were in response to assigned goals. In Central and South America, where four National Assemblies were assigned goals for new homefront pioneers, they achieved 21. Chile, which had a goal to raise up ten homefront pioneers, finished the Plan with 14; and Peru, when called upon to foster 'a large number of self-supporting homefront pioneers', reported that 24 believers had settled in new locations by Riḍván 1985.

## 2.4. BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND FUNERALS

The skills which Local Assemblies have developed during the Seven Year Plan in registering Bahá'í births, conducting Bahá'í marriages, and organizing Bahá'í funerals have been an important element in the development of these 'life-giving, life-sustaining' institutions of the Cause. In assuming responsibility for maintaining records of the significant events in the life of the individual, Bahá'í Spiritual Assemblies have simultaneously prepared themselves for their role of spiritual and administrative leadership.

One hundred and nineteen National Spiritual Assemblies were assigned goals to encourage Local Assemblies in this general area; 48 National Assemblies reported specific national plans or activities to accomplish the goal, while other National Assemblies incorporated the subject into broader deepening programmes. Distribution of birth and marriage certificates and log books or forms to be used to register these events was reported by 18 countries. Training in how to use the forms was also reported. Regular reporting of Bahá'í births varies widely from country to country: where the Faith is circumscribed, the friends courageously defend their right to identify their children as Bahá'ís; in other parts of the world, such as Vanuatu, the general concept of a census is entirely new and the effort to register Bahá'í children supports an ongoing Government project to encourage birth registration. Some National Assemblies have charged only selected Local Assemblies with registering births, marriages, and funerals. This has been the case in places as diverse as Pakistan, El Salvador, and Kiribati, where only those Local Assemblies considered to be sufficiently mature had this task assigned them.

Registration of Bahá'í births assists National Assemblies to keep more accurate statistics and to monitor their membership records. All Assemblies were encouraged to appoint Statistics Committees to assist them in the collection and tabulation of records and memberships, and many have done so. The constantly-improving quality of statistics received at the Department of Statistics is in itself a proof of the growing maturity of Bahá'í institutions.

Some communities reported that uncertainty about how to perform weddings and funerals had prevented local communities from assuming these functions. Most National Spiritual Assemblies offer assistance to the local communities by printing and distributing information about the marriage ceremony and Bahá'í funerals. In Costa Rica a form was designed which explained Bahá'í marriage; the form came with an attachment for parental consent. Japan distributed a printed sheet with instructions for both marriages and funerals in order to minimize the amount of work needed to prepare for each. Colombia devised a unique national programme whereby experienced teachers used dramatizations to demonstrate which institutions can help with weddings and funerals and in what way. Sixty-two communities had already been visited when the project was reported, and there were plans for further demonstrations.

Bahá'í marriages and funerals can be potent vehicles for expressing Bahá'í spiritual teachings. Several National Spiritual Assemblies in Africa noted that the importance of funerals in their society means that a significant feature of Bahá'í community life is expressed at funerals. The funerals of prominent African believers have in some cases developed into proclamation events. In 1985, the tribal elders of the Aboriginal people in Western Australia requested Bahá'ís to conduct marriages and funerals for their people, which the believers have happily accepted to do. The Bahá'ís have acquired a Land Rover to enable them to meet this request.

## 2.5. LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES

Promotion of the local activities which constitute the foundation of Bahá'í community life has been one of the most important objectives of the Seven Year Plan. The encouraging progress made at this level reflects a heightened awareness on the part of Local Spiritual Assemblies around the world of their sacred duties and obligations. When assigning goals for the consolidation of local Bahá'í communities, the Universal House of Justice called on the Bahá'í world to concentrate on the following activities, so vital to establishing the distinctive character of the Bahá'í way of life: communities electing their own Local Spiritual Assemblies without outside assistance, holding regular Nineteen Day Feasts and observing Bahá'í Holy Days and Anniversaries, conducting regular Local Assembly meetings, contributing to the various Bahá'í Funds, holding children's classes, having youth activities or encouraging the participation of youth in activities, having women's activities or encouraging the participation of women in activities, adopting extension teaching goals, and having local teaching and deepening activities.

At the outset of the second phase of the Plan, which spanned the period Riḍván 1981 to Riḍván 1984, consolidation goals were established for many national communities in such a way that in each succeeding year an increased number of Local Assemblies would be conducting the various activities. This procedure of phasing the goals emphasized the necessity of nurturing local communities so that the final goals could be won gradually. Many National Assemblies were assigned specific numerical goals for local activities while others were encouraged to increase the number of active Local Assemblies or to initiate and pursue programmes aimed at Local Spiritual Assembly consolidation.

At Riḍván 1980, the first time period for which complete world-wide reports on Local Spiritual Assembly activity are available, only 134 countries and territories reported conducting Local Assembly activities, 76 per cent of the possible total. Due to the emphasis placed on the importance of fostering Bahá'í community life, that number has increased so that 179 countries or territories now report active local Bahá'í communities, a 34 per cent increase.

The activities emphasized by the Universal House of Justice, monitored by the Department of Statistics at the World Centre from semi-annual statistical reports submitted by National Assemblies, and for which actual numerical goals were assigned, differ somewhat from continent to continent. The few activities listed for each continent represent a minimum list, as other activities were assigned variably by country according to the needs, special circumstances, and maturity of the community.

*Election of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Chi Ma Wan, a closed refugee camp in Hong Kong, at Riḍván 1985.*

**5.a. World Summary of Local Assembly Activities**

The character of local and national Bahá'í communities throughout the world has begun to improve due to these intensified activity levels, resulting in favourable progress towards strengthening Local Spiritual Assemblies and enhancing Bahá'í life. Local Assemblies have demonstrated the role played by the local Bahá'í community in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh by increasing the number and diversifying the type of their activities. The growing awareness of their role will assist them in the coming years to arise with even more vigour to strengthen their local communities, the most fundamental components of the Bahá'í community. This achievement of the Plan is highlighted in the table above.

*Local Assembly Activities Worldwide*

| *Nature of Activity* | *No. of LSAs Involved* | | *Per cent of Total LSAs* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1980* | *1986* | | |
| Feasts and Holy Days | 3,149 | 7,196 | 22% | 129% |
| Meeting Regularly | 2,747 | 6,081 | 19% | 121% |
| Contributing to Funds | 2,472 | 4,596 | 14% | 86% |
| Children's Classes | 1,731 | 4,295 | 13% | 148% |
| Youth Activities | 843 | 2,402 | 7% | 185% |
| Women's Activities | 418 | 1,558 | 5% | 273% |
| Extension Teaching Goals | 1,655 | 3,847 | 22% | 132% |
| Local Teaching Activities | 1,460 | 5,699 | 33% | 290% |
| Local Deepening Activities | 1,352 | 4,665 | 27% | 245% |

**5.b. Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Days**

The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the world which observe the Nineteen Day Feasts and commemorate Bahá'í Holy Days and Anniversaries has reached a total of 7,196, as shown in the table at the bottom of this page. This increase is partly due to at least quintupling the number of Local Assemblies participating in this vital aspect of community life in 12 countries or territories. Altogether, in 56 countries the number of communities observing Feasts and Holy Days was doubled: 26 in Africa, 12 in the Americas, 8 in Asia, 5 in Australasia, 5 in Europe.

Observance of the Nineteen Day Feasts and Bahá'í Holy Days and Anniversaries is presently taking place in 179 countries of the world. More than two-thirds of the Local Assemblies in 70 countries are observing Feasts and Holy Days, while in 45 countries between one-third and two-thirds are participating in this activity. In 44 countries, every community is reported to be conducting Feasts and Holy Days.

*Local Assembly Activities by Continent*

| *Continent* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1980* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1986* | *Per cent of Total LSAs* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 300 | 2,175 | 30% | 625% |
| Americas | 1,510 | 2,161 | 33% | 43% |
| Asia | 672 | 1,686 | 10% | 151% |
| Australasia | 371 | 547 | 64% | 47% |
| Europe | 296 | 627 | 88% | 112% |
| **World** | **3,149** | **7,196** | **22%** | **129%** |

**5.c. Local Assemblies Meeting Regularly**

The number of Local Assemblies meeting regularly grew from 2,747 in 1980 to 6,081 by now. Sixteen national communities increased their totals by 400 per cent, and in 58 countries or territories the number of Local Assemblies meeting regularly was doubled: 28 in Africa, 14 in the Americas, 5 in Asia, 6 in Australasia, 5 in Europe.

*Number of Local Assemblies Meeting Regularly*

| *Continent* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1980* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1986* | *Per cent of Total LSAs* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 248 | 1,887 | 26% | 661% |
| Americas | 1,413 | 1,874 | 29% | 33% |
| Asia | 532 | 1,303 | 7% | 145% |
| Australasia | 268 | 435 | 53% | 62% |
| Europe | 286 | 582 | 81% | 103% |
| **World** | **2,747** | **6,081** | **19%** | **121%** |

By 1986, in 175 countries or territories Local Assemblies were meeting on a regular basis, addressing the needs of the believers residing in the area of their jurisdiction. Thirty-three of these countries reported that all their Local Assemblies meet regularly. In 58 countries at least two-thirds of the Local Assemblies are meeting regularly; while in 38 other countries, between one-third and two-thirds of the Local Assemblies hold meetings regularly.

**5.d. Contributing to Funds**

Overall, in 170 countries believers have exercised their privilege of contributing to the Funds of the Faith, which are used for the advancement of various activities of the Cause. In 53 countries at least two-thirds of communities contribute to the Funds, and in 33 countries between one-third and two-thirds of the communities do so. In 33 countries every Bahá'í community is contributing to the Fund.

**5.e. Children's Classes**

The number of countries which quintupled the number of their communities with children's classes stands at 16. In 22 African countries, 16 American, 12 Asian, 10 Australasian, and 8 European countries the number of communities with educational programmes for children more than doubled.

In 165 countries of the world Bahá'í communities are endeavouring to educate their children in the basic principles and precepts of the cause: 46 in Africa, 42 in the Americas, 30 in Asia, 20 in Australasia, 27 in Europe. In 31 countries at least two-thirds of the communities, and in 39 countries between one-third and two-thirds, are holding such classes for the children of the area. In 16 countries every community is conducting children's classes. See the table below for local community statistics.

*Children's Classes*

| *Continent* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1980* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1986* | *Per cent of Total LSAs* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 241 | 889 | 12% | 269% |
| Americas | 769 | 1,418 | 22% | 84% |
| Asia | 395 | 1,361 | 8% | 245% |
| Australasia | 197 | 310 | 36% | 57% |
| Europe | 129 | 317 | 44% | 146% |
| **World** | **1,731** | **4,295** | **13%** | **148%** |

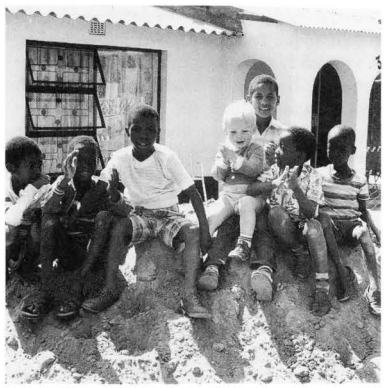
**5.f. Youth Activities**

Aided by the world-wide activities of Bahá'í communities centering around the International Youth Year, 143 countries or territories are presently undertaking activities designed to promote the interests of the Faith and teach the principles of the Cause to their peers. In 15 countries at least two-thirds of the localities, and in 18 additional countries between one-third and two-thirds, sponsor activities aimed at the youth of their communities.

**5.g. Women's Activities**

The world-wide increase of communities with women's activities was 273 per cent, having risen to 1,558 by now. In 116 countries or territories Bahá'í communities have adopted special activities aimed at the women of the area. In 8 countries over two-thirds of the communities, and in 10 countries between one-third and two-thirds, are having women's activities.

*The first Bahá'í marriage between two Greenlanders took place in September 1984.*



*Bahá'í children in Pretoria, South Africa, played together while their parents attended a conference in August 1985.*

*The Hand of the Cause of God Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá with friends at the International Bahá'í Youth Conference held in Lima, Peru, from 2 to 6 August 1985.*

*Women in a sewing class taught by a Bahá'í in Nagalur, Tamil Nadu, India, early in 1983.*

**5.h. Extension Teaching Goals**

In 13 countries the number of Local Assemblies which have planned extension teaching activities was quintupled. In 18 countries of Africa, 15 of the Americas, 9 of Asia, 8 of Australasia, and 7 of Europe, for a total of 57 countries or territories, the number of such communities was more than doubled.

In 157 countries or territories believers are undertaking vigorous local teaching activities: 47 in Africa, 42 in the Americas, 21 in Asia, 19 in Australasia, 28 in Europe. In 40 countries at least two-thirds of the Local Assemblies conduct local teaching activities, while in 35 more between one-third and two-thirds of the communities report local teaching activities.

*Extension Teaching Goals*

| *Continent* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1980* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1986* | *Per cent of Total LSAs* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 232 | 1,165 | 16% | 402% |
| Americas | 731 | 1,274 | 20% | 74% |
| Asia | 294 | 759 | 4% | 158% |
| Australasia | 197 | 270 | 32% | 37% |
| Europe | 201 | 379 | 53% | 89% |
| **World** | **1,655** | **3,847** | **12%** | **132%** |

The expansion process of the Cause has been greatly aided by the increase in the number of Local Assemblies which have adopted extension teaching goals in 145 countries of the world. Countries which have extension teaching goals in over two-thirds of their communities number 23, whereas those with between one-third and two-thirds of their local communities with these goals number 28.

**5.i. Local Teaching Activities**

In 11 countries or territories of the world the number of Local Assemblies engaged in local teaching activities increased by more than five times; and in a total of 32 countries this number increased by over 100 per cent. In 17 countries, all local communities are participating in this activity. (see table below).

**5.j. Local Deepening Activities**

There are now 4,665 communities for which deepening activities have been reported, an increase of 3,313 from the beginning of the Plan. In 7 countries the number was increased by more than 400 per cent. Overall, 41 countries have at least doubled their number of communities having deepening activities, and in 18 countries all local communities have such activities.

The promotion of deepening activities and the spiritualization of Bahá'í communities were especially emphasized during this Plan. The number of countries or territories of the globe in which believers, aided by the ever-enriching literature of the Faith, are reported to be deepening themselves in the fundamental verities of the Cause stands at 160: 47 in Africa, 41 in the Americas, 24 in Asia, 19 in Australasia, 29 in Europe. Over two-thirds of the communities

*Local Teaching Activities*

| *Continent* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1980* | *No. of Local Assemblies 1986* | *Per cent of Total LSAs* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 155 | 1,980 | 27% | 1,177% |
| Americas | 768 | 1,817 | 28% | 137% |
| Asia | 127 | 1,033 | 6% | 713% |
| Australasia | 194 | 352 | 41% | 81% |
| Europe | 216 | 517 | 72% | 139% |
| **World** | **1,460** | **5,699** | **17%** | **290%** |

in 38 countries are reported as having local deepening activities. An additional 38 countries report between one-third and two-thirds of their communities are participating in this field of community life.

The beginning of the fundamental transformation in local Bahá'í community life which these world-wide increases signalize has been achieved through sacrifice, effort, and perseverance. The continuing and challenging task of nurturing nascent local institutions will increasingly evoke the latent capacity of national communities and test their strength.

## 2.6. BULLETINS AND NEWSLETTERS

The substantial increase in the number of Bahá'í newsletters and periodicals is another indication of the growing capacity and maturity of Bahá'í institutions around the world. The Seven Year Plan witnessed the appearance of 277 new Bahá'í periodicals. These periodicals have been published in all major world languages, for a total of 58 languages. The impressive trend towards establishment of new periodicals and newsletters has been accelerating throughout the Plan and has occurred on every continent: 54 new ones in Africa; 90 in the Americas; 56 in Asia; 16 in Australasia; and 61 in Europe.

In the past four years the total number of issues of nationally-distributed periodicals received by the World Centre has tripled from 1,028 to 3,037. Due to particular needs or circumstances of Bahá'í communities, most newsletters have been published on an ongoing basis since their inception. At the beginning of the Plan 246 national periodicals were being received at the World Centre. Currently 432 reach the World Centre; an increase of 75 per cent. A portion of the 277 bulletins and newsletters initiated during the Plan appears to have ceased publishing before 1986; this is why the difference between the 1979 figure and that for 1986 is not 277. The following table shows the increase in active periodicals for each continent.

*Number of Active Periodicals*

| *Continent* | *No. of Active Periodicals 1979* | *No. of Active Periodicals 1986* | *Per cent Increase* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 48 | 80 | 67% |
| Americas | 73 | 115 | 58% |
| Asia | 54 | 115 | 113% |
| Australasia | 21 | 30 | 43% |
| Europe | 50 | 92 | 84% |
| **World** | **246** | **432** | **76%** |

Effective compilation and distribution of local, regional, national, and international news and information strengthen the Bahá'í community at every level. The regular arrival of a Bahá'í journal prompts study which increases understanding of the scope and importance of the Faith, and confirms the Bahá'í identity of the individual believer. Widespread awareness of the progress of the Faith promotes unity among the friends, and new administrative skills must be developed in order to gather news and produce articles. Some communities use newsletters for distributing Bahá'í Scripture or for deepening programmes. Newsletters and bulletins are almost universally used for disseminating messages of the Universal House of Justice, supplemented in some countries by taped translations of the messages.

Specific goals calling for prompt and regular dissemination of newsletters were assigned to the communities of Brazil, Ecuador, Guyana, India, Burma, and the Marshall Islands, each of which won its goal. In India, where emphasis has been placed on development of newsletters in the major regional languages of the country, 31 regional newsletters are now distributed in a total of 14 languages, in addition to the national newsletter. Pakistan produces 11 different periodicals in a total of five languages, Switzerland has eight periodicals in three languages, and Papua New Guinea disseminates four in three languages. In some countries such as Canada,

*First newsletters of new National Spiritual Assemblies formed between Riḍván 1983–86. These are from (shown clockwise from top left): Gabon, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Cook Islands, Canary Islands, Equatorial Guinea, Grenada, Martinique, Eastern Caroline Islands, Cape Verde, and the Commonwealth of Dominica. Saint Lucia is in the middle.*

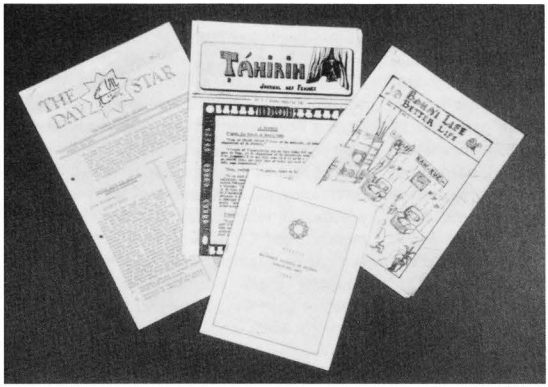
*A representative sampling of Bahá'í special interest journals which began publication between Riḍván 1983–86 and which are published in English, French, German, Italian, Persian, and Spanish.*

Fiji, Malawi, and Pakistan, the national newsletter is written in a bilingual format, while some National Assemblies translate the national newsletter into two or more vernacular languages and others include vernacular inserts. As one example, the National Assembly of South and West Africa publishes its newsletter in English, Afrikaans, and four African tribal languages. Dozens of other countries produce periodicals in two or more languages, some intended for world-wide distribution. Many National Assemblies send regular newsletters to Local Assemblies for their Nineteen Day Feasts. Malaysia, which distributes a national newsletter in four languages and regional ones in three, reports that circulation of its newsletters increased by 100 per cent during the Plan. Several other Assemblies report that they have upgraded their bulletins by including photographs and personal teaching stories.

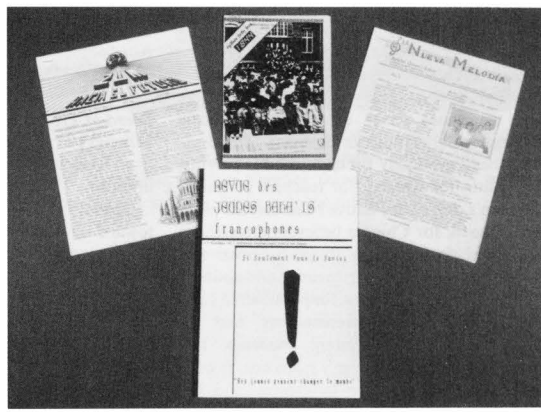
With circulation ranging from local to international, a wide variety of Bahá'í newsletters and magazines serves the needs of specific groups or populations of believers. There are periodicals especially for children, for parents, for youth, for women, for teachers of Bahá'í children's classes, for native believers, for pioneers abroad, for Chinese believers throughout the world, for Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, for local treasurers and national treasurers' representatives, for public affairs and public information representatives, and for Persian believers in western countries. For example, *Varqá*, a children's magazine, is published in India in nine languages, and the German edition is printed in Germany. The Netherlands produces *Quddús* for youth; *Helping Hand*, published in Hawaii, offers assistance with child education and parenting; and *Art of Living*, produced in Zambia, examines health and other topics related to social and economic development. Six new newsletters have radio as their focus, and there are nine new titles relating to Bahá'í studies. *Pulse of the Pioneer* (Canada), *Pioneer Post* (United States), *Pacific Pioneer* (Australia), and *Asia Pioneer News* (published by the Continental Pioneer Committee for Asia) are all geared to the needs of international pioneers. A number of newsletters are also produced by National Teaching Committees, Committees for Spiritual Enrichment, Family Life Committees, Bahá'í Education Committees, Social and Economic Development Committees, External Affairs Committees, and University Clubs.

The Continental Boards of Counsellors and Auxiliary Boards also produce newsletters which share news, information, and stories among Board members and assistants, respectively. *African Highlights* and its French counterpart, *Clous de l'Afrique*, share the stated goal of creating an atmosphere of love, unity, and a sense of intimacy among Auxiliary Board members and Counsellors in Africa. This effort is further augmented by the production of *Teaching Flash. Boletin Bahá'í* and its predecessor have served a similar purpose in Latin America since the 1960s. *News Bulletin* is produced in Australasia, while *Newsletter* and *Newsletter for Auxiliary Board Members* are produced by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe. Newsletters published by the Auxiliary Boards to inform, encourage, and inspire the assistants to Auxiliary Board members include *Assistants' Bulletin for the Board of Protection in Bangladesh, The Assistants* and *Victory Fingers* in India, *Arise to Assist* from Kenya, and *Musá'id* in Pakistan, written in Urdu.

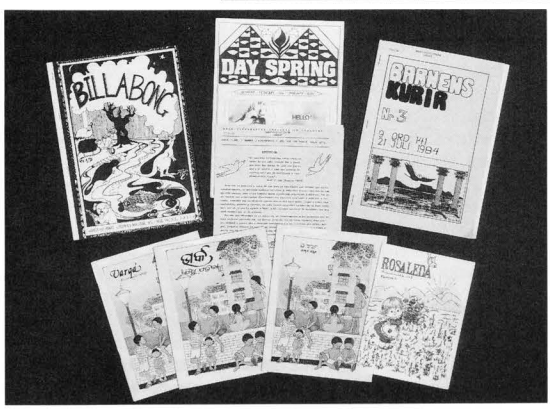
Several Bahá'í periodicals are oriented toward a substantially non-Bahá'í audience. The revival of *Herald of the South* in an attractive colour format designed to appeal to a general audience, including non-Bahá'ís, was a significant achievement of the National Assemblies of Australia and New Zealand, in response to goals of the Seven Year Plan. The National Assembly of Germany was assigned the task of reviving its journal *Bahá'í-Briefe*, which was accomplished in 1984. Scholarly and literary publications intended for both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í audiences include *Opinioni Bahá'í* produced in Italy; *La Pensée Bahá'íe* from Switzerland; *World Order* produced in the United States; *Pensamiento Bahá'í* from Spain; and various publications from Associations for Bahá'í Studies. Canada produces a Bahá'í Studies bulletin, notebook and monograph series; while Chile, Central South Zaire, French- and German-speaking Europe, and the West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies, based in Nigeria, distribute newsletters. As the Faith has emerged from obscurity, public information needs have increased and a new quarterly, *U.S. Bahá'í Report*, has been launched to acquaint prominent people with the activities




*A selection of newsletters for women in various languages that commenced publication in the period Riḍván 1983–1986.*




*A selection of newsletters for youth in various languages that commenced publication in the period Riḍván 1983–1986.*




*A selection of newsletters for children in various languages that commenced publication in the period Riḍván 1983–1986.*

of the Bahá'í community. It is being distributed without charge to all United States Senators and Representatives, major media networks and newspapers, influential members of Government, and international organizations.

The effectiveness of Bahá'í news organs in binding together the Bahá'í community was clearly evident to Bahá'í travelling teachers who visited Tanna in Vanuatu, one of the most primitive of the Melanesian islands. After driving along narrow dirt roads through the jungle, they reached the home of one of the island believers, who asked, 'How are the dear friends in Írán?'

## 2.7. ACQUISITION AND USE OF BAHÁ'Í PROPERTIES

The acquisition of 647 new properties by 134 national communities during the course of the Plan has enhanced the ability of the Bahá'ís to carry forward the work of the Cause. These properties include 22 national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (two additional national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds were acquired by conversion of local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds), 37 national endowments, and 16 Temple sites. There were 317 district and local Bahá'í Centres acquired for spiritual, social, and administrative activities and for fostering Bahá'í community life, as called for by the Universal House of Justice. In addition, 255 other properties were acquired world-wide, including summer schools, teaching institutes, and a number of bequests to the Faith. A total of 118 properties were donated to the Cause.

| *Continent* | *Total* | *National Ḥaẓíra* | *National Endowments* | *Temple Sites* | *Local/ District Ḥaẓíra* | *Other* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 197 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 111 | 67 |
| Americas | 196 | 8 | 13 | 1 | 78 | 96 |
| Asia | 115 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 53 | 47 |
| Australasia | 70 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 37 | 23 |
| Europe | 69 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 38 | 22 |
| **World** | **647** | **22** | **37** | **16** | **317** | **255** |

Of these 647 properties, 120 were acquired during the first phase, 332 during the second phase, and 195 during the third phase.

### 7.a. Notable Property Achievements

The inauguration of the Landegg Conference Centre in Switzerland overlooking Lake Constance took place over the weekend of 4–5 June 1983 when the National Spiritual Assembly welcomed more than 200 guests from many European countries to the ceremony. The facilities include rooms for 120 guests and four conference rooms that can accommodate 400 people. The Centre is being used for week-long and weekend schools, seminars and conferences throughout the year.

In 1985 the National Spiritual Assembly of the Netherlands embarked on a similar venture by purchasing a property of 23 acres in Groesbeek. This property is undergoing renovations under the direction of the National Assembly and a local Bahá'í architect.

New Zealand accomplished part of its goal of establishing a permanent Bahá'í Summer School by acquiring, on 5 August 1985, a site of over 21 hectares in Raglan.

Ireland reported that a film crew had visited the new National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Dublin. This new Centre was acquired in October 1982 and already has enhanced the image of the Bahá'í community in that country.

Brazil acquired 20 local and district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds during the course of the Plan, including six outstanding district Centres in different provinces.

In Paris, on 25 April 1985, the inauguration of the new National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds took place with the attendance of representatives from the Government and the press. The Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds occupies a three-storey building in a section of Paris where 'Abdu'l-Bahá spent much of His time during His two visits to the city; the Guardian had expressed the desire that the

Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds be located there.

In Western Samoa, a property across the main road from the site of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was purchased. It includes nine acres of land and a house which will serve as the new office of the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa.

The National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the National Spiritual Assembly of Burundi, located in Bujumbura, was inaugurated in September 1985. This is a particularly significant achievement considering the numerous legal problems the National Spiritual Assembly has had to face, including loss of an earlier site. The present land was acquired after much effort of believers in the area, with the assistance of the Auxiliary Board member.

**7.b. Property Goals of the Plan**

During the first phase of the Seven Year Plan, 70 goals were assigned to 42 national communities, which included general property goals and nine specific acquisition goals. The second phase of the Plan witnessed an increase in the assigned goals in the Bahá'í world: there were 201 goals assigned to 98 national communities, including 80 goals for 190 specific acquisitions. The third phase of the Plan saw 45 communities assigned a total of 59 goals, 27 of which called for the acquisition of 44 specific properties. A number of the goals were reiterated throughout the phases of the Plan.

In total, 77 national communities were given specific property goals to fill, and so far 29 of these communities have accomplished their goals. Of the 213 specific property goals assigned to these communities 121, or 57 per cent of the total, have been fully accomplished.

**7.c. National Properties**

During the Plan the House of Justice called for the acquisition of 15 national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in all five continents. The 13 already acquired are in Bophuthatswana (1983), Burundi (1983), Cape Verde (1983), Equatorial Guinea (1982), Gabon (1981), South West Africa/Namibia (1982, by conversion of a local Centre), Bermuda (1982, by conversion of a local Centre), Dominica (1983), Grenada (1983),—(1984), Tuvalu (1982), France (1982) and Ireland (1982). The National Assembly of St. Lucia had to stop construction due to legal problems with the contractor, and the National Assembly of Ciskei is in the process of acquiring a national Centre; these two goals will be completed during the next Plan.

There is now a total of 149 national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds: 45 in Africa, 40 in the Americas, 27 in Asia, 17 in Australasia, and 20 in Europe. These properties have been vital for the presen-

*The Landegg Conference Centre, shown centre front, was inaugurated by the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland in June 1983.*

tation of a positive impression of the Faith to the public; for example, the United States National Assembly noted that its new administrative building has enhanced the reputation of the Faith. Many national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds became the focus of media attention during the Plan, prompting Bahá'í communities all over the world to devote extra attention to the condition of these properties. The United States and Chile were among the communities that considered the acquisition of new national Centres to be one of their major achievements of the Plan; this improved their administrative efficiency and sparked new vigour and enthusiasm among the friends.

Eight National Assemblies were assigned the goal of acquiring a Temple site, and three of these have been achieved: in South West Africa/Namibia (1985), Tonga (1981), and Tuvalu (1985). Five remain to be acquired: in Bophuthatswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Somalia. There are 127 sites for Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs now owned by Bahá'í communities: 38 in Africa, 31 in the Americas, 24 in Asia, 14 in Australasia, 20 in Europe.

Eight of the 15 national endowment goals assigned during the Seven Year Plan have been achieved: Bophuthatswana (1984), Equatorial Guinea (1982), Gabon (1985), Bermuda (1979), Grenada (1985), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1986), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (1986), Tuvalu (1986). The seven national communities which have yet to accomplish this goal are Burundi, Cape Verde, Ciskei, Somalia, French Guiana, Martinique, and Nepal. The world total of Bahá'í national endowments is now 170: 46 in Africa, 48 in the Americas, 37 in Asia, 18 in Australasia, 21 in Europe.

**7.d. District and Local Properties**

Forty-one national communities were assigned goals to acquire or construct 79 district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds during the Plan. So far 41 of these have been completed, leaving 38 to be completed or acquired. Regional Bahá'í Centres are widely used for nationally planned consolidation programmes, as well as for teaching conferences, summer schools, and other activities. Regional Centres in rural areas can provide a focus for activity and create unity in areas where there are large numbers of Bahá'ís.

A total goal of 85 local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds was assigned to 20 national communities; 47 have been accomplished thus far. A further 11 property goals of acquiring summer schools, teaching institutes, local endowments, and cemeteries were assigned, nine of which have been fully achieved. The outstanding goal is for Tonga to acquire two more cemeteries.

The total number of district and local Bahá'í Centres and Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds is now 1,813: 1,067 in Africa, 337 in the Americas, 266 in Asia, 94 in Australasia, 49 in Europe.

**7.e. Maintenance and Use of Properties**

To demonstrate the importance of proper upkeep of properties of the Faith throughout the world, the Universal House of Justice assigned 60 National Spiritual Assemblies goals regarding the maintenance of Bahá'í Centres. To achieve this goal many National Assemblies have appointed National Properties Committees to look after their properties and report to the National Assembly the condition of the Centres throughout the country. A number of national communities have allocated a fund for the continued maintenance of their properties. Upkeep of local properties has proven to be a challenging responsibility which requires an active and mature Local Assembly; several countries reported that unused and poorly maintained Bahá'í Centres are a conspicuous problem.

The need to protect vacant Bahá'í plots of land and other unused properties such as Temple sites, plots for Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, and endowments has been addressed by some communities by the temporary development of the property. World-wide there are at least ten projects involving the development of Bahá'í properties. By planting crops and trees, Bahá'í claims to otherwise undeveloped land can often be protected, the value of the land and its beauty enhanced, erosion minimized, funds generated, and a spirit of co-operation fostered among the believers who volunteeer to participate. Bahá'ís in Rwanda planted over 4,000 trees on their Temple site, and in Benin a title deed for the Temple site was obtained after fruit trees had been planted on the land.

There has been a general increase in the uses of Bahá'í Centres as called for in the Plan. The local Centres, apart from being administrative centres of the Local Assembly, are used for dawn prayers, Nineteen Day Feasts, Holy Days and Anniversaries, deepening classes, youth

gatherings, women's activities, teaching the Faith, and for general social functions organized by the Local Assembly. The growing trend to use local Centres for tutorial schools and other development projects will assist in solving the problem of under-utilized and poorly maintained Bahá'í Centres. There are now 184 tutorial schools (34 per cent of the total number) which are conducted in local Centres.

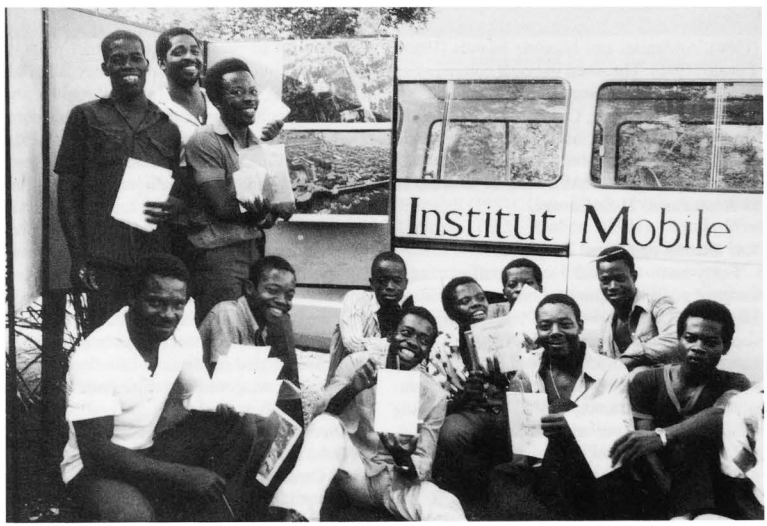
**7.f. Mobile Teaching Institutes**

For the second phase of the Seven Year Plan the Universal House of Justice assigned the goal of acquiring audio-visual Mobile Teaching Institutes to nine national communities in Africa: the Central African Republic, Chad, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania, Transkei, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Eight of these National Assemblies have acquired their Mobile Institutes, and Rwanda is in the process of purchasing one.

Mobile Institutes are vehicles equipped with audio-visual facilities such as cameras, slide projectors, public address systems, tape recorders, and various introductory books and pamphlets. These vehicles are under the sponsorship of the National Assembly and are often sent to the rural areas of the country to supplement the proclamation and consolidation work in a region where a teaching project or some other activity is in progress.

All National Assemblies with Mobile Institutes reported that they were a tremendous help in the teaching effort and in providing easy access to the remote parts of the country. The first teaching trip of the Mobile Institute in the Central African Republic, in the months of April and May 1984, to two of the remotest provinces in the country, was reported to be an overwhelming success. The words 'La Foi Bahá'íe'—Institut Mobile' painted on the door made the vehicle a rolling proclamation of the Faith. The sight of the van brought cries of 'Alláh-u-Abhá' and 'Yá Bahá'ul-Abhá' from the friends in these areas who seldom receive visitors.

In October 1984 the Universal House of Justice encouraged the National Spiritual Assemblies of Canada, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States to invite a number of youth or young adults to offer a year or two to serve the Faith, in




*The Mobile Institute in the Central African Republic has met with great success.*

response to the appeal in the message of the House of Justice to the youth dated 3 January 1984, and as part of their participation in the International Year of Youth, by serving, in collaboration with one of the indigenous believers, as drivers or administrators of Mobile Teaching Institutes in the African countries.

The success of the Mobile Institutes has sparked enthusiasm in other countries in Africa, which, as a result, have also acquired vehicles to use as Mobile Teaching Institutes; and these have been counted as supplementary achievements of the Plan. Botswana, Burkina Faso, and the Gambia acquired Mobile Institutes for the first time during the Seven Year Plan, while Cameroon and Kenya replaced ones that had been obtained earlier. The National Spiritual Assembly of Benin is in the process of acquiring a vehicle.

## 2.8 LEGAL STATUS OF THE FAITH

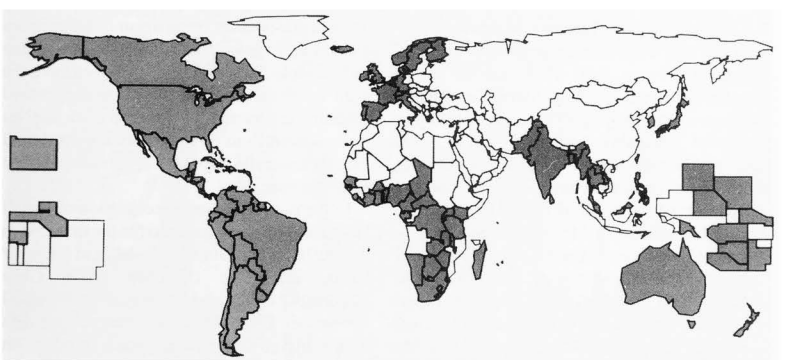
Although few specific goals to attain legal recognition of the Faith were assigned during the Seven Year Plan, progress has been made in the incorporation of National Assemblies, in the attainment of legal recognition of Bahá'í marriage and Bahá'í Holy Days, and in obtaining tax exemptions for Bahá'í properties. The world-wide attention focused on the Bahá'í community as a result of the persecutions in Írán has, in many areas, caused those in authority to grant the Bahá'í Faith equal status with other religions; this is apparent in invitations to serve on official councils, solicitations of the advice or opinion of the Bahá'í community, and similar measures.

The Universal House of Justice has provided the following definition: 'The minimum requirement for the official recognition of the Faith by a government is that the Assembly be accorded the status of an independent legal personality able to sue and be sued, to enter into contracts and to hold title to property both real and personal. The incorporation document should also, as far as is legally possible, embody the provisions of the Bahá'í national or local constitution, which are expressed in the model Declaration of Trust and By-Laws.'

Among the most important instances of legal recognition of the independent status of the Faith was a constitutional amendment in Pakistan (8 April 1981) naming the Bahá'í Faith specifically among the non-Muslim faiths of the country; this was preceded by a letter from the Ministry for Religious Affairs declaring the Faith a religious 'minority' among 'other non-Muslims'. Other specific forms of recognition are outlined below.

### 8.a. National Spiritual Assembly Incorporation

At the present time 113 National Spiritual Assemblies are legally incorporated: 34 in Africa, 34 in the Americas, 16 in Asia, 13 in Australasia, 16 in Europe. The Universal House



*Shaded areas of the map depict the 113 National Spiritual Assemblies which are legally incorporated, Ridván (21 April) 1986.*

of Justice has clarified that this goal is considered achieved when the Assembly is accorded the status of an independent legal personality able to sue and be sued, to enter into contracts, and to hold title to property both real and personal. Insofar as legally possible, the incorporation document should also embody the provisions of the Bahá'í national or local constitution, as expressed in the model Declaration of Trust and By-Laws, and should not contain any provision contrary to Bahá'í administrative principles.

The following 11 National Assemblies were incorporated during the Plan: Bophuthatswana (April 1984), Cape Verde (July 1985), Gabon (February 1985), Sierra Leone (April 1981), Southwest Africa/Namibia (August 1982), and Transkei (October 1980) in Africa; Bermuda (August 1985), Dominica (December 1985), and the Leeward Islands (November 1983) in the Americas; the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (November 1984) in Asia; and the Marshall Islands (April 1986) in Australasia. All of these except Sierra Leone were new Assemblies of the Plan, and specific incorporation goals were set for Bermuda, Bophuthatswana, the Leeward Islands, and Southwest Africa/Namibia. Other specific goals for Ethiopia, Bahamas, Tuvalu, and Austria are in process. In addition, the National Assembly of Uganda is reported to have been 're-registered' with the new Government. Active efforts towards the fulfilment of this important legal objective continue in all countries where it is legally feasible.

**8.b. Local Spiritual Assembly Incorporation**

While only a few specific goals were assigned during the Seven Year Plan for the incorporation of Local Spiritual Assemblies, steady progress in attaining legal personality status for the local governing bodies of Bahá'í communities has continued. Presently a total of 2,309 Local Assemblies have been incorporated in 85 countries of the world: 289 Local Assemblies in 17 countries of Africa, 879 Local Assemblies in 31 countries of the Americas, 669 Local Assemblies in 9 countries of Asia, 162 Local Assemblies in 13 countries of Australasia, and 310 Local Assemblies in 15 countries of Europe.

Among important Local Spiritual Assembly incorporations achieved during this period are those in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where a legislative act has provided incorporation for all present and future Local Spiritual Assemblies; Cayenne in French Guiana; San Marino, and Macau. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Addis Ababa has also been re-registered with the High Court of Ethiopia.

**8.c. Recognition of Bahá'í Marriage**

Bahá'í marriage is now legally recognized in 52 countries: 8 in Africa, 13 in the Americas, 10 in Asia, 13 in Australasia, 8 in Europe. This means, according to the definition provided by the Universal House of Justice, that 'Bahá'í authority to conduct and certify marriages is legal; stated in another way, recognition is attained when a Bahá'í or Bahá'ís, as representative(s) of the Faith, is/are empowered to conduct and certify a legally valid marriage, whether the Bahá'í ceremony is legally sufficient or not'. In some countries this is possible under existing laws, whether or not specific reference is made to the name of the Faith.

During the Seven Year Plan, Bahá'í marriage has been recognized in Barbados (March 1980), Mauritius (January 1982), Burma (August 1984), and Uganda (March 1986). The appointment and acceptance by the Malaysian Government of 78 Bahá'í marriage registrars greatly increased the ability of the believers to conduct Bahá'í marriages in all regions of that country.

**8.d. Recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days**

Another facet in attainment of equal status with other religions is the recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days. The Universal House of Justice has clarified that this is considered to be achieved when 'a government department or office issues a document stating that, on one or more of the Bahá'í Holy Days, Bahá'í employees have the right to be excused from work, and/or Bahá'í students are permitted to absent themselves from school, and/or institutions owned and entirely controlled by Bahá'ís may close on the nine specified days'.

In the past seven years recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days has been attained for the first time in Bophuthatswana (June 1984), Malawi (October 1983), Zimbabwe (October 1982), Chile (September 1981), and the Republic of Ireland (December 1979). In some countries this has been achieved on a national basis, in others on a state or provincial basis, and in others by local or district school boards or local governments. In most cases the permission applies to

school children and/or government employees. In other cases, students or employees have been permitted to absent themselves from school or work without penalty, although there is no official documentation of this right. Efforts continue toward clarification of this question in many countries for which the Department of Statistics records are still incomplete.

In Hawaii, where a bill acknowledging 21 March as the Bahá'í New Year had been signed by the Governor 10 years earlier, intense public indignation at the refusal of a school board to grant excused absences to Bahá'í children for Holy Days led to a legislative act in June 1981 permitting excused absences for all non-Christian pupils to observe their Holy Days. In Australia, Bahá'í Holy Days are indicated on the Government calendar. In the state of New Jersey, in the United States, a Department of Education letter to school superintendents and administrators provides a list of Holy Days (including seven Bahá'í Holy Days) on which it is mandatory that students be excused, if requested. In Laos, permission has been granted for the Bahá'ís to meet for the Holy Days and Nineteen Day Feasts without having to obtain special permission each time, as generally required.

Recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days has now been achieved in 71 countries: 14 in Africa, 22 in the Americas, 14 in Asia, 9 in Australasia, 12 in Europe.

### 8.e. Tax Exemptions

One indicator of governmental awareness of the Faith's status is the granting of tax exemption for Bahá'í properties and religious articles and materials. Bahá'í institutions have sought to obtain tax-exempt status since the time of the beloved Guardian, and this has now been accomplished in 54 countries around the world. There are 15 Bahá'í national communities in Africa, 15 in the Americas, 11 in Asia, 7 in Australasia, and 6 in Europe which have been granted tax exemptions for their properties or imported materials.

*Bahá'í children performing during a Naw-Rúz celebration held in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1985.*

Tax exemptions were granted for the first time during the Seven Year Plan in 17 of these countries, or almost one-third of the total number. They are:

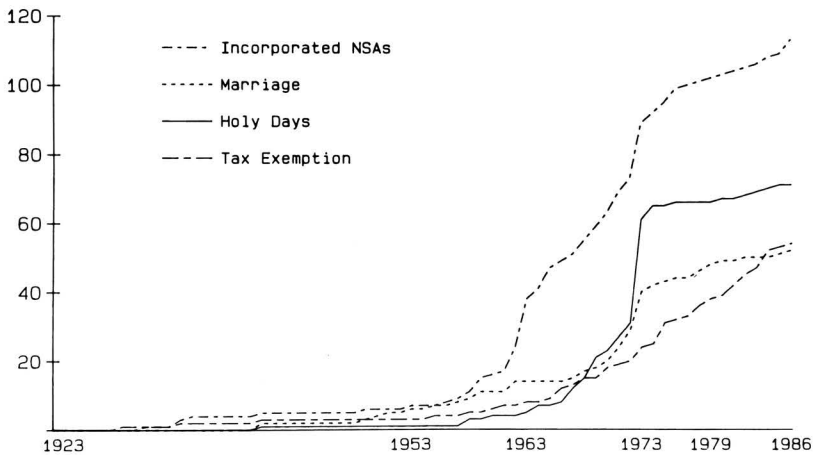
| | |
|---|---|
| Argentina | November 1983 |
| Bahamas | March 1984 |
| Benin | May 1982 |
| Cyprus | March 1982 |
| Ethiopia | July 1980 |
| Guyana | June 1984 |
| Korea | December 1982 |
| Liberia | January 1984 |
| Papua New Guinea | January 1984 |
| Seychelles | April 1979 |
| Sierra Leone | February 1980 |
| Solomon Islands | October 1981 |
| S.W. Africa/Namibia | August 1985 |
| Sri Lanka | May 1980 |
| Transkei | August 1981 |
| Turkey | August 1980 |
| Zimbabwe | March 1984 |

The line graph below indicates the growth in the number of national communities which have obtained various types of legal recognition.

**8.f. Other Forms of Legal Recognition**

In addition to these forms of legal recognition which Bahá'í communities have worked to achieve, the past seven years have witnessed a remarkable augmentation of the legal status accorded to the Faith by national governments. Many reports have been received from all over the world indicating that the Bahá'í community is regarded by the authorities as equal to the other religious communities of the nation. The historic response to *The Promise of World Peace*, described in Sections V.4. and V.5., is the foremost example of this trend; others include the attempts of governments to learn about and accommodate Bahá'í law; the invitation of Bahá'í representatives to state occasions; and the appointment of Bahá'ís to national councils concerned with religious, social, educational, and humanitarian affairs.

In Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, the National Spiritual Assemblies have been requested by their respective Governments to explain the Bahá'í viewpoint in relation to proposed new laws regarding family affairs. The Supreme Court of Tonga has written to the Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly requesting its co-operation in the registration of deaths.




*Graph depicting increase in various types of recognition accorded the Bahá'í Faith 1923–1986.*

The Bahá'í Faith is listed on Government census forms in Swaziland and in Brunei. In Trinidad and Tobago, the courts requested a volume of Bahá'í Holy Writings to be used in court for taking oaths; the National Spiritual Assembly complied by supplying them with *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh.*

The inclusion of Bahá'í delegations at formal occasions has been reported by many National Spiritual Assemblies. Mozambique, Liberia, Fiji, and Chile were among the communities that sent representatives to official events. The Bahá'í community in some regions of Zaire is now represented at all official gatherings. The President of Chad met religious leaders in April 1985 and mentioned the Bahá'í Faith together with Christianity and Islám. In Swaziland a Bahá'í was one of two speakers to address a congregation of 10,000 at the dedication by the Government of an interdenominational church. Bahá'ís in Burkina Faso were invited, along with other religious groups, to collaborate in a vaccination project; in Kenya a District Divisional Officer asked the Bahá'ís to join Christians and Muslims in prayers for rain.

The National Council of Churches in Germany asked the National Spiritual Assembly in March 1983 for information and a Bahá'í prayer to publish in the calendar that is sent to their member churches. Bahá'ís in Kiribati were asked by the Ministry of Health and Community Affairs to nominate a candidate for a Commonwealth Youth Study Fellowship. The Civil Affairs Department in Taiwan gives annual awards for contribution to the religious welfare of the people; each year the National Assembly nominates believers for these awards. Bahá'ís in the United Kingdom have served on the Religious Education Council and the World Congress of Faiths Executive Committee. Also in the United Kingdom, Bahá'í viewpoints were included in the 1979 Standing Conference on Inter-Faith Dialogue in Education. In March 1981, Bahá'í representatives were appointed to the Commission on Education and Curriculum of the National Social Action Council of the Philippines. In Pakistan a Bahá'í delegate serves on the Divisional Minority Council. When the President of Guyana named an Advisory Committee for Religion in October 1985, a Bahá'í was asked to serve on the Committee.

In Canada the Faith has been granted non-governmental organization status with the Canadian International Development Agency, enabling co-operation and funding of many community service projects sponsored by Bahá'í institutions world-wide. In 1982 the American Bahá'í community was honoured by the United States Committee for UNICEF for service to the world's children.

## 2.9 BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTIONS: SETTING AN EXAMPLE

The significant and fundamental maturation of Bahá'í institutions which has characterized the Seven Year Plan is evident in the confidence and assurance with which National Spiritual Assemblies have dealt with officials and the media regarding the crisis in Írán; their attainment of financial self-sufficiency; the tremendous increase in the level of functioning of Local Spiritual Assemblies; their noteworthy efforts towards encouraging enrichment of Bahá'í literature; and the world-wide initiatives in social and economic development of the Bahá'í community.

The inevitable consequences of the consolidation of Bahá'í institutions is already apparent in the leadership which some Bahá'í communities have been asked to provide for their towns and nations. In villages in the Philippines, in rural Bolivia and Peru, in Canada, Sénégal, and Swaziland, government authorities have sought the assistance of Bahá'í institutions which have become efficient channels for the reconstructive power of Bahá'u'lláh. The Local Assembly of Sugarbush, Transkei, initiated a community-wide self-help effort when it opened a tutorial school. The parents, most of whom were not Bahá'ís, decided to organize a feeding scheme for the children; later they developed income-generating activities to support the school. In Kolonga, Tonga, the Bahá'ís were elected by the Produce Board to be responsible for the packing of bananas in that village. The tutorial schools and Local Spiritual Assemblies in the Mangyan area of the Philippines have become accepted advisors in their communities. The Ministry of Health relies on them to disseminate health information, as the people will listen to the Bahá'ís. The Bureau of Forestry in the Province has turned solely to the Local Spiritual Assemblies to determine the right to receive

certificates of ownership and settlement of land, even for non-Bahá'ís.

After receiving *The Promise of World Peace* in February 1986, the Minister of Culture in Sénégal requested the participation of the Bahá'í community in elaborating a cultural charter for the country which would provide a set of principles defining the orientation of the Government toward cultural development. It was hoped that the Bahá'í contribution could assist in creating unity in diversity in Sénégal.

In Canada the National Assembly's decision to participate in the Inter-Faith Programme for Public Awareness on Nuclear Issues was extremely productive in terms of contacts made and recognition gained for the Faith and its distinguishing principles. The Bahá'í community was the only group to respond when the Roman Catholic Church, the Jewish Community, the United Church, and the Anglican Church circulated a proposal to all the other faiths and denominations in Canada regarding a series of public hearings on various nuclear questions. After careful study of the proposal and receiving assurances that the principles of the Faith would be upheld, the Bahá'ís agreed to join the coalition as a full sponsor. The non-partisan contribution of the Bahá'ís led to a positive response from industry, Government, and academia and paved the way for open consultation and discussion among these groups and the public, which had been the goal of the organization. When the Chairman of the coalition (a former moderator of the largest Protestant denomination in Canada, the United Church) addressed the Government, he identified the participation of the Bahá'ís as proof of the non-partisan nature of the report. He attributed the change in tone of the document, from one which was judgemental to one which was unbiased, to the contribution of the Bahá'ís. The National Assembly of Canada reported that 'what has impressed all of the Bahá'ís who have participated in this process is the potency of the Bahá'í Teachings, which we often tend to take for granted, to guide us through very vexed issues and to win the appreciation of people of goodwill from many different schools of thought'.

Another example of government authorities responding postively when Bahá'í principles are presented as a solution to their problems comes from South America, where Counsellor Eloy Anello was requested by two governments to teach courses on community development explicitly based on the Bahá'í teachings. These courses for rural school teachers and rural officials focus on the concept of excellence and draw on *The Secret of Divine Civilization* and other Bahá'í Writings. After repeating the course several times in Chuquiçaca Province for the Ministry of Education of Bolivia, Counsellor Anello taught similar courses in Peru at the invitation of the Peruvian Government.

The National Assembly of Swaziland was one of the non-governmental agencies asked by the Canadian International Development Agency to distribute relief funds directly to the victims of Cyclone Dominica which struck Swaziland on 24 January 1984. The whole Bahá'í administration in Swaziland mobilized to distribute funds directly to cyclone victims in a short period of time. Local Assemblies provided information quickly on the specific aid requirements of all the people within their area; and Local Co-ordinators appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly visited each homestead to verify the need and distribute the funds. Bahá'í Area Teaching Committees walked into areas where roads had been destroyed in order to deliver much-needed help to these communities. Requests for aid from all sections of the community were attended to without discrimination, and all recipients were told that the money came from the Canadian Government and not from the Bahá'ís. In total, the Bahá'í community devoted an estimated 590 hours to the project, travelled some 8,700 kilometres using their own vehicles, and did not request any reimbursement for administrative expenses. This exemplary instance of aid distribution came about because Bahá'í institutions were known to be capable: the National Assembly of Canada had gained the status of a registered non-governmental organization with the Canadian International Development Agency; the National Assembly of Swaziland acted quickly and efficiently to organize the effort; and the Local Assemblies and Area Teaching Committees of Swaziland were able to meet the responsibilities they were given.

# 3. SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

THE spiritual development of the Bahá'í community during the Plan provides ample proof that 'the inherent potentialities of the Cause for ordering human affairs' are becoming increasingly apparent. Two new Houses of Worship point to a way of life centred on worship and service. The sustained and varied activities of Bahá'í communities to enrich their spiritual lives, to develop their understanding through seasonal schools and institutes, and to promote the Bahá'í education of children have demonstrated their belief in the divine purpose of human life. The amazing achievements of Bahá'í youth, the expanding role of Bahá'í women, and the efforts exerted towards the development of Bahá'í family life show the transforming power of the Faith in action. The social and economic development activities of Bahá'í communities illustrate the interaction of spiritual understanding and practical action. The enrichment of Bahá'í literature has provided impetus for all these endeavours.

## 3.1. HOUSES OF WORSHIP

### 1.a. Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Samoa

The Bahá'í Temple of the Pacific Ocean is located on the island of Upolu, 550 metres above and overlooking Apia, the capital city of Western Samoa.

At Riḍván 1978, Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat was appointed architect and in September of that year his design for the Temple was approved by the Universal House of Justice. On 27 January 1979 His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II laid the foundation stone, and the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the representative of the Universal House of Justice, placed a small casket of Dust from the Sacred Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in a niche in the foundation stone.

The Samoans' informal and expressive way of life, the beautiful lush tropical landscape, and the interesting indigenous structures called Falés, with their open plan, geometric form, and high, steep, curved roofs were main sources of inspiration in the design of the Temple.

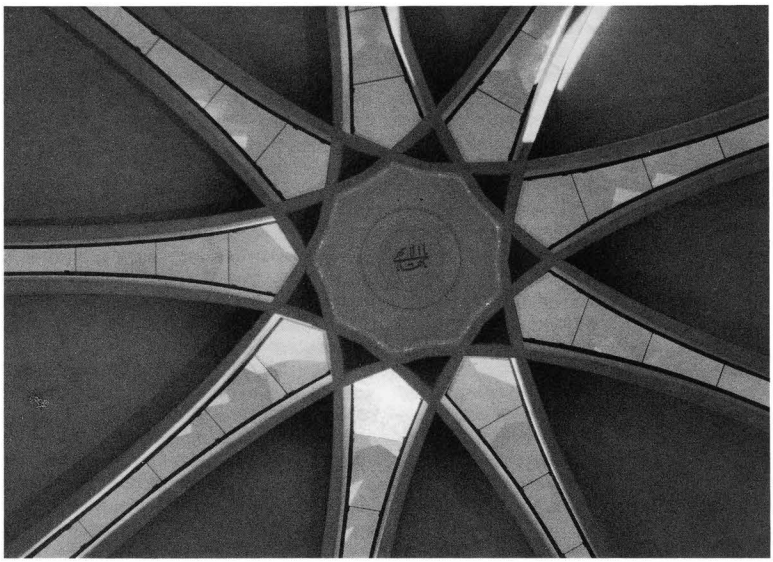
The white mosaic tiled dome rests atop nine pairs of buttresses and is clad in soft red granite to create the required visibility against the tropical green of the mountain. Nine pairs of splayed inner walls support nine pairs of ribs, the main structural members of the dome, which constitute the primary architectural feature of the building. Strips of reflective glazing, the arc windows, and wide expanse glazing over each of the nine entrance portals seem to draw the light through the structure itself. The movement of clouds in the tropical blue sky creates a 'moving stained-glass' effect between the ribs, giving the impression that the Temple is integrated with the sky; and the glass surface causes an iridescent effect when lit at night.

The dome and all internal structures are of white, reinforced concrete bush-hammered to a soft texture, accented with distinctive native hardwood joinery and finished with a warm red quarry tile floor. The main hall seats 500 and a mezzanine ringing the perimeter provides additional seating for 200, including the choir. A perimeter vestibule between the entrances and the sunken main hall can be used to seat more than 1,000 when required.

Earthquake codes were carefully considered in the structural design of the building. The dome is composed of nine entirely separate sections connected at the apex ring beam. Through the integration of large span windows, glass louvers, and concealed mechanical fans at the apex of the dome, natural ventilation is provided, thus avoiding the necessity of air-conditioning.

The height from the basement floor to the top of the dome is 31 metres. The dome is 19 metres high with a diameter of 27 metres.

The first concrete was poured in the presence of His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II on 18 December 1980. After soil testing and engineering studies, a contract was signed with a New Zealand contractor and a building permit was issued in August 1981. The subsoil of porous lava with lava tubes and cavities necessitated a vast amount of cement grouting under the foundations. By March 1983 the dome formwork had been set up and the concreting of the dome was completed in November 1983.



*Interior of the dome of the Bahá'í House of Worship near Apia, Western Samoa.*

Materials for the Temple came from various parts of the world: white aggregate from the island of Niue near Samoa, reinforcement bars and stainless steel from New Zealand, floor quarry tiles from Germany, white mosaic tiles for the dome from the United States, granite slabs, quarried in Australia, came from Italy, and various other materials were brought from Japan. Many workers were Samoan, and Bahá'í volunteers carried out roof-tiling and various other tasks. Tilers came from Japan, glaziers from Canada, and foremen from New Zealand.

A glazing subcontractor from Canada was assigned to carry out the aluminium joinery and dome glazing work. The dome ribs were glazed with reflective silver-tinted laminated glass using structural glazing techniques. The finishing work and dome glazing were completed on 31 August 1984, in time for the dedication ceremony. A few weeks before the ceremony hundreds of Bahá'ís began arriving from many parts of the world and helped with the landscaping of the Temple grounds and various other preparations.

An ancillary building of approximately 350 square metres has been built in the vicinity of the Temple. It has a simple open-plan design following the architecture of the traditional Samoan gathering halls. The heavy timber roof was constructed of local hardwood supported by concrete wall units covered by clay roof tiles. This building incorporates a meeting hall for about 200 people, administrative offices for the Temple, a library, and other necessary facilities.

The total construction cost of the seventh House of Worship of the Bahá'í world community was $6,500,000.

The dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár took place on 1 September 1984 in the presence of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the representative of the Universal House of Justice; His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, the Head of State of Western Samoa; Prime Minister Tofilau Eti; many other dignitaries and approximately 1,300 Samoans, as well as Bahá'í visitors from many countries. It was a glorious occasion which started with prayers and readings from

Bahá'í Scriptures, and talks by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II. Afterwards a traditional Samoan ceremony was held on the Temple grounds. A model of the House of Worship was presented to His Highness by Amatu'l-Bahá on behalf of the Universal House of Justice.

Services are now held in the Temple every Sunday, with 60 to 70 in attendance, including the choir. The first publicly announced special service, attended by more than 500 guests, including His Highness the Malietoa and other dignitaries, commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and inaugurated the International Year of Peace. Members of the diplomatic corps participated in the service by reading selections from the world's Scriptures on the subject of peace.

**1.b. Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in India**

Before the beginning of the Seven Year Plan, the Universal House of Justice had approved the design of Mr. Faríburz Ṣahbá for the House of Worship in India and designated him as the architect. The foundation stone had been laid by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum on 17 October 1977, and excavation of the area had begun.

Located on a 24-acre site in South Delhi, the Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent suggests a lotus flower, a symbol of purity and divine grace for India's religious traditions. The dome of the central auditorium, 34.5 metres in diameter, is formed by nine inner lotus petals of marble-clad concrete and topped by a skylight. Nine outer petals, also of marble-clad concrete, surround the dome, and another ring of petals arches outward to form canopies over the nine entrances. A reception centre, library, and administrative offices are located on a series of terraces on either side of the main entrance steps. Nine reflecting pools surround the House of Worship, providing natural air cooling and conveying the impression that the lotus structure is floating on water.

A contract was awarded to one of the largest construction companies in India on the First Day of Riḍván 1980. Mobilization of the site saw the growth of a small township at Bahapur, including site offices, storage facilities, housing for the 400 labourers, and a primary school for their children. In order to expedite the work and provide the most benefit to the surrounding communities, labour-intensive, employment-creating construction methods were favoured: for example, all the excavated rock and earth were carried in headloads. A total quantity of 6,000 cubic metres of rock was excavated. The foundation was completed in December 1980.

The design of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár called for exposed or fair-faced concrete finishes for many of its columns, beams, and walls. In India this is still a novelty, and technical skills for developing different exposed concrete surfaces had to be developed at the site, with experiments taking place over a four-month period. While the columns rose in rapid succession, the basement areas and ancillary building floors were concreted.

The ninth of May 1981 marked the commencement, amidst prayers and distribution of sweets, of concreting the podium, or floor. This work was completed on 16 December 1981. The extremely high Delhi temperatures called for extraordinary care in quality control. Tonnes of ice had to be used in the concrete mix to lower its temperature, and most of the work was carried out during the cooler summer nights. Concrete was transported by women who made up a human conveyor belt, rushing from mixer to site with 25-kilogram headloads of concrete. It was estimated that during the 19 weeks taken to concrete the podium, each woman worker carried some 7,500 kilograms of concrete in 25-kilogram headloads over 21 kilometres in an eight-hour working day!

The first elements of the superstructure to be constructed were the nine massive arches that ring the main hall. These arches, six metres high and 10 metres wide, support the interior dome at the crown level point, and the edges of the outer and entrance leaves at their springing point. There were 150 tonnes of structural steel used in the temporary structure of the arches. The first arch was concreted on 26 March 1982. On 3 April the foundation stone and a brick from the Síyáh-Chál, the prison in Ṭihrán where Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in August 1852, were embedded in the crown of the entrance arch which faces 'Akká.

The lotus superstructure was designed to function as a series of skylights, with glazing provided at the apex of the inner leaves, the internal vertical surface of the outer leaves, and the external side of the entrance leaves. Light

filters into the hall in the way it passes through the inner folds of the lotus flower. The exquisite beauty of the lotus design is in the perfect symmetry and sheer lines of the petals. Adherence to the exact geometry of the design was critical in the construction of the superstructure. Sensitive instruments, such as theodolites and automatic levels, were not available; consequently alternative methods of measurement had to be devised.

Because the superstructure contains no elements with straight lines, it had to be described by three-dimensional Cartesian co-ordinates rather than ordinary plan and section drawings. Each co-ordinate is a numerical identification of a point in space, and thousands of such co-ordinates were used to define the exact curvature of the shell elements. Experimental full-scale sections of the different superstructure elements were built in timber in order to ensure geometric accuracy, used to make templates for checking individual formwork panels and assembled sets of panels.

When a gigantic staging had been erected on the auditorium floor to support the formwork of the inner leaves, the checked, numbered, formwork panels were raised to their respective positions and fastened in place. Panel by panel each inner leaf took shape, reaching 30 metres into the sky. Approximately 3,000 square metres of formwork were used for the inner leaves.

A drastic remobilization of the contractor's team was deemed essential by the architect and contractor at this point in order to overcome all technical problems and substantially increase the speed of the work. The contractor's new team was able to make good the previous delays during a one-year period, and completed the concreting of the superstructure two months ahead of schedule.

Both the white concrete shell construction and galvanized steel reinforcement were used for the first time in India. Special efforts had to be made to find sources of the best quality white aggregates and white sand for use with white cement in the construction of the shell. The complex back-staging and shuttering system, used to achieve jointless concrete shells of heights up to 25 metres, has been praised by engineers of international repute. Concreting of the inner leaves was completed on 20 September 1984, and on 29 September 1985 the concreting of the outer leaves was finished. The spherical interior dome has been designed by intersecting nine spheres, and is supported by 45 ribs. Concreting of the 45 ribs and 18 shells of the interior dome was completed in December 1985.

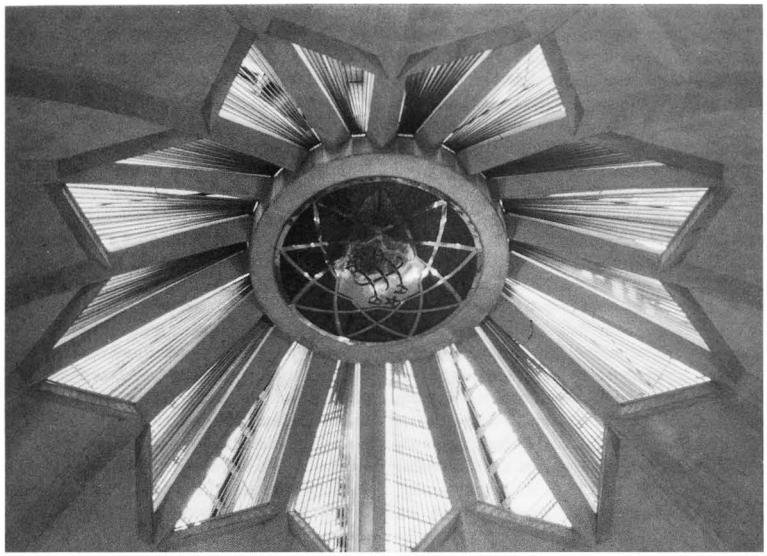
In March 1982 a contract was signed with the Industria dei Marmi Vicentini in Italy to supply white Pentelikon marble. This is the same firm which was contracted to cut the marble for the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The 8,000 square metres of marble, which came from a single mine in Greece and were specially cut in Italy to specified curvature and thickness to match the various curved profiles of the leaves, were granted an official exemption from import duty by three Ministries of the Indian Government. The external surfaces of the petals were clad with marble while the internal surfaces were bush-hammered. By April 1986 five of the 27 shells were completed and all the marble cladding work was finished.

The total cost of the House of Worship so far had been $9,500,000, with the final cost estimated at $10,000,000. Since the Universal House of Justice expressed its desire for the Bahá'ís of India to contribute to the construction costs, special Temple coupons worth one to 100 rupees each were printed and distributed to Temple Fund representatives in each Bahá'í community. The result of this effort was a generous outpouring of funds from the friends comprising 13 per cent of the total cost of the Temple.

The construction of the Temple had progressed well within the original six-year timetable set for it. Due to various circumstances it was estimated that a short extension might be required. Under the direction of the Universal House of Justice a special committee for the dedication of the Temple was appointed in June 1985. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum would represent the Universal House of Justice at the dedication ceremony, which was to take place from 23 to 28 December 1986.

### 3.2. SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMES

A solid achievement of the Seven Year Plan has been the importance attached to, and the efforts directed towards, the spiritual enrichment of the believers. Eighty-nine National



*Interior of the dome of the Bahá'í House of Worship near New Delhi, India.*

Assemblies adopted vigorous nation-wide programmes for this purpose, the majority of which featured weekend or several-day institutes of specially designed programmes of study to be held in all parts of the countries. In some places, district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds were used for monthly institutes and deepening programmes were carried out at the Teaching Institutes. An Assembly reported that conferences 'in the native style' are having a noticeable effect on the understanding of the friends. Some Assemblies in Africa added materials on spiritual life to their unit convention agendas. Another strategy for spiritual enrichment has been the attention given to a selected group which is trained to serve as catalysts to inspire the rest of the community. In the United States, the 'Personal Transformation Programme', designed to inspire individuals to study the creative word, utilized trained discussion leaders. A similar programme was initiated in New Zealand. In Taiwan, the Adoption Plan called for selected individuals to 'adopt' other, less active believers, and patiently nurture them to maturity. In India, a programme to train 500 believers from major towns and villages has become the single most potent force in assisting the development of fledgling Bahá'í communities in the various states.

Many National Spiritual Assemblies involved their own membership in their spiritual enrichment efforts: the National Assembly of Bermuda divided itself into teams to visit all localities, and the members of the National Assembly of the United Kingdom conducted training institutes for believers who then led other institutes. In Ethiopia, locally initiated deepening activities increased significantly after a year-long programme during which teams of National Assembly members met with groups of believers from several localities in the regional centre of each area on a regular basis. Spiritual laws and obligations were common themes of these programmes; others focused on the Covenant or intensive study of Bahá'í Scripture.

The life-giving Words of the Manifestation of God, essential for spiritual growth, are becoming available to more members of the Bahá'í community, not only through the translation and publication efforts, but also through a new emphasis on the effective distribution of

Bahá'í Scripture and encouragement of its use. Distribution of the Bahá'í Holy Writings was the focus of many national spiritual enrichment programmes. Compilations of Bahá'í Writings for inspiration and deepening are prepared and sent regularly to Local Spiritual Assemblies or individual believers. Some National Assemblies reported that such regular mailings have inspired local communities to hold study classes on a continual basis, and a few reported that many favourable comments were received after all believers were sent prayers and readings for the Fast. Several Assemblies have initiated programmes to provide every believer with the *Words of God* compilation. Some National Assemblies have printed the short obligatory prayer or other short passages from the Sacred Writings on attractive posters and cards. Feast newsletters published by many communities include such passages for daily reading.

The number of inspirational and deepening activities on the local level is also increasing: 52 National Assemblies have doubled the number of local deepenings in the communities under their jurisdiction. Fifty-one national communities have reported local deepenings in more than 50 per cent of their Assembly areas.

Dawn prayers were identified by such diverse national communities as Germany and India as an excellent means for fostering the growth of the Bahá'í community and distinguishing it from the rest of society. Twelve National Assemblies report that local communities are holding regular dawn prayers. The Philippines estimates that more than one-third of their local communities hold regular dawn prayers: in one community, the friends from an entire province meet weekly to pray, deepen, and contribute to the Fund. Several National Assemblies report that the number of dawn-prayer gatherings is increasing; in Costa Rica the National Spiritual Assembly felt that the use of a community activities report which included such items as dawn prayers had in itself encouraged the Local Assemblies to establish this practice.

### 3.3. BAHÁ'Í SEASONAL SCHOOLS

A signal achievement of the Plan, and one that has contributed greatly to the consolidation of the community, has been the consistently large increase in the number of summer and winter schools held each year throughout the world. More than 1,880 such schools were conducted during this Plan. In fulfilment of the goals assigned by the Universal House of Justice to most National Spiritual Assemblies (99), the number of National Assemblies holding seasonal schools has increased from approximately 50 at the end of the Five Year Plan to 128 by Riḍván 1986, 86 per cent of the national Bahá'í communities in the world. From information available, it appears that more than 80 National Assemblies held such schools for the first time during the Plan.

Not only have there been new summer and winter schools established during the Plan, but in each country there has been a noticeable increase in both the number and the regularity of these schools. For example, the number of summer school sessions held in the United States rose from 21 in 1979 to 51 in 1984, with overall attendance rising from 6,222 in 1979 to 13,750 in 1984. After 1984, the number of summer school participants became too large for the National Assembly to continue monitoring.

Another praiseworthy characteristic of the 1,880 schools held during the Plan was the attention given to racial minorities by 24 National Assemblies. One hundred and fifteen seasonal schools were conducted in a language other than that of the majority of the population, catering to the divergent needs of a multicultural community. A new dynamism suffused many schools as a result of the directive from the Universal House of Justice that they should be held at low cost; all segments of the Bahá'í community attended and a wonderful spirit of love and unity was generated as the participants worked together cooking, carrying water, and doing other supportive tasks. Many schools included daily teaching among the local residents attracted by the people attending the school. In addition, a pattern of activity reported by almost all National Spiritual Assemblies has been that seasonal schools are followed by large-scale teaching projects, or greater individual commitment to personal teaching. This demonstrates not only the unity of spirit, but also a unity of purpose, enabling the participants to spread the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh.

Permanent schools such as Green Acre and Bosch in the United States, and the New Era Academy in India, have become anchors of

Bahá'í community life, uniting and encouraging the friends in their regions. Schools completed during the Plan have already begun to fuse surrounding communities. The Landegg Institute in Switzerland, overlooking Lake Constance, offers courses in German, French, Italian, English, Arabic, and Persian, bringing together believers from all over Europe and the world. In New Zealand, a property was acquired in the Raglan area thereby fulfilling a goal to establish a permanent summer school. A new summer school in Groesbeek in the Netherlands is located in a wooded area on a 24-acre site.

Reconstruction of the Louhelen School near Davison, Michigan, was completed in 1982 at a cost of $1,900,000. The new facility, in constant use for summer schools, institutes, and conferences, also hosts the Center for Interracial Understanding. It is expected that in September 1987 it will open a residential college where Bahá'í students will live and study the Faith, while taking academic courses at nearby colleges.

Another undertaking is the Soltaniéh Bahá'í Educational Centre in Brazil, acquired as a gift by the National Spiritual Assembly in 1981. It has three dormitories and serves as a national centre for conventions, summer schools, and other activities.

### 3.4. BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTES

In addition to the institution of the Bahá'í summer or winter schools, now universally established, almost all Bahá'í communities organize study institutes: special gatherings of the friends for rigorous deepening. Over the course of the Plan 1,044 institutes were reported by 99 National Spiritual Assemblies, many more than the 38 which had specific goals in this area. Four National Assemblies held regular

*The Bahá'ís of the Bahamas held their second Winter School from 26–29 December 1985. The students are gathered on the grounds of the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Nassau.*

teaching institutes during the Plan: Swaziland, Seychelles, Peru, and two in Brazil. In Europe and North America, 30 institutes have provided intensive preparation for potential pioneers. World-wide, more than half of the institutes held are for spiritual deepening. It is exciting to consider that after the Bahá'ís of Guyana held ten 'spiritualization institutes', the energy of the community was directed to a mass teaching project which culminated in 1,192 new believers.

The acquisition of new permanent institutes and the development of other institutes that had been acquired before the Seven Year Plan were important aspects of the consolidation work of the Seven Year Plan. Only 21 National Assemblies were asked to acquire permanent institutes during the Plan, but 41 achieved this objective, raising the total number of permanent institutes to 75. Deepening institutes are increasingly being used for development activities as well as for Bahá'í deepening classes.

The diffusion of the Rúḥí Institute method and materials has been a significant factor in the spiritual consolidation of Latin American communities. Approximately one-third of the 257 Central and South American institutes are Rúḥí Institutes. The goal of the Rúḥí Institute in Cali, Colombia, is to guide believers on a path of service. Each course involves not only training in practical skills but also study of spiritual topics that will develop the necessary qualities to endow the students' deeds of service with excellence and purity. Each person who completes the training becomes a trainer and shares his or her training with others. By the end of the Plan the Rúḥí Institute model had spread from its native Colombia to Dominica, Ecuador, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela. Participants in courses at the Institute in Colombia have come from many countries, including the United States and several islands in the Caribbean. Youth, in particular, have been encouraged to participate in Rúḥí Institutes, undergoing the rigorous training and taking the ideas back to their native countries.

Several institutes in the Americas have been established primarily to serve the needs of Native American peoples: for instance, in the Yukon, Bahá'í House; the Native American Bahá'í Institute in the United States; the Martha Root Institute in Mexico; and the Guaymi Cultural Centre in Panama. All of these emphasize preservation and encouragement of indigenous cultures and have initiated or planned programmes of social and economic development. As well, four institutes collaborate with Bahá'í radio stations in areas with relatively large Bahá'í populations: the Guaymi Cultural Centre, the Louis G. Gregory Institute in the United States, the Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum Institute in Ecuador, and the Ferdwosi Institute in Bolivia. The imaginative and unified activities by the staffs of the institutes and radio stations provide potential for the rapid expansion and consolidation of hundreds of Bahá'í communities.

## 3.5. BAHÁ'Í EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

The Bahá'í education of children, so essential to the health and future well-being of the Bahá'í community, has been carried out through the immense and sacrificial efforts of many believers during the Seven Year Plan, with unprecedented progress registered as a result. The number of local Bahá'í children's classes increased by 148 per cent throughout the world, growing from 1,731 classes at the beginning of the Plan to 4,295 classes by Riḍván 1986. The greatest growth was in Africa, where an increase of almost four times, from 241 to 889 classes, was registered; and in Asia, where 395 classes were held at the beginning of the Plan and 1,361 at the end—a 245 per cent increase. The number of children's classes grew by 84 per cent in the Americas, 146 per cent in Europe, and 57 per cent in Australasia. Sixteen national communities report that all of their Local Assemblies were providing Bahá'í education to all their children, and in 45 countries there are children's classes in more than 50 per cent of the communities. Overall, an impressive total of 165 national communities are conducting classes for the Bahá'í education of children.

The assignment of goals to 127 National Assemblies for the provision of children's classes, and the particular assignment of specific numerical goals to 74 of them, have been motivating factors in this remarkable achievement. Of the Assemblies with definite numerical goals, the National Assemblies of Chad, Brazil, Panama, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Papua

*The spacious back porch of the Martha Root Institute in Muna, Yucatan, Mexico, provides a perfect workshop for 40 children during the Winter School held early in 1983.*

New Guinea achieved 100 per cent or more of their assigned goal. In addition, seven National Assemblies achieved at least 75 per cent of their goal, while 16 more established between 50 and 74 per cent of the children's classes they were asked to institute.

In order to provide high-quality children's classes, great attention has been devoted to training teachers and developing lesson plans for them. Seventy-six National Spiritual Assemblies were given the goal of developing lesson plans, and 20 Assemblies reported the production of 30 new lesson plans during the last seven years. They are usually designed by a national committee for distribution throughout the country. Lesson plans vary in content, some providing specific references for the teachers and others being general topic outlines for the children. Sixty per cent of the total number of Bahá'í children's lesson plans held on file at the World Centre were generated during the Seven Year Plan.

There have been 525 institutes for training teachers of children's classes held in 77 countries during the Plan; 88 National Spiritual Assemblies had goals in this area. One extensive training effort has been the Local Education Advisor Programme (LEAP) in the United States where a network of child education advisors meets together to learn specific skills and increase their understanding of Bahá'í principles of child education; they then return to their own communities to share their enthusiasm and train others to hold better children's activities. Several hundred individuals have participated in some 200 LEAP training institutes since 1979. In the Philippines, a project to establish at least 200 regular children's classes was launched in October 1985. A corps of volunteers received special training, and then dispersed to localities to train teachers who would in turn train additional teachers. It was intended that the project would triple the number of children's classes held and improve the quality of existing classes.

A firm foundation for Bahá'í education of

children has been established through the institution of annual seminars on this subject, which are now held in Barbados, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Sri Lanka. A total of 209 education seminars have been held in 47 countries since 1979.

Another prerequisite for successful children's education is an adequate supply of literature written with a child's interests in mind. Twelve National Assemblies were specifically assigned goals to provide literature for children, and many other communities have also directed attention to this need. Before this Plan there were 143 children's books available, of which 36 were books of Sacred Writings for children. During the past seven years, 226 new children's books were printed, of which 30 are prayer books. Prayers for children are now available in 24 languages, including a recent production in Papua New Guinea in Motu and Pidgin. The prayer book, *O God, Guide Me*, is available in English, French, German, Icelandic, Kinyarwanda, Maori, Norwegian, Portuguese, and Spanish. There are children's books available in 36 languages including Acholi, Indonesian, and Maori. Some books, such as *Stories from the Dawnbreakers* and *God and His Messengers*, are available in seven and eight languages respectively, and each has been reprinted more than ten times. The National Spiritual Assembly of Mexico produced six titles in Spanish during the first two years of the Plan, and the Netherlands has produced 26 different children's books. The World Centre receives four children's periodicals, one of which, *Varqá*, from India, is published in seven languages.

The Bahá'í community has not only invested its energy in the classroom education of Bahá'í children, but around the world children are coming together from different countries, regions, and cultures to discover their unique identity as Bahá'ís. During the Seven Year Plan there were 387 camps, weekend gatherings, picnics, fairs, and sports days organized for Bahá'í children. Some particularly memorable events include a nation-wide children's art contest and a children's folkloric festival in Panama with 500 children and 300 adults in attendance, a broadcast to an audience of 1,500 by a group of Bahá'í children from 13 rural villages in Ecuador, and a music festival attended by 1,700 children in Brazil.

## 3.6. BAHÁ'Í FAMILY LIFE

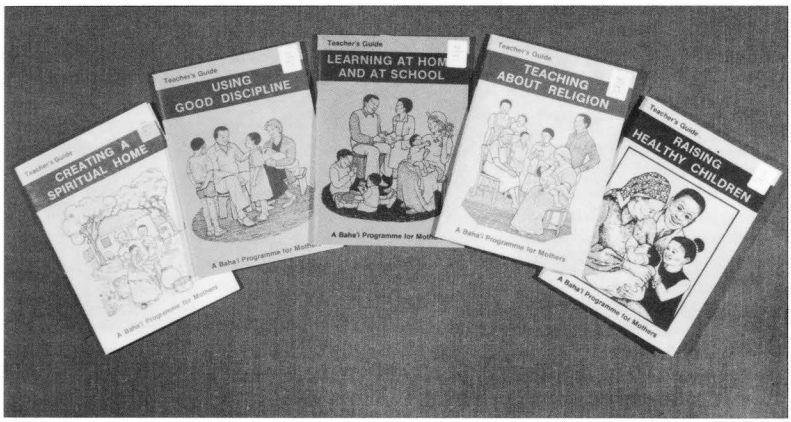
Many National Spiritual Assemblies have identified the disintegration of the family unit as one of the significant trends in their countries and have directed their energies to fostering an awareness of the distinctive character of Bahá'í family life as a cornerstone of the new world civilization. Sixty-six National Assemblies were given goals in this area, and 203 events in 45 countries have focused on parenting and family life. Six communities reported regular family life seminars and deepening events. Other National Assemblies reported that Bahá'í teachings on family life are stressed in summer schools, feast letters, and on teaching trips. Malaysia launched two campaigns entitled 'Happy Family Month'. Bahá'í activities planned with families in mind are also increasing: Austria, Australia, and New Zealand have regular family camps or weekend retreats. The burgeoning number of Bahá'í summer schools has also contributed to the development of Bahá'í family life.

More than one-third of all National Assemblies were assigned goals to encourage family gatherings for prayers and reading the Holy Writings. Progress towards this long-term objective calls for the cultivation of new habits and a new way of thinking of Bahá'í families. Recognizing that family prayer and study can create spiritual strengths that facilitate the winning of more tangible goals, many Assemblies utilize every possible means to promote this objective. For example, the National Assembly of Argentina reported that the National Teaching Committee, the Auxiliary Board members, the national bulletin, and summer schools all helped to encourage the practice of family prayers. Materials for family deepening evenings were prepared in Hawaii and the United States, and books of daily devotions were published in Canada and the United States.

Special literature designed to acquaint the friends with the Bahá'í teachings on family life was published in 26 countries during the Plan. The *Bahá'í Programme for Mothers* series, which includes 12 teachers' guides and simple, illustrated booklets for mothers on creating a spiritual home, learning at home and at school, teaching about religion, and using good discipline, was published by the National Women's

and Children's Committee in Kenya in a format that will allow it to be easily translated and adapted by other communities. A family life compilation was published in Sinhala in Sri Lanka; and in Transkei, a book on Bahá'í family life was distributed to a number of families.

Teaching the Faith to whole families and to non-Bahá'í members of Bahá'í families is an essential corollary of increasing the number of spiritually united Bahá'í families. Twenty National Assemblies were assigned such goals. Bangladesh reported that as a result of the emphasis placed on teaching families, many non-Bahá'í family members had become Bahá'ís. Singapore reported that 43 per cent of new declarants now came from families that already have at least one Bahá'í member.




*'Teacher's Guide' volumes of the series* A Bahá'í Programme for Mothers *published by the Bahá'í Publishing Agency of Kenya in 1985. Also in the series are matching 'Mother's Guide' volumes.*

## 3.7. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

One of the most dramatic developments in the Bahá'í world community during the Plan was the evolution of the 'Bahá'í Youth Movement'. Beginning in June 1984 with discussions among youth across North America, it received added impetus three months later at the International Youth Conference in London, Canada. Nearly 2,000 youth left the conference with a network of peers all over the world and a commitment to transform themselves into the leaders among their generation, leading humanity towards a peaceful global civilization. The spiritual energy released by the persecutions in Írán combined with the inimitable enthusiasm and energy of youth has, through the self-discipline encouraged by the Youth Movement, brought about unprecedented numbers of deepenings, conferences, development projects, media coverage, teaching endeavours, and activities which have served to consolidate young people everywhere—all planned and carried out by Bahá'í youth.

The decision of the United Nations that 1985 was to be considered the International Year of Youth provided a channel for this newly released energy. In 1985 international conferences were held in eight countries on all five continents, bringing together more than 10,000 youth from over 100 countries. National and regional conferences totalled 49, including conferences for the first time in Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Greece. There were 1,300 Bahá'í youth in attendance at the European Youth Conference in Antwerp, Belgium, and almost 4,000 at the conference in Columbus, Ohio, the United States.

In 1985 alone, Bahá'í youth extended their

*A few of the 550 Bahá'í youth from 24 countries at the Asian Bahá'í Youth Conference in New Delhi, India, during August 1985.*

services and enthusiasm to government committees, non-governmental organizations, various councils and associations, and other religious bodies in almost 30 countries, helping to plan, organize, or host a vast number of events intended to encourage discussions on peace, participation, and development, the three themes of the International Year of Youth.

Youth from around the globe began sharing messages of achievements and activities with one another through at least 19 publications intended for Bahá'í youth. By Riḍván 1986, youth periodicals carried stories about 38 African youth who pledged to travel by foot to teach the Faith in rural villages after a particularly inspiring youth conference in Cameroon; Norwegian youth who prepared a local radio programme about the Faith and youth; and South American youth who received training at the Rúḥí Institute in Colombia and travelled in Colombia, Panama, and Paraguay to strengthen tutorial schools in villages. There are six youth bulletins in Africa, five in the Americas, four in Asia, and two each in Australasia and Europe, all started during the Plan.

Bahá'í youth, while building a stronger network among themselves, are simultaneously making connections with other youth as well. Bahá'í youth in the United Kingdom undertook a massive project to take information about the United Nations, with special emphasis on the Declaration of Human Rights, to every secondary school and university. Although not all schools were willing to participate, many were reached. Many of the upper grades accepted offers for Bahá'í speakers in their classrooms. Bahá'í youth in Chad received governmental acclaim for visiting thousands of drought and famine victims; the Bahá'í club at the University of Guelph in Canada held a general meeting to explain the Bahá'í Youth Movement to students and ended the meeting with a Bahá'í Club having more non-Bahá'í members than Bahá'ís.

The outstanding reputation acquired by Bahá'í youth through this kind of outreach has opened the way for invitations by governmental authorities in some countries to participate in

or organize events. Youth in Guam were asked by the Department of Youth Affairs to organize a 'Unity Day'; the State Government of Hawaii asked a Bahá'í youth to join the planning committee for the International Year of Youth; youth in Belize collaborated with the Ministry of Youth to hold a conference to observe the International Year of Youth which was reported to be the 'largest, best organized in the history of Belize'. The Bahá'ís participated in a U.N. International Youth Conference held in Jamaica in April 1985, with Bahá'í representatives from the Bahá'í International Community, the United Kingdom, The Gambia, the United States, and Jamaica. The Swiss Bahá'ís, being the only group with representation from all three language areas in the country, were asked to consult with the Minister of the Interior about problems of special concern to youth. The Swiss Government sent four youth including one Bahá'í to an international youth conference in Japan. Similarly, Bahá'í youth in the United Kingdom, The Gambia, and Tonga were also sent as youth ambassadors by their governments.

In addition to these special activities, however, there were more than 378 teaching events during the Plan directed specifically at youth, many carried out by youth themselves. Many National Spiritual Assemblies have established special youth teaching committees or regularly scheduled youth teaching activities. The Badí' teaching projects undertaken in Brazil made great use of national school holidays by encouraging youth to travel teach, especially in small villages, during their vacations. Zimbabwe trained over 100 teams of two youth each for consolidation work among Bahá'í communities. Youth are also holding children's classes, teaching in tutorial schools, conducting deepenings in villages, participating in social and economic development projects, and proclaiming the Faith through Bahá'í sports events.

The activities held during the International Year of Youth received a great deal of publicity and attention, but underlying the vast number of special events organized for 1985 was the consistent growth of locally initiated events throughout the Seven Year Plan. There were 121 national communities with goals assigned to encourage youth activities; 125 reported youth activity of some kind. Nineteen National Assemblies now report youth activities in more than half of their Local Assembly areas. More than 1,100 national and regional conferences for youth were held during the Plan. Approximately one-third of these national and regional events coincided with the International Year of Youth. Locally sponsored activities, however, have grown at a dramatic rate—more than seven times in Africa—from the beginning to the end of the Plan. Almost all the National Assemblies in the world have attentively nurtured the youth in their communities.

### 3.8. ENCOURAGEMENT OF BAHÁ'Í WOMEN

Inspired by the example of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Fiftieth Anniversary of whose passing the friends commemorated midway through the Plan, Bahá'í communities around the world made intensive efforts to encourage the participation of women in Bahá'í activities and to attract greater numbers of women to the Faith. These efforts have grown remarkably during the Plan, partly in response to goals that were assigned to more than 50 per cent of all National Asssemblies. In the course of these seven years, the number of national communities with specific activities geared towards the women of their communities almost doubled, from 69 at the beginning of the Plan to 116 national communities. Concurrently, the number of Local Assemblies organizing local women's activities has almost quadrupled, from 418 local communities in 1980 to 1,558 in Riḍván 1986. Activities for Bahá'í women are held in 604 communities in Africa, 222 in the Americas, 544 in Asia, 126 in Australasia, and 62 in Europe.

In many parts of the world, these activities focused on the ability of women to improve the quality of rural life by learning about nutrition, child care, hygiene, sewing, appropriate technology, tree planting, and literacy. In Haiti and Kenya, Bahá'í women formed co-operatives for income-generating activities. In some communities, the women meet once a week for prayers and then spend the day working together to improve each other's homes.

At least 434 national and regional women's conferences were held during the Seven Year Plan, with a total attendance of 16,500 believers. These conferences were very significant in confirming the faith of Bahá'í women, giving

*Participants in the Inter-Regional Bahá'í Women's Conference held in Yaoundé, Cameroon Republic, 23–25 August 1985.*

them an assurance of their own capacity and allowing them to gain practical administrative experience. Some National Spiritual Assemblies reported that the Bahá'í men have prepared meals and provided child care for women's conferences. Nineteen National Assemblies, nine of them in Africa, publish special magazines for Bahá'í women. Other National Spiritual Assemblies reported that their national bulletins regularly include articles prepared by the women's committee on famous Bahá'í women and other topics.

Specially planned activities for teaching the Faith to women took place in 101 countries on all five continents. Bangladesh held regional conferences specifically designed to encourage the teaching of women. In some developed countries, morning meetings were held to teach women at home. In Italy, a book about the role of women in the Faith was prepared for distribution to women who had gained national prestige in political, social, cultural, or humanitarian affairs. Fruitful contact with leading women has been reported by the National Assemblies of Tonga, Kenya, Swaziland, Benin, The Gambia, and Guadeloupe. Another significant trend was the involvement of Bahá'í communities in women's activities sponsored by other organizations. In Fiji, the Bahá'í National Women's Committee hosted an International Labour Organization course on money-making projects for women in rural areas. The National Bahá'í Women's Committee of Singapore and the Singapore Council of Women's Organizations jointly planned a seminar on youth and community development that was highly successful, and the National Assembly of the Solomon Islands noted the growing involvement of their Bahá'í women in activities of the National Council of Women and the Solomon Islands Development Trust.

A significant factor in the realization of the equality of the sexes is the participation of women in the Bahá'í administrative order. Many National Assemblies, particularly in Africa and Asia, have noted that the number of women elected to serve on Local Assemblies and as delegates to National Conventions has been increasing. Several Assemblies have also reported that they have attempted to include women in all committees they appoint.

Bahá'í delegations at the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya in July 1985, and the Regional Preparatory Meetings held in Havana, Cuba and Arusha, Tanzania in 1984 were extremely successful in presenting the Bahá'í teachings and accomplishments regarding the equality of the sexes. In Nairobi, the Bahá'í delegates received extensive media attention, including 11 radio and television interviews.

## 3.9. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 9.a. Overview of the Plan's Progress

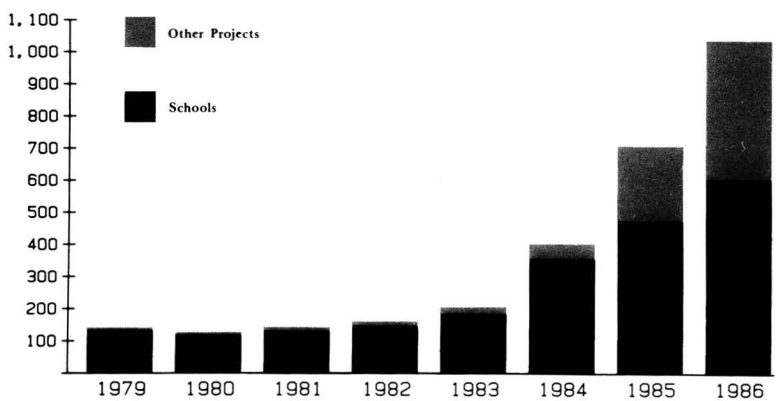
One of the most dramatic achievements of the Seven Year Plan has been the increasing involvement of Bahá'í communities throughout the world in activities designed to uplift the social and economic life of peoples, largely in response to the 20 October 1983 message of the

Universal House of Justice which directed the attention of the Bahá'í world to this essential corollary of Bahá'í belief, and called upon the communities to incorporate the process of social and economic development into their regular pursuits. A 700 per cent increase in the number of development activities monitored by the Department of Statistics occurred over the course of the Plan. At the beginning of the Plan, 98 tutorial schools were operating in India and Zaire, and 18 other National Assemblies were conducting some type of development activity; the total number of projects was 129. By Riḍván 1986, 92 national communities were engaged in 1,030 development activities.

During the first five years of the Plan, all but a few of these efforts were schools, but since 1984 other types of projects have developed rapidly, now making up 42 per cent of the total. This is illustrated in the following table, which presents the number and type of development programmes on each continent:

| | *World* | *Africa* | *Americas* | *Asia* | *Australasia* | *Europe* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agriculture & Forestry | 70 | 28 | 13 | 21 | 7 | 1 |
| Community Development, etc. | 144 | 57 | 61 | 14 | 4 | 8 |
| Education | 724 | 164 | 117 | 423 | 14 | 6 |
| *Tutorial Schools* | *558* | *139* | *93* | *318* | *8* | *0* |
| *Academic Schools* | *41* | *4* | *13* | *24* | *0* | *0* |
| *Other Projects* | *125* | *21* | *11* | *81* | *6* | *6* |
| Health & Social Services | 87 | 33 | 8 | 35 | 3 | 8 |
| Radio Stations | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **1,030** | **282** | **204** | **493** | **28** | **23** |

The following bar chart illustrates the growth in the number of development programmes during the Seven Year Plan.




*Graph depicting growth in the number of development programmes during the Seven Year Plan 1979–86.*

**9.b. Tutorial Schools**

The schools are the centrepiece of the Bahá'í development effort, a visible seed of the widespread humanitarian activities of the future Bahá'í society. They provide basic education for children or adults in many developing countries where educational opportunities are otherwise limited.

At the outset of the Seven Year Plan the goal of encouraging the establishment of tutorial schools was given to 33 National Assemblies. By the final phase of the Plan, the number of National Spiritual Assemblies encouraged to participate in development of tutorial schools had reached 51, with 29 in Africa, 11 in the Americas, 7 in Asia, and 4 in Australasia. In response to these goals, the number of tutorial schools quintupled during the Plan, growing from 111 in 1979 to 558 presently. Most of these grassroots educational efforts are concentrated in a few countries, with 47 per cent of the schools located in India alone. There are also 86 schools in Zaire, 56 in Bolivia, 10 in Colombia, 7 in Haiti, 9 in Panama, and 19 in the Philippines, comprising 34 per cent of the total number.

Tutorial schools represent the efforts of Bahá'ís to meet the educational needs of their communities with their own resources. In some parts of the world the Bahá'í tutorial school is the first educational institution ever to be established in a village; in other places the Bahá'ís are providing pre-school education and spiritual and social enrichment activities for young children who would otherwise have been unsupervised while their mothers worked. In some countries the tutorial schools concentrate on adult education. Non-Bahá'í students are reported at 41 per cent of the schools, which integrate Bahá'í study with secular education.

| *Continent* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Schools* | *Estimated Enrolment* | *Non-Bahá'í Students* | *Enrolment Per School* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 17 | 139 | 3,197 | 46% | 23 |
| Americas | 12 | 93 | 3,069 | 60% | 33 |
| Asia | 9 | 318 | 15,582 | 12% | 49 |
| Australasia | 5 | 8 | 136 | 52% | 17 |
| **World** | **43** | **558** | **21,984** | **20%** | **40** |

Twenty-five per cent of the schools meet in the open air, 48 per cent are held in Bahá'í Centres, and the others meet in other buildings or simple structures erected to provide shelter for the students. The teachers may be young school graduates returned from the city, a literate villager, or a parent. Some teachers are volunteers, others are paid with funds raised from a communal garden, others are reimbursed with food or with labour on the teachers' lands, and some are supported by school fees or temporarily subsidized by the Assembly. Most tutorial schools (82 per cent) concentrate on basic education, 24 per cent offer adult literacy, and 45 per cent include or consist of pre-school programmes. Thirteen per cent of the schools have other programmes, primarily vocational training and crafts. A few communities have initiated craft programmes by inviting village elders to use the school to share their skills. Seventy per cent of Bahá'í tutorial schools operate with one teacher, and overall the student/teacher ratio is 30:1. Although only 12 per cent report being totally financially self-supporting, an additional 51 per cent are partially funded at the local level.

Reports from India, Africa, and South America suggest that Bahá'í tutorial schools have remarkable potential to transform and strengthen individual and community Bahá'í life. Some of these schools provide education to groups which traditionally have been the victims of discrimination, such as the 'untouchables' in India, and various tribal peoples. Tutorial schools are often very effective in their efforts to instil fuller knowledge of the Faith and Bahá'í standards of behaviour, as well as influencing the families of children who attend them. Some communities have established local Bahá'í Funds for the first time and have begun to hold Nineteen Day Feasts and Local Assembly meetings more frequently since their tutorial schools began operating. In the Philippines, the teachers of the 19 tutorial schools are actively involved in all facets of Bahá'í life within their communities and are sources of

great spiritual energy among the friends. The National Assembly reports that the tutorial programmes in the Mangyan tribal area have so strengthened the Local Assemblies that 'even the Government land authorities in the area have made it a policy to deal only with the Local Assemblies'. They also report that children leaving tutorial schools in the mountains in order to continue their education 'have consistently shown that their tutorial background has prepared them to be put into classes in the public school system two to three grades ahead of their peers'.

Bahá'í tutorial schools are also guiding and developing the communities they serve. As parents of the non-Bahá'í children attending the schools become involved in planning for their children, they are exposed to Bahá'í principles of consultation, of the spiritual foundation of education, and of service as worship, through working with the Local Spiritual Assembly. At the tutorial school in Sugarbush, Transkei, the parents, most of whom are not Bahá'ís, consulted on how to provide funds for feeding the students, devised a plan of rotating responsibility, and then initiated fund-raising activities to provide a firm foundation for the school. The potential of tutorial schools to be a centre for community education and improvement will grow as Local Assemblies gain confidence in their ability to promote the welfare of their communities.

*A Bahá'í tutorial school in Rajshahi, Bangladesh.*

*A Bahá'í tutorial programme in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.*

*A Bahá'í tutorial school in Millani, Chuquisaca, Bolivia.*

*A Bahá'í tutorial school in Banyowe-Bamanga, Haut Zaire.*

**9.c. Academic Schools**

Bahá'í academic schools, operating with a full-time staff, permanent premises, and an approved curriculum, have been established and gradually developed by Bahá'í communities in many countries. These schools reflect a heritage of Bahá'í education that began in 1897 with the founding of the Tarbíyat Schools in Tihrán, and the establishment, in subsequent years, of formal Bahá'í schools in 'Ishqábád, Najafábád, Hamadán, Káshán, Bárfurúsh, Qazvín, and other locations for a total of 24 schools. Although all these schools were closed down by the Government in the 1930s, the Bahá'í standard of equality of opportunity and excellence in education has been continued by the newer Bahá'í schools around the world.

At the beginning of the Seven Year Plan ten academic schools were operated by Bahá'í institutions. By the completion of the Plan 41 academic schools in eight countries provided educational opportunities for Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í students, guided by the standards and teachings of the Faith. Twenty-four of these schools are located in Asia, 13 in the Americas, and 4 in Africa. It is estimated that over 6,000 students, 85 per cent of them non-Bahá'ís, attend these schools. In addition to the 41 official Bahá'í schools which are run by institutions of the Faith, the number of schools operated by individual believers as private ventures has also increased rapidly. Thirty-four such schools are now operating in 19 countries, almost all of them initiated during the Seven Year Plan.

Some of the better-known Bahá'í schools are briefly described below, listed alphabetically.

*Anis Zunúzí Bahá'í School*, Lilavois, Haiti
Since opening in 1980, it has gradually expanded its programme and now offers kindergarten, grades 1–8, and a new technical section, serving a total of 270 students from the surrounding rural area. A rural development programme is based here, and the school hosts local and national Bahá'í conferences, seasonal schools, and National Conventions.

*Auntie Claire's School*, Kampala, Uganda
This interracial kindergarten was established in 1957 by Miss Claire Gung, who was called 'the mother of Africa' by Shoghi Effendi. Since her death in February 1985, it has been operated by the National Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Uganda.

*Bahá'í School*, Tadong, Sikkim
Over 870 students, ranging from nursery up to Class IX, attend the Tadong Bahá'í School, which is considered one of the best schools in Sikkim. It has secured recognition by the Government of India and its new building also houses the National Assembly offices.

*Colegio Núr*, La Cisterna, Chile
Inaugurated in 1977, Colegio Núr is Bahá'í-owned and administered, but receives state support. Its curriculum spans pre-school through high school, including professional/technical training. Nearly 400 students attend, participating in a variety of extra-curricular activities, including optional lessons on the Faith.

*Escola das Nações* (School of the Nations), Brasilia, Brazil
Over 175 students from more than 30 countries, mostly from families of diplomats, attend this international bilingual school, which includes pre-school and primary grades. New construction will enable the school to start a secondary school programme and expand enrolment to 400 students. Although begun as a private school, it is now partly owned by the National Spiritual Assembly of Brazil.

*Faizi and Muhájir Schools*, Loncopulle and Bollilco, Chile
These rural primary schools mainly serve the Mapuche Indian population, from whose ranks come the majority of Bahá'ís in Chile. In addition to the standard academic curriculum, they encourage expressions of Mapuche art and music by the 102 students, and provide agricultural training and community literacy programmes. Boarding facilities are planned which will enable them to substantially increase enrolment.

*Glory School*, Shantiniketan, West Bengal, India
Glory School currently offers pre-school and grades 1–3 to approximately 60 students, some of whom enjoy boarding facilities and scholarships.

*New Day Montessori School*, Karachi, Pakistan
Since its establishment in 1978, enrolment has grown to 359 students, with five primary

grades and a Montessori kindergarten operating at present. A new building has been completed and the National Assembly plans to expand the curriculum through secondary school.

*New Era High School*, Panchgani, Maharashtra, India

This international school of increasing stature, which has existed since 1945, offers classes from pre-school through junior college, attended by more than 500 students, including a number of international students. Computer programming has recently been added to its curriculum, and the primary school programme is being expanded. The Centre for Rural Development and Education, the Bahá'í Academy, and the Institute of Rural Technology, all based in Panchgani, will soon be merged into the Bahá'í Development Institute (BADI). This new institution is expected to develop into a College of Human Services.

*Rabbani Higher Secondary School*, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India

Offering Standards VI-XI to about 200 students, vocational and agricultural training is heavily emphasized at the Rabbani School. A 72-acre farm and poultry operation augments the academic programme, while community development and health programmes provide outreach services to nearby villages.

*Raimundo Oliveira Menezes School*, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

Approximately 300 students, including a number of physically or emotionally handicapped children, attend this primary school which offers pre-school through fourth grade.

*Santitham School*, Yasothon, Thailand

In operation since 1963, it currently includes a large kindergarten and small commercial school, with a total enrolment of about 200 students. Two new buildings have been completed recently, providing space for vocational training of rural women.

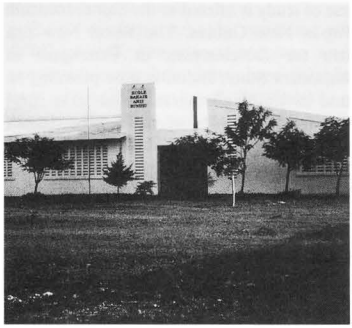
### 9.d. Literacy and Vocational Training

At least 125 literacy, vocational, and other educational programmes were also established during this Plan. The William Masehla Bahá'í Institute in Zambia combines practical education in agriculture, health, literacy, and village technology with service projects and intensive study of Bahá'í subjects. The same dynamic course of study is offered at the Shiraz Institute in Papua New Guinea. The Rural New Era Centre for Development at Panchgani in Maharashtra State, India, is now planning to expand its training programme to serve rural people from all parts of India. The Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, teaches craft classes that enable Indian women, most of whom come from tribal areas, to become gainfully self-employed. Adult literacy education, computer skills classes, and training for the unemployed are among the other efforts of Bahá'í communities to uplift themselves through education.

### 9.e. Community Development and Other Projects

The growing awareness by the Bahá'í community of its potential and capacity to improve the conditions of mankind is reflected in the increasing number and diversity of community development activities initiated by Bahá'ís. Pygmy Bahá'ís in Zaire have learned and adapted skills that enable them to express their innate dignity and self-respect which identification with the Bahá'í Faith has reinforced: they have built homes, they have begun to farm so that they can support themselves, they have become literate. Some local Assemblies have organized co-operatives to make scarce goods available at fair prices, or to help Bahá'í farmers and craftsmen obtain a reasonable income from their work. And in some countries Assemblies have established village health centres to disseminate health information and dispense medicines. Bahá'ís have organized medical and dental camps in the tribal areas of India and established alcoholism counselling programmes in Alaska. Local Assemblies in 12 countries have community farms or fish ponds to raise money for the Bahá'í Fund or to support a tutorial school or other community service. Other projects promote innovative agricultural technologies or encourage tree planting.

Community development, agricultural, and health-related activities are being carried out in 57 countries: 16 in Africa; 17 in the Americas; 10 in Asia; 8 in Australasia; and 6 in Europe. The number of health-related activities reported has increased from 2 to 87 during the course of the Plan; the number of agricultural activities grew from 3 to 70, and the number of other



*The Anís Zunúzí Bahá'í School in Lilavois, Haiti.*

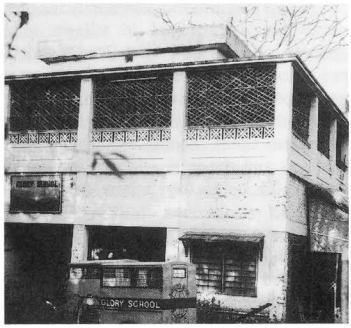
*Auntie Claire's School in Kampala, Uganda.*

*The Bahá'í School in Tadong, Sikkim.*

*Colegio Núr in La Cisterna, Chile.*

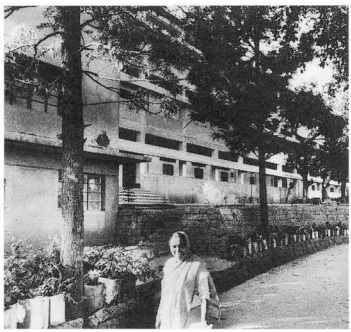
*Escola das Nações in Brasilia, Brazil.*

*Faizí School in Loncopulle, Chile.*




*Glory School in Shantiniketan, West Bengal, India.*

*New Day Montessori School in Karachi, Pakistan.*



*New Era High School in Panchgani, Maharashtra, India.*

*Rabbani Secondary School in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India.*

*Raimundo Oliveira Menezes School in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.*

*Santitham School in Yasothon, Thailand.*

community development projects increased from 2 to 144.

### 9.f. Radio Stations

During the Seven Year Plan Bahá'í radio stations were established in Peru (1981), Bolivia and the United States (1984), and Panama (1986), joining Radio Bahá'í Ecuador (1977) in an expanding network of stations dedicated to community service as well as consolidation of Bahá'í communities and proclamation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Bahá'í radio stations are developing a unique and very successful form of community-based, participatory media. Usually centred in rural areas where there are large indigenous Bahá'í populations, they are a service offered by the local Bahá'ís to the wider community around them. The Radio Bahá'í staff are for the most part local people; volunteers who view their work as an expression of their faith. Their programmes speak to the people in their own languages: the news programmes report local events; the agricultural and community life programmes are often taped in villages; and indigenous music is broadcast. Radio Bahá'í gives a voice to the community it serves, a tool which the people can use to express and validate their culture, to discuss and solve their problems, and to uplift themselves through their own efforts and the inspiration of the Bahá'í teachings. These radio stations are briefly described below.

*Radio Bahá'í Ecuador*, in Otavalo

Established in 1977, the first Bahá'í radio station now broadcasts 19 hours each day and has upgraded its power to 3 kW, giving it the potential to reach over 200,000 people on medium wave. Response from short wave listeners in two distinct provinces has been enthusiastic. The medium wave station has achieved 94 per cent listenership in its broadcast area, by far the highest of any station in the area. It has well-developed community service programmes in agriculture, health, and general culture.

*A free medical camp held by three Bahá'í physicians with two helpers in the village of Deh Jokio, Sind, Pakistan, in August 1985.*

*Radio Bahá'í del Lago Titicaca*, in Chucuito and Puno, Peru

This 1 kW medium wave station operates nine hours each day, with programming in the Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara languages. Under an agreement with the Ministry of Education it broadcasts a literacy programme, and announcements have been prepared to support immunization and preventive medical programmes. In 1985, the process of Local Assembly elections was greatly aided by regular announcements over the radio.

*Radio Bahá'í Caracollo*, in Bolivia

With programming in Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara, the 1 kW power Radio Bahá'í Caracollo reaches over 100 kilometres, broadcasting nine hours each day and 16 hours on Sundays. The first Bahá'í station to teach the Faith directly, it also has a collaborative progamme with UNICEF.

*Radio Bahá'í (WLGI)*, in Hemingway, South Carolina, United States

A 50 kW FM station, situated on the campus of the Louis Gregory Institute, WLGI broadcasts a mixture of adult contemporary music and community service features to a population of 800,000 people, including the largest concentration of Bahá'ís in the United States. Informal reports indicate that it has attracted considerable attention from all strata of society and become a powerful instrument for propagation of the Faith, with a majority of the people in the area listening to the station.

*Radio Bahá'í Boca del Monte and Boca de Soloy*, in Panama

This 1 kW station joined the ranks of operational Bahá'í radio stations in January 1986, with the main studio and transmitter located in Boca del Monte and a remote studio integrated into the Guaymi Cultural Centre in Boca de Soloy. The Government of Panama has granted permission to gradually increase broadcast time to the mandated level of 12 hours each day. This station is expected to play a crucial role in the consolidation and expansion of the Faith among the Guaymi Indians, who constitute the largest concentration of Bahá'ís in Central America.

In addition to these stations currently operating in five countries, AM stations in Liberia and Chile are expected to go on the air soon. Both are under construction, having obtained all requisite governmental approvals. ELRB in Liberia, a 5 kW station located near the capital of Monrovia, is the first Bahá'í radio station in the eastern hemisphere and has sufficient power to cover most of Liberia. The station in Chile, located in La Branza near Temuco, will broadcast with 1 kW of power and will be primarily oriented to the needs of the Mapuche Indian population.

### 3.10. ENRICHMENT OF BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

One of the primary objectives before the institutions of the Cause and the friends everywhere

*A Radio Bahá'í staff member in Caracollo, Bolivia, tapes a programme in one of the station's production studios.*

is to provide all believers with Bahá'í literature in their native tongue and to expand the range and availability of Bahá'í literature into as many languages as possible. The depth of understanding of this cardinal goal is reflected in the steadily increasing flow of achievement reports from an ever greater number of countries announcing new translations, publications, and further dissemination of literature. Many National Assemblies have identified their efforts to provide the friends with Bahá'í literature as one of their major achievements of the Seven Year Plan. The range of materials available in each language varies from a single prayer or pamphlet to an impressive collection of titles.

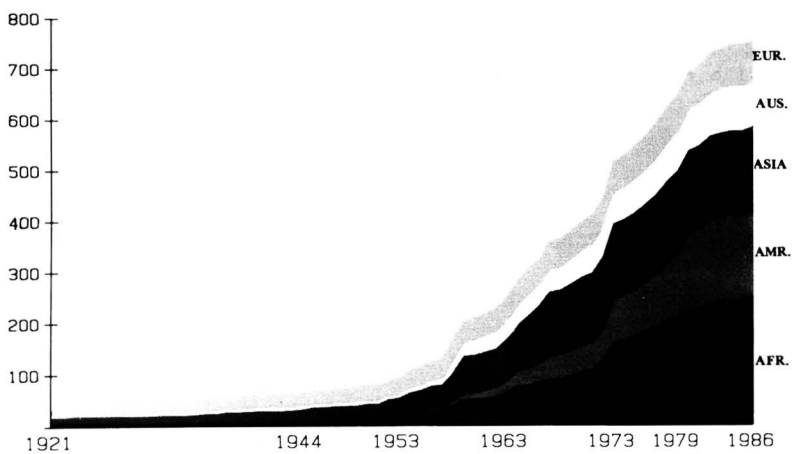
**10.a. Translation**

As a result of strenuous efforts to provide every follower of Bahá'u'lláh with His Writings and teachings, the total number of languages, dialects, and scripts into which some Bahá'í literature (although not necessarily scripture) has been translated has now reached a minimum of 757, of which at least 520 items have been published or reproduced in some form and made available to believers and the public. Also, in 109 languages of the world, at least one book, defined as a publication of at least 60 pages, is available. Of the total 757 languages with available Bahá'í literature, 106 are first-time achievements for the Seven Year Plan.

The graph below portrays the increase in the number of languages opened to the Faith in each continent.

**10.b. Enrichment of Literature**

The marked increase in the number, rate of publication, and variety of Bahá'í books has been a highly significant achievement of the Seven Year Plan, affording greater opportunities for believers to interact with the Word of God and to learn more about various aspects of the Faith, and indicating the growing administrative capacity of National Assemblies and Publishing Trusts. During the Plan 118 National Spiritual Assemblies around the world have reported the publication of 2,872 books, pamphlets, tapes, and other materials. These statistics represent only the publications reported by Assemblies; the works published by the major Bahá'í Publishing Trusts, which function independently, are described in a later section.




*Graph depicting the increase in the number of languages opened to the Bahá'í Faith in each continent 1921–86.*

| *Continent* | *No. of NSAs Reporting Publications* | *Sacred Writings* | *Other Books* | *Audio-Visual Materials* | *Total Publications* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 33 | 305 | 260 | 84 | 649 |
| Americas | 31 | 169 | 166 | 55 | 390 |
| Asia | 20 | 323 | 482 | 43 | 848 |
| Australasia | 16 | 66 | 88 | 16 | 170 |
| Europe | 18 | 352 | 436 | 27 | 815 |
| **World** | **118** | **1,215** | **1,432** | **225** | **2,872** |

Not only has the literature of the Faith been significantly enriched during the Plan with the addition of these 2,872 items, but one can observe an accelerating pace in the production of Bahá'í literature. For the Plan, an average of 359 items were published each year during the first phase; 405 each year of the second phase; and 470 for both years of the third phase. That is, on the average, the number of items produced during each year of the Plan has increased considerably.

Inter-Assembly co-operation was an important factor in this achievement. Eight of the ten specific goals in this area were won. The joint efforts of Bophuthatswana and Botswana have resulted in the circulation of selected Writings on tapes in Tswana. The National Assemblies of Nicaragua and Honduras collaborated on prayer books in Miskito, now available in both countries. The European communities co-operated to produce literature in German Braille, (Argentina and Spain), Portuguese (Brazil and Portugal), and French (through the efforts of the Maison d'Éditions Bahá'í and the support of the National Assemblies of Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, and Switzerland). Of particular interest are the efforts of the German, Indian, and Lebanese Publishing Trusts in the reproduction of the Bahá'í Writings of the Central Figures of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi, and Bahá'í scholars in Persian and Arabic that were no longer available to the displaced Persian friends after the closing of the Iranian Publishing Trust. These efforts have assisted greatly with the deepening of the friends in the fundamental precepts of the Faith, in the original language of the Revelation.

Of the total 2,872 published items for this Plan, 736 have been listed by the publishing country as first-time translations, according to the following distribution:

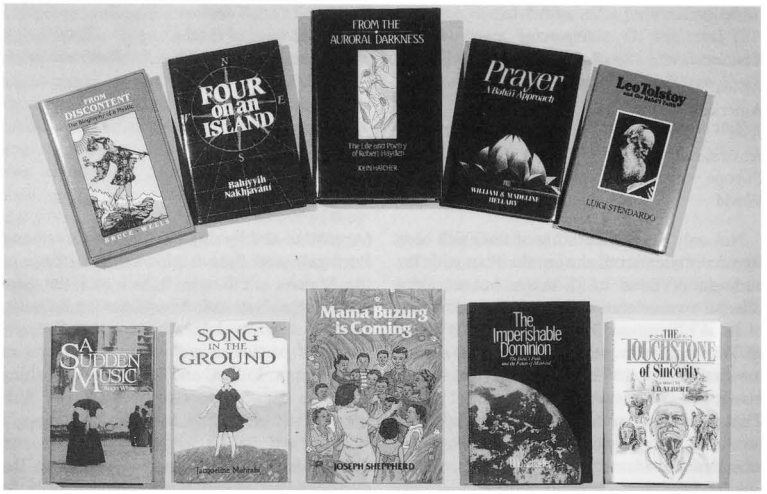
*Production of Literature*

| *Continent* | *First Phase* | *Second Phase* | *Third Phase* | *Total for Plan* | *Total NSAs Reporting* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 47 | 64 | 46 | 157 | 28 |
| Americas | 25 | 37 | 30 | 92 | 19 |
| Asia | 39 | 107 | 108 | 254 | 18 |
| Australasia | 12 | 35 | 5 | 52 | 11 |
| Europe | 34 | 89 | 58 | 181 | 15 |
| **World** | **157** | **332** | **247** | **736** | **91** |

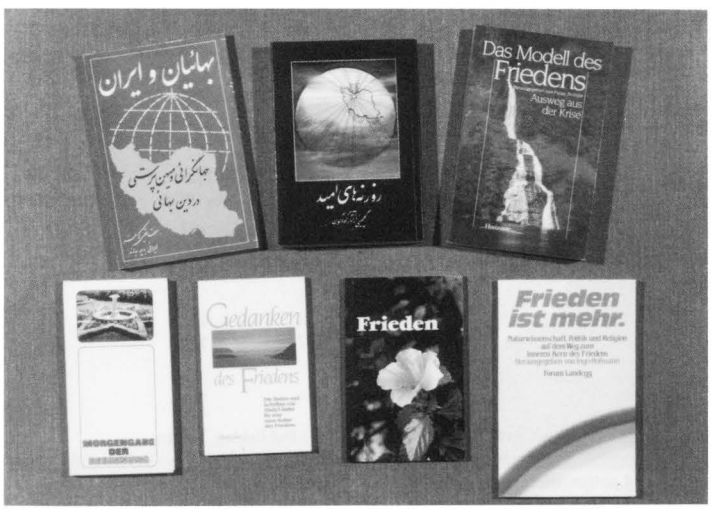
Greek, and Faroese. Other praiseworthy activities in this area include the reproducton of Vietnamese and Laotian literature in the United States, and the intercontinental co-operation between Europe and the Americas to provide more literature of a higher quality in Spanish

**10.c. Publishing Trusts**

At present 25 Bahá'í Publishing Trusts serve the literature needs of the Bahá'í world. During the Plan major achievements have included formation of the new publishing trusts in the Ivory Coast, Kenya, and Nigeria as well as re-estab-




*A sample of novels, biographical works, children's literature, and literary criticism published by independent Bahá'í publishing house George Ronald.*




*Books in Persian, and a series of works in German on peace for the International Year of Peace, by independent Bahá'í publisher Horizonte Verlag.*

lishment of the one in Uganda, all in response to goals of the Plan. Fulfilment of these goals has markedly improved the ability of the friends to increase the supply of Bahá'í literature in the many languages of Africa, so vital to the continued expansion and consolidation of the Faith there. In total, the Bahá'í Publishing Trusts, produced 354 items related to the Sacred Writings, 570 new books by Bahá'í authors and 668 other types of publication.

A new development in Bahá'í literature was the publication of materials intended specifically for a non-Bahá'í audience. These were particularly in evidence from non-institutional publishers of Bahá'í and Bahá'í-related works. Horizonte Verlag, publishing in German, produced a colour-illustrated version of *Die Sieben Täler* (*The Seven Valleys*) for sale in bookstores, as well as several books on peace—*Frieden is Mehr, Die Frau und der Weltfriedens, Das Modell des Friedens,* and *Gedanken des Friedens*. George Ronald produced such arts-related volumes as *Mark Tobey: Art and Belief*, and John Hatcher's *From the Auroral Darkness* (on the life and poetry of Robert Hayden), and Moojan Momen's *An Introduction to Shi''i Islam*. Kalimát Press brought out two volumes in its series of essays on contemporary problems—*Circle of Unity* and *Circle of Peace*. Among the materials produced by Bahá'í publishers treating current problems are *Beyond Disarmament* and Philip Hainsworth's *Bahá'í Focus on Human Rights*, both from the United Kingdom; and Canada's *The Future of Canada*, a brief presented to the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects of Canada. This enumeration is by no means complete.

Other significant developments include decentralization of publishing responsibility in Zaire and India, prolific activity by the Trust in Pakistan, and a Hindi edition of *The Dawn-Breakers* in India. In addition, independent Bahá'í publishers, including George Ronald, Kalimát Press, New Era (later known as One World), and Horizonte Verlag continue to enrich the supply of literature on the Faith, by publications of a total of 206 items during the Plan.

**10.d. Sacred Writings**

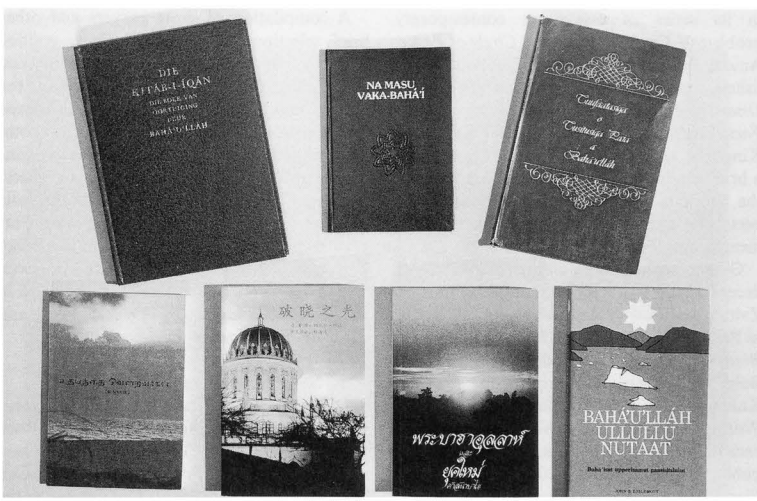
During the Plan, 1,192 of the works published were editions of the Sacred Writings. Some of the most important translation achievements of the past seven years have been the following: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* in Dutch and Samoan raising the total to 26 languages; *Prayers and Meditations* in Spanish for a total of six languages; *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* in Italian, its tenth language; *The Hidden Words* in Czech, Scots Gaelic, Hungarian, Malagasy, Mapuche, Motu, Nepali, Palauan, Polish, and Rumanian, now making 57 languages; *The Kitáb-i-Íqán* in Xhosa and Afrikaans for 22 languages; *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh* in German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish; and the new United States edition of *Bahá'í Prayers* in German, Japanese, Norwegian, and Portuguese. The recent Greek translation of *Some Answered Questions* now makes the book available in 23 languages. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb* and *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* were published in French; *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* in Italian, making ten languages; and *God Passes By* in Dutch, its ninth language of translation.

A compilation of short prayers and other brief selections from the Writings, entitled *Words of God*, was issued by the Universal House of Justice in 1981 to better facilitate the goal of many Assemblies to make the Sacred Word available to all believers. This compilation has been translated into over 100 languages and published in at least 53. In Africa, there are 27 editions in eight languages. Reports received indicate that during the Seven Year Plan, 47 prayer books were published in African languages, 14 in North and South American Indian languages, 22 in Asian languages, 15 in the indigenous languages of Australasia, and 21 in the languages of European minorities.

**10.e. New Original Works**

Original books on the Faith began to appear more frequently during the Seven Year Plan. Among these were introductory and biographical works in French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Concordances and indexes to the Writings appeared in English, as well as two compilations of Shoghi Effendi's letters in English, to the Bahá'ís of Germany and to the Bahá'ís of the British Isles. Dozens of other

*Translations of the compilation* Words of God*: centre, Laotian; clockwise from the bottom, Norwegian, Kasem, Albanian, Punjabi, Moré, Venda, Korean, Assamese, Catalan, Haitian Créole, Tagalog.*




*A representative sample of Bahá'í literature in non-European languages:* The Kitáb-i-Íqán *in Afrikaans; a prayerbook in Fijian;* Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh *in Samoan;* Nabil's Narrative Abridged *in Tamil;* The Dawn Breakers *in Chinese; and* Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era *in Thai and Greenlandic.*

original works appeared in English, which language has traditionally led the Bahá'í world in number and variety of publications. Some other publications not translated from Persian, Arabic, or English are the two French publications, *Le Prisonnier de Saint-Jean d'Acre* by André Brugiroux and *Les Bahá'ís, ou Victoire sur la Violence* by Christine Hakim; the German publications *Der Weg aus der Ausweglosigkeit* by Huschmand Sabet, *Der Bahá'í in der Modernen Welt* by Udo Schaefer; two Italian publications, *Il Maestro* by Luigi Zuffada, and *Bahíyyih Khánum, Ancella di Báhá* by Julio Savi; and two Spanish language originals, *Perspectivas de un Nuevo Orden Mundial* by José Luis Marques y Utrillas, and *Mulla Husayn, el Primer Que Creyo en El Báb* by R. Mehrabkhání. Two notable achievements in Europe were the major work in Icelandic by Edvard Jónsson entitled *Bahá'u'lláh, Lif Hans og Opinberun* and a book in Danish by Margit Warburg, a sympathetic non-Bahá'í, about the plight of the friends in Írán entitled *Iranske Dokumenter*.

Of the 687 new original works on the Faith, 357 were published in Europe, 63 in Africa, 68 in the Americas, 174 in Asia and 25 in Australasia. Some of the remarkable original publications outside Europe include two textbooks published in Bolivia—one in Aymara and one in Quechua—both for use in schools there, and a pamphlet in Haitian Creole.

**10.f. Correspondence Courses**

Correspondence courses have become a feature of teaching and consolidation work in many countries during the Seven Year Plan. This particular activity was considered so essential that the number of National Assemblies which were given specific goals for correspondence courses numbered 70 by the third phase: 28 in Africa, 25 in the Americas, 12 in Asia, 5 in Australasia. In response to these goals, there were 22 African National Assemblies which distributed correspondence courses, 24 in the Americas, 11 in Asia, and 3 in Australasia, for a total of 60.

Eighty-eight National Assemblies have reported using correspondence courses, of which 38 noted that they initiated their first correspondence courses during this Plan. A total of 219 different courses have been distributed during this period, in 57 languages. There is a fairly consistent turnover of course material over time; some courses are dropped when interest in them wanes, and new ones then initiated.

Most correspondence courses are designed to introduce the Faith to enquirers or provide basic deepening for new Bahá'ís, but a wide variety of other specific topics is addressed through this medium. One of the most widely used correspondence courses is based on *The New Garden*. During the Plan, it was distributed by 18 National Assemblies in 31 editions, in at least ten languages. Among the more specific courses were 14 on Bahá'í administration, 9 on Bahá'í family life, and 5 designed for Bahá'í children. The National Assembly of Fiji prepared a course for high-school students, Colombia offered one for teachers on children's classes, and St. Vincent presented a course on Bible-related subjects.

Many National Spiritual Assemblies make extensive use of this method of deepening. In Togo, there are courses on prayer and on life after death, as well as a general course and one on Bahá'í administration. The community of Chad offers a course for Bahá'í women, for youth, one on Bahá'í history, and one on administration, all in French, and an introductory course in French and Massa. Believers in Papua New Guinea can study Bahá'í history, administration, family life, and living the life through correspondence. In Australia, courses are offered on the life of Bahá'u'lláh, the Covenant, parenting, Bahá'í administration, and the life of the Hand of the Cause of God Horace Holley. In Pakistan, correspondence courses are used to present specially chosen materials and information to a small, specific group of believers such as youth or children's teachers. In Sri Lanka, courses for Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís have been offered in Sinhala, Tamil, and English throughout the Plan, with enrolment reaching more than 1,100 at one time. A year-long course in English or Chichewa was offered in Malawi.

The National Assembly of Malaysia makes excellent use of correspondence courses by offering introductory courses in Tamil, Chinese, English, Malay, and Iban; deepening courses (at two different levels) in the same four languages; and teaching courses in English. There is also a course in English and Iban for deepening the members of the Local Assemblies. Over 5,000 enrolments in these courses have

been reported and many Malaysian correspondence courses have been adapted by other National Assemblies.

Inter-Assembly co-operation has been very important in the growing use of correspondence courses during the Plan. Half of the National Assemblies in the Caribbean use an introductory course from India; in Jamaica it is sent to all new believers. Portugal offers a correspondence course developed in Brazil. Correspondence courses have been exchanged by neighbouring National Spiritual Assemblies in West Africa, and Malaysian courses have been widely distributed.

### 10.g. Audio-Visual Materials

The Bahá'í community has become more skilled at producing and utilizing audio-visual materials for consolidation and for proclamation of the Faith. While certain National Assemblies have provided the believers with audio-visual materials in the past, goals concerning them have been extensively assigned for the first time during this Plan. For example, the goal to provide taped prayers and excerpts from the Holy Writings was assigned to 71 National Assemblies: 38 in Africa, 21 in the Americas, 8 in Asia, 4 in Australasia. Of these, 25 were assigned goals in specific named languages. Similarly, production of audio-visual materials was assigned to 31 countries in Africa, the Americas and Asia in a variety of languages.

Production of such materials requires not only professional expertise, but also access to specialized facilities and equipment. Consequently, the results have been limited. However, major efforts in this area are especially evident in areas where many of the friends are still illiterate, as can be seen from the following table.

Cassette tapes of Bahá'í Scripture, which are invaluable for the spiritual nourishment of communities where reading is not a cultural habit, have been produced in 68 versions by 59 national communities. Taped readings are also distributed by a special Committee for Service to the Blind in the United Kingdom. Reports were received of 81 new tapes of Bahá'í music during the Plan, of which 24 were produced in Africa. In a few areas tapes of the Sacred Writings set to music were produced.

The International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre reports that a dramatic development of the Plan was a much greater exploitation of music and deepening cassettes, slides, posters, and locally produced videotapes, for teaching as well as deepening. Continuously running Bahá'í videotapes enhanced the appeal of Bahá'í displays at fairs, markets, and exhibitions. Bahá'í calendars, pictures, posters, and jewellery, so important for reinforcing and expressing Bahá'í identity, were produced by 27 National Assemblies.

Music has always been a unique and inspiring means of bringing people together. During the Seven Year Plan music was increasingly used for consolidating the Bahá'í community. The number of music tapes offered by Bahá'í distributors increased every year of the Plan. Musicians from all over the world joined in the first International Bahá'í Music Conference in Costa Rica in February 1985, to discuss and explore the use of music in the promotion of the Faith. The National Assembly of the Philippines identified the growing popularity and quality of its Annual Music Fest as one of its most important achievements of the Seven Year Plan. Often groups of youth worked together to compose songs and set prayers to music in several languages, which they then took with them travelling teaching. The music festivals associated with the Bahá'í radio stations in

| *Continent* | *Printed Materials* | *Tapes of Scripture* | *Deepening Tapes* | *Music Tapes/ Sheet Music* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 29 | 29 | 3 | 24 |
| Americas | 15 | 30 | 304 | 31 |
| Asia | 20 | 1 | 24 | 6 |
| Australasia | 3 | 5 | 10 | 2 |
| Europe | 16 | 3 | 54 | 18 |
| **World** | **83** | **68** | **395** | **81** |

*The Hands of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, 'Ali-Akbar Furútan, and Paul Haney, standing left, pause on the portico of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice during filming of* The Pilgrimage.

South America have became a catalyst for the uplifting of indigenous cultures: the Annual Festival at Radio Bahá'í Ecuador is the most important cultural event in the region, and it has become so popular that now six preliminary competitions must be held in order to accommodate all the participants.

At least 11 major, 16 mm colour films were produced and distributed around the world during the Seven Year Plan, while there were no more than three major Bahá'í films produced in the Nine Year Plan and six in the Five Year Plan. Among the achievements of this Plan were two unique productions, *The Pilgrimage*, produced by the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, with the participation of the Hands of the cause 'Ali-Akbar Furútan and Paul Haney, offering glimpses of sites in the Holy Land; and *The Ark of Destiny*, produced by the Bahá'í World Centre and Kiva Films, which documents the construction and occupation of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The latter film gave rise to an auxiliary film, *Stronghold of Unity*, which deals with the same theme but for the benefit of those not familiar with the Faith. The first film dealing with social and economic development, *Bahá'í Education in India*, was produced, and the first film on the Local Assembly, *Trustees of the Merciful*. Both were produced by Ark Productions of New Zealand at the request of the Counsellors in Asia and the National Assembly of India.

Two introductory films on the Faith centred on two of the International Bahá'í Conferences held during the course of the Seven Year Plan: *The Bahá'ís*, made at the Conference in August 1982 in Montreal, and *The Bahá'í Faith—Unity in Diversity*, which was filmed at the site of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Western Samoa. One film dealt with the Fund, *This Undying Fire*, and another, *By Way of the Gate*, with the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy.

The Bahá'í community began to take advantage of the videotape format during the Seven Year Plan. The Canadian Bahá'í Distribution Service and the United States Bahá'í Publishing Trust marketed increasing numbers of video-

tapes, many of which were taped versions of Bahá'í films, while others were videotape productions. Light of the North in Alaska produced and distributed two excellent documentaries on native Bahá'í activities, *Thy Love is My Stronghold* and *Trail of Light*.

There was unprecedented production of films and major videotapes by privately owned production companies during the course of the period under review. Ark Productions in New Zealand and Peak Films in Canada produced five major films. A group of Canadian Bahá'ís produced the first Bahá'í music video, *Mona with the Children*, a dramatic portrayal of the persecution and execution of the Iranian Bahá'í martyr, Mona (Muná) Maḥmúdnizhád.

# 4. THE EMERGENCE OF THE FAITH FROM OBSCURITY

THE Universal House of Justice wrote in 1985 that 'the great, the historic feature of this period is the emergence of the Faith from obscurity, promoted by the steadfast heroism of the renowned, the indefatigable, dearly-loved Bahá'í community of Bahá'u'lláh's and the Báb's native land'. This profoundly significant transition is clearly evidenced by the quantity and quality of media coverage during this period; the ever-increasing extent to which the Faith is presented in academic and intellectual domains; the evolving relationships of Bahá'í communities with national leaders and prominent people; and the promulgation by the Universal House of Justice of a statement on peace addressed to the peoples of the world, and its delivery to heads of state and other world leaders. A report on the distribution of *The Promise of World Peace* appears elsewhere in this volume.

## 4.1. PROCLAMATION IN THE MEDIA

The crisis in Írán precipitated unprecedented media coverage. The most prestigious newspapers and the major television networks of the non-communist world reported on the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís and presented editorial comment urging their defence. Through the diligent attention of Bahá'ís, this flood of media attention has been characterized by a steadily improving level of accuracy in reporting about the Bahá'í community. The type of media coverage has also changed during the Plan, as regular Bahá'í programming in all media has increased substantially.

The following table presents the number of media items on the Faith reported by National Spiritual Assemblies during the Seven Year Plan. Several National Assemblies informed the World Centre that instances of media coverage

| | TELEVISION | | RADIO | | NEWSPAPER | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Continent* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Items* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Items* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Items* |
| Africa | 9 | 77 | 18 | 170 | 13 | 100 |
| Americas | 20 | 209 | 25 | 282 | 25 | 6,563 |
| Asia | 7 | 21 | 8 | 45 | 11 | 302 |
| Australasia | 5 | 72 | 12 | 178 | 10 | 927 |
| Europe | 12 | 56 | 11 | 168 | 16 | 1,721 |
| **World** | **53** | **435** | **74** | **843** | **75** | **9,613** |

within their nations were too numerous to count, which means that the numbers given here are significantly lower than the actual totals.

**1.a. Feature Programmes**

One important aspect of the growth in media coverage during the Plan should be noted, namely an increase in the number of feature programmes about the Faith. Although all the items above reflect references to the Faith, the table below provides a tally of televised programmes lasting more than 20 minutes, radio shows lasting more than five minutes, and newspaper articles which feature the teachings of the Faith.

| | TELEVISION | | RADIO | | NEWSPAPER | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Continent* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Items* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Items* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Items* |
| Africa | 8 | 43 | 14 | 36 | 11 | 18 |
| Americas | 13 | 31 | 11 | 37 | 11 | 63 |
| Asia | 4 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| Australasia | 4 | 22 | 8 | 53 | 7 | 20 |
| Europe | 4 | 18 | 12 | 81 | 9 | 28 |
| **World** | **33** | **119** | **48** | **212** | **44** | **135** |

**1.b. Reporting Quality**

During the course of the Plan, for most countries the relationship of the media with Bahá'í institutions evolved from one of general lack of interest, to substantial but inaccurate coverage of the persecutions in Írán to a well-informed and sympathetic concern with the affairs of the Bahá'í community. At the same time, the image of the Faith presented in the media also evolved: at first the Bahá'í community was described as an obscure offshoot of Islám, then as an independent religion whose members were being unjustly persecuted. A sense that the Bahá'í community had something valuable to offer to the world began to emerge in news stories as reporters became more familiar with Bahá'í beliefs, especially after the release of *The Promise of World Peace*.

An example of this trend is the change in the tone of articles appearing in the United States newspaper, *The New York Times*. Its first article on the persecution, in December 1978, called the Bahá'ís 'secretive' and 'technically, Moslems'. One of their next articles on the persecution explains that the 'religion originated within Islam in the nineteenth century' and is 'a gentle creed that seeks to harmonize the ethical tenets of all great world religions'. *The New York Times* raised the issue of persecution of Bahá'ís in Írán in more than eight editorials published between 1980 and 1986. The first of these editorials described the Faith as a 'highly vulnerable' and an 'unoffending creed'. Over the next six years, the *Times* printed stories about the National Convention and President Reagan's statements concerning the Bahá'ís, a guest editorial by Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh (Fírúz Kházimzádih), a member of the National Assembly, and a feature story about a Sunní Muslim who described his fellow prisoners in Írán who were Bahá'ís: 'They were killed in cold blood for their faith but they never broke. They were my friends. I was in awe of their faith and courage.' By November 1985, when Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum visited New York City to present *The Promise of World Peace* to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, *The New York Times* had begun to describe the Faith in terms of its tenets rather than the persecutions suffered by its adherents.

**1.c. Media Volume**

As the quality of news about the Faith has steadily improved, the volume of media coverage has also increased. A total of 3,948 'news stories' appeared about the Faith in the media: 314 on television; 626 on radio; and 3,008 news items in newspapers. Feature programmes totalled 470 items. Additionally, 796 instances of paid advertisement brought the Faith to the attention of the public: 48 items on television; 412 on radio; and 337 instances in newspapers.

The number of people exposed to the Faith through newspapers has increased at an extra-

ordinary rate. For example, in 1982 the National Assembly of the United States estimated that 50 million people had read about the Faith in any of the 1,135 articles about the Faith printed that year. This represented 13,198 column inches. A year later, it estimated that 80 million newspaper readers had the opportunity to read about the Faith in the 790 articles printed that year, this time for a total of 10,749 column inches. Afterwards, the number of articles also began to increase, until the National Assembly reported that it was no longer able to count the total number.

Increasing the use of mass media for the proclamation of the Faith was a goal assigned to 110 National Spiritual Assemblies; 28 of these were also asked to use the media for consolidation of the Bahá'í community. Forty National Assemblies devised and carried out media plans; 23 National Assemblies held a total of 135 media workshops to increase their members' ability to use mass communication resources; and 67 National Assemblies established systems for conveying news about the Iranian situation quickly and efficiently to the media in their country. Several National Assemblies considered the media skills acquired by their communities to be one of their major achievements of the Plan. The United States National Assembly wrote: 'A new level of confidence has been gained by the community in its ability to deal with these people, resulting in a widespread presentation of the Teachings, the like of which has never been witnessed.'

### 1.d. Advertisements in the Media

Another dimension of Bahá'í visibility through media is the continuation of paid advertising. Five National Assemblies reported using paid television advertising time: three in the Americas, putting on nine televised advertisements; and two Assemblies in Australasia, with 15 advertisements. Occasional spot advertisements tended to give way to long-term advertising campaigns, and paid advertising in general has decreased as the number of regularly scheduled Bahá'í programmes on radio and television has increased. Some examples of advertising efforts are the highly successful pilot campaign on television in New Zealand, a comprehensive campaign in Canadian magazines, and the regular printing of Bahá'í Writings in newspapers in Lesotho, an effort which has continued since 1981.

### 1.e. Regularly Scheduled Radio and Television Programmes

The production of regularly scheduled radio and television programmes, invaluable in reaching and consolidating Bahá'í communities, particularly in areas where transportation is difficult or almost impossible, illustrates the evolution of the Bahá'ís into a community which is actively and visibly attempting to lead the world towards peaceful coexistence. The island communities of the Caribbean and the South Pacific have made the most noticeable use of regularly scheduled radio programmes. More than half of the Caribbean National Assemblies broadcast Bahá'í radio shows on a regular basis, some having run consecutively for more than a decade. Radio broadcasts extend beyond the boundary of any one National Spiritual Assembly, reaching people of other islands as well. The sharpest increase in radio programming in the past three years occurred in the South Pacific, where routine programming rose from eight broadcasts in four countries to 20 broadcasts in six countries. The number of Bahá'í radio programmes increased all over the world, from approximately 25 programmes in 1979 to 124 by Riḍván 1986.

| | REGULAR RADIO | | REGULAR TELEVISION | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Continent* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Programmes* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of Programmes* |
| Africa | 7 | 18 | 5 | 6 |
| Americas | 18 | 51 | 5 | 20 |
| Asia | 3 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| Australasia | 7 | 33 | 2 | 4 |
| Europe | 3 | 13 | 2 | 3 |
| **World** | **38** | **124** | **14** | **33** |

*Filming of the first Bahá'í music video,* Mona with the Children, *in Toronto, Canada, during April 1985. The film is a dramatic portrayal of the persecution and execution of the Iranian Bahá'í martyr, Mona (Muná) Maḥmúdnizhád.*

In many countries, the relevance of the Bahá'í teachings and the effort Bahá'ís make to communicate with listeners distinguish the Bahá'í radio programmes. In St. Vincent, station staff have commented on how different the Bahá'í programmes are from other religious broadcasts, and the regular five-minute programme has been expanded to ten minutes. Such programmes often have loyal listening audiences: Barbados estimates the audience to be 70 per cent of the households there; the weekly programme on Radio Jamaica, now in its tenth year, attracts 79 per cent of radio listeners. Bahá'ís in Réunion were invited to produce a regular programme after making several broadcasts for special occasions. In the Central African Republic, where a radio programme has been broadcast for 13 years, the Bahá'ís reported participating in an Independence Day parade in which the people lining the streets all sang the Bahá'í radio show theme song when they saw the Bahá'í banner.

Several Bahá'í communities are broadcasting morning and evening devotions; other communities use national media to remind the far-flung communities to observe Nineteen Day Feasts, Bahá'í Holy days, and other events. As a result of vigorous efforts by the Bahá'ís, All-India Radio now announces every Bahá'í Holy Day. Numerous Bahá'í communities broadcast five minutes of devotions on Holy Days. In addition to bringing the concepts of the Bahá'í Revelation into people's homes every week, special cases sometimes arise where the radio broadcast can be used to solve problems. The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone gave two radio interviews on the regular Bahá'í broadcast in the Marshall Islands in order to correct the misapprehension of some of the church leaders who had expressed opposition to the Bahá'í broadcast.

Bahá'í communities have greatly improved their ability to use the medium of television; the number of regularly broadcast Bahá'í television programmes increased five-fold during the course of the Seven Year Plan. *The Spiritual Revolution*, a television series produced in the United States, was broadcast by 20 stations in 1983 alone. The first series of Bahá'í programmes produced in Spanish and Chinese for international distribution, *Grow With Us* (*Crece Con Nosotros*) and *The Bahá'í Faith: A Universal Religion for Today's World*, were broadcast in several countries.

Bahá'í communities in Canada and the United States have taken advantage of the easy accessibility of cable television stations, receiving training in production techniques and assistance from the cable companies in the taping of their programmes. At least three regular community television programmes have received national awards. The Bahá'ís from San Leandro, California, the United States, whose programme *Bahá'í Fireside* has been on the air weekly for four years, received an award in 1984 for the contribution of the Bahá'í community to the station and the consistent improvement in the quality of its production. Brazil, El Salvador, Trinidad, the Netherlands Antilles, the Central African Republic, and Samoa are other countries where the Bahá'ís have produced their own television programmes on a regular basis. As with radio programmes, people recognize the shows and become loyal audiences. After being interviewed on the regular television programme in the Central African Republic, French travelling teacher André Brugiroux met large crowds for the following five days.

Regularly scheduled Bahá'í radio and television programmes have been greatly facilitated through training courses organized by CIRBAL and the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, agencies whose responsibility is to promote and encourage Bahá'í use of the media.

## 4.2. ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS OF THE FAITH

The emergence of the Faith from obscurity has given added importance to the accurate presentation of the Faith in academic circles. Efforts to include the Bahá'í Faith in the curricula of universities and schools are gaining momentum through several major achievements and the persistent efforts of many Bahá'í communities around the world. Religion classes at the primary and secondary levels in Australia, India, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Trinidad and Tobago have included the Faith. Courses on or including the Bahá'í Faith have been taught at universities in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Hawaii, Kenya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, and the United States. Bahá'í curricula have been prepared and submitted to educational authorities for approval in several other countries. A network of over 300 Bahá'í college clubs is in the forefront of teaching work in the United States, and the number of such clubs is increasing around the world.

### 2.a. Textbooks on the Faith

Significant progress has been made in the inclusion of information about the Faith in school textbooks, a goal assigned to Germany and the United Kingdom. *The Bahá'í Faith: the Emerging Global Religion*, written by William Hatcher and Douglas Martin, is an introductory textbook on the Faith. The publication in Britain of two secondary-level textbooks, *The Bahá'í Faith*, by Mary Perkins and Philip Hainsworth, and *Eight Major Religions in Britain*, by Jane Bradshaw, which contains a section containing accurate information about the Bahá'í Faith, has assured the inclusion of the Faith in Religious Studies courses in the United Kingdom, and given a great impetus to efforts in other parts of the world. Two textbooks were published in Bolivia, one in Aymara and one in Quechua; both are used in schools there. Interest in the Faith in German-speaking academic circles has been stimulated by the release in 1982 by a major non-Bahá'í publisher of *Auf den Spuren Eines Neuen Zeitalters*, a thorough presentation of the Faith for a general audience by Egon Heckeroth; and through Huschmand Sabet's *Der Weg aus der Ausweglosigkeit*, which received considerable media attention when it was published in 1985. Much work remains to be done to ensure the inclusion of the Faith in general textbooks on religion, especially at the university level.

### 2.b. Associations for Bahá'í Studies

In light of the Universal House of Justice's interest in the furtherance and extension of Bahá'í scholarship, a significant accomplishment of the Plan was the establishment of Associations for Bahá'í Studies in all five continents. These Associations, which promote and encourage studies of the Bahá'í Faith and seek ways of presenting the Faith in academic circles, have now been established in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Germany, India, Ireland, Nigeria, and Switzerland. Each is an independent affiliate of the original Association for Bahá'í Studies established in Canada, and operates under the direction of its own National Spiritual Assembly.

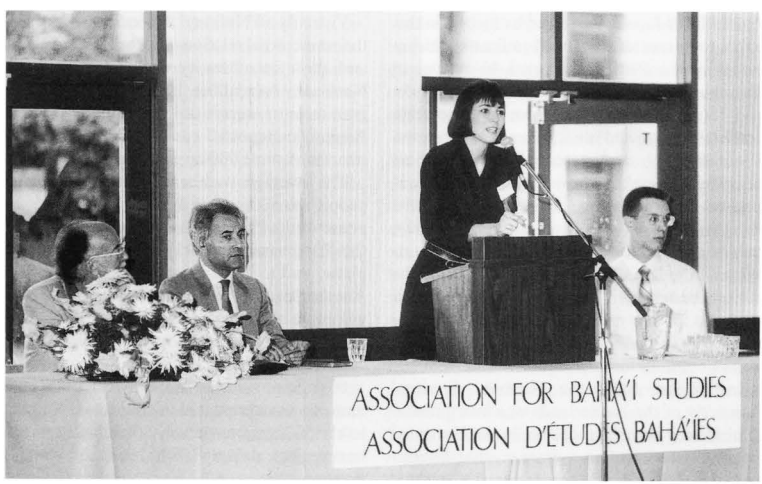
The Association for Bahá'í Studies in Canada

has now become a North American association sponsored jointly by the National Spiritual Assemblies of Canada and the United States, and includes professional interest sections in the fields of health, the arts, environmental design, education, marriage and family studies, American Indian and Inuit studies, and religious studies. It has established a speakers' bureau to provide presentations on the Faith through invited lecturers for university and scholarly audiences, and a collection of curricula to be used as a resource for the development of credit and non-credit courses on the Bahá'í Faith at institutions of higher learning.

Two highly successful and ground-breaking conferences sponsored by the Association for Bahá'í Studies (North America) during the period of the Plan deserve special mention: the First Symposium on the Bahá'í Faith and Islám, at McGill University, Montreal, March 1984, and a 'Marxist-Bahá'í Dialogue' held at Louhelen Bahá'í School in January 1986. The conference on the Bahá'í Faith and Islám featured nine outstanding presentations by scholars in the field of Islamic studies, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í. The 'Marxist-Bahá'í Dialogue' extended the frontiers of Bahá'í scholarship by bringing together prominent Bahá'ís and several noted Marxist scholars for what proved to be a stimulating exchange. In the words of the Association executive, 'the seminar provided a clear indication of the intellectual force and respect which the Bahá'í teachings so readily command even when perceived by those who operate within the confines of a secular and materialistic vision of reality', and 'provided important areas of challenge which Bahá'í scholarship will have to take up as the Faith begins to engage directly the attention of proponents of some of the most powerful of the current world doctrines'.

**2.c. Theses on the Faith**

An increase in attention to the Faith by academics and students pursuing a university education is yet another sign of the Bahá'í Faith's 'emergence from obscurity'. This period witnessed a notable increase in the number of academic theses on Bahá'í-related subjects prepared by Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í candidates for advanced degrees. Of the 87 theses dealing with the Bahá'í Faith, in whole or in part, 32 (37 per cent of the total) were prepared during




*Dorothy Freeman, author of* From Copper to Gold: The Life of Dorothy Baker, *delivering a lecture during the tenth annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies in August 1985, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.*

the years 1979–1985. Of these, 16 were doctoral theses, 8 master's theses, and the remainder bachelor's or equivalent. Of the 32 theses known to have been completed during the Plan, 13 related to various aspects of Bahá'í history, 5 to doctrines and teachings of the Faith, and the remainder to other topics, including education, architecture, and social processes of community life.

As might be expected, most of the academic theses on the Faith written to date have originated in the universities of Europe and North America. In Austria, India, and Italy, 2 theses each were presented, three were presented in both Australia and Switzerland, five in the United Kingdom, seven in France and Germany, and 36 in the United States. In each of another 16 countries or territories, there was one thesis presented for a total of 87.

**2.d. Bahá'í Faith in Reference Books**

As public awareness of the Faith has grown, the accuracy of information about the Faith in reference works has become critically important. Several National Assemblies were directed by the Universal House of Justice in January 1985 to review the reference works published in their countries and present accurate information to the publishers. The National Assembly of Japan considered its success in this effort to be one of its most significant achievements of the Plan. It collected 40 articles in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and similar works and found that many of them had incorrect material. Corrected articles and information about the Faith were presented to 18 publishers of reference works, who indicated their intention to print the information supplied by the Bahá'ís. The *World Christian Encyclopedia*, published in 1982, provides demographic statistics on the Bahá'í community, and during the period under review *The Europa Yearbook* began to include references to the Bahá'í community in its profiles of most countries where Bahá'í communities exist.

In August 1980, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Netherlands was instrumental in obtaining an official change in the Universal Decimal Classification system so that Bábism and the Bahá'í Faith are assigned the same number in the section 'Younger religions and religious movements'. The World Centre succeeded, in 1982, in convincing the United States Library of Congress to change its subject heading 'Bahaism' to 'Bahá'í Faith', a change that will affect all other general subject headings.

## 4.3. CORDIAL RELATIONS

The cordial relationships which Bahá'í communities around the world have developed with prominent people and those in authority are an important aspect of the emergence of the Faith from obscurity. While the Bahá'í community has enjoyed high regard in international circles for many years through the work of the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations, the broadly based and well-informed respect for the Bahá'ís which now characterizes the Faith's relationship with most governments received a major impetus during the Plan. During the opening years of the Plan many National Assemblies devised plans to acquaint their governments and leaders of thought in their countries with the essential tenets of the Faith; these highly successful efforts are continuing. Contact with national leaders greatly increased when Bahá'í communities around the world were impelled to seek the assistance of their governments in attempting to end the worsening persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

Virtually all National Assemblies were asked to foster cordial relations with prominent people and those in authority during the Plan; 102 National Assemblies devised special programmes to carry out this goal, and 108 Assemblies reported contacts with 11,245 dignitaries at some 900 occasions during the Plan.

The average number of times prominent people were contacted during each year of each phase of the Plan increased from 579 a year for the first phase, to 1,895 a year for the second phase, and to 2,202 a year for the third phase. Another significant pattern was that the people who were approached by the Bahá'ís represent an ever-increasing body of national personalities and leaders of thought.

It is important to note that Bahá'í communities have presented the Faith to the highest levels of government with Bahá'í delegations having met directly with heads of state or governments.

All government ministers or all members of the Cabinet of 47 nations have been contacted by their Bahá'í communities; and all the

| | HEAD OF STATE | | HEAD OF GOVERNMENT | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Continent* | *No. of People* | *No. of NSAs* | *No. of People* | *No. of NSAs* |
| Africa | 19 | 12 | 20 | 11 |
| Americas | 24 | 15 | 18 | 10 |
| Asia | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Australasia | 20 | 9 | 9 | 7 |
| Europe | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| **World** | **73** | **44** | **54** | **35** |

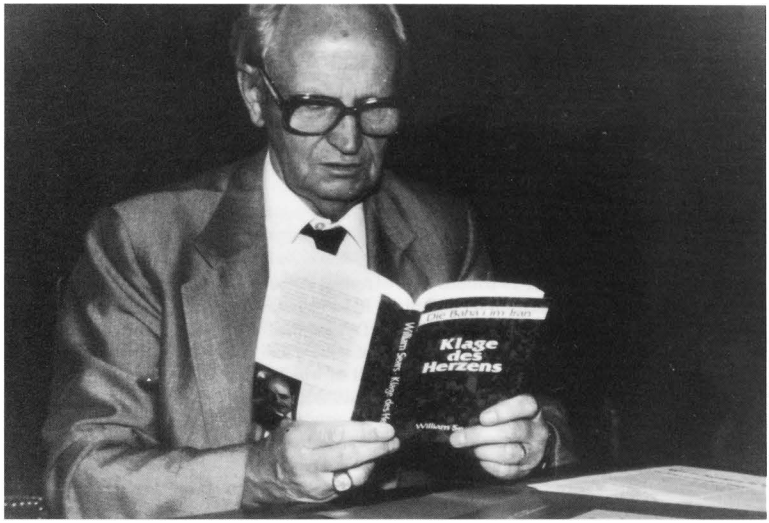
members of the parliaments of 29 nations have been presented with information about the Faith. On many occasions, these officials have been approached more than once.

The means adopted by Bahá'ís to present the Faith to leading citizens, which ranged from hiring a public relations firm in the United States and Canada, to inviting a prominent cleric to speak on a famous Celtic rendition of the Gospels in the Republic of Ireland, to building a special ceremonial entrance for the King of Tonga every year at an agricultural fair, are all expressions of the wide cultural diversity of the Bahá'í community. One common approach was to prepare a special information folder which was given to each prominent person visited by the Bahá'ís; some National Spiritual Assemblies used presentation of Bahá'í books as an occasion to meet dignitaries. Several National Spiritual Assemblies reported that frequent changes in the composition of government ministries made it necessary to repeat their visits often. For example, the National Spiritual Assembly of Nigeria appointed a 'prominent persons team' to increase the number of visits and keep records of them, and all the Local Spiritual Assemblies of New Zealand were involved in a campaign to introduce the Faith to members of Parliament.

Mailing Bahá'í material likely to be of interest to a particular group was another common strategy; health professionals, lawyers, and teachers, as well as parliamentarians and government ministers, received special mailings of Bahá'í literature in some countries. Several National Spiritual Assemblies sent *Call to the Nations* to national leaders with a cover letter inviting a response; those who replied were sent more literature.

Many communities invited prominent people to annual events such as award banquets or formal dinners. Examples include: the Annual Bahá'í Humanitarian Awards Dinner in Taiwan; the formal celebration of the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh in Singapore; and similar events, all of which grew more successful every year. The Alaskan National Spiritual Assembly reported that their 'Honor Kempton Award for service to Humanity' quickly became a statewide event, and at the 1985 banquet Alaska's Governor, Congressmen, and the Mayor of Anchorage all addressed the audience. The Bahá'ís of Sri Lanka began to observe World Religion Day in 1981; each year the event gained in prestige until, at the fifth observance in 1985, the Prime Minister and Cabinet of Sri Lanka officially recognized World Religion Day and issued a commemorative stamp showing the symbols of all the world's revealed religions, including Bahá'í. The Prime Minister was the guest of honour at the 1985 event, with three other Cabinet Ministers and top Government officials also attending.

Bahá'í support for United Nations activities has helped to cement good working relationships between Bahá'í communities and government authorities, and also with the representatives of international agencies. The significant contribution made by the Bahá'ís of Benin to International Year of the Child activities in their country established excellent relations with the national Government, which led in time to several interviews with the President of the Republic and strong support for the Bahá'í community. Bahá'í youth were prominent in the planning and execution of International Year of Youth activities in many countries, and Bahá'í representatives were present at all the meetings convened to mark the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. The licensing of Bahá'í radio stations and academic schools has been another source of interaction between Bahá'í




*The presentation of a copy of* A Cry from the Heart *to the Lord Mayor of Fürth, Germany, in September 1983.*

*The presentation of Bahá'í Humanitarian Awards to prominent philanthropists, Taipei, Taiwan, in November 1984.*

communities and government authorities; the success of such projects has greatly enhanced the prestige of the Faith.

When Bahá'í efforts to intercede directly with the Government in Írán completely failed to halt the persecution of the believers there, Bahá'í communities around the world turned to their national leaders to ask them to try to convince Írán to treat its Bahá'í minority with justice. The genuine concern for the Iranian Bahá'ís expressed by Presidents, Prime Ministers, and other world leaders, and the resolutions passed by provincial, national, and international parliaments condemning the treatment of Bahá'ís have succeeded to some degree in mitigating the severity of the persecution. Apparently in response to this strongly voiced international protest, the Iranian authorities seemed to stop publicly denouncing membership in the Bahá'í Faith as a capital offence; and fewer Bahá'ís were executed each year, although the number in prison remained high.

The persistent efforts of Bahá'ís, and the corresponding willingness of prominent people all over the world to come to the defence of the Iranian friends, culminated with the passing, on 13 December 1985, of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution criticizing Írán for its human rights record and specifically mentioning its treatment of the Bahá'ís. These actions engendered a new level of understanding and good-will between Bahá'ís and those in authority. The inner strength and conviction of the Iranian friends who would not dissimulate their Faith in order to save their lives gave parliamentarians and government authorities a clear awareness of the validity of the Faith and the qualities of its adherents, while the Bahá'í community, recognizing that the active support of their leaders had lifted the threat of organized extermination from their fellow-believers in Írán, was filled with gratitude and appreciation.

The Bahá'í community has received significant assistance from international agencies and many governments in the complex and urgent task of resettling Iranian Bahá'ís who were forced to flee from their homeland or who have been made stateless by the Iranian Government's refusal to renew their passports. The acceptance of Bahá'í refugees in 30 countries to date, and the continuing negotiations with several others, have been an important aspect of Bahá'í interaction with government officials during the Seven Year Plan.

A report from the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, noting the successive hearings before committees of the United States Congress, the Congressional Resolutions condemning the persecutions, and the mentions of the Iranian situation by President Reagan, emphasizes the importance of this aspect of the Seven Year Plan. Its explanation of this achievement accurately represents the reports of many other National Assemblies: 'One of our major accomplishments has been our relationships with leaders of thought and people in authority, which have surpassed once unimaginable levels. The interaction of the Bahá'í community with its nationally and locally elected civil representatives has broadened the base of our influence and brought the aims of the Faith to the attention of the nation. This leap forward in our relationships with people in authority has developed new friends for the community and established its credibility.'

### 4.4. *THE PROMISE OF WORLD PEACE*

*The Promise of World Peace*, a statement issued by the Universal House of Justice to the peoples of the world on the occasion of the 1986 International Year of Peace, marked a turning point in the Cause of God. For the first time in its history, the Universal House of Justice addressed a statement to the peoples of the world, initiating a process of collaboration leading to the establishment of order in the world. The personal and cordial presentation of the Statement to heads of state significantly advanced the proclamation of the Faith to the kings and rulers of the earth, a process which began in 1867 in Adrianople, when Bahá'u'lláh revealed the Tablets to the Kings, and continued with the presentation or mailing of books containing those Messages to heads of state in 1967 and 1968.

*The Promise of World Peace* had been presented to 167 world leaders by Riḍván 1986. These included 140 presentations to the leaders of independent nations, 27 to the leaders of dependent countries or territories, and the presentation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Bahá'í delegations met directly with the Head of State (or Governor of dependent

territories) in 66 instances, 70 presentations were made to government officials representing the Head of State, and 31 were delivered by mail or messenger. There were 126 National Spiritual Assemblies involved in presenting the Peace Statement. The Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations presented it to the United Nations delegations of countries where it was not advisable for the National Spiritual Assembly to offer the Statement directly. The following table provides the continental distribution of the presentation of the Peace Statement.

| | INDEPENDENT NATIONS | | DEPENDENT TERRITORIES | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Continent*** | ***Direct*** | ***Indirect*** | ***Direct*** | ***Indirect*** |
| Africa | 14 | 31 | 2 | 1 |
| Americas | 17 | 8 | 4 | 3 |
| Asia | 5 | 26 | 1 | 2 |
| Australasia | 8 | 1 | 7 | 3 |
| Europe | 5 | 24 | 2 | 2 |
| United Nations | 1 | | | |
| **World** | **50** | **90** | **16** | **11** |

Some presentations were a part of public ceremonies: President Reagan received the Peace Statement at the annual White House Human Rights Day observance in Washington; and Prince Khuzulwandle of Swaziland accepted the Statement on behalf of Her Majesty Indlovukati at a United Nations Day celebration attended by 5,000 people including all the Cabinet Ministers, Principal Secretaries, and diplomats in Swaziland. The majority of the presentations, however, were direct, personal meetings in which the National Assembly delegations were able to explain to their Heads of State the Bahá'í concept of the means for achieving peace; these meetings were characterized in such terms as 'friendly', 'very positive', and 'marked by respect'.

Prime Ministers, Supreme Court members, parliamentarians, or other government leaders have received copies of the Peace Statement in 70 independent nations and dependent territories. Thirteen National Spiritual Assemblies in Africa, 24 in the Americas, 9 in Asia, 10 in Australasia, and 14 in Europe reported programmes to present the Peace Statement to people in authority. The Bahá'ís of Norway delivered 4,000 copies of the Peace Statement in six weeks, including presentations to the Cabinet, the media, university professors, mayors, and officials in all parts of the country on 24 October 1985. The National Spiritual Assembly of Transkei reported that all the members of the Parliament of Transkei, including all the cabinet ministers, paramount chiefs, and other chiefs, totalling 180 people, received the English edition of the Peace Statement at the opening of Parliament, 19 February 1986, at which session the new State President was elected. All members of Parliament and all bishops received the Statement in Sweden, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Colombia presented it to all members of the Congress, the Senate, and the Chamber. The National Spiritual Assembly of El Salvador reported that 85 per cent of the Ministers and Vice-Ministers in the national cabinet, all 60 members of the Legislative Assembly, and all 13 members of the Supreme Court had received the Statement.

In the Mariana Islands, the Senate of Guam passed a resolution acknowledging the International Year of Peace, encouraging endeavours which promote peace and specifically praising the efforts of the Bahá'í community to 'effectuate the promise of world peace and [for] publicizing this cause and encouraging mankind to work for this worthy and high goal'. During a debate in the Canadian Parliament, a member from Manitoba quoted from the Statement and recommended it to his fellow members. A Supreme Court Justice in Alaska asked the Bahá'í delegation to present *The Promise of World Peace* in 'open court' so that more could hear about it. A Fairbanks television station documented the proceedings and the evening news carried a two-minute segment entitled 'Supreme Court Justice praises Bahá'ís for their peace efforts'.

Following the presentation of the message of the Universal House of Justice to the Grand-Duke and to the Ministers of the Luxembourg Government, the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg sent the document to 64 members of the Chamber of Deputies, Government Counsellors, six Deputies representing Luxembourg in the European Parliament, Ambassadors and representative Consulars Luxembourgeois living abroad, 825 doctors and dentists, more than 2,000 teachers of secondary education, 150 priests, 300 lawyers, and 35 notaries. Bahá'í delegations in Brazil had personally delivered *The Promise of World Peace* to 939 authorities all over the country before 15 January 1986.

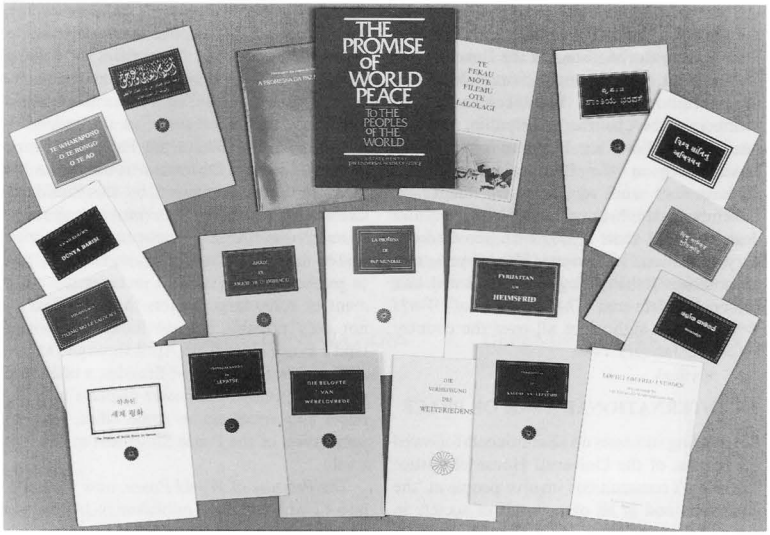
## 4.5. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE

Resounding successes on all continents followed the request of the Universal House of Justice that Bahá'í communities involve people at 'the grassroots and at all other levels of society in a broad range of profoundly effective activities through which they will interact with the Bahá'í community in a sustained, world-wide effort to attend to the fundamental issues of peace, aided by the unique insights provided by the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh' (23 January 1985). Workshops, institutes, and special conferences intended to prepare the Bahá'í community to explain the Bahá'í teachings on peace have been an initial part of this process. Unit conventions for the election of National Spiritual Assemblies focused on the Peace Statement in some countries; 49 regional conferences on the Peace Statement in Cameroon ensured that even the believers in remote areas had an opportunity to study the message.

Wide dissemination of *The Promise of World Peace* has been a central part of Bahá'í peace education activities. Many communities have published all or part of the Peace Statement in major newspapers in order to make it available to their fellow citizens. After a press conference about the Peace Statement was held in Papua New Guinea, the Bahá'ís were surprised to find the complete text of the Statement published in *Niuguini News*, a major newspaper. It was presented in five sections and illustrated with pictures. The recent publication of a condensed version of the Peace Statement in another major newspaper of Papua New Guinea caused the National Assembly to cable that its country is now 'extremely receptive' to the message of peace. The National Assemblies of Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria reported that the formal presentation of the Peace Statement was a major national news story; at the request of the President of Benin, the Bahá'ís there explained the Peace Statement to the media in a press conference arranged by the President's Chief of Protocol. The Statement also appeared in numerous college newspapers in the United States. In Switzerland, a comprehensive plan to publicize the Statement includes the placement of 2,200 large posters that say 'Peace is not only possible but inevitable' in Switzerland's major cities from April through October 1986, public meetings and firesides, a telephone-answering campaign, poster displays in public buses and streetcars in some cities, and dissemination of the Peace Statement at the local level.

*The Promise of World Peace*, now translated into 47 languages and published in 143 editions or printings, is helping to define perceptions of the nature of peace as it reaches the diverse peoples of the world. The Peace Statement has struck a responsive chord, and some National Assemblies have reported that the enthusiasm and interest generated by it is unprecedented in their community. A local community peace group in Kansas, the United States, gained momentum and a sense of purpose by using the Peace Statement to frame its goals; at a recent convention, the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the Alaska Native Sisterhood passed a resolution largely based on the Peace Statement affirming that 'world peace is in the highest interest of the native peoples of Alaska and is the attainable goal toward which we with the body of mankind are striving'; monthly programmes in Cameroon were designed to present aspects of peace to the Cameroonian people through newspapers and radio interviews. The distinguished scholar and member of the Club of Rome, Dr. Ervin Laszlo, wrote a challenging appreciation of the Statement later published by the Canadian National Assembly in its compilation *To the Peoples of the World.*

Bahá'í communities have used many different activities to promote the idea of peace. Bahá'ís in Mozambique marched in a peace parade. Essay contests for schoolchildren or university students have been held in several countries; a




*A selection of some of the published versions of* The Promise of World Peace. *Clockwise from top: English, Tuvaluan, Kannada, Gujarati, Bengali, Sinhalese, Norwegian, Tswana, German, Afrikaans, Sesotho, Korean, Samoan, Turkish, New Zealand Maori, Arabic, Portuguese, Swahili, Spanish, Faroese.*

competition for secondary school students in Hong Kong led to requests that the Bahá'ís speak about world peace at school assemblies. In New Zealand, the Bahá'ís of Taranake entered a 'Peacetrain' in the Waitara and New Plymouth Christmas parades and took first prize on both occasions. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Montevideo, Uruguay organized a peace event in a city square; a television crew filmed the event, which included a poster exhibition with writings on peace, the launching of balloons, and a band. An art exhibit was held in Belize in April; many people contributed their work in the form of paintings, drawings, graphics, sculpture, needlework and stained glass related to the theme of peace. *The Promise of World Peace* was the guiding principle for arranging the exhibit. Government officials and prominent people were invited to the opening ceremony, with the Mayor of Belize City giving opening remarks. The exhibition included a special competition of poetry and art contributed by the children and youth from various schools and colleges on the theme of peace.

'Ten incredible days' was one believer's account of the Australian Peace Exposition, an event described by the Universal House of Justice in its cable of 1 April 1986, as an 'extraordinary event' in the annals of the Faith. The ten-day peace exposition, organized by the National Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia, was held in Sydney from 28 March to 6 April 1986, with many of the events taking place on the grounds of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Included in the significant events of the Peace Expo were a media dinner, a Bahá'í Studies Conference, a Youth for Peace Conference, a Concert for World Peace given to a crowd of 2,500 by Seals and Crofts, ethnic music and dancing, living arts and craft displays, children's activities, and conflict resolution workshops. Well over 10,000 peace banners representing the work of some 25,000 people from 40 countries in the world and from all areas of Australia were tied together to make a giant Peace Ribbon. The Ribbon was strung so that it encircled the Temple and lined the road six kilometres to the sea. A key feature was the participation of non-

Bahá'ís in all aspects of the Peace Expo, including the support of civil, humanitarian, and social organizations in the planning and carrying out of the activities. By the third day, over 7,300 people had already participated in various events. Publicity was unprecedented with extensive daily coverage by newspapers, radio, and television. A Peace Exposition was also held in Tablelands, North Queenland, Australia attended by over 4,500 people, and this in an area with a total population of only 8,500. Peace expositions or displays attracting thousands of visitors were also held in Belize, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, New Zealand, Réunion, Uruguay, and other countries.

More than 5,000 people attended the first Inter-Religious Assembly in Guyana, a peace service which was organized by the Presidential Advisory Committee on Religious Affairs directly in response to the Peace Statement of the Universal House of Justice. The National Spiritual Assembly reported that during his prepared remarks, the President of Guyana, Mr. Hugh Desmond Hoyte, interjected his observation that he admired the Bahá'í Faith as it promoted the cause of peace, and he went on to describe what he had just seen at the Bahá'í display. A World Peace Conference in New Delhi on 19–20 January 1986 included an evaluation of the role of effective, grassroots social and economic development activities in establishing peace; and a forum in Mauritius on world peace was attended by more than four hundred people. Mexico and Réunion were among the other Bahá'í communities that organized Peace Conferences which were attended by large numbers of Bahá'ís.

Bahá'ís have organized activities to promote peace, to demonstrate the possibility of uniting diverse peoples, to affirm the capacities inherent in human nature, and to encourage their fellow citizens to have hope for the future of mankind, which were gaining momentum as the Seven Year Plan drew to a close. The profoundly significant presentations of the Peace Statement to heads of state, and the overwhelming success of the initial peace activities organized by Bahá'í communities, clearly testified that the Bahá'í Faith had not only arrived on the world scene but it had assumed a substantial role in leading mankind to an understanding that peace is possible.

*A Bahá'í billboard in Managua, Nicaragua, which promotes world peace.*

# 2. EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

140, 141 AND 142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
21 APRIL 1983–20 APRIL 1986 A.D.
INFORMATION STATISTICAL AND COMPARATIVE

| | *21 April 1983* | *20 April 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| National Spiritual Assemblies | 135 | 148 |
| Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies | 104 | 113 |
| National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity) | 145 | 149 |
| National Endowments | 146 | 170 |
| Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs) | 5 | 6 |
| Sites for future Bahá'í Temples | 119 | 127 |
| Bahá'í Publishing Trusts | 22 | 25 |
| Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated | 727 | 757 |
| Bahá'í schools | 181 | 599 |
| Social and economic development projects (other than schools | 22 | 431 |
| Countries that exempt the Bahá'í community from payment of taxes on properties | 47 | 54 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days | 68 | 71 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage | 48 | 52 |
| Localities where Bahá'ís reside | 115,842 | 116,707 |
| Isolated centres or groups | 88,513 | 83,853 |
| Local Spiritual Assemblies | 27,329 | 32,854 |
| Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies | 2,764 | 2,309 |

## A. AFRICA

| | *21 April 1983* | *20 April 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| National Spiritual Assemblies | 37 | 43 |
| Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies | 30 | 34 |
| National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity) | 40 | 45 |
| National Endowments | 40 | 46 |
| Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs) | 1 | 1 |
| Sites for future Bahá'í Temples | 36 | 38 |
| Bahá'í Publishing Trusts | 1 | 4 |
| Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated | 239 | 249 |
| Bahá'í schools | 65 | 143 |
| Social and economic development projects (other than schools | 5 | 139 |
| Countries that exempt the Bahá'í community from payment of taxes on properties | 12 | 15 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days | 12 | 14 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage | 8 | 8 |
| Localities where Bahá'ís reside | 28,570 | 35,657 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Isolated centres or groups | 23,444 | 28,399 |
| Local Spiritual Assemblies | 5,126 | 7,258 |
| Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies | 795 | 289 |

## B. THE AMERICAS

| | *21 April 1983* | *20 April 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| National Spiritual Assemblies | 38 | 41 |
| Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies | 31 | 34 |
| National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity) | 47 | 40 |
| National Endowments | 40 | 48 |
| Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár) | 2 | 2 |
| Sites for future Bahá'í Temples | 31 | 31 |
| Bahá'í Publishing Trusts | 3 | 3 |
| Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated | 167 | 170 |
| Bahá'í schools | 35 | 106 |
| Social and economic development projects (other than schools | 5 | 98 |
| Countries that exempt the Bahá'í community from payment of taxes on properties | 12 | 15 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days | 22 | 22 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage | 13 | 13 |
| Localities where Bahá'ís reside | 24,929 | 26,570 |
| Isolated centres or groups | 19,236 | 20,070 |
| Local Spiritual Assemblies | 5,693 | 6,500 |
| Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies | 825 | 879 |

## C. ASIA

| | *21 April 1983* | *20 April 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| National Spiritual Assemblies | 26 | 27 |
| Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies | 15 | 16 |
| National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity) | 24 | 27 |
| National Endowments | 29 | 37 |
| Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár) | 0 | 0 |
| Sites for future Bahá'í Temples | 22 | 24 |
| Bahá'í Publishing Trusts | 8 | 8 |
| Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated | 165 | 168 |
| Bahá'í schools | 81 | 342 |
| Social and economic development projects (other than schools | 10 | 151 |
| Countries that exempt the Bahá'í community from payment of taxes on properties | 11 | 11 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days | 13 | 14 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage | 8 | 10 |
| Localities where Bahá'ís reside | 57,155 | 48,730 |
| Isolated centres or groups | 41,818 | 31,206 |
| Local Spiritual Assemblies | 15,337 | 17,524 |
| Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies | 681 | 669 |

## D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

| | *21 April 1983* | *20 April 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| National Spiritual Assemblies | 15 | 17 |
| Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies | 12 | 13 |
| National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity) | 15 | 17 |
| National Endowments | 15 | 18 |
| Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs) | 1 | 2 |
| Sites for future Bahá'í Temples | 12 | 14 |
| Bahá'í Publishing Trusts | 2 | 2 |
| Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated | 83 | 86 |
| Bahá'í schools | 0 | 8 |
| Social and economic development projects (other than schools | 2 | 20 |
| Countries that exempt the Bahá'í community from payment of taxes on properties | 6 | 7 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days | 9 | 9 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage | 11 | 13 |
| Localities where Bahá'ís reside | 2,539 | 2,902 |
| Isolated centres or groups | 1,954 | 2,045 |
| Local Spiritual Assemblies | 585 | 857 |
| Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies | 159 | 162 |

## E. EUROPE

| | *21 April 1983* | *20 April 1986* |
|---|---|---|
| National Spiritual Assemblies | 19 | 20 |
| Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies | 16 | 16 |
| National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity) | 19 | 20 |
| National Endowments | 22 | 21 |
| Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs) | 1 | 1 |
| Sites for future Bahá'í Temples | 18 | 20 |
| Bahá'í Publishing Trusts | 8 | 8 |
| Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated | 73 | 84 |
| Bahá'í schools | 0 | 0 |
| Social and economic development projects (other than schools | 0 | 23 |
| Countries that exempt the Bahá'í community from payment of taxes on properties | 6 | 6 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days | 12 | 12 |
| Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage | 8 | 8 |
| Localities where Bahá'ís reside | 2,649 | 2,848 |
| Isolated centres or groups | 2,061 | 2,133 |
| Local Spiritual Assemblies | 588 | 715 |
| Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies | 304 | 310 |

# II
# INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES

140, 141 AND 142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
21 APRIL 1983–20 APRIL 1986

## 1. SURVEY BY CONTINENTS

### BASED ON REPORTS OF THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

### A. AFRICA

AFRICA comprises fifty mainland countries and nine major islands and island groups. Many countries struggled during this period with economic instability, political strife, social crises and/or natural disasters. Within this crucible, the Bahá'ís of Africa endeavoured to win the goals of the Seven Year Plan and to respond befittingly to the suffering of the Bahá'ís in Írán. They witnessed glimmerings of the Faith's gradual emergence from obscurity and attained new levels of maturity and cohesiveness.

Forty-three National Spiritual Assemblies administered the affairs of the Faith with three administrative committees temporarily serving the Bahá'ís of Zaïre. Included in this number were the newly formed National Spiritual Assemblies of Cape Verde, 1984, with its seat in Praia; Ciskei, 1985, with its seat in Bisho; Equatorial Guinea, first established in 1973 and re-established in 1984, with its seat in Malabo; Gabon, 1984, with its seat in Libreville; Mali, 1985, with its seat in Bamako; and Mozambique, 1985, with its seat in Maputo.

The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies rose to over 7,200 and localities where Bahá'ís reside to more than 35,000. In Algeria, the Congo, Egypt, Libya and Niger the Faith remained banned.

*Proclamation, Public Relations and the Media*

The Seven Year Plan called for national communities to foster cordial relations with those in authority and to make the aims and purposes of the Faith widely known. The persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán provided a powerful, if grievous, instrument for proclamation activities, particularly in governmental circles. As resolutions were considered by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and later by the General Assembly, Bahá'í representatives met with concerned officials in their countries in an attempt to evoke the sympathy and enlist the support of their respective governments for the relief of the Iranian community.

Activities of Bahá'í communities in support of programs related to United Nations activities provided further opportunities for contact and collaboration with those in governmental authority. Bahá'í youth responded enthusiastically to the United Nations' designation of 1985 as International Youth Year, with a wide range of activities. A successful eight-day exhibition in the Central African Republic was opened by the Minister of Information, Youth, Arts and Culture, whose favorable comments about the Faith were broadcast on national radio and television. The Bahá'í youth of Mauritius organized a series of well-attended lectures on topics relevant to youth. In Côte d'Ivoire, Bahá'ís participated in a government-arranged conference for over 2,500 youth from throughout the world.

The United Nations conference ending the Decade for Women was held in Nairobi, Kenya in July 1985. A ten-member delegation representing the Bahá'í International Community

*In the Central African Republic, the nation's Minister of Information, Youth, Art and Culture, standing centre in uniform with beret, listens to Counsellor Húshang Ahdieh explain the panels of a Bahá'í exhibit held in the Bangui for eight days in June 1985.*

participated in the official government conference, while more than fifty Bahá'ís, including a number of African believers, attended the Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations. The Bahá'í community of Kenya in collaboration with the Bahá'í International Community office in New York, hosted three receptions for delegates and Forum participants, two at the Nairobi Bahá'í Center and one in a private home. An excellent display on 'Women in Development' attracted considerable attention as did a workshop conducted by Dr. Jane Faily on management skills for women. Thousands of copies of Bahá'í statements presented at previous world and regional United Nations conferences on women were distributed along with a brochure on the 'Spiritual Foundation of Equality'.

Bahá'í representatives participated in numerous other conferences sponsored by the United Nations, as well as meetings on several international organizations, for example: the Governing Council Session of the United Nations Environment Program in Nairobi, Kenya; sessions of the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; the Regional Preparatory Conference for the Decade of Women in Arusha, Tanzania; and the World Peace through Law Conference in Lomé, Togo.

Extensive, systematic and comprehensive proclamation efforts were made on national, regional and local levels in conjunction with the International Year of Peace in 1986 and the distribution of the Peace Statement of the Universal House of Justice. Fifty-one Heads of State and three territorial Heads in Africa received the statement, with seventeen of these presentations having been made to the Heads of State in person. Widespread publicity often resulted, as was the case in Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Uganda. In Benin, after receiving the statement, the President requested the Chief of Protocol to organize a press conference at which the Bahá'ís were asked to explain its content to the media. In Mozambique, Bahá'ís featured prominently in a Peace Parade organized by the Government.

The independent status of the Faith became increasingly recognized, as evidenced by the spontaneous inclusion of Bahá'ís in activities organized in the realm of social and economic development. In Burkina Faso, Bahá'ís were called over the radio, together with representatives of other religions, to participate in a

vaccination campaign launched by the Ministry of Health. In Sénégal, the Bahá'ís were invited by the Ministry of Culture to submit a statement which would assist the Government in elaborating its policy toward cultural development. In Swaziland, following a natural disaster, Bahá'ís were entrusted with distribution of relief supplies in collaboration with an international development agency.

Legal incorporation of the national Bahá'í communities in the Cape Verde Islands and in Guinea was achieved, with the incorporation document in Cape Verde clearly recognizing the Faith as an independent religion. Mention should be made in this context of the tireless efforts of Dr. 'Azíz Navídí, who lent invaluable assistance in these and other important legal matters throughout the continent.

Given the immense potential of mass communication, more concerted efforts were made to use the media effectively. Regular Bahá'í radio programs were broadcast in seven countries including the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Zaïre. At the same time periodic use of radio increased throughout the continent. In Réunion Island, officials at one radio station were so impressed with the quality of occasional Bahá'í programs that they invited the Bahá'ís to broadcast a regular program. A Radio Advisory Team based in Nairobi continued its services in providing encouragement and professional advice to national communities interested in expanding their use of radio. In Liberia, after receiving authorization from the Government, work began on constructing the first Bahá'í radio station in Africa.

*Teaching and Consolidation*

The Guardian called teaching and consolidation twin processes and said that they must proceed simultaneously. Emphasis during this period was placed on improving the quality of the teaching work and insuring that consolidation activities formed an integral part of all teaching efforts. As this period coincided with the closing years of the Seven Year Plan, the teaching work intensified markedly. Twenty-seven countries achieved their teaching goals with another five attaining at least ninety per cent. Dramatic increases were noted in Chad and Sierra Leone where the number of Assemblies nearly tripled during the course of the Plan. Botswana and Lesotho, whose goals trailed rather hopelessly through most of the Plan, rallied in the last year and finally achieved their mark. In Angola, the Comoro Islands, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé Island, renewed activity and visits by traveling teachers resulted in significant growth. The Cape Verde Islands, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Mali, all with new National Spiritual Assemblies, made steady progress.

Teaching methods varied from country to country and even within a country from area to area. Book exhibitions or presentations at fairs and agricultural shows continued to be widely used in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mauritius, Réunion Island, Togo, and Zimbabwe. Song and dance festivals in Zaïre attracted crowds of 2,000 to 3,000 people.

As a result of the emphasis on improving the quality of the teaching work, individual teaching was stressed at summer schools and deepening courses. The 'Teaching Booklet' developed in Honduras by Counsellor Ahmadiyyih proved an effective aid for individual teaching and was translated into vernacular languages in Botswana, Ghana, Zambia, and other countries.

Special teaching projects of varying scope, duration and purpose were characteristic of the period. A series of projects among the Giriama tribe along the coast of Kenya resulted in the formation of nearly a hundred Assemblies. The Bundibugyo region of western Uganda proved particularly successful, with hundreds accepting the Faith.

The artificial national boundaries of the countries of Africa, created during colonial times, resulted in the division of tribal groups along such borders. Border teaching projects and collaborative efforts in the translation and production of literature were, therefore, mutually beneficial. Among the countries taking part in these joint projects were Angola and Zambia; Botswana and Bophuthatswana; Cameroon and Chad; Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Sénégal; and South Africa and Swaziland.

Africa has long received the support of pioneers from the older, well-established communities of the Americas, Asia and Europe, and this process continued. In addition, several African countries including Chad, the Central African Republic, Ghana, Mauritius, and Niger sent pioneers to other African countries. Nearly

one hundred African believers from almost all countries arose as homefront pioneers to open new areas and strengthen weak communities.

Visits by international traveling teachers, and especially those of extended duration, assisted the proclamation, teaching and consolidation work and were a source of joy and encouragement for the believers.

Consolidation, including the chronic problem of lapsed Assemblies, remained the major challenge. Poor communications, widespread illiteracy, insufficient literature, and limited funds tested the resourcefulness of the believers and institutions in deepening the communities. In addition to the traditional methods of visits to communities by traveling teachers, the holding of deepening courses, institutes and seasonal schools, innovative approaches were also tried.

In Malawi a 'messenger system' was developed with marked success. Individual messengers were appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly and assigned to work with several Assemblies in a given, nearby area. At regular regional conferences under the guidance of National Spiritual Assembly representatives, the messengers were trained and received assignments including distribution of letters and conveyance of information to the various communities. Instead of a letter simply being given to the secretary of the Local Assembly, the messenger called a meeting of the entire community, read the letter, discussed it with the believers and answered any questions. This very personal method of communication resulted in an increase in the number of reports and letters from local communities to the National Spiritual Assembly, increased contributions to the National Fund, and increased interest and activity among the believers at the local level.

The regular use of mobile institutes in Cameroon and Kenya was extended to include the Central African Republic, Chad, Malawi, Mauritius, Transkei, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, while several other countries began the process of acquiring vehicles. These vehicles, equipped with audio-visual items and other materials, and serving as visual symbols of the Faith, traveled throughout each country. Deepening institutes were conducted, and assistance was given with the teaching work.

Seasonal schools over holiday periods were held regularly in many countries. These offered intensive courses for the study of the Faith and provided an occasion for strengthening the bonds of unity and fellowship. In southern Africa summer schools were often international in character. In Cameroon they were held extensively throughout the country in as many as nine separate localities and as often as four times a year. Permanent institutes were further developed and expanded in Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

These continuous efforts to deepen the friends resulted in an overall increase in the percentage

*In Côte d'Ivoire, Bahá'ís gathered for a deepening institute held during July 1984 in the new National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds at Abidjan.*

of communities shouldering responsibility for electing their Assemblies, holding Nineteen Day Feasts and regular Assembly meetings, organizing diverse local activities and contributing to the Fund. The growing maturity of the believers and institutions was evidenced by the ever-increasing numbers of African Bahá'ís who arose to pioneer internationally or on the homefront or were actively involved in the teaching and administrative work, the more effective functioning of national and local administrative bodies, greater collaboration between the Continental Board of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies, and increased financial self-sufficiency. Nearly two-thirds of all National Communities supported their internal financial needs.

*Literature*

Emphasis was placed in all deepening efforts on regular use and deep study of the Sacred Writings of the Faith. An essential corollary to this and all aspects of consolidation is the production of Bahá'í literature, particularly in vernacular languages. In addition to national efforts at translation and publication, the Publishing Trusts in Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda increased their output. *Words of God*, a brief compilation of prayers and extracts from the Sacred Writings prepared by the Universal House of Justice, was translated into nearly a hundred African languages. Other major works were also realized: the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* in Xhosa and Afrikaans, *Inspiring the Heart* in Yoruba, the *Hidden Words* and *The New Garden* in Setswana and Malagasy. Both Madagascar and Rwanda made significant strides in translation. The increased use of literature subvention funds made a marked contribution to the production of Bahá'í literature. As National Spiritual Assemblies became more familiar with the methods of using these funds and more aware of their availability, the literature needs in each country were more adequately met. Parallel with literature, many countries experimented with cassette recordings both of extracts from the Sacred Writings and of music, and with the development of locally produced filmstrips and slide programs. The Audio-Visual Center for Africa, based in Côte d'Ivoire, made available a series of posters and other materials.

At least thirty national communities were involved in the production and administration of correspondence courses. Courses ranged from general introductions to the history, teachings and administration of the Faith, to specialized subjects such as family life, prayer, and life after death. Regularly produced national newsletters helped disseminate information about activities throughout the Bahá'í world and were a source of deepening and encouragement.

*Properties*

National Bahá'í Centers were acquired in Bophuthatswana, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, and Transkei. Completion of the construction of the National Center in Burundi was a signal achievement for that community. The beautiful nine-sided National Center in Equatorial Guinea attracted considerable media attention. Regional centers were acquired in Abomey, Benin; Bata, Equatorial Guinea, and other countries. The Samandari Teaching Institute in Chad was completed and a permanent institute acquired in Zimbabwe.

*Women*

The Seven Year Plan called for national communities to initiate and implement programs which would stimulate and promote the full and equal participation of women in all aspects of Bahá'í community life. Serious attention was given to this goal through the appointment of National Women's Committees in almost all countries and the organization of conferences and institutes for women on a national and local level. In addition to presentations on the spiritual teachings and principles of the Faith, programs often included opportunities for learning practical skills to improve the quality of women's daily lives. For example, conferences in Kenya covered Bahá'í principles regarding the equality of men and women, Bahá'í family life and teachings concerning the education of children, in addition to information and practice in tree-planting, the making of tie-dyed cloth, energy conservation, and the use of improved seeds. Women in several Bahá'í communities in Kenya were so stimulated by what they learned at a national women's conference that they formed local women's co-operatives and self-help groups.

An excellent series entitled 'A Bahá'í Program for Mothers' prepared under the auspices of the National Women's Committee in Kenya was published by the Bahá'í publishing agency of

*In Bophuthatswana, a television crew takes notes for a Bahá'í programme which is about to be recorded in February 1986.*

*In Nigeria, the office staff of the National Bahá'í Centre are mostly youth who volunteer to work part-time.*

*In Benin, Bahá'í women from 18 countries gather for an inter-regional women's conference held in Cotonou in 1984.*

that country. The series included six booklets designed to be used by rural women, with a Teacher's Guide and Mother's Booklet for each topic. The topics included were: 'Creating a Spiritual Home', 'Teaching about Religion', 'Teaching Good Character', 'Using Good Discipline', 'Learning at Home and at School', and 'Raising Healthy Children'. Displayed as part of the Bahá'í International Community exhibition at the Forum Conference in Nairobi, at the close of the United Nations Decade for Women, the books attracted the favorable attention of women participants from around the world.

Two major inter-regional women's conferences were held: one in Cotonou, Benin with participants from eighteen countries, and a second in Yaounde, Cameroon which generated widespread publicity. Newsletters for women were produced in Cameroon and Zaïre, while several other countries included women's pages in their national bulletins. The number of women serving as members of National and Local Assemblies, as Auxiliary Board members and assistants, and as delegates to National and Regional Conventions increased, though the figures are not yet proportionate to either the number of Bahá'í women or women in the general population.

*Youth*

Youth continued to be a dynamic and integral part of the work of the Faith throughout the continent. Their devotion, enthusiasm and determination served as an example to all. They were often in the vanguard of the teaching and consolidation activities, serving as homefront pioneers, traveling teachers, children's class teachers, and even as assistants to the Auxiliary Board members. Most of the special teaching projects relied heavily on the participation of youth. Special mention should be made of the youth volunteers from Europe and the Americas who gave one to two years of voluntary service to assist in running the mobile teaching and audio-visual institutes in Africa.

Many countries established National Youth Committees, and national and regional youth conferences were annual occurrences. The deeply moving messages of the Universal House of Justice during International Youth Year were a source of guidance and inspiration unveiling a new vision in the statement, 'Youth Can Move the World'. Youth bulletins were produced in Cameroon, Chad, Gambia, Kenya, and Zaïre.

*Children*

All countries struggled to provide more systematically for the Bahá'í education of children. Efforts were made to establish regular children's classes, to provide training for teachers, to produce appropriate teaching materials, and to insure consistent follow-up. Several new approaches evolved. In Sénégal, a children's conference was successfully held during the Intercalary Days, bringing together over one hundred children from five localities. Sénégal also produced and administered a correspondence course for children. In Benin and Ghana, cultural dance and music groups for children were formed.

The Universal House of Justice appointed a Central and East African Regional Development Committee whose members were drawn from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The initial mandate of this committee was to develop and publish a graduated curriculum for child education in Africa, to assist National Spiritual Assemblies in the region in the training of teachers, and to provide encouragement and follow-up to those involved in Bahá'í child education.

*Social and Economic Development*

Prior to the period under review scattered efforts in the field of social and economic development had been made with the establishment of tutorial schools in some countries and the organization of Bahá'í education centres in Zaïre. The message of the Universal House of Justice of 20 October 1983, encouraging all communities to expand their regular activities to include social and economic development, gave direction and impetus to these initial stirrings. Communities, institutions and individuals began exploring ways and means to extend their endeavors.

The number of tutorial schools on the continent increased, with Kenya, Swaziland and several other countries establishing pre-primary or nursery schools. In Tanzania, an agricultural secondary school was established. The William Masehla Institute in Zambia was a unique project where students were invited for extended periods of two to three months. Instruction was given on the teachings of the Faith in the morning and on agriculture, health, and car-

*In Botswana, Counsellor member of the International Teaching Centre Hooper Dunbar visiting the friends in a village in July 1984.*

pentry in the afternoon. Students worked to produce food for the institute which is situated on a farm, thus defraying part of their expenses. Health education programs were started in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Swaziland and Uganda.

In Zaïre, the Bahá'í Education Centres expanded their literacy programs to include agricultural initiatives such as the use of improved seeds, and also fish breeding. Noteworthy success was achieved among the Pygmies in Goma, Northeast Zaïre, where they were taught to build homes, cultivate the land, and read and write, as well as being helped to educate their children. The Bahá'ís of Moissala, Chad were deeply involved in relief work following the political upheaval in that country, distributing food and medicine, and later establishing the Ḥakím Dispensary.

*Continental Board of Counsellors, Auxiliary Boards and Assistants*

Visits in 1984 and 1985 by Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre, Hooper Dunbar, Magdalene Carney, and Isobel Sabri were of great assistance to the Counsellors in their functioning. After meeting with the Counsellors, Mr. Dunbar travelled extensively in central, eastern, southern, and western Africa. Dr. Carney was a member of the delegation attending the United Nations conference that ended the Decade for Women, and Mrs. Sabri was involved in intensive efforts to revitalize Uganda.

The Board of Counsellors was strengthened by the appointment of eight new African Counsellors including, for the first time, three African women. Collaboration with National Spiritual Assemblies increased, and the work of the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants became more effective. The efforts of Auxiliary Board members to train their assistants and direct their work reinforced national teaching and consolidation activities. Through the administration of the subvention funds for audio-visual materials, literature and special teaching projects, the Counsellors were able to stimulate and participate in these vital areas of the development of the Faith more effectively.

The Guardian wrote through his secretary: 'Africa is truly awakening and finding herself, and she undoubtedly has a great message to give and a great contribution to make to the advancement of world civilization. To the degree to which her peoples accept Bahá'u'lláh, will they be blessed, strengthened and protected.' The efforts of the believers and the development in the Faith throughout the continent during this period were a direct and dynamic contribution to Africa's achieving its destiny.

## B. THE AMERICAS

AT THE close of the Seven Year Plan there were forty-one National Spiritual Assemblies in the western hemisphere, approximately 6,500 Local Spiritual Assemblies and more than 26,500 localities. Three new National Spiritual Assemblies were formed at Riḍván, 1984: French Guiana with its seat in Cayenne; Grenada with its seat in St. George's; and Martinique with its seat in Fort de France.

During the period being reviewed three great losses were visited on the hemisphere. On 21 October 1983, Mr. Raul Pavon of Ecuador, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, passed away in Lima, Peru while traveling on behalf of the Faith. His spirit of service to the indigenous peoples of Latin America and his work in establishing Radio Bahá'í in Ecuador left not only an indelible memory but also engendered a spirit of renewed dedication to teaching. Less than seventeen months later, another indefatigable servant and member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, Mr. Lloyd Gardner of Canada, passed away on 5 March 1985, shortly after becoming ill while on a teaching trip in Latin America. The Seven Year Plan came to a close with one more grievous loss, the passing after a long illness of Mr. Angus Cowan, a former member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, whose tireless services to the indigenous peoples of North America and whose all-encompassing love will be keenly missed in the teaching field. The loss of these three outstanding servants of Bahá'u'lláh was deeply felt throughout the hemisphere.

*Proclamation, Public Relations and the Media*

Increased public awareness of the Faith, including a greater comprehension of the nature of Bahá'u'lláh's claims and of His fundamental teachings, resulted from the relentless and cruel persecution of the believers in the cradle of the Faith. The continued executions and imprisonment of the Bahá'ís in Írán, and the increased use of torture against them, served to attract unprecedented attention and sympathy from the authorities and the general public throughout the hemisphere, and such acts of persecution received widespread coverage in the media. The Faith itself and the activities of the friends became news in the Americas.

It was estimated that on 28 July 1983, thirteen million television sets in the United States were tuned to the national news program, '20/20', which included a twenty-minute segment on the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán. With increased awareness of the serious violation of human rights in that country, more nations of Latin America spoke out for the protection of the Bahá'ís, and many of these same nations voted in favor of United Nations resolutions condemning the persecutions. An outstanding diplomat from Venezuela was appointed Special Representative of the United Nations to investigate the situation in Írán.

The extraordinary statement by the Universal House of Justice to the peoples of the world, *The Promise of World Peace*, issued at the outset of the United Nations International Peace Year (1986), provided the Bahá'ís with an unparalleled opportunity for further proclamation to Heads of State, authorities, prominent persons, and people at all levels of society. National Assemblies presented the Peace Statement to Heads of State in almost every country in the Americas. Among the many positive responses was the moving and perceptive message addressed to the Universal House of Justice by the President of Colombia, Dr. Belizario Betancur, who wrote, 'On United Nations Day your beautiful and noble publication came into my hands ... I share with you and with the entire world the hope for the peace to come ... I thank you profoundly for having sent me a document of such great beauty, import and eloquence.'

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, heading the delegation representing the Bahá'í International Community, presented the Peace Statement to His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations at the U.N. headquarters in New York City.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska literally covered that State with the Peace Statement. In response to the request of the Bahá'ís, the Governor proclaimed 1986 as the Year of Peace in Alaska, and the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court requested the Bahá'ís to make their presentation in court so that it would appear in the court record.

The President of the United States received

*In Jamaica, Dr. John Martin, the Custos of St. Andrew (a Jamaican official), opens the annual Convention of the Bahá'ís of Jamaica. The event, held on 27 April 1985 in Kingston, marked the 25th anniversary year of the Jamaican National Spiritual Assembly.*

the entire membership of the National Spiritual Assembly as special guests at a public ceremony commemorating Human Rights Week, citing forcefully the plight of the Bahá'ís of Írán. On the following day seven of the nine Justices of the United States Supreme Court personally received copies of the Peace Statement presented by the chairman and the treasurer of the National Assembly.

Other examples of large-scale proclamation resulting from the International Peace Year took place in Venezuela where there was wide use of announcements placed in public buses and posters showing Bahá'í concepts related to peace; and in Barranquilla, Colombia, where a highly successful public forum with representatives of five world religions speaking on 'Religion, Source of Peace' resulted in unprecedented local and national publicity in all types of media.

In Guyana, distribution of the Peace Statement to every member of the President's Religious Advisory Committee in January 1986 inspired the Committee to hold the First National Inter-Religious Assembly. On April 13th in the National Cultural Center an overflow crowd of more than 5,000 people, representing all the major religions of the country, heard President Hugh Desmond Hoyte interrupt his prepared speech and spontaneously express admiration for the efforts of the Bahá'ís to promote peace. He also praised the beautiful Bahá'í display which he had just seen in the foyer. Upon termination of the program hundreds flocked to the Bahá'í table to ask questions and receive literature.

Proclamation of the Faith through radio, television, and the press increased steadily in most countries. Chile was a unique example. Dramatic recordings of various selections from *Hidden Words* were played on the hour, all day every day for several months on twenty-eight radio stations throughout the country. The Bahá'í radio stations in Ecuador and Peru continued excellent proclamation as well as educational and cultural programs, and also provided other forms of community service. In 1984, Radio Bahá'í of Caracollo, Bolivia, was inaugurated, bringing to three the number of radio stations owned and operated by the Faith in South America. And on 23 March 1985, the voice of Hand of the Cause of God William Sears proclaimed, 'This is WLGI, 90.9 megahertz, the voice of the Louis Gregory Institute.

Bravo.' Later that day official opening ceremonies were held at the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute near Hemingway, South Carolina, for WLGI, the first Bahá'í radio station in North America. The keynote speaker for the event, which attracted 600 people, was the director of South Carolina's Division of Rural Improvement who was introduced by the Mayor of Hemingway. Also in 1985 the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile obtained government approval and an assigned frequency for yet another Bahá'í radio station. Construction of buildings and transmission facilities was initiated. On 29 January 1986, the first broadcast on Radio Bahá'í, Panama, took place, bringing to five the number of Bahá'í radio stations in the Americas. Permission has been granted for gradual progress by Radio Bahá'í Panama towards a twelve-hour broadcast day.

On 21 October 1983, the Republic of Panama issued a postage stamp in its *Libertad de Cultos* (Freedom of Worship) series bearing the picture of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Panama. The other three stamps in the series show a synagogue, a Catholic church and a mosque, all historic sites in Panama.

Proclamation of the Faith through Bahá'í exhibits and booths at fairs and book festivals also proved highly successful in a number of countries. For example, at the Bahá'í booth in the International Book Fair of Cordoba, Argentina, tens of thousands of people received information and literature while hundreds heard detailed explanations of the Faith, purchased books, or enrolled in a Bahá'í correspondence course.

*Expansion and Consolidation*

Integration of expansion and consolidation activities was a primary objective during the period under review. The expansion-consolidation campaigns developed in Colombia were adapted successfully in several other countries, resulting in the enrollment of thousands of new believers, substantial increases in the numbers of Bahá'í families, local community activities, and classes for children and youth.

During 1985 and 1986, nineteen National Spiritual Assemblies in the Americas, in collaboration with the Continental Board of Counsellors, carried out in their respective countries the 'We Cannot Fail Them' teaching project, dedicated to the beloved martyrs and persecuted Bahá'ís of Írán. Teams of local Bahá'í teachers, aided by experienced teachers from other countries, focused intensive efforts on expansion, deepening, and Bahá'í community life as they traveled from village to village, sometimes remaining in one village for two weeks or more before continuing on. The results were outstanding in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Guyana.

The nine courses of the first level of studies of the Rúḥí Institute program of Colombia have been utilized successfully in several other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, having also been translated from Spanish into English and French. These courses focus not only on deepening the believers but confirming them in the service of the Cause. Work has begun on preparation of nine additional courses for the second level.

An active expansion and consolidation program in Uruguay brought excellent results. Energies of pioneers and traveling teachers were combined in many localities throughout the country, bringing about new enrollments, strong local communities and active Local Spiritual Assemblies.

The Association for Bahá'í Studies, under the aegis of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly, expanded its activities markedly during this period. Internationally known figures outside the Bahá'í community began to participate as speakers at its annual conferences, attracting the favorable attention of various academics. A textbook on the Faith was requested by the Association and was published by Harper & Row in 1984, *The Bahá'í Faith—the Emerging Global Religion* by William S. Hatcher and J. Douglas Martin.

On 20 December 1983, the legislature of Newfoundland, Canada, recognized Bahá'í marriage, thereby completing the goal of recognition in every province and territory in Canada. This victory followed the visit of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum to the Province of Newfoundland in 1982. During the 1983 televised Christmas message of the Lieutenant-Governor, he spoke of the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

*Youth*

In response to the inspiring call of the Universal House of Justice to youth to participate

in the United Nations International Youth Year (1985) and to 'move the world', energetic youth activities attracted further attention to the Faith. International youth conferences were held throughout the continent which galvanized an increasing number of youth into action. A youth pilgrimage to the Holy Land from the United States in 1983 was such an outstanding success that it has become an annual event. And when the Universal House of Justice called for 'youth year of service projects', the National Spiritual Assemblies of Bolivia, Colombia, Panama, Paraguay, and the United States created the first series of projects, with youth from the five countries participating. The projects began with a program of study and training at the Rúḥí Institute in Puerto Tejada, Colombia. This training at the start of projects is continuing. Youth from many countries of Latin America and North America come together for study of the Holy Writings followed by field experience in tutorial schools along with continued study and spiritual vitalization. Then they disperse for their year of service in various countries of Latin America.

Among the multitude of youth activities, a few outstanding events were the International Youth Conferences held in Anchorage, Alaska, in June, 1983; in London, Ontario, Canada, in August, 1984; in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., in July, 1985; and in Lima, Peru, in August, 1985. Almost 700 participants from twenty countries and twenty-four different Indian tribes and ethnic groups gathered in Anchorage; almost 2,000 youth from fifty-two nations met in London, blessed with the presence of three Hands of the Cause of God, Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and Mr. John Robarts; over 5,000 from forty-two countries attended the unique 'triple conference' for parents, youth and children in Columbus; most of Latin America was represented in Lima where public forums attracted hundreds of Peruvian youth to discuss Bahá'í perspectives on issues of the day. Again the beloved Hand Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá was present, having traveled from Canada to participate in that important gathering. Counsellors Farzam Arbab and Athos Costas were also present.

A Bahá'í youth theatre troupe known as *El Teatro de Pan y Paz* (the Theatre of Bread and Peace) was established in Peru, affiliated with

*In Dominica in 1985, Inuit Bahá'í travelling teacher from the Northwest Territories of Canada, Miss Delores Springgay, fifth from left, visits the village of Salybia in the territory of the Carib people.*

Radio Bahá'í in Puno. The group has been highly successful in proclamation and in promoting development among rural people. A border youth camp held during school holidays at the border between Suriname and Guyana has become an annual event usually attended by nearly one hundred youth, followed by an exchange of traveling teachers between the two countries for teaching projects in the border area.

*Indigenous Teaching*

Following the highly successful first phase of *Camino del Sol* (Trail of Light), in which indigenous believers from North America traveled through Central and South America in a program of teaching and cultural exchange, the Continental Board of Counsellors and several National Spiritual Assemblies in the Americas again collaborated in launching the second major phase of this important project. This time indigenous Bahá'ís from several countries of Central and South America formed three teams which traveled extensively in Central America, the United States, Canada and as far north as Alaska, blazing a path of love, spirituality, excitement, and humor.

After these two initial phases involving large-scale movement north and south, 'Trail of Light' was next focused on projects within national areas or on international exchanges with indigenous believers travelling to nearby countries, forming teaching teams with indigenous believers of those countries. These included movements from Costa Rica and Panama to Mexico, from Argentina to Chile, and activities in Panama, Colombia and Venezuela. The effect was outstanding in cities and towns as well as in rural areas.

Bringing the Faith to new tribes of Latin America is a continuing objective. A unique achievement in 1985 was the arrival of a 'Trail of Light' team of indigenous Bahá'í teachers from Panama, Colombia and Venezuela in the remote town of Nabusimaque, the ancient capital of the Arhuaco tribe in the mountains of northern Colombia. Although this tribe has tried to isolate itself from outside influences, the traditional leaders warmly welcomed both the Bahá'í teachings and the cultural exchange between tribes, and eagerly invited the indigenous Bahá'ís to return. During a subsequent visit the first Arhuaco believers were enrolled.

On 9 July 1983, the Hand of the Cause of God John Robarts joined Mr. Johnny Johns, an elder of the Tlingit Tribe, in turning the sod at the dedication of the National Teaching Institute in the Yukon Territory of Canada. One year later, on 9 July 1984, close to five hundred people gathered for the dedication of the newly completed Yukon Bahá'í Institute. Present were the Hands of the Cause of God Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, and John Robarts Mr. Johns and other native elders, the Territorial Commissioner, the Mayor of Whitehorse, and executive members of the Council for Yukon Indians.

*The Hands of the Cause of God*

The hemisphere was blessed in having six Hands of the Cause resident there and by three others visiting for long periods during the years being surveyed. Their continual outpouring of loving guidance combined with their urgent calls to arise were powerful agents assuring the accomplishment of the Seven Year Plan goals. Mr. William Sears and Mr. John Robarts were continually involved in assisting the Canadian community, and Mr. Dhikru'lláh Khádem and Mr. Sears proved tireless in not only urging the believers of the United States to accomplish their goals but in traveling themselves continually throughout the country lending their assistance to the friends directly. Advancing age and failing health did not deter these standard-bearers from fulfilling the mission assigned to them by the beloved Guardian.

After more than seventy years of 'uninterrupted dedicated service', the Hand of the Cause of God Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í passed away in Arizona, U.S.A., on 17 November 1984. His presence in the southwest of the United States during the last years of his life had added a special blessing to the entire hemisphere.

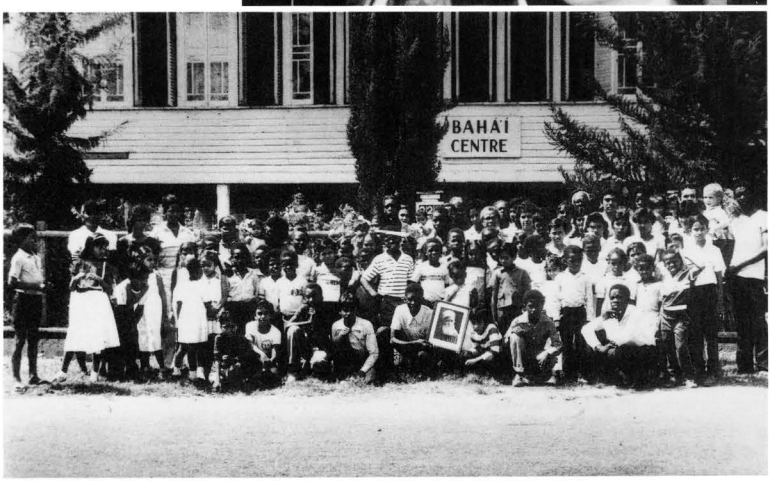
An outstanding event for Latin America was an extensive visit in the early months of 1984 by the Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, Madge. Mr. Featherstone untiringly promoted the Cause from Chile to Panama and on the islands of the Caribbean through personal interviews with authorities, including the President of Trinidad and Tobago, the President of Suriname, and the Governor-General of Barbados, on the radio and television and in the press,

as well as at receptions and dinner parties for dignitaries and prominent persons. He met with hundreds of believers at meetings, institutes, conferences and schools.

Another major inspiration for South America was the presence of the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum at the International Teaching Conference held in January, 1985, in Manaus, capital of the State of Amazonas in northern Brazil. Her talks, filled with perception and wisdom, inspired the hundreds who attended them. From this conference, she journeyed to Bahia State, in eastern Brazil, to participate in a historic conference with chiefs and leaders of indigenous tribes of the region. Later on, she visited Panama and laid the cornerstone of the Guyami Institute in Solay, Chiriqui Province.

An increasingly powerful and effective spirit of co-operation developed between and among the many agencies of the Faith during this period, adding to an already firm foundation of mutual support, and offering a glimpse of the possibilities for future cooperative activities. A significant understanding of the process of inter-agency consultation and dependency helped create the spiritual environment for most of the victories.

*In Canada, the 'Two Wings Conference' brought over 450 young Bahá'ís to Toronto in February 1986 to discuss the equality of men and women.*




*In Guyana, a Regional Bahá'í Children's Conference brought 200 children from 25 communities to the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Georgetown in 1984.*

*In Nepal, the first national Bahá'í Youth Conference was held in October 1985 and was attended by about 120 Bahá'ís from 10 districts.*

## C. ASIA

ASIA is the continent where some of the greatest achievements of the Cause of God were recorded in the period under review. Many of the developments in teaching, proclamation, and the emergence of the Faith from obscurity were the direct results of the sacrificial services of the dearly-loved believers in Írán. It is the steadfastness and sacrifices of these heroic souls which brought the Cause before the attention of the world and its highest consultative forums. Every community can only confirm its great indebtedness to the national Bahá'í community of Írán, whose National Spiritual Assembly was disbanded, and all of whose institutions were dissolved by order of the Government of that country in the autumn of 1983.

*Proclamation, Public Relations and the Media*

During the three years being surveyed, the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia continued frequent radio broadcasts directly about the teachings of the Faith. Sarawak in East Malaysia had regular radio broadcasts in the English, Chinese and Iban languages; these had commenced in 1969. The Philippines started frequent radio broadcasts in Mindanao, Cebu and Iloilo. Thailand, too, commenced broadcasts on Bahá'í Holy Days in Chieng Mai and Yasothon.

In almost all countries in Asia newspapers and magazines mentioned the Faith on occasions too numerous to recount. The most common subject was the persecution of the friends in Írán. In addition, the believers have taken many opportunities to proclaim the Cause.

Sri Lanka had the area distinction of obtaining the maximum publicity for World Religion Day when the Government of Sri Lanka issued a special postal stamp to commemorate this day. The stamp had as part of its design, the symbols of all the major religions including the Bahá'í Faith. The Government of Sri Lanka also proclaimed World Religion Day, the third Sunday in January, as an annual national event.

The Universal House of Justice announced in 1985 the establishment of a regional office of the Bahá'í International Community to be affiliated with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok, Thailand. The Bahá'í community has participated in the activities of ESCAP for

several years and became an officially recognized body with other NGOs there. In 1985 and 1986, Bahá'í delegations officially submitted papers for consideration by other delegates.

The Government of Pakistan officially listed the Bahá'í Faith as a non-Muslim minority, thus greatly promoting recognition of the independent character of the Faith.

In Malaysia and Singapore, the Government accepted Bahá'ís as assistant registrars of marriage and gave legal recognition to Bahá'í marriages.

India, Malaysia and Taiwan showed a marked increase in the number of publications put out by their Publishing Trusts. Taiwan, especially, produced Chinese publications of superb quality. *Words of God* was translated into almost all the major languages of Asia and large numbers of this prayer book were distributed among the believers.

*Expansion and Consolidation*

A new National Spiritual Assembly was established in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. These islands were opened during the Ten Year Crusade, and for many years the community was lovingly served by the National Spiritual Assembly of India. In 1984, the Universal House of Justice announced the establishment of the new Assembly. This community saw an increase in the total number of Local Spiritual Assemblies from 6 to 25, an increase of 317 per cent.

Another dramatic increase in Local Spiritual Assemblies was in Bangladesh which went from 40 to 200: 400 per cent. In Nepal the increase was from 20 to 40: 100 per cent.

Asia also formed the largest number of Local Spiritual Assemblies: 17,504, which was 53 per cent of the world's total.

The number of children's classes grew from 394 to 1,361, an increase of 245 per cent during the Seven Year Plan.

*India*

The continuing vast increase of the Bahá'í community in India required administrative response to meet its challenges. The Universal House of Justice permitted the establishment of appointed State Teaching committees which later evolved into elected State Bahá'í Councils. These Bahá'í Councils were institutions unique to India. Their membership, nine in number, is elected by the members of the Local Spiritual

*In Burma, a Bahá'í children's class in Daidenaw was photographed in February 1985.*

*In India, in 1985, a group of Bahá'í musicians and entertainers based at New Era School in Panchgani travelled around the country teaching the Faith.*

*In Hong Kong, a group of Bahá'í youth, one disguised as 'Mr. Tree', visited a children's hospital in August 1985 and handed out seedlings for the children to plant.*

*In Laos, members of the National Youth and Children's Committee are seen meeting in Vientiane in October 1983.*

Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of each State from the entire membership of the State, and the election is confirmed by the National Spiritual Assembly in the same way as it confirms Local Assembly elections. The State Bahá'í Councils, in addition to carrying out the policies of the National Spiritual Assembly, also take initiative for the promotion of the Faith in their States and carry out their own decisions within the area of authority vested in them by the National Assembly. They have the authority to deal with administrative matters within the State, including the appointment of State Committees for teaching, publishing and other functions. They supervise, on behalf of the National Assembly, the smooth and efficient execution of the plans for each State.

Reports trickled in from village communities of social changes taking place. A Bahá'í peasant farmer wrote that on the marriage of his son, he refused to take dowry from the bride, as it was contrary to Bahá'í teachings, and instead took advantage of the gathering of the bridal party to teach the Cause, emphasizing the principle of the equality of the sexes. Another report came in of a Local Spiritual Assembly being so respected in a village, even by the non-Bahá'ís, that two feuding groups came to the Assembly for mediation, promising to abide by their decisions. The quarrel was resolved amicably and the parties decided to live together in peace.

*Mother Temple of the Indian Sub-continent*

Progress continued on the building of the Mother Temple of India. An international seminar for pre-stressed concrete was held in New Delhi in 1986, and the Temple was chosen as the best example for practical study. Its novel design and unique architectural and constructional features received universally favorable comments from visiting professional and public figures from all parts of the world. Believers from many countries came forward to offer their contributions to ensure the completion of the work. The innumerable problems of labour relations and utilization, building materials and techniques, and design detail were gradually and successfully overcome, mainly through the unstinting and dedicated labors of Mr. Faríburz Ṣahbá, the architect.

*Chinese Teaching*

*The Chinese people are most simple-hearted and truth-seeking ... Truly I say the Chinese are free from any deceit and hypocrisies and are prompted by ideal motives*, said 'Abdu'l-Bahá. One quarter of the world's population is of the Chinese race. The Universal House of Justice stresses the importance at this time of teaching people of Chinese origin wherever they may reside. Thirty-four countries outside the mainland of China have formed Chinese Teaching Committees with this objective. Bahá'ís have organized communities in Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan. They are active in teaching among the Chinese locally and in sending traveling teachers to other countries.

*Academe*

The Thai Bahá'í Community arranged to have a course of Bahá'í Studies organized and included in its curriculum by Mahidol University in Bangkok. The University authorities also authorized a textbook on the Faith to be prepared for use of the graduate students.

Bahá'í scholarship was further promoted by the Bahá'í Academy in Panchgani, India. This institute has been operating for many years and conducts in-depth studies of the Holy Writings.

Malaysia also initiated Academy Courses in 1985 to follow the pattern evolved in India and other countries. This activity was entrusted by the Spiritual Assembly to a special task force. Operating from the Balakong premises, this task force will surely continue to play a significant role in the consolidation of the Faith in that country. An 'Open University' concept of correspondence education in various subjects of the Faith was developed by this task force.

Singapore successfully pursued teaching activities in senior secondary schools in Singapore and at Singapore University.

*Refugees*

Large numbers of refugees from Indochinese countries sought shelter in Thailand. Many thousands of Laotians, Kampucheans, Vietnamese and Chinese were residing in temporary camps there. Within two years, more than six thousand enrolled in the Cause of God. Some were given asylum in other countries, but many remained confined to camps. Their progress there in organizing classes open to all and offering their services to the camp authorities earned the friendly approval of the United Nations

High Commission for Refugees. A number of Local Spiritual Assemblies have been formed in these communities.

The Philippines followed a similar pattern by having Bahá'í communities established in Bataan, where a transit camp for refugees was based. Hong Kong also had an influx of Vietnamese 'boat people', as such refugees are often termed. The Hong Kong community associated with these refugees in open and closed camps, and they helped visiting Bahá'ís to go to these camps. Many of the refugees were Bahá'ís from Vietnam who had fled that country.

Iranian Bahá'í refugees sought shelter in Pakistan, escaping from the religious persecution in their native land. They were confined to camps, and the Supreme Body lovingly assisted with their care.

## D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

*Overview*

The dedication of the Mother Temple of the Pacific in the midmost heart of the Pacific Ocean; the extraordinary respect accorded by His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, the first reigning monarch to accept the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, in welcoming to the shores of Samoa the representative of the Universal House of Justice, the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum; the historic and arduous journey of Amatu'l-Bahá through some fifteen island territories of the vast Pacific Ocean and through the rivers and mountains of Papua New Guinea; the organic growth of the Faith towards maturity through the objectives of the Seven Year Plan, which raised the number of localities to approximately 3,000; the excitement and the joy generated throughout the region by the historic message of the Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*; the unprecedented success and recognition derived from the Peace Exposition so effectively organized in the shadow of the House of Worship, in Sydney, Australia; the marked participation of Bahá'í youth and Bahá'í women in the affairs of the Faith; the establishment of machinery for the advancement of social and economic development; the closer ties of the International Bahá'í Community with the work of the South Pacific Commission; the initiatives taken by the Bahá'í communities, and the historic actions taken by several governments in support of the persecuted Bahá'ís of Írán—these mark the highlights of the three-year period, ending at Riḍván 1986, in the vast, receptive zone of Australasia, the great 'water hemisphere' clasping to its heart the many islands of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia.

*House of Worship Dedication*

Activities associated with the dedication of the House of Worship in Western Samoa at the end of August 1984 generated a wave of visits by Hands of the Cause and Counsellors as well as movements of pioneers and traveling teachers through the many island communities. These followed and amplified the activities resulting from the International Conference in Canberra in 1982. Not only in Samoa but in most of the countries visited by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone audiences with Heads of State occurred, such as that with King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, his brother, and the Prime Minister in Tonga. Much media interest arose, and relations with civil administrations were cemented.

*Proclamation, Public Relations and the Media*

Within a little over one year the promulgation of the Peace Message from the Supreme Body to the peoples of the world vastly accelerated contacts with leaders, authorities, judiciaries and many organizations. In the Mariana Islands the Legislature of Guam passed a resolution of tribute to the Bahá'í initiative, dispatching copies to the President of the United States of America, to the Secretary General of the United Nations, to the Pacific Governors' Council, and to the Association of Legislatures. The President of the Marshall Islands responded favorably and directly to the Universal House of Justice. In the Cook Islands the Prime Minister, Sir Thomas Davis, expressed his wish, later fulfilled, to visit the Holy Land to consult with the House of Justice. The Grand Chief of Noumea, New Caledonia, requested a special meeting with the National Spiritual Assembly, while in Australia the

*In the Cook Islands, Prime Minister Sir Thomas Davis, KBE, (centre) and Minister for Internal Affairs Dr. Teariki Matenga (left) receive Dr. Hamid Farabi, Bahá'í travelling teacher from Trinidad on the occasion of Dr. Farabi's visit to Rarotonga in 1984.*

National Director of the International Year of Peace stated publicly that 'The Bahá'ís have given vision to the Peace Movement.' In Papua New Guinea, the entire text of *The Promise of World Peace* was published in six installments in consecutive editions of a national newspaper.

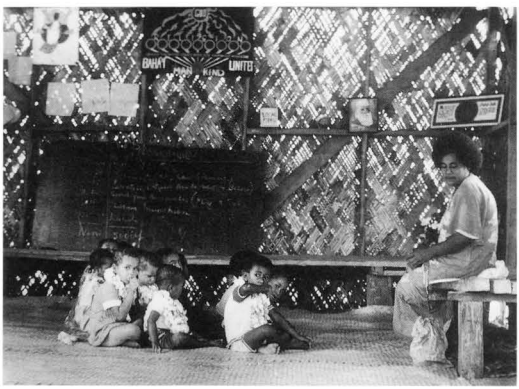
Support for the persecuted friends in Írán continued to require frequent contacts with governments, which have, in general, been both sympathetic and active within the United Nations organization and its agencies. Some 1,500 Iranian believers reached Australia between 1983 and 1986, and the civil administration continued to be generous in its social services. The national Bahá'í community has been deeply involved with their resettlement. New Zealand was starting to accept such immigrants at a significant rate. Many other states made positive representations, notably the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, who wrote directly to the Prime Minister of Írán.

Generally relations with the media showed rapid and increasingly spontaneous development, as the Faith was emerging as a vibrant and significant source of ideas and action. Many communities had regular free time-slots on radio stations, often government-owned, with others paying for regular television announcements. Newspapers requested interviews and information as a matter of routine reaction to what was now seen as newsworthy material.

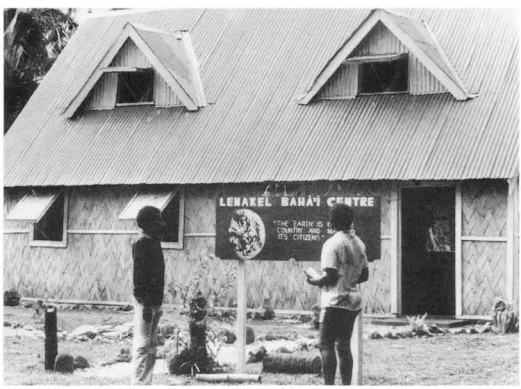
*Teaching and Consolidation*

Two features of the teaching and consolidation efforts throughout the Region were the increased participation by indigenous believers, in both their own and nearby communities, and the strengthening relationship between the two arms of the administrative order. In Papua New Guinea, which had the largest Bahá'í population in Australasia, the rapid expansion was greatly assisted by the friends from Malaysia, while Papua New Guinean friends helped in northern Australia, Tongans in Micronesia, and Maoris from New Zealand in the Cook Islands. Many members of the Auxiliary Boards for Propagation and Protection of the Faith were appointed from among the indigenous believers. They, in turn, worked closely with the National Spiritual Assemblies and national committees to train office-bearers, convention delegates, and traveling teachers. The functioning of Spiritual Assemblies and all aspects of their administration benefited greatly from this close cooperation. In most countries it was vitally

*In Papua New Guinea, the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Sepik Province poses with families and friends in April 1985.*



*In Fiji, a class in the Lomaivuna Bahá'í Kindergarten is photographed in 1984.*




*In Vanuatu, the local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds at Lenakel on Tanna Island was built by local Bahá'ís and was dedicated on 24 April 1986.*

necessary for consolidation to be effected in order to enable the communities to cope with a massive increase in the enrollment of new believers. The teaching work was given frequent injections of inspiration and encouragement through the visits of many friends *en route* to and from the Samoan Temple dedication, and some notable results occurred. In the Solomon Islands, for example, the hitherto pagan areas of East and West Kwaio, which have long resisted the efforts of missionaries, were opened to the Faith. A community meeting house (*maneaba*) was constructed near the office of the National Spiritual Assembly in Kiribati at considerable sacrifice by the believers.

French Polynesia, which had been under the direction of the National Spiritual Assembly of New Caledonia, was transferred to the newly-elected National Assembly of the Cook Islands at Riḍván 1985. This was providential in view of the political unrest in New Caledonia.

Also in 1985, two other new National Spiritual Assemblies were formed, that of the Eastern Caroline Islands, with its seat in Pohnpei, and that of the Western Caroline Islands, with its seat in Yap. This brought to seventeen the number of 'pillars' of the Universal House of Justice in this region.

*Youth*

Bahá'í youth rapidly and very effectively came to the fore in Australasia. Much inspiration was derived from the International Youth Conference in August 1985 on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, which received excellent recognition by civic leaders. Many of the pioneers and traveling teachers were youth. In Vanuatu, when the Bahá'ís were invited to participate in a conference during the International Year of Peace, a youth was chosen to represent the Faith. One youth conference there was sponsored by the Bahá'ís, and a youth wrote a special song for the occasion. Much of the enthusiasm, inspiration, and effort called forth by the Peace Exposition at the House of Worship in Sydney early in 1986 was manifested through the many youth who worked as members of the various committees.

*Women*

The United Nations International Decade of Women was supported by the Bahá'í communities, which gained recognition and continuing requests for co-operation from both governmental and non-governmental organisations with similar objectives. In many national administrations women played vital

*In Hawaii, a group of Bahá'ís gather with Counsellor Ben Ayala (standing second from right) in 1986.*

roles, and more and more indigenous women were elected to both National and Local Assemblies. In Tonga a Women's Day luncheon achieved strong civic participation and unprecedented publicity, while in the Solomon Islands the Bahá'í Women's Committee worked closely with the official National Women's Committee.

*Social and Economic Development*

Another area of Bahá'í activity, which grew rapidly as communities matured and gained confidence from their contacts with civil governments, was that of social and economic development. The projects ranged from running schools, often including local non-Bahá'í participation, to the growing of vanilla and sweet potatoes in Tonga, to initiation of social services such as youth centers and drug education programs, to providing alternative life-style or farming seminars and workshops. The number of projects in Fiji increased from four to twelve in the three-year period. By 1986, seven projects were operating in Vanuatu.

*Literature*

The Fiji Publishing Trust prepared two items for printing, and twenty-six others were in various stages of development. The first translation of a compilation from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh was completed, and 2,000 copies were printed. Tapes of the translation in the Hindi language were distributed among the communities.

Through a joint editorial board, New Zealand and Australia recommenced publication of the quarterly magazine *Herald of the South*.

## E. EUROPE

EUROPE is a relatively small continent; consequently, many statements about it are true of several countries rather than one only, and in the Bahá'í Faith what happens in one national community is paralleled in a number of others. It is easier therefore to talk about different kinds of development rather than about individual countries.

For several years there were nineteen National Spiritual Assemblies in western Europe, But in 1984 the twentieth was added with the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Canary Islands, where the community had been steadily growing.

During the three years of this review the European communities have had many visitors from other parts of the world. Most precious have been visits by the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, 'Ali-Akbar Furútan, John Robarts, and by Dr. Ugo Giachery, the only Hand of the Cause resident in Europe who, despite his advanced years and delicate health, gave outstanding support through his many letters of encouragement, and his travels, especially to Scandinavia for which he had a deep affection.

*Proclamation, Public Relations and the Media*

The growth of public awareness of the Bahá'í Faith in Western Europe continued in the three years of this review. Mostly due to the outrage and sympathy felt everywhere about the cruel persecution of the Bahá'ís of Írán, to whom we owe unending and boundless gratitude for their sacrifices, the Faith attracted a good deal of attention, and this was perhaps the most significant development of the Bahá'í community.

The news from Írán continued to be distressing, and both Bahá'ís and the public were shocked as each new announcement of further executions was made. Bahá'í Assemblies brought the situation again and again to the attention of their governments, members of national parliaments, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. The response of all these official bodies was good and, besides these diplomatic approaches, speeches were made and resolutions passed calling on the Iranian Government to respect the human rights of their Bahá'í citizens. Especially interesting was the occasion in the British House of Commons, when both a speaker and the member of the Government who replied, acknowledged the Faith as an independent world religion. Good press articles followed. Not only the National Assemblies but also Local Assemblies and individual Bahá'ís continued to take energetic action, calling the plight of the Iranian Bahá'ís to the notice of provincial, regional and local officials, members of parliaments and councils, universities, newspapers, and humanitarian organizations.

*In Austria, President Rudolf Kirchschläger (second from left) receives a delegation from the National Spiritual Assembly in the Hofburg in 1984.*

In Germany, after the first broadcast concerning the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, non-Bahá'í villagers of Langenhain spontaneously went to the House of Worship and prayed for the relief of the Iranian Bahá'ís.

Public notice of the Faith having grown so extensively, the Bahá'ís both nationally and locally seized their opportunities and endeavored to keep the attention of the public alive. Co-operation with other religions, celebration of United Nations' special days, contacts with schools, public meetings and concerts, planting of commemorative trees—all were pursued with enthusiasm.

Certainly the Faith was treated with more seriousness and respect everywhere by the many organizations both religious and humanitarian. Invitations now came, both nationally and locally, to take part in a considerable number of functions: conferences, seminars and meetings, United Nations activities, peace campaigns, and help for the starving in the Third World, to name a few. Sympathetic non-Bahá'ís also took part in events organized by the Bahá'ís. Collaboration with other religious bodies increased, and the Faith was invited to be represented at various joint religious gatherings, perhaps the most prestigious being several in London in, or connected with, Westminster Abbey, as well as one in the Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral. Also noteworthy was the offer by a high official of the Church of Scotland for the Bahá'ís to hold one of their functions in the Church Assembly Hall in Edinburgh; as a result, a large Peace Conference was held there on World Religion Day in January 1986.

A course on the Bahá'í Faith was given in the faculty of Comparative Religion at the University of Antwerp, Belgium. A Naw-Rúz party in Ponta Delgada, Azores, with 140 participants, was shown on television. There was periodic mention of the Faith on the radio, including the BBC World Service, and even special programs on television. A special event was the production by the BBC of a forty-minute-long documentary in their 'Everyman' series, made with the collaboration of Bahá'ís in several countries, especially at the World Centre. This was not only seen by many millions but was marketed overseas, and an abridged version was shown in Canada and in Austria. This may well have been the most extensive proclamation of the Faith thus far.

Another event of importance was the 'Band Aid' campaign instituted by the pop singer, Bob Geldof, to aid the starving in Africa. Bahá'ís helped to collect money and also helped in the collection of a large stock of non-perishable foods, tins, and dry goods. The collection by

the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom proved to be the largest amount from a single organization.

For the first time the Bahá'ís on the Côte d'Azur between Nice and Marseille participated in the flower parade with a float, which was highly praised by the Mayors of Cavalaire and Sainte-Maxine.

*United Nations International Year of Peace*

The announcement of this special year was given a heartfelt welcome by the Bahá'í community as being a vital step on the path towards the harmony of the human race within the pattern proclaimed by the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

The impressive statement prepared by the Universal House of Justice entitled *The Promise of World Peace* was received with tremendous enthusiasm by the European Bahá'ís. They derived great inspiration and understanding from it, and it has been the subject of close examination at many schools, at seminars, and in study courses.

But this message was addressed to all the people of the world, and the European Bahá'ís immediately set themselves to make it as widely known as possible. Every national community made arrangements to insure its presentation on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, in the special form provided by the Supreme Body, to all Heads of State in western Europe: kings, queens, and presidents. It was translated into all the principal European languages, as well as some less widely used such as Faroese, Greenlandic, and Irish, and was distributed to every possible quarter: to leaders of Government and of the various religious bodies, those prominent in education and the leading people in all the organizations involved in the welfare of the human race. Furthermore, the local Bahá'í communities acted with similar energy and presented copies of the statement to provincial, regional and local government and other officials, to religious bodies, universities, schools and to all the organizations working at the local level for the good of humanity.

With an audience of 2,500 listeners a proclamation concert of many choral groups involving 650 singers took place in Sundsvall, Sweden, a goal city, assisted by the United Nations Club. It had been preceded by a drawing contest among fifty school classes on the theme 'The Earth is but One Country'.

The statement was, moreover, of great significance in publicity for the Faith, becoming the subject of public meetings and media articles. It provided a resounding answer to the comment sometimes received: 'I thought the Bahá'ís were just people being persecuted in Írán.' Now there was overwhelming proof that the Bahá'ís are everywhere and that the Faith offers something of the greatest importance to the whole of mankind. The Captains Regent of San Marino received the Peace Statement with great respect for the Faith. The event was officially filmed and shown on television the same day.

*Teaching and Consolidation*

Teaching activity, of course, continued everywhere with increased intensity in these three years which formed the last phase of the Seven Year Plan, and the energy was mainly directed towards the goals of the Plan. This involved not only the customary local teaching functions but also a wide and busy circulation of traveling teachers, some able to visit extensively in their own countries and some able to visit other countries.

The majority of the national communities won their goals for the formation of new Local Spiritual Assemblies and the establishment of Bahá'ís in new localities. However, though many pioneers went from Europe to the other continents, some of the overseas goals could not be completed, due to various difficulties and adverse conditions.

Especially noteworthy was the formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly in the little principality of Liechtenstein and also a Local Spiritual Assembly at Tromsø in the far north of Norway some 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle.

The first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in Portoferraio on the island of Elba, Italy where Napoleon had been exiled in 1813. Also, the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in Rovaniemi, Finland on the Arctic Circle, 'the Gate to Lapland' as it is called.

The establishment and reinforcement of many Local Spiritual Assemblies owed a debt of gratitude to the Iranian believers who had come to Europe as refugees from persecution in their home country. These friends settled all over western Europe and gave most welcome help not only by adding to numbers but also through the influence of their special qualities.

*In Finland, the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Rovaniemi was formed on 9 March 1985.*

*In France, the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Paris is near the area in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed during His historic visit to that city.*

*In Germany, Bahá'í youth in the Frankfurt area formed a football club in 1983.*

The National Spiritual Assembly of Austria deserves special praise for its care and support of many of these refugees while they waited in that country until entry to their countries of final destination could be arranged.

The community in Denmark had great satisfaction in its efforts to help in Greenland, where it was entrusted with assisting the responsible National Spiritual Assembly of Canada. Especially in the last year of this period there was a very satisfactory increase in the number of new believers there. Greenland now has two Local Spiritual Assemblies, the beginnings of a foundation for the formation of a National Spiritual Assembly of its own.

The development of border teaching progressed well. The various countries of Europe touch each other at so many points, and a sharing relationship in teaching the Faith has grown up among the Scandinavian countries, along the long border between the Netherlands and Germany, and across Germany's other borders with Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Austria. France worked with adjacent countries and so did Switzerland. The North Sea Border Conferences, which rotate among the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United Kingdom, continued very successfully. Norway, Sweden, and Finland operated a joint committee to work among the ethnic minority of the Samé (Lapps).

There was good work done among the Romani in the south of Spain where two Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed, mostly of Romani. Many of the Romani traveled to other European countries during the summers.

*Summer/Winter Schools*

Summer schools continued to be held regularly in every Bahá'í national community in Europe; indeed, some countries held several in different areas. Winter schools and some spring schools took place in a number of countries. Attendances were large and enthusiastic. There were also some special summer schools for children, as well as some youth camps, notably in Iceland and Norway.

*Youth*

Youth activity continued and increased in this period. In the summer of 1983 an international youth conference, sponsored by the European Board of Counsellors, was held at Innsbruck, Austria, and attracted much eager participation, about 1,500 being present. The conference was honored by the presence of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, which made it a very special event for the youth. It gave a great impetus to the youth work in Europe. Those who attended were deeply inspired and passed their feelings on when they returned home. Many undertook immediate spells of traveling teaching. In all three years there were national youth conferences, together with other special events for youth such as youth camps. The youth taught actively wherever they were living, and this was especially true of the university and college students. In some countries special magazines for youth were produced; in others a section was reserved for youth in the national newsletter.

An attempt in one country to reach teenagers still at school by distributing packs of material about Human Rights to all secondary schools, with an offer to come and give further information if desired, achieved a good response.

1985 was declared by the United Nations to be the International Year of Youth, and Bahá'í youth everywhere in western Europe made special efforts to increase their relationships with other organizations working in the same sphere. In many areas committees were formed to promote the International Year of Youth, and often these had Bahá'í members. All through the year there were special activities: conferences, public meetings, concerts, approaches to schools, special pamphlets. Youth also made special efforts to take part in social and charitable projects; for example, in Greece they visited homes for the aged, and orphanages.

To commemorate the Year of Youth, an international youth conference, again sponsored by the European Board of Counsellors, was held in July 1985 at Antwerp, Belgium. About 1,200 were present and returned home refreshed and inspired by a very stimulating experience.

*Children*

Bahá'ís in Europe were now taking the Bahá'í education of their children with increasing seriousness. In almost every local community where there were even a few children, classes were held, and in Germany and Denmark there were special conferences for children. At large functions there were almost always special

*In Austria, an international youth conference in Innsbruck in July 1983 was attended by about 1,500 Bahá'ís from 40 countries.*

arrangements for the care of the children with studies and activities for them, and at the same time classes for parents and teachers of children's classes. Books for various age-groups were being published in a number of languages, and Denmark produced a special prayer book for children and gave a copy to every Bahá'í child in its community. Many of the national newsletters had a special section for children, and study outlines and advice were provided for those working with them. The Thomas Breakwell School in London, which is becoming well known, was started in October 1984. It provides classes every Sunday for children from five to fifteen years from a wide area, and has become a model for similar efforts in other parts of the country.

*Women*

This period saw the end of the United Nations sponsored Decade of Women. Women continued to play a large part in Bahá'í activities both national and local and participated in non-Bahá'í events, such as radio talks expressing the Bahá'í point of view.

*Publishing*

As in the past, in most European countries, translations were made into the various languages, so that each community was able to build up a wider range of Bahá'í literature. France took the necessary steps for translation of *The Dawn-Breakers* and for republication of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* by the *Presses Universitaires de France*; the Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Belgium published the French translation of *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*. The German Bahá'í Publishing Trust continued its activities, and a special committee worked on the publication of literature in Persian and Arabic. Several original works about the Faith in German also appeared. The periodical *Bahá'í Briefe*, suspended for a long time, made a welcome reappearance. Iceland produced several Icelandic translations and one original work. They also produced an introductory book in Faroese. Italy, Greece, and the Scandinavian countries continued to bring out new books and reprints. The Netherlands published a number of translations in Dutch and one in Frisian, or Friesich, the language of Friesland. Among the more unusual languages of Europe, translations were made into Samé and Romansch. The United Kingdom Publishing Trust continued its work of producing new books and reprinting those out of stock, and the independent publisher George Ronald also provided a steady flow of books related to the Faith. Books with themes of interest to Bahá'ís, or related directly or indirectly to the Faith, were also published by New Era Press (later One-

World Press), which was established on Cyprus in 1984, and by Horizonte Verlag, which became active in 1984–85, first in Austria and then in Rosenheim, Germany, and in Luxembourg.

*Properties*

The number of properties owned and used by the Faith in the various countries continued to grow. The National Spiritual Assembly of France settled into a handsome, new Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in a select part of Paris, and the French community acquired two regional Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, in Nice and Strasbourg. The Republic of Ireland, already based in its larger and more dignified Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Dublin, acquired a local building in each of the four Provinces. The United Kingdom acquired nine local buildings distributed over England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Even the small community in Iceland came into possession of three local properties.

In Germany, energy was devoted to restoration work on the Mother Temple of Europe at Langenhain, and also to the preparation of plans for one of its dependencies, a home for the aged. There was a special gathering in the Temple on 13 September 1984 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of its inauguration.

In Switzerland, there was a very special event when their lovely, new conference center at Landegg in the east of the country was inaugurated on 4–5 June 1983. This is a large property in beautiful surroundings overlooking Lake Constance (Bodensee). Bahá'ís from fourteen countries as well as prominent local non-Bahá'ís were present at the inauguration. The premises were soon in continual use for summer and winter schools, weekend and week-long courses, and seminars in several languages, which attracted visitors from the adjacent countries and even from further afield.

The Netherlands community acquired a fine property which, when restoration is completed, will provide premises not only for summer and winter schools but, since this is a small community, also conventions, conferences, and other national gatherings. It is situated in the forested eastern part of Holland on lovely grounds which also provide a very good camping site.

*In the United Kingdom, one of London's distinctive, red double-decker buses in the Borough of Newham carries a banner reading 'The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens'. The Local Assembly of Newham placed the banner as part of an anti-racism campaign in the area in 1985.*

*One of a spray of roses moulded from dough by a Bahá'í woman prisoner as a gift for her husband to commemorate their wedding anniversary which occurred during their term of imprisonment. The woman mixed the dough from her ration of bread and water. Subsequently, the floral arrangement was coloured and framed and presented to the Universal House of Justice.*

# 2. THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF ÍRÁN
## 140, 141 and 142 of the Bahá'í Era
## 21 April 1983–20 April 1986

For information about the persecution of the Bahá'í community of Írán in the period from 21 April 1979 to 20 April 1983, see 'The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán', by Geoffrey Nash, *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, 1979–83, pp. 249–289, and other related articles in that volume.

## A. SURVEY OF EVENTS

THE violent oppression and hostility that were meted out to the followers of the Báb, and later to those of Bahá'u'lláh, have always thrown their dark and sinister shadows across the fortunes of the Bahá'í community of Írán. No decade from the 1840s to the present has been without its martyrs.[1] The persecution inflicted upon the Bahá'ís has sometimes taken subtle forms and has sometimes—as was notably the case in 1955[2]—erupted into episodes of cruelty and barbarism that have shocked and outraged the world.

Although the persecution of the Iranian believers in the Cradle of the Bahá'í Faith during the years immediately preceding the pre-revolutionary period was for the most part covert and insidious, since 1979 the Revolutionary Government of Írán has virtually declared war on the hapless Bahá'í community, and has launched a systematic and organized campaign to destroy every trace of the Faith in the land of its birth. 'It is absolutely certain that in the Islamic Republic of Írán there is no place whatsoever for Bahá'ís and Bahá'ism', the President of the Revolutionary Court in Shíráz announced in February 1983.[3] 'Before it is too late, the Bahá'ís should recant Bahá'ism, which is condemned by reason and logic. Otherwise, the day will soon come when the Islamic nation will deal with them in accordance with its religious obligations, like it has dealt with other hypocrites who have appeared in more dangerous garb and have religious and satanic gatherings.' It was perfectly clear that a pogrom was at hand designed to exterminate the Bahá'ís of Írán.

'The decline of religious and moral restraints has unleashed a fury of chaos and confusion that already bears the signs of universal anarchy,' the Universal House of Justice stated in its message to the Bahá'í world at Naw-Rúz 136 B.E. (21 March 1979). 'Engulfed in this maelstrom, the Bahá'í world community, pursuing with indefeasible unity and spiritual force its redemptive mission, inevitably suffers the disruption of economic, social and civil life which afflicts its fellow men throughout the planet. It must also bear particular tribulations. The violent disturbances in Persia, coinciding with the gathering of the bountiful harvest of the Five Year Plan, have brought new and cruel hardships to our long-suffering brethren in the Cradle of our Faith and confronted the Bahá'í world community with critical challenges to its life and work. As the Bahá'í world stood poised on the brink of victory, eagerly anticipating the next stage in the unfoldment of the Master's ['Abdu'l-Bahá's] Divine Plan, Bahá'u'lláh's heroic compatriots, the custodians of the Holy Places of our Faith in the land of its birth, were yet again called upon to endure the passions of brutal mobs, the looting and burning of their homes, the destruction of their means of livelihood, and physical violence and threats of death to force them to recant their faith. They, like their immortal forebears, the Dawn-Breakers, are standing steadfast in the face of this new persecution and the ever-present threat of organized extermination.'

[1] 'The persistent and decisive intervention of the Russian Minister, Prince Dolgorouki, who left no stone unturned to establish the innocence of Bahá'u'lláh ...' (See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 104).
[2] Possibly a reference to the Qur'án, súrih 5, verse 33.
[3] Reported in *Khabar-i-Junúb*, issue of 22 February 1983.
[4] The executions took place on 8 September 1980. Ayatollah

On 13 May 1983, early in the period under review, it was the sad task of the Universal House of Justice to inform the Bahá'í world of the execution on 1 May 1983 of Mr. Suhayl Ṣafá'í and Mr. Jalál Ḥakimán, who had been imprisoned since October 1982 in Iṣfahán. More than a week went by before the families and friends of these Bahá'ís learned that they had been executed in Ṭihrán.

Mr. Suhayl Ṣafá'í, aged 35, after attending high school in Iṣfahán had graduated from university in Ṭihrán where he studied literature. For a time he was the manager of the Zamzam Company's plant in Iṣfahán, a firm owned by a Bahá'í. After the company was taken over by the new regime, and its employees dismissed, Mr. Ṣafá'í, who was married and had two young sons, opened a small stationery shop from which he derived a meagre living. He was active in teaching Bahá'í youth and was making notes for use in compiling a Bahá'í encyclopaedia. These notes, and his sizeable library of Bahá'í books, were used in support of the accusations made against him, principally that he was engaged in 'propagation of the misled sect'. Neither a will nor his notebooks came to his family after his death, nor did his library, only his shoes and a small bag, and a copy of Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy* which he had read in prison and on the flyleaf of which he had written a verse by Ḥáfiẓ:

> O Bird of Paradise!
> On the journey to the Loved One
> Let longing march by my side
> For the destination is distant
> And I, a novice traveller,
> Seek a seasoned guide.

Mr. Jalál Ḥakimán, aged 62, was a retired writer whose fields of interest when he was a student had included the study of literature, English and psychology. He had served as a translator in the Ministry of Health. Mr. Ḥakimán was a profound student of the Bahá'í Faith and devoted himself assiduously to study and research. He was not married. His relatives and friends were concerned about him because he sometimes became so engrossed in his study of the Faith that he would forget to eat. A few months before his arrest he wrote to a friend about the transitoriness of the mortal world and stated, 'If my life does not last, I will also, God willing, go to my destiny—do not grieve or feel despondent about what is happening, but resign yourself to the will of God and be assured that there is no father kinder than Him.' He was, throughout his life, noted for his courtesy and graciousness and his grasp of the Bahá'í teachings. At the time of his arrest he was engaged in writing a series of books recording the history and development of thought and civilization in the world, and was working on a dissertation on dreams.

Then Shíráz suddenly became the focus of attention, as it had been in the early years of the revolution, and so often before in Bábí and Bahá'í history. On 23 October 1982 the militia had invaded the homes of a number of Bahá'ís in the area of Shíráz and arrested over forty men and women and imprisoned them. After months of confinement and torture, the fate of some of these prisoners was now revealed.

With great sorrow the House of Justice announced on 20 June 1983 that in Shíráz on 16 June six Bahá'ís had been executed by hanging: Dr. Bahrám Afnán, aged 50, a prominent physician specializing in heart and internal diseases; Mr. Bahrám Yaldá'í, aged 28, who had studied to obtain his doctorate in economics; Mr. Jamshíd Síyávushí, aged 39, who owned a clothing shop; Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí, aged 61, who had worked for the Írán Oil Company and was retired; Mr. Kúrush Ḥaqqbín, aged 34, an electrical technician specializing in the repair of radio and television sets; and Mr. 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Ázádí, aged 66, a veterinarian who had been an employee of the Ministry of Health. Of this group, all save Mr. Ishráqí and Mr. Yaldá'í were members of Local Spiritual Assemblies in Shíráz or surrounding communities.

Dr. Bahrám Afnán—his name indicating that his family is related to the Báb—had, before his arrest, voluntarily visited Bahá'í prisoners and tended to their needs and relayed messages, but he was denied a medical permit by the authorities and had to discontinue this service. Because of his lineage he was subjected to an unusual degree of abuse and humiliation after his arrest, and was tortured so severely that he suffered a heart attack on two occasions. Despite his condition—his body 'torn and bleeding and skeletal', according to an eyewitness—the prison authorities had to resort

to his assistance because of his medical competence, and he was asked to tend to the sick prisoners. Doctors in the city continued to consult him about their patients. His last gesture before being taken from the cell for execution was to remove a gold crown from his tooth and present it to a friend. 'I have not written a will; I leave all I have in your hand!' he remarked.

Mr. 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Ázádí, who was from Burázján, a town in Bushihr county, and who in 1978 pioneered to Akbarabád near Shíráz, was a warm-hearted believer. He was married with three daughters and four sons. Although he keenly missed his wife during his imprisonment and suffered painful disorders to his respiratory and digestive systems due to being tortured, nevertheless he remained cheerful, good-natured and concerned for others. He was very entertaining to be with and was a source of joy and amusement to his fellow prisoners, raising their spirits when they sank under the weight of sorrow.

Mr. Kúrush Ḥaqqbín was from a devoted and well-known Bahá'í family of Yazd. Born in 1949, he spent his childhood in comfort, and was an obedient child. He was hard-working and serious both in school and in Bahá'í classes, and enjoyed good relationships with his teachers and fellow students. After finishing elementary school he was forced to find work because of the financial circumstances of his family, but he continued his education by taking night classes. With his parents, he pioneered to Sar-i-Pul-i-Dhaháb, Kirmánsháh, where he participated in Bahá'í activities, acquired the skill of repairing radio sets, and attended school classes. He performed his military service in Shíráz during which time he graduated from high school, majoring in mathematics and then, in response to a dream about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he pioneered to Marvdasht, a community not far from Shíráz, settling in Suhaylábád which had only a Bahá'í group and not yet a Local Spiritual Assembly. After the Spiritual Assembly was formed, the two administrative districts were merged and he served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Marvdasht. Meanwhile, he opened a radio repair shop. In 1976, he married, and following the birth of the first child the following year, he and his wife pioneered to Sar-i-Pul-i-Dhaháb where they settled in an agricultural co-operative. Mr. Ḥaqqbín studied Kurdish, the language used in that area, to facilitate his teaching the Faith, and he travelled to neighbouring villages to acquaint the residents with the Bahá'í principles. A Spiritual Assembly was formed in Sar-i-Pul-i-Dhaháb. Three years after the Ḥaqqbín family arrived there, when war broke out between Írán and 'Iráq, the couple left Sar-i-Pul-Dhaháb which is situated on the border of the two countries. At this time they were expecting their second child. They returned to Marvdasht where Mr. Ḥaqqbín opened a shop for the repair of radio sets, undeterred by the fact that the shop he opened there earlier, as well as his shop in Sar-i-Pul-i-Dhaháb, had been set afire by fanatics hostile to the Faith. It has been written of him, 'Whoever had met Kúrush, even once, would feel affection for him; he was good-natured, kind and generous to all without expectation of return.' After his arrest on 8 December 1982 he said to his mother, when she visited him in prison, 'Why do you cry? All these calamities have been encountered in the path of God and in service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. If we are fortunate and depart from this mortal realm with a good end, our souls will be elevated in the next world. Do not grieve; rather, pray for us.' He was especially concerned about his older brother who had been arrested and imprisoned with him, and rejoiced when his brother was freed. 'Now I can stay in prison without anxiety,' he remarked. Although of slight stature he had a powerful spirit, and he delighted his fellow prisoners by chanting in a melodious voice some of the many prayers he had memorized. On the last occasion that his family visited him in prison, his father recorded, Kúrush Ḥaqqbín already knew of his sentence of death, and appeared to be in another world. He consoled his family, urged them not to sorrow, seemed oblivious to the tears of his children whom he loved so deeply, and took his leave of them without glancing back. It was already too late for his nearest and dearest, and the loyalties of this world, to keep him from his destination.

Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí, who came from Najafábád, Iṣfahán, had been arrested and imprisoned in 1980, together with his family, but they were all released the following day. On 29 November 1982, he and his wife and teenage daughter, Ru'yá, were again arrested and imprisoned, the women being sent to the women's prison. 'Mr. Ishráqí', one of his fellow

inmates wrote, 'was imperturbable; his qualities of dignity and quiescence were more than I can describe. No incident would disturb him, and he remained constantly calm and thankful.' Mr. Ishráqí was an assistant to an Auxiliary Board member, and served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz. Both he and his wife had served as marriage counsellors. He was the first of the group of six to be summoned to the court, and was called four times in two successive days, but no matter how the authorities tried they could not persuade him to recant. By pure chance, after leaving the interrogation room on the first day, Mr. Ishráqí encountered his beloved wife for a brief moment on the stairs. 'May my life be a sacrifice for you!' she exclaimed—a Persian expression of utter love and devotion—before the guards whisked him away. It was the last time they were to see one another. When the sentence of death was passed, one of the friends remarked lightly that the authorities might only be bluffing. 'Don't worry, boys, sometimes these people play-act,' he said. 'But we have come here for the real thing!' Mr. Ishráqí replied.

Originally from Yazd, Mr. Jamshíd Síyávushí spent the last few years of his life in Shíráz where he was arrested on 1 November 1982. Because he served as treasurer of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz, the interrogations to which he was subjected were more rigorous than those experienced by others. He was also severely tortured in an effort to have him reveal the hiding place of the large sums of money the authorities mistakenly assumed he had under his control. He was placed in solitary confinement for a considerable period and frequently lashed on the soles of the feet with electric cables. So unbearable did his sufferings become that he sought to take his own life by gashing his wrists and throat with a broken tile, but he was prevented from doing so. Separation from his wife, to whom he had been married for about twelve years and who was also imprisoned, and uncertainty about what might befall her, added to his misery. One day the authorities told Mrs. Síyávushí that they were going to torture her husband until he died and to prove their point they summoned her to the interrogation chamber. Her husband was led in by two guards who had to support him under his arms. He had been tortured and deprived of sleep for seventy days; his back was covered with festering wounds caused by lashings, and his toenails had been removed and were also infected. Only with difficulty was he able to speak. On another occasion which proved to be their final meeting, the jailers again brought husband and wife face to face. Each was told beforehand the falsehood that the other had recanted and become a Muslim. In their last hurried moments together, the couple assured one another that they had remained steadfast.

On 23 October 1982, Mr. Bahrám Yaldá'í and his mother and father were arrested. Bahrám's presence in prison, a fellow prisoner testified, was a source of consolation and tranquillity, and a cause of the spiritual strengthening of the imprisoned Bahá'í friends. Although his father was freed after a short time, his mother was not, and Bahrám was deeply concerned about her fate. He devoted his time to teaching Arabic and to explaining the relationship of the Qur'án to the Bahá'í Writings. His courage and audacity in defending the Faith during the interrogations, and his knowledge of both the Bahá'í teachings and the Qur'án, won the admiration of all who heard him, even his questioners, though this did not prevent his being transferred to a more secluded prison cell and given harsher treatment for seventy days. Still, his spirit was not broken and he faced death with equanimity.

A still greater shock now swept through the Bahá'í world. Although by Ridván 140 B.E. (21 April 1983) almost a score of Bahá'í women of all ranks had been executed, mobbed, assassinated, or disappeared without a trace, including Írán's first woman physicist, a concert pianist, and the illiterate wife of a shepherd, the fate of some of the women who had been rounded up in the area of Shíráz in October 1982 became known.

The Universal House of Justice, on 20 June 1983, reported to the Bahá'í world that on the evening of 18 June ten Bahá'í women, ranging in age from 17 to 57, were hanged in Shíráz, after months of imprisonment and torture during which they refused to renounce their faith. 'THE EXECUTION OF THESE GUILTLESS WOMEN IN THE NAME OF RELIGION MUST SHOCK CONSCIENCE HUMANITY', the House of Justice telexed. 'THEY WERE ARRESTED FOR ACTIVITIES IN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY INCLUDING EDUCATION OF YOUTH.'

Even the youngest among the women fearlessly admitted during the interrogations during which it was sought to have her recant that she had been conducting classes for the spiritual training of children. She had seen it as her duty, since the children were barred from attending regular schools.

The telex of the House of Justice continued: 'FOLLOWING LONG INTERROGATION IN PRISON THEY WERE WARNED THEY WOULD BE SUBJECTED TO FOUR SESSIONS PRESSURING THEM RECANT THEIR FAITH ACCEPT ISLAM AND IF BY FOURTH TIME THEY HAD NOT SIGNED PREPARED STATEMENT RECANTING FAITH THEY WOULD BE KILLED. ALL PREFERRED DIE RATHER THAN DENY THEIR FAITH. FEW HOURS PRIOR EXECUTION WOMEN MET WITH FAMILIES NONE OF WHOM KNEW [OF] IMPENDING EXECUTION. NEWS THIS DASTARDLY CRIME NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED OR FORMALLY GIVEN TO FAMILIES. AUTHORITIES REFUSED ALLOW FAMILIES RECEIVE BODIES FOR BURIAL OR EVEN TO SEE THEM.'

In the same communication the Bahá'í community was reminded that between October and November 1982 over 80 Bahá'ís were arrested in Shíráz. The authorities later revealed that 22 persons among the 80 were condemned to death if they failed to recant. The names of these 22 were never revealed, however, intensifying the psychological stress endured by Bahá'í prisoners.

Not only the fellow prisoners of the ten women but their executioners too were affected by the heroism with which these women met their fate, remarking that they sang and chanted as though they were enjoying a pleasant outing. One of the men attending the gallows confided to a Bahá'í, 'We tried saving their lives up to the last moment, but one by one, first the older ladies, then the young girls, were hanged while the others were forced to watch, it being hoped that this might induce them to recant their belief. We even urged them to say they were not Bahá'ís, but not one of them agreed; they preferred the execution.'

A witness reported, 'The bodies of the women were taken to the morgue at 10:00 p.m. The following day, when relatives went to take delivery of the bodies of the six Bahá'í men who had been executed two days before [16 June 1983], they learned that the ten women were also martyred. The news spread rapidly throughout Shíráz. Soon it was impossible to buy flowers in the city as all had been purchased and sent to the relatives of the martyrs as an expression of sympathy. On 19 June the militia removed the bodies to the Bahá'í cemetery of Shíráz without informing the families, and they were buried with their clothes on and without washing and shrouding.'

There was no further humiliation to which the enemies of these Bahá'í women could subject them; now they were in the hands of God, and their names had been inscribed among the immortals.

The names of these women are: Miss Shahín (or 'Shírín') Dálvand, aged 25, who held a degree in sociology; Mrs. 'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí, aged 57, a homemaker, the wife of 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí who was executed but two days before; Miss Ru'yá Ishráqí, aged 23, a second-year student of a veterinary college and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí; Miss Muná Maḥmúdnizhád, aged 17, the youngest Bahá'í and the youngest female to be martyred up to this point in the present onslaught, who was in her last year of high school at the time of her arrest and imprisonment and whose father, Mr. Yadu'lláh Maḥmúdnizhád, had been executed on 12 March of that year; Miss Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih, aged 28, who held a B.A. in English and who wrote excellent poetry; Miss Mahshíd Nírúmand, aged 28, who had qualified for a degree in physics though it was denied her because of her being a Bahá'í; Miss Símín Ṣábirí, aged 25, who held a high school diploma; Mrs. Ṭáhirih Arjumandí Síyávushí, aged 30, who had qualified as a nurse and was the wife of Jamshíd Síyávushí, martyred two days earlier; Miss Akhtar Thábit, aged 25, a nurse; and Mrs. Nuṣrat Ghufráni Yaldá'í, aged 47, a brilliant teacher of the Faith, who was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly and the mother of several children, including Bahrám Yaldá'í, who had been executed on 16 June. Although the provisions made for hangings varies from prison to prison it seems clear from reports that the desired end is generally not accomplished by the method in which the body drops from a considerable height, the neck is broken and death is swift, but by the less humane method of having the victim stand on a chair or low support which is then removed, or sometimes by slow elevation of the victim by a pulley, with, in either case, resultant strangulation and the maximum of suffering.

Even before the details of the lives of these women were known a storm of public protest was registered by leaders of thought and by the media. The *Guardian* of 25 June 1983 carried a story, representative of those describing the hangings, under the headline 'Bahá'í Women Sing and Pray on Way to Meet Hangman'. Other newspapers, echoing a paid advertisement inserted in major newspapers by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, tersely declared 'Now They Are Hanging Women', while many editorials spoke of 'genocide', 'bloodletting', and the 'reign of terror'.

Miss Shahín Dálvand, nicknamed 'Shírín', was born to a Bahá'í family in Shíráz in December 1956. She was extremely diligent and was recognized as an outstanding student. Her senior thesis at the university of Shíráz where she earned her bachelor of science degree was accorded much praise by her professors. During her final year of school, Shírín's parents were in England, but despite the possible danger and her family's request that she move somewhere where she would be safer, she remained in Shíráz with her grandparents. She was, until her arrest and imprisonment on 29 November 1982, active on various Bahá'í committees, and would often visit the families of Bahá'í prisoners and martyrs. Asked during her trial if she were willing to die for her beliefs, she replied in an unruffled manner that she was, and expressed the hope that God would help her to be steadfast in such circumstances. An eyewitness said that her responses to the interrogator seemed inspired. 'Shírín had a generous and sensitive spirit and was calm and content in prison', a Bahá'í woman who was imprisoned with her has written. 'I remember one day in the prison when we were having a meal together, and Shírín told us that it was her birthday, and that the year before her mother had given her a beautiful new dress as a birthday gift, and that this year her gift was to be a prisoner for Bahá'u'lláh. Since we had nothing else, each of us took a little morsel of food and placed it in Shírín's mouth, and thus celebrated her birthday.'

Imprisonment was not a new experience for Mrs. 'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí, nor for her daughter Ru'yá, as they had been previously arrested and then released, but they refused to leave Shíráz, choosing instead to remain there to help the Bahá'í community. After the revolution, Mr. Ishráqí's pension was withheld because of his being a Bahá'í, but in spite of their growing hardship the Ishráqí's home continued to be used as a haven for the disconsolate and those believers who had been rendered homeless. During one of Mrs. Ishráqí's interrogations in which, because she was blindfolded she experienced great difficulty in walking, the questioner taunted her, saying, 'Are you so blind that you cannot walk?' She replied, 'I am merely outwardly blind, but you are inwardly blind.' Ru'yá, who was training as a veterinarian until she was dismissed in the second year of her course because of her adherence to the Bahá'í Faith, was possessed of beauty and a radiant personality; she was one of the most popular Bahá'í youth of Shíráz. She led an active life and loved sports such as mountain climbing. Her sister, Ruzítá, became engaged the same day that her father was killed. When Ruzítá, two days later, told her mother and sister about the death of Mr. Ishráqí, her sister said 'Thank God!' and her mother calmly said, 'I knew, I knew, I knew.' Ru'yá had a deep affection for her father and on one occasion persuaded the judge to let her speak to her father during their interrogation. Noticing the tender exchange between them, the judge sought to capitalize on it. 'What a pity,' he said. 'You put yourselves through this agony only for one word; just say you are not a Bahá'í and I'll see that the three of you are released, and payment of the pension of your father resumed.' Ru'yá was quick to respond. 'Your honour, the love of father and mother for their daughter is a natural sentiment, but my love for my Lord and my attachment to His Cause must take precedence over my love for my parents. I will not exchange my faith for the whole world.' Asked, then, if she would insist on saying she is a Bahá'í even until the moment of her execution, Ru'yá replied that she hoped to remain firm in her belief and steadfast in her love of the Blessed Beauty to the end of her life. As a child of five or six, she had dreamed one night that she was lost in a wheatfield among stalks so high that she could not find her way home, and was rescued and taken home by two men of brilliant countenance on horseback, one of whom was Bahá'u'lláh and the other 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The youngest of this group of martyrs, Miss Muná Maḥmúdnizhád, a schoolgirl, who as a

result of her extreme youthfulness and conspicuous innocence became, in a sense, a symbol of the group, and whose martyrdom was greatly publicized, was born on 10 September 1965 in Yemen where her parents were pioneering, a child of the Ten Year Plan. The family returned to Írán in 1969 when the Government expelled all foreigners. Muná possessed a fine singing voice, was a good student, and had a warm, loving nature and a frank, inquisitive mind. An essay she wrote in 1981 on the topic 'The fruit of Islám is freedom of conscience and liberty; whoever tastes it benefits therefrom,' in which she expressed her frustration at being restricted, as a Bahá'í, to offering guarded private responses to questions posed about the Faith by fellow students, caused a furor in the school that resulted in the principal, a fanatical man, prohibiting her mentioning the Bahá'í religion on the school grounds, an injunction with which she faithfully complied. When Muná and her parents were arrested on 23 October 1982, her mother protested to the guards that Muná was only a child. One of the men, who in ransacking the house had come across a poem written by Muná, retorted, 'Do not call her a child. You should call her a little Bahá'í teacher. Look at this poem, it is not the work of a child. It could set the world on fire. Some day she will be a great Bahá'í teacher.' In prison she was bastinadoed, lashed on the soles of the feet with a cable, and forced to walk on her bleeding feet. Sneering guards taunted her and the other victims by setting, just out of reach, a glass of water that would have been balm for their physical agony. A book entitled *The Story of Mona 1965–1983*, produced by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada in 1985, and a videotape of the Canadian musician Doug Cameron performing his composition 'Mona with the Children', produced by Jack Lenz and Mr. Cameron in collaboration with other Canadian friends, were disseminated throughout the world and reached both Bahá'í and general audiences. Muná, in death, fulfilled the guard's prediction that she would be a great Bahá'í teacher. It has been related by one of the guards that Muná asked to be the last to be hanged, and that she prayed for the 'murderers' of her martyred friends. Then she is reported to have said, 'In the Bahá'í Faith the kissing of hands is prohibited, and we are only allowed to kiss the hands of those who kill us for our beliefs.' Seizing the executioner's hand she kissed it lightly, then kissed the rope and placed it around her throat and, smiling, said goobye to this world. Muná's mother, Mrs. Farkhundih Maḥmúdnizhád, succeeded in gaining entry to the mortuary after the hangings, and later wrote to Mrs. Ṭáhirih Dálvand, mother of Shírín (Shahín), who was residing in the United Kingdom with her husband, 'I visited them all and kissed them, and then I returned in order to kiss Muná once again and bid farewell to my beautiful little daughter. My eye fell upon Shírín Dálvand. I arose from bending over the pure and sanctified body of Muná and went toward Shírín. I said, "Shírín, dear, I shall give you two kisses, one on behalf of your mother, and the other on behalf of your father; accept these kisses from me!" and I leant down and kissed her twice.'

'Whether you accept it or not, I am a Bahá'í. You cannot take it away from me. I am a Bahá'í with my whole being and my whole heart.' These were words uttered by Miss Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih at one point during her interrogation after her arrest when, having failed to convince her with arguments, the interrogator began to use foul language. Her ringing, melodious voice, and her vigorous defence of the Bahá'í Faith, caused one of her interrogators to declare that she should have obtained a degree in public speaking. Zarrín, the daughter of Umm-i-Hání and Ḥusáyn Muqímí-Abyánih, was born on 23 August 1954 in the beautiful village of Abyánih, located at the foot of a mountain between Iṣfahán and Káshán, and was raised in Ṭihrán. Even as a child she used to stand on a chair reciting prose and poems in her clear voice. She was an honour student in high school and at age 21 graduated from the University of Ṭihrán where she obtained her degree in English literature. She memorized the entire text of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, made a thorough study of the Qur'án, and was tireless in service to the Faith. A deep attachment existed between Zarrín and her father and the two would spend hours discussing the Bahá'í teachings. When her attempt to obtain employment as a school teacher in Abyánih where the villagers made clear she was welcome was rejected because the authorities did not want a Bahá'í residing there, she accepted a job as administrative assistant, interpreter and accountant in a petrochemical plant near Marvdasht, not far from Shíráz,

where her father was in charge of maintenance of the house of the Báb and other Bahá'í properties, but she was discharged after the revolution, with seven other Bahá'í employees. In taking leave of her supervisor, Zarrín so brilliantly expounded the Cause that her dismissal became a means of proclamation throughout the company. When news of her death reached the company driver who used to transport Zarrín to her office, he exclaimed: 'O God! Why should I have known and served an angel, and now bear the anguish of her martyrdom!' An accomplished poet, Zarrín wrote the following stanza in honour of one of her dearly loved Bahá'í teachers, Mr. Háshim Farnúsh, who was martyred on 23 June 1981:

O God! My teacher is now the teacher of Holy Souls,
He sings the divine song among the denizens of eternity,
He offered his breast as a target
for the burning arrows of the enemies,
He chanted new refrains of love and sacrifice,
And at last he tinged with his crimson blood
The pale leaves of history.
He wrote a final counsel for his pupils:
'If we are true lovers of that Peerless Beloved,
Why should we shrink from His test?'

Time after time during her trial, the judge who was Zarrín's interrogator pressed her to recant, and threatened her with execution if she did not. On one occasion she replied, 'How can I make you understand that my being exists solely for Bahá'u'lláh, the object of my hope and love is Bahá'u'lláh, and my heart is also of Bahá'u'lláh.' 'I will tear your heart out of your breast,' the judge replied. 'Even then that heart will cry out "Bahá'u'lláh!", "Bahá'u'lláh!", "Bahá'u'lláh!"' Zarrín retorted. Later, she wearily reminded him of his first interrogation of her. 'Do you think that I can deny the truth? I told you the first day I would not recant. If you try me for months and years, my response will be the same.' Zarrín's parents were also arrested but were subsequently released.

A graduate in physics from the University of Shíráz in 1979, Miss Mahshíd Nírúmand was ridiculed by her interrogator, who boasted that although he did not complete high school, he was in a position of power and was questioning a university graduate: 'What an education! A graduate in physics!' he jeered.

Mahshíd was born in Shíráz in 1955. Until her arrest December 1982 she had served as a youth advisor and as a member of a number of Bahá'í service committees. She was also an assistant to an Auxiliary Board member. Throughout her long imprisonment she was strong, steadfast, and solicitous of others, often sharing her food with her fellow prisoners and encouraging them to be staunch. She was, by nature, pensive and retiring, and although she was a lioness in the strength of her faith, she had a calm and soothing disposition, and a dignified bearing. She spoke little, but when she did it was to the point and revealed her profound grasp of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Noticing her demureness even when being cross-examined, the judge who was conducting her interrogation exclaimed, on one occasion, 'Your meekness and your non-interference in politics are banners that you Bahá'ís hold in your hands to conquer the world, and so far you have been successful. All the foreign radio broadcasts are talking about the Bahá'ís being wronged in Írán!' Confronted with the death sentence for failing to recant, Mashíd replied, 'I have found the path to Divine Reality and I am not prepared to abandon it. Therefore, I am willing to abide by the court's verdict.' A young Bahá'í who was able to view the bodies of the women after their martyrdom wrote a poignant report in which he described Mashíd as appearing to be in a deep, peaceful sleep. Muná, the youngest, lay close by, her head resting on Mahshíd's shoulder, as if seeking strength and solace.

Miss Símín Ṣábirí was the daughter of Ḥusayn and Ṭavus Pampúsíyán Ṣábirí and was born on 2 March 1958 in the village of Dahbíd in Fárs Province. Her father was from a Muslim background, and her mother from a Jewish one, but her father, and the parents of her mother, had independently investigated and accepted the Bahá'í Faith. Símín's father was a widower when he married her mother and had two sons and four daughters by his first marriage. Símín was the youngest of the five children born of the new union. After completing high school Símín studied typewriting and acquired other secretarial skills and found employment in an agricultural company in Marvdasht.

In November 1978 when the homes of many Bahá'ís in Shíráz were burned and looted, the

Ṣábirí residence was attacked by a raging mob who threw stones and broke windows and threatened the family. Although she was injured by broken glass, Símín remained cheerful throughout the incident. She and her family took refuge with relatives and about a month later their home in Shíráz was confiscated, as were the homes of other Bahá'í families. Ultimately, on 26 October 1982, Símín was imprisoned.

Símín Ṣábirí has been described as one of the most fearless of the group of women who were martyred together. She had been a member of the Bahá'í Education Committee in Shíráz, responsible for the continuing education of Bahá'ís about their Faith and its Writings, and she was the youngest assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board. During her interrogations, she would constantly try to refute the accusations and correct the misinformation of her interrogators. Throughout her imprisonment she remained strong and resilient, and did not yield to sorrow, but comforted and encouraged the other believers.

A Bahá'í who was imprisoned with her has written, 'Símín was steadfast, courageous and swift-thinking. Her whole being was suffused with love of Bahá'u'lláh, and she had a happy and smiling face. Even in prison she did not stop smiling. She was a symbol of absolute detachment, a true lover of the spiritual path and aflame with a desire to serve the Cause of God. "It is not important how they treat us here", she was often heard to remark in prison, "but what is important is that our interrogators realize the goal of the Bahá'í Faith and its administrative order. We have unveiled the nature of the Bahá'í administrative order and introduced and proclaimed the Faith. It is important that the truth is being made known to judges all across Írán in order that they might understand that the Bahá'í Faith is a religion, not a political movement." She appeared willing to overlook the more cynical view that the stronger the sunlight grows, the blinder bats become.' When a female relative called at the prison to collect Símín's clothing after her martyrdom, she apologized to the guards and other workers that her relation had been their guest for so many months and said aloud, as she signed the receipt in the prison book, 'Dear Símín, may my life be a sacrifice to you! We are proud of you, and I am happy to sign a document that testifies so eloquently to your success.' Though some of the guards and workers bowed their heads with shame, others defended the right of the Islamic Republic to execute those whom it regards as enemies. Símín was twenty-four years and four months old at the time of her martyrdom, her mother has stated. She tried very hard to prepare her parents for their loss. 'Don't expect that I shall be allowed to leave here,' she warned her mother on one occasion. And always she pleaded with her family to recognize that she was content with the will of God and prayed that they would be able to reconcile themselves to separation from her.

Mrs. Ṭáhirih Arjumandí Síyávushí had served as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Yásúj, near Shíráz, had been active as an assistant to the Auxiliary Board and as a member of the committee on deepening, and she had memorized, as had Miss Muqímí-Abyánih, the entire text of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. Mrs. Síyávushí, a nurse, had been fired from her job for being a Bahá'í but had later secured employment in a private hospital. After being imprisoned she was, for a time, held in solitary confinement where the cells have no bathrooms or toilets—facilities the prisoners may use only three times in twenty-four hours, at the discretion of the prison guards. Frequently, to make her recant, the guards told her that her husband would be tortured to death. When the prison authorities brought Mr. and Mrs. Síyávushí together in an effort to persuade them that the other had recanted, she could barely recognize her husband because he had been so severely beaten, and indeed the prison personnel did not think he would live through the night. The guards felt so sorry for him that they asked his wife to send him some fruit, but he could not eat it. Although he recovered to some degree, he was hanged shortly afterward. When Mrs. Síyávushí realized that she, too, would be executed, she encouraged her family not to mourn. When she saw her father for the last time, she said, 'Look how beautiful I am!' And she was laughing. Some time after Mrs. Síyávushí's execution, a Bahá'í who had been imprisoned with her but who was later freed, brought to the World Centre a pair of pale grey heavy cotton ankle-length socks which had belonged to Ṭáhirih, and which she insisted her fellow prisoner wear when the latter was taken away

to be whipped on the soles of her feet, in order to provide a greater degree of protection, as she had only thin stockings. When the prisoner spoke of her intention, if released, of presenting the socks to the Universal House of Justice, Ṭáhirih wished her the fulfilment of her heart's desire. 'If you are released, it will be with honour,' she said. Then she counselled: 'Leave Írán and tell the world what we suffered, what the enemies did to us. And tell the Bahá'ís, too, so they will utterly detach themselves from material things, will not be content with the glitter and illusions of this contingent world, and will devote their lives to service to the Cause.'

Born in 1958 in Sarvistán, about fifty miles from Shíráz, to a family of modest means, Miss Akhtar Thábit was a model pupil, as her teachers have testified, cheerful and willing and always ready to assist her classmates in the study of their lessons. Humility, kindness of heart, respect for her elders and an eagerness to serve others were among her distinguishing characteristics. While attending school she had to accept employment in order to assist her family. She was always attractively attired in simple and becoming clothes that she made herself. Ever devout in nature, and faithful in her duties, she served as a teacher of children's classes and was an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board. Hostile elements among the population of Sarvistán often attacked and molested the Bahá'ís, murdered them, and plundered their properties. On 8 November 1978, when she was still a teenager, Akhtar and her family and a large number of Bahá'ís had to abandon their homes when the enemies launched an attack. Undismayed, and with firm resolve, she continued her studies in Shíráz, graduated as a pediatric nurse and found a job caring for children in a hospital in that city. After her arrest on 23 October 1982 the hospital manager telephoned and pleaded with the authorities to release her as she was extremely capable and her services were needed. But her release was conditional upon her recanting her faith, an impossible demand. Till the time of her death she served the other prisoners, washed their clothing (considered 'untouchable' and 'defiled' by the authorities because it belonged to 'infidels') and hung the laundry to dry on a line she had improvised from plastic bags; put her nursing skills at the disposal of all including the non-Bahá'í drug addicts and immoral women in other wards who called upon her for help, claiming that the peacefulness of her countenance alone was an aid to them; and, on one occasion, restoring to consciousness a Bahá'í prisoner who had blacked out due to a heart attack. 'Even at the expense of your life do you intend to remain firm in your belief?' Akhtar was asked during one of her interrogations. 'I hope so, by the grace of God,' was her reply.

A member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz, Mrs. Nuṣrat Ghufrání Yaldá'í was known for her kindness and hospitality, and her home was considered one of the centres of Bahá'í community life in Shíráz. Like her close friend, Mrs. Túbá' Zá'irpúr, who held a degree in Persian literature and who had been martyred on 12 March 1983, Mrs. Yaldá'í had been a pupil of the noted Bahá'í teacher, Mr. Naṣru'lláh Chihrihnigár. She was extremely knowledgeable about the Faith and allowed her home to be used for deepening classes and other Bahá'í gatherings. Intransigent neighbours on various occasions made trouble over the years, harassing and seeking to annoy her, and complaining to the police on the pretext that she and her guests were disturbing the peace, although their real objection was that the purpose of the meetings was to discuss the Bahá'í teachings. On at least one occasion when the police asked her to desist from holding Bahá'í meetings in her home, she refused on the grounds that it was her religious obligation to be hospitable, and to open her doors to friends and strangers alike. But that was back in what, in retrospect, might be seen as a period of relative calm, before the nightmare began in Shíráz in October 1982 when she and so many others, including her husband and son, were swept into prison. Mrs. Yaldá'í was one of the several women who were tortured and she was twice given severe beatings of as many as 200 lashes. Those who saw her after those beatings testified that strips of her blood-soaked clothing were embedded in the weals that covered her body. Her wounds, an eyewitness recounted, were still visible after she was hanged. During her imprisonment she was cursed and reviled by her interrogators who pressed her to announce on radio and television that she had spurned the Bahá'í Faith and was inviting the Bahá'ís to follow her example by recanting and becoming Muslims. 'I am but a drop compared to the ocean of the Cause of

Bahá'u'lláh,' she replied. 'Do you think you can stop the sun from shining? Do you think I was a member of the Bahá'í Assembly when this religion was established? You should understand that the light of the Cause of God will not disappear even if I and others were to recant.' Her son, Bahrám, who was executed on 16 June 1983, it was learned, on hearing of his decree of death, danced from the courtroom to the prison—a truly worthy son of such an outstanding mother.

'Outrage in this country [U.S.A.] has continued to build following the public hanging in June of 17 Bahá'ís—10 of them women and teenage girls—in the southern city of Shíráz,' declared a report in the 29 August 1983 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*. 'Official charges, such as spying for foreign powers, have grown more transparent in recent killings of girls and adolescents ... Most observers have little hope that the situation will change very soon.'

A report reached the World Centre about this time, illustrating conditions in the prisons: 'Being unwilling to touch the 'unclean' Bahá'ís, the guards blindfold the Bahá'í prisoners, give them the end of a folded newspaper the other end of which they hold in their hand, and lead them to the interrogation room. In the interrogation room the blindfolded prisoners are made to sit down next to and facing the wall. Then the blindfold is removed and each prisoner is given a file containing questions which must be answered either in writing or verbally without turning around. The responses often produce insult and invective on the part of the judge or examiner, who seeks by every means to humiliate the prisoners. Non-Bahá'í prisoners at first shun the Bahá'ís because they are told they are unclean, but soon they become friendly and realize that all the allegations against Bahá'ís are false. There are a few spies among the prisoners, but the Bahá'í prisoners conduct themselves in a manner above reproach. Prisoners take turns in cleaning up and performing other duties in prison, but the young Bahá'ís often take the place of their elders. Bahá'ís are prevented from saying prayers in prison; they have to rise in the middle of the night when others are asleep and whisper their prayers. Trial of the prisoners is carried out in three stages. Stage one is the investigation in which the prisoner is asked to give information about himself and other Bahá'ís inside or outside the prison. Sometimes the prisoner is taken to a room next to the torture basement, where he or she can hear the cries of agony of those being tortured, and is threatened with the same punishment if he or she withholds information. Stage two is verbal or written interrogation in the courtroom by the district attorney. Stage three is the court procedure in which the religious magistrate acts as a judge and issues the final verdict. In many instances Bahá'í prisoners are subjected to physical torture.'

The response of the Universal House of Justice to the tragedy in Shíráz was to send the following cable on 24 June 1983 to 'Bahá'í Youth Throughout the World':

'RECENT MARTYRDOMS COURAGEOUS STEADFAST YOUTH IN SHÍRÁZ, SCENE INAUGURATION MISSION MARTYR-PROPHET, REMINISCENT ACTS VALOUR YOUTHFUL IMMORTALS HEROIC AGE. CONFIDENT BAHÁ'Í YOUTH THIS GENERATION WILL NOT ALLOW THIS FRESH BLOOD SHED ON VERY SOIL WHERE FIRST WAVE PERSECUTION FAITH TOOK PLACE REMAIN UNVINDICATED OR THIS SUBLIME SACRIFICE UNAVAILING. AT THIS HOUR OF AFFLICTION AND GRIEF, AND AS WE APPROACH ANNIVERSARY MARTYRDOM BLESSED BÁB CALL ON BAHÁ'Í YOUTH TO REDEDICATE THEMSELVES TO URGENT NEEDS CAUSE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH. LET THEM RECALL BLESSINGS HE PROMISED THOSE WHO IN PRIME OF YOUTH WILL ARISE TO ADORN THEIR HEARTS WITH HIS LOVE AND REMAIN STEADFAST AND FIRM. LET THEM CALL TO MIND EXPECTATIONS MASTER FOR EACH TO BE A FEARLESS LION, A MUSK-LADEN BREEZE WAFTING OVER MEADS VIRTUE. LET THEM MEDITATE OVER UNIQUE QUALITIES YOUTH SO GRAPHICALLY MENTIONED IN WRITINGS GUARDIAN WHO PRAISED THEIR ENTERPRISING AND ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT, THEIR VIGOUR, THEIR ALERTNESS, OPTIMISM AND EAGERNESS, AND THEIR DIVINELY-APPOINTED, HOLY AND ENTHRALLING TASKS. WE FERVENTLY PRAY AT SACRED THRESHOLD THAT ARMY OF SPIRITUALLY AWAKENED AND DETERMINED YOUTH MAY IMMEDIATELY ARISE RESPONSE NEEDS PRESENT HOUR DEVOTE IN EVER GREATER MEASURE THEIR VALUED ENERGIES TO PROMOTE BOTH ON HOMEFRONTS AND IN FOREIGN FIELDS, CAUSE THEIR ALL-WATCHFUL AND EXPECTANT LORD. MAY THEY MANIFEST SAME SPIRIT SO RECENTLY EVINCED THEIR MARTYR BRETHREN CRADLE FAITH, SCALE SUCH HEIGHTS OF ENDEAVOUR AS TO BECOME PRIDE THEIR PEERS CONSOLATION HEARTS PERSIAN BELIEVERS, AND DEMONSTRATE THAT THE FLAME HIS OMNIPOTENT

HAND HAS KINDLED BURNS EVER BRIGHT AND THAT ITS LIFE-IMPARTING WARMTH AND RADIANCE SHALL SOON ENVELOP PERMEATE WHOLE EARTH.'

Scarcely had the Bahá'í world community assimilated the distressing news of the hangings of the ten women in Shíráz when, on 3 July 1983, the Universal House of Justice sent another cable:

'SWIFT ON HEELS EXECUTION YOUNG BAHÁ'ÍS SHÍRÁZ ANNOUNCE DISTRESSING NEWS YET ANOTHER YOUNG SERVANT BAHÁ'U'LLÁH THAT CITY, 24 YEAR OLD SUHAYL HÚSHMAND, HANGED 28 JUNE, BRINGING TO 142 TOTAL NUMBER BAHÁ'ÍS KILLED SINCE BEGINNING OF ISLAMIC REVOLUTION, NOT INCLUDING 14 WHO DISAPPEARED. FATE OTHER PRISONERS SHÍRÁZ IN BALANCE . . .'

Mr. Suhayl Húshmand was born in Sarvistán in the Province of Fárs. He was arrested in Shíráz with others, in October 1982, and, as attested to by non-Bahá'í prisoners, was subjected to fierce interrogations and maltreatment, including torture. Enemies of the Faith, in an effort to weaken the morale of the other Bahá'í prisoners, almost immediately spread the rumour that Suhayl had broken down under pressure and recanted, but his strength of character was too well known among his friends, and the falsehood was not believed. 'He suffered beyond human endurance,' one friend wrote, 'but he remained steadfast.' When Mr. Húshmand learned of the execution of the six believers on 16 June he was distressed not to have been included, and related to a friend that it was perhaps because he had not yet been spiritually purified. 'God has ordained that I go to His Threshold with a perfectly clean soul; I will be summoned one of these days,' he said. A few days later, hearing his name called over the loudspeaker, he put on the fresh clothing he had prepared for this eventuality, embraced and took leave of his fellow prisoners, and a few hours after sunset went to meet the hangman calmly and triumphantly.

On 4 July 1983 yet another message was sent by the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world:

'ATROCITIES MOUNTING AGAINST BRETHREN CRADLE FAITH, NOW DIRECTED TOWARDS DEFENCELESS VILLAGERS NEAR SÁRÍ IN MÁZINDARÁN. IN VILLAGE OF ÍVÁL OVER 130 BAHÁ'ÍS INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE HELD CAPTIVE FOR THREE DAYS IN WALLED-IN OPEN FIELD WITHOUT FOOD AND WATER. WHEN PRESSURES TO RECANT FAITH ACCEPT ISLÁM FAILED THEY WERE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES. HOWEVER, SAME NIGHT, JULY 1ST, THEY WERE ATTACKED BY VILLAGERS AND FORCED HIDE IN NEARBY FOREST.

'FURTHER DISTRESSING NEWS TWO PROMINENT BAHÁ'ÍS ṬIHRÁN, JAHÁNGÍR HIDÁYATÍ AND AḤMAD BA-SHÍRÍ, KIDNAPPED. APPEALS TO AUTHORITIES SO FAR UNHEEDED, ANY KNOWLEDGE THEIR ABDUCTION OR WHEREABOUTS DENIED . . .'

On 27 July 1983 the Universal House of Justice sent the following message to Bahá'í communities:

'PRESSURES MOUNTING AGAINST BAHÁ'ÍS ÍRÁN, PARTICULARLY IN ṬIHRÁN WHERE MEMBERS OF BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTIONS ARE BEING HUNTED, THEIR HOMES RAIDED. IF NOT FOUND, THEIR FAMILIES ARE BEING HARASSED . . .'

The House of Justice went on to say that 22 believers including 11 women were arrested between 11–20 July, and that on 16 July several Bahá'ís of Yazd, among whom were three who had been imprisoned in that city, were banished to Khásh, Baluchistan.

The above news was followed by the announcement telexed by the House of Justice on 2 August 1983 that 'PERSECUTIONS IRANIAN FRIENDS REMAIN UNABATED. WAVES ARRESTS PROMINENT BAHÁ'ÍS RECENTLY INTENSIFIED . . .'

The Iranian authorities, early in 1979, had seized all the records of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán; on 21 August 1980 they abducted all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly who were never seen again; and on 27 December 1981 they executed eight of the nine believers who had been elected to replace the first group (the ninth having absented herself from the meeting due to illness). Then, in what the authorities surely must have regarded as the crowning blow to the Bahá'í community, on 29 August 1983 they banned all Bahá'í administrative and community activities and made membership of a Spiritual Assembly a criminal offence.

The Universal House of Justice on 13 September 1983 communicated this information to the Bahá'í world by cable in these words:

'SORELY TRIED COMMUNITY GREATEST NAME ÍRÁN HAS IN RECENT DAYS SUSTAINED YET ANOTHER CRUEL BLOW OPENING NEW CHAPTER ITS TURBULENT HISTORY. ON 29 AUGUST

IN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT THROUGH STATEMENT ISSUED ATTORNEY GENERAL ANNOUNCED BAN BAHÁ'Í ADMINISTRATION, RECITING USUAL FALSE ACCUSATIONS STATING EXISTENCE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALLY CONSIDERED TO BE AGAINST LAWS CONSTITUTION COUNTRY. HOWEVER STATEMENT SAID BAHÁ'ÍS MAY PRACTICE BELIEFS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED THEY DO NOT TEACH OR INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN FAITH, THEY DO NOT FORM ASSEMBLIES OR HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ADMINISTRATION. SERVING IN BAHÁ'Í ADMINISTRATION NOW SPECIFIED AS CRIMINAL ACT. THIS LATEST ONSLAUGHT DEFENCELESS COMMUNITY CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES IMPLACABILITY FANATICAL ELEMENTS IN THEIR DRIVE SUPPRESS LIGHT GOD'S INFANT FAITH IN LAND ITS FIRST GLEAMING . . .'

The House of Justice went on to report that the National Spiritual Assembly had immediately taken action to dissolve the Bahá'í administration. The House of Justice also expressed its confidence that the steadfast Iranian believers would face their new situation with radiant fortitude. Bahá'ís residing elsewhere were called upon to 'VINDICATE BY THEIR RECONSECRATION TO IMMEDIATE SACRED TASKS UNABATED SUFFERING THEIR GRIEVOUSLY WRONGED IRANIAN BRETHREN. INDEED ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES URGED TAKE STEPS STRENGTHEN FOUNDATION BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTIONS THEIR COUNTRIES AS TRIBUTE SACRIFICES COURAGEOUSLY ACCEPTED MEMBERS COMMUNITY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S NATIVE LAND.'

In response to the ban, on 3 September 1983, the National Spiritual Assembly immediately informed the Attorney-General of its willingness to obey the law, and took the opportunity to refute all the false charges that had been made against the Bahá'ís. The text of this document, 'An open letter from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán about the banning of the Bahá'í Administration', copies of which were distributed to more than two thousand important officials and other prominent people in Írán, and, through the Universal House of Justice, to all National Spiritual Assemblies, is as follows:

'Recently the esteemed Public Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolution of the country, in an interview that was published in the newspapers, declared that the continued functioning of the Bahá'í religious and spiritual administration is banned and that membership in it is considered to be a crime. This declaration has been made after certain unjustified accusations have been levelled against the Bahá'í community of Írán and after a number of its members—ostensibly for imaginary and fabricated crimes but in reality merely for the sake of their beliefs—have been either executed, or arrested and imprisoned. The majority of those who have been imprisoned have not yet been brought to trial.

'The Bahá'í community finds the conduct of the authorities and the judges bewildering and lamentable—as indeed would any fair-minded observer who is unblinded by malice. The authorities are the refuge of the people; the judges in pursuit of their work of examining and ascertaining the truth and facts in legal cases devote years of their lives to studying the law and, when uncertain of a legal point spend hours poring over copious tomes in order to cross a "t" and dot an "i". Yet these very people consider themselves to be justified in brazenly bringing false accusations against a band of innocent people, without fear of the Day of Judgement, without even believing the calumnies they utter against their victims, and having exerted not the slightest effort to investigate to any degree the validity of the charges they are making. "Methinks they are not believers in the Day of Judgement." (Háfiz)

'The honourable Prosecutor has again introduced the baseless and fictitious story that Bahá'ís engage in espionage, but without producing so much as one document in support of the accusation, without presenting proof in any form, and without any explanation as to what is the mission in this country of this extraordinary number of "spies": what sort of information do they obtain and from what sources? Whither do they relay it, and for what purpose? What kind of "spy" is an eighty-five-year-old man from Yazd who has never set foot outside his village? Why do these alleged spies not hide themselves, conceal their religious beliefs and exert every effort to penetrate, by every stratagem, the Government's information centres and offices? Why has no Bahá'í "spy" been arrested anywhere else in the world? How could students, housewives, innocent young girls, and old men and women, like those blameless Bahá'ís who have recently been delivered to the gallows in Írán, or who have become targets for the darts

of prejudice and enmity, be "spies"? How could the Bahá'í farmers of the villages of Afús, Chígán, Qal'ih Malik (near Iṣfahán), and those of the village of Núk in Bírjand, be "spies"? What Secret Intelligence documents have been found in their possession? What espionage equipment has come to hand? What "spying" activities were engaged in by the primary school-children who have been expelled from their schools?

'And how strange! The Public Prosecutor perhaps does not know, or does not care to know, that spying is an element of politics, while non-interference in politics is an established principle of the Bahá'í Faith. On the contrary, Bahá'ís love their country and never permit themselves to be traitors. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the successor of the Founder of the Bahá'í Cause, says: "Any abasement is bearable except betraying one's own country, and any sin is forgivable other than dishonouring the government and inflicting harm upon the nation."

'All the other accusations made against the Bahá'ís by the honourable Public Prosecutor of the Revolution are similarly groundless. He brands the Bahá'í community with accusations of subversion and corruption. For example, on the basis of a manifestly forged interview, the falsity of which has been dealt with in a detailed statement, he accuses the Bahá'í community of hoarding, an act which its members would consider highly reprehensible. The Prosecutor alleges that the Bahá'í administration sanctioned the insensible act of hoarding, yet he subtly overlooks the fact that with the proceeds that might be realized from the sale of unusable automobile spare parts whose total value is some 70 million túmáns—the value of the stock of any medium-size store for spare parts—it would be impossible to overthrow a powerful government whose daily expenditures amount to hundreds of millions of túmáns. If the Public Prosecutor chooses to label the Bahá'í administration as a network of espionage, let him at least consider it intelligent enough not to plan the overthrow of such a strong regime by hoarding a few spare parts! Yes, such allegations of corruption and subversion are similar to those hurled against us at the time of the Episcopalian case in Iṣfahán when this oppressed community was accused of collaboration with foreign agents as a result of which seven innocent Bahá'ís of Yazd were executed.[1] Following this the falsity of the charges was made known and the Public Prosecutor announced the episode to be the outcome of a forgery. 'Bahá'ís are accused of collecting contributions and transferring sums of money to foreign countries. How strange! If Muslims, in accordance with their sacred and respected spiritual beliefs, send millions of túmáns to Karbilá, Najaf and Jersualem, or to other Muslim Holy Places outside Írán to be spent on the maintenance and upkeep of the Islamic Sacred Shrines, it is considered very praiseworthy; but if a Bahá'í—even during the time in which the transfer of foreign currency was allowed—sends a negligible amount for his international community to be used for the repair and maintenance of the Holy Places of his Faith, it is considered that he has committed an unforgivable sin and it is counted as proof that he has done so in order to strengthen other countries. 'Accusations of this nature are many but all are easy to investigate. If just and impartial people and God-fearing judges will only do so, the falsity of these spurious accusations will be revealed in case after case. The Bahá'í community emphatically requests that such accusations be investigated openly in the presence of juries composed of judges and international observers so that, once and for all, the accusations may be discredited and their repetition prevented. 'The basic principles and beliefs of the Bahá'ís have been repeatedly

[1] Khomeini, in his lectures on *Islamic Government* (1973), had for his own purposes falsely linked the Christian missions in Írán with the Bahá'ís as corrupters of Muslim youth. In August 1980 pressure against the Christian community in general began to mount. The 27 August 1980 issue (No. 11079) (5 Sháhrívar 1359 A.H.) of the Tihrán-based newspaper *Kayhán* carried a story released through the Pars agency about the discovery in an Episcopalian church in Írán of a document purporting to be a receipt of US $500 million signed by a clergyman who was said to be spying for the C.I.A. The sum was, the report said, to be split among various agencies including 'the head of the Bahá'ís and anti-revolutionary groups' and was described as a preliminary step in anticipated terrorist activities including bombing the residence of Ayatollah Khomeini. Soon after the hanging of the seven Bahá'ís, and it may be concluded because groups other than Bahá'ís were affected, the Public Prosecutor announced that the document was a forgery.

proclaimed and set forth in writing during the past five years. Apparently these communications, either by deliberate design or by mischance, have not received any attention, otherwise accusations such as those described above would not have been repeated by one of the highest and most responsible authorities. This in itself is a proof that the numerous communications referred to were not accorded the attention of the leaders; therefore, we mention them again.

'The Bahá'í Faith confesses the unity of God and the justice of the divine Essence. It recognizes that Almighty God is an exalted, unknowable and concealed entity, sanctified from ascent and descent, from egress and regress, and from assuming a physical body. The Bahá'í Faith which professes the existence of the invisible God, the One, the Single, the Eternal, the Peerless, bows before the loftiness of His Threshold, believes in all divine Manifestations, considers all the Prophets from Adam to the Seal of the Prophets as true divine Messengers Who are the Manifestations of Truth in the world of creation, accepts Their Books as having come from God, believes in the continuation of the divine outpourings, emphatically believes in reward and punishment and, uniquely among existing revealed religions outside Islám, accepts the Prophet Muḥammad as a true Prophet and the Qur'án as the Word of God.

'The Bahá'í Faith embodies independent principles and laws. It has its own Holy Book. It prescribes pilgrimage and worship. A Bahá'í performs obligatory prayers and observes a fast. He gives, according to his beliefs, tithes and contributions. He is required to be of upright conduct, to manifest a praiseworthy character, to love all mankind, to be of service to the world of humanity and to sacrifice his own interests for the good and well-being of his fellow kind. He is forbidden to commit unbecoming deeds. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says: "A Bahá'í is known by the attributes manifested by him, not by his name; he is recognized by his character, not by his person."

'Shoghi Rabbani, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, says: "... a person who is not adorned with the ornaments of virtue, sanctity, and morality, is not a true Bahá'í, even though he may call himself one and be known as such".

'He also says: "The friends have been required ... to be righteous, well-wishing, forbearing, sanctified, pure, detached from all else save God, severed from the trappings of this world and adorned with the mantle of a goodly character and godly attributes."

'The teachings and laws of the Bahá'í religion testify to this truth. Fortunately, the books and writings which have been plundered in abundance from the homes of Bahá'ís and are available to the authorities, bear witness to the truth of these assertions. Bahá'ís, in keeping with their spiritual beliefs, stay clear of politics; they do not support or reject any party, group or nation; they do not champion or attack any ideology or any specific political philosophy; they shrink from and abhor political agitations. The Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause says, "The people of Bahá, under the jurisdiction of whatsoever state or government they may be residing, should conduct themselves with honesty and sincerity, trustworthiness and rectitude.... They are neither thirsty for prominence, nor acquisitive of power; they are neither adepts at dissimulation and hypocrisy, nor are they seekers after wealth and influence; they neither crave for the pomp and circumstance of high office, nor do they lust after the glory of titles and ranks. They are averse to affectation and ostentation, and shrink from the use of coercive force; they have closed their eyes to all but God, and set their hearts on the firm and incontrovertible promises of their Lord.... Oblivious to themselves, they have occupied their energies in working towards the good of society.... While vigilantly refusing to accept political posts, they should whole-heartedly welcome the chance to assume administrative positions; for the primary purpose of the people of Bahá is to advance the interests and promote the welfare of the nation.... Such is the method of the Bahá'ís; such is the conduct of all spiritually illuminated souls; and aught else is manifest error."

'Also, Bahá'ís, in accordance with their exalted teachings, are duty bound to be obedient to their government. Elucidating this subject, Shoghi Rabbani says: "The people of Bahá are required to obey their respective governments, and to demonstrate their truthfulness and good will towards the authorities.... Bahá'ís, in every land and without any exception, should ... be obedient and bow to the clear

instructions and the declared decrees issued by the authorities. They must faithfully carry out such directives."

'Bahá'í administration has no aim except the good of all nations and it does not take any steps that are against the public good. Contrary to the conception the word "administration" may create in the mind because of the similarity in name, it does not resemble the current organizations of political parties; it does not interfere in political affairs; and it is the safeguard against the involvement of Bahá'ís in subversive political activities. Its high ideals are "to improve the characters of men; to extend the scope of knowledge; to abolish ignorance and prejudice; to strengthen the foundations of true religion in all hearts; to encourage self-reliance and discourage false imitation; ... to uphold truthfulness, audacity, frankness, and courage; to promote craftsmanship and agriculture; ... to educate, on a compulsory basis, children of both sexes; to insist on integrity in business transactions; to lay stress on the observance of honesty and piety; ... to acquire mastery and skill in the modern sciences and arts; to promote the interests of the public; ... to obey outwardly and inwardly and with true loyalty the regulations enacted by state and government; ... to honour, to extol and to follow the example of those who have distinguished themselves in science and learning". And again, "... to help the needy from every creed or sect, and to collaborate with the people of the country in all welfare services".

'In brief, whatever the clergy in other religions undertake individually and by virtue of their appointment to their positions, the Bahá'í administration performs collectively and through an elective process.

'The statements made by the esteemed Public Prosecutor of the Revolution do not seem to have legal basis, because in order to circumscribe individuals and deprive them of the rights which have not been denied them by the Constitution, it is necessary to enact special legislation, provided that legislation is not contradictory to the Constitution. It was hoped that the recent years would have witnessed, on the one hand, the administration of divine justice—a principle promoted by the true religion of Islám and prescribed by all monotheistic religions—and, on the other, and coupled with an impartial investigation of the truths of the Bahá'í Faith, the abolition or at least mitigation of discriminations, restrictions and pressures suffered by Bahá'ís over the past 135 years. Alas, on the contrary, because of long-standing misunderstandings and prejudices, the difficulties increased immensely and the portals of calamity were thrown wide open in the faces of the long-suffering and sorely oppressed Bahá'ís of Írán who were, to an even greater degree, deprived of their birthrights through the systematic machinations of Government officials who are supposed to be the refuge of the public, and of some imposters in the garb of divines, who engaged in official or unofficial spreading of mischievous and harmful accusations and calumnies, and issued, in the name of religious and judicial authorities, unlawful decrees and verdicts.

'Many are the pure and innocent lives that have been snuffed out; many the distinguished heads that have adorned the hangman's noose; and many the precious breasts that became the targets of firing squads. Vast amounts of money and great quantities of personal property have been plundered or confiscated. Many technical experts and learned people have been tortured and condemned to long-term imprisonment and are still languishing in dark dungeons, deprived of the opportunity of placing their expertise at the service of the Government and the nation. Numerous are the self-sacrificing employees of the Government who spent their lives in faithful service but who were dismissed from work and afflicted with poverty and need because of hatred and prejudice. Even the owners of private firms and institutions were prevented from engaging Bahá'ís. Many privately owned Bahá'í establishments have been confiscated. Many tradesmen have been denied the right to continue working by cancellation of their business licences. Bahá'í youth have been denied access to education in many schools and in all universities and institutions of higher education. Bahá'í university students abroad are deprived of receiving money for their education, and others who wish to pursue their studies outside Írán have been denied exit permits. Bahá'ís, including the very sick whose only hope for cure was to receive medical treatment in specialized medical centres in foreign lands, have been prevented from leaving the country. Bahá'í cemeteries have been confiscated and bodies rudely

disinterred. Numerous have been the days when a body has remained unburied while the bereaved family pleaded to have a permit issued and a burial place assigned so that the body might be decently buried. As of today, thousands of Bahá'ís have been divested of their homes and forced to live as exiles. Many have been driven from their villages and dwelling places and are living as wanderers and stranded refugees in other parts of Írán with no haven and refuge but the Court of the All-Merciful God and the loving-kindness of their friends and relatives.

'It is a pity that the mass media, newspapers and magazines, either do not want or are not allowed to publish any news about the Bahá'í community of Írán or to elaborate upon what is happening. If they were free to do so and were unbiased in reporting the daily news, volumes would have been compiled describing the inhumane cruelty to and oppression of the innocent. For example, if they were allowed to do so, they would have written that in Shíráz, seven courageous men and ten valiant women—seven of whom were girls in the prime of their lives—audaciously rejected the suggestion of the religious judge that they recant their Faith or, at least, dissemble their belief, and preferred death to the concealment of their Faith. The women, after hours of waiting with dried lips, shrouded themselves in their chádurs, kissed the noose of their gallows, and with intense love offered up their souls for the One Who proffereth life. The observers of this cruel scene might well ask forgiveness for the murderers of Karbilá, since they, despite their countless atrocities, did not put women to the sword nor harass the sick and infirm. Alas, tongues are prevented from making utterance and pens are broken and the hidden cause of these brutalities is not made manifest to teach the world a lesson. The Public Prosecutor alleges that they were spies. Gracious God! Where in history can one point to a spy who readily surrendered his life in order to prove the truth of his belief?

'Unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this letter to recount the atrocities inflicted upon the guiltless Bahá'ís of Írán or to answer, one by one, the accusations levelled against them. But let us ask all just and fair-minded people only one question: If, according to the much publicized statements of the Public Prosecutor, Bahá'ís are not arrested and executed because of their belief, and are not even imprisoned on that account, how is it that, when a group of them are arrested and each is charged with the same "crime" of "spying", if one of them recants his belief, he is immediately freed, a photograph of him and a description of his defection are victoriously featured in the newspapers, and respect and glory are heaped upon him? What kind of spying, subversion, illegal accumulation of goods, aggression or conspiracy or other "crime" can it be that is capable of being blotted out upon the recantation of one's beliefs? Is this not a clear proof of the absurdity of the accusations?

'In spite of all this, the Bahá'í community of Írán, whose principles have been described earlier in this statement, announces the suspension of the Bahá'í organizations throughout Írán in order to establish its good intentions and in conformity with its basic tenets concerning complete obedience to the instructions of the Government. Henceforth, until the time when, God willing, the misunderstandings are eliminated and the realities are at last made manifest to the authorities, the National Assembly and all Local Spiritual Assemblies and their Committees are disbanded, and no one may any longer be designated a member of the Bahá'í Administration.

'The Bahá'í community of Írán hopes that this step will be considered a sign of its complete obedience to the Government in power. It further hopes that the authorities—including the esteemed Public Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolution who says that there is no opposition to and no enmity towards individual Bahá'ís, who has acknowledged the existence of a large Bahá'í community and has, in his interview, guaranteed its members the right to live and be free in their acts of worship—will reciprocate by proving their good intentions and the truth of their assurances by issuing orders that pledge, henceforth:

1. To bring to an end the persecutions, arrests, torture and imprisonment of Bahá'ís for imaginary crimes and on baseless pretexts, because God knows—and so do the authorities—that the only "crime" of which these innocent ones are guilty is that of their beliefs, and not the unsubstantiated accusations brought against them;

2. To guarantee the safety of their lives, their personal property and belongings, and their honour;

3. To accord them freedom to choose their residence and occupation and the right of association based on the provisions of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic;

4. To restore all the rights which have been taken away from them in accordance with the groundless assertions of the Public Prosecutor of the country;

5. To restore to Bahá'í employees the rights denied them by returning them to their jobs and by paying them their due wages;

6. To release from prison all innocent prisoners;

7. To lift the restrictions imposed on the properties of those Bahá'ís who, in their own country, have been deprived of their belongings;

8. To permit Bahá'í students who wish to continue their studies abroad to benefit from the same facilities that are provided to others;

9. To permit those Bahá'í youth who have been prevented from continuing their studies in the country to resume their education;

10. To permit those Bahá'í students stranded abroad who have been deprived of foreign exchange facilities to receive their allowances as other Iranian students do;

11. To restore Bahá'í cemeteries and to permit Bahá'ís to bury their dead in accordance with Bahá'í burial ceremonies;

12. To guarantee the freedom of Bahá'ís to perform their religious rites; to conduct funerals and burials including the recitation of the Prayer for the Dead; to solemnize Bahá'í marriages and divorces, and to carry out all acts of worship and laws and ordinances affecting personal status; because although Bahá'ís are entirely obedient and subordinate to the Government in the administration of the affairs which are in the jurisdiction of Bahá'í organizations, in matters of conscience and belief, and in accordance with their spiritual principles, they prefer martyrdom to recantation or the abandoning of the divine ordinances prescribed by their Faith;

13. To desist henceforth from arresting and imprisoning anyone because of his previous membership in Bahá'í organizations.

'Finally, although the order issued by the Public Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolution was unjust and unfair, we have accepted it. We beseech God to remove the dross of prejudice from the hearts of the authorities so that, aided and enlightened by His confirmations, they will be inspired to recognize the true nature of the affairs of the Bahá'í community and come to the unalterable conviction that the infliction of atrocities and cruelties upon a pious band of wronged ones, and the shedding of their pure blood, will stain the good name and injure the prestige of any nation or government, for what will, in truth, endure are the records of good deeds, and of acts of justice and fairness, and the names of the doers of good. These will history preserve in its bosom for posterity.

'Respectfully,
(signed) The National Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahá'ís of Írán
(12 Sháhrívar 1362)
[3 September 1983]'

But the troubles of the Bahá'ís of Írán were not at an end despite the swiftness of their obedience in suspending administrative activities. On 7 November 1983 the House of Justice informed the Bahá'ís of the world that 'intense pressures' continued to be directed against the Bahá'í community by the authorities. 'Many of these pressures are being exerted', the House of Justice wrote, 'in the hope that the Bahá'ís will recant their faith and trade their love of Bahá'u'lláh for the comfort and security which the authorities offer to them in exchange.' The message went on to say that many imprisoned Bahá'ís were being tortured in an effort to make them recant and that although 'no Bahá'ís have been executed since the statement calling for the disbanding of the administration of the Faith was made by the Attorney-General on 29 August, it has been reported that on 19 September a Bahá'í farmer in the town of Khuy, Mr. Akbar Ḥaqíqí, died as a result of a beating by a mob incited by the clergy. Moreover, at least 140 Bahá'ís have been arrested in all parts of the country following the Attorney-General's statement, 50 of whom were detained on 30 October in the Caspian Sea area.' Although some Bahá'ís had been released, the Universal House of Justice reported, its records showed that the total number still imprisoned in Írán stood at over 450.

Mr Akbar Zá'iri-Ḥaqíqí was born in 1939 in

the village of Ívoghli, in Khuy, Ádhirbáyján, the son of Muḥammad-'Alí and Zahrá Ḥaqíqí. He finished primary school in Ívoghlí and became a farmer. In 1971 he married Miss Gulsanam Samandarí, and the couple had three children. He was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ívoghli for several years, and he often encountered problems from the villagers for being a Bahá'í. Once in 1964 and again in 1974 he was arrested for his faith. On 19 September 1983 at about 9:00 a.m., he went to his farm with his son. There, a village youth began to argue with him. The youth picked up a long, heavy branch and when Mr. Ḥaqíqí turned away from him, refusing to argue, the youth beat him with the branch until he collapsed. Neighbours took Mr. Ḥaqíqí toKhuy, to the hospital, but treatment was ineffective and he passed away.

In that same message the House of Justice wrote, 'Three believers who were advanced in age have died in prison and thus have joined the ranks of those who had laid down their lives in service to the Cause. They are: Mr. Ḥusayn Nayyirí-Iṣfahání ... Mr. Aḥmad-'Alí Thábit-Sarvistání ... Mr. Muḥammad Ishráqí.'

Mr. Ḥusayn Nayyirí-Iṣfahání, aged 64, had been imprisoned in Iṣfahán since 19 July 1981, and died just as he was going into court for his trial on 29 November 1982. He had been born into a religious family in Iṣfahán, the youngest son of Siyyid-Javád, a well-known Muslim divine, who witnessed the execution in a public square of two young followers of Bahá'u'lláh and was so affected by this occurrence that he investigated and embraced the Bahá'í Faith. Mr. Nayyirí-Iṣfahání's mother, Zahrá-Bagum, was a kind-hearted Muslim who acquiesced to her husband's request that Ḥusayn be taught the Bahá'í principles. After completing his primary and secondary education in Iṣfahán, Ḥusayn entered the Agricultural College in Karaj, but later, upon returning to his native city, he became interested in accounting and pursued his career in this field. He married Miss Bahiyyih Nikúbín, a descendant of Mullá Ja'far, the sifter of wheat who was the first in Iṣfahán to accept the Báb. The couple had three children, a daughter and two sons. Mr. Nayyirí-Iṣfahání served as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Iṣfahán. Imprisonment was especially difficult for Mr. Nayyirí-Iṣfahání because of his age and his not being able to receive treatment for his diabetic condition, but the more he suffered the more steadfast he became in his faith. 'I want nothing from this mortal life,' he told a fellow prisoner, 'save the safety of my family.' Having obeyed the instructions of the prison officials to be present in Iṣfahán for the funeral of Mr. Nayyirí-Iṣfahání on 30 November 1982, his daughter and son-in-law were not in their home in Shíráz when the revolutionary guards called at their house to arrest them. Mr. Nayyirí-Iṣfahání is buried in the Bahá'í cemetery of Iṣfahán.

Mr. Aḥmad-'Alí Thábit-Sarvistání, aged 67, died in prison in Shíráz on 30 June 1983. He was born on 25 March 1912 in Sarvistán, Fárs. Having lost his mother when he was only a small child, he was raised by his sister. His father, Karbalá'í Shukru'lláh, a recipient of a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was a knowledgeable teacher of the Faith. His son, too, had an insatiable desire for knowledge and studied the Bahá'í writings from early childhood, and grew up to be a most humble and pleasant man who was known for his sincerity. Mr. Thábit-Sarvistání and his wife, Afsaru'sh-Sharí'ih 'Idálat, had nine children, five daughters and four sons. In 1944, Mr. and Mrs. Thábit-Sarvistání pioneered to the goal area of Khafr, remaining there for twelve years despite hardships and problems created by fanatical elements among the population. Later they settled in Takht-i-Jamshíd and then in Marvdasht. He earned his living by a means practised in Persia of treating the afflicted with traditional herbal medicines. On 4 December 1982 he was summoned to prison and although Muslim relatives offered him a means of escape he considered that to accept would be a betrayal of his Faith, and apologized to them for not being able to accompany them. He submitted to his fate, took leave of his family, and went to prison where, in part due to his age, he became ill, though he never complained. His fellow prisoners gave up their own sheets in order to provide a shroud for him when he passed away. His body was given to his relatives, and burial was arranged in the Bahá'í cemetery.

Mr. Muḥammad Ishráqí, who died in prison in Ṭihrán on 31 August 1983, was 81 years of age, and was a member of the Auxiliary Board.

When he was a 13-year-old boy in Yazd, he witnessed a crowd abusing the body of a Bahá'í

martyr, Muḥammad Bulur Furush. He later told his family, "It was as if a pot of fire had been poured on my head: I was filled with an extraordinary feeling and longed to be taken and martyred with him". Some 70 years later, after a lifetime of service to the Faith, his wish came true and he became a martyr himself. Born in 1899 in the city of Gurgán, he was the son of Ḥáji Muḥammad Ṭáhirí Ghandiharí — one of the merchants of Yazd whose father, Ḥáji Muḥammad Mullá Ṭáhirí Ghandiharí, was a famous Mujtahid of Yazd and an early believer in Bahá'u'lláh — and Bíbí Gouhar, who had become a Bahá'í before her marriage. Theirs was a spiritual home, and prominent Bahá'í teachers often stayed with them when they were in Yazd. Muḥammad Ishráqí grew up to be very knowledgeable and strong in the Faith. From the age of 16 he helped the secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly in Kirmán with his correspondence, and when 21 he was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kirmán. As a young man he went to Hamadán to study the Bahá'í Writings with Mr. Ṣadru'l-Sudúr. Subsequently he went to Ṭihrán to continue his studies with prominent Bahá'í scholars there. Four years later he returned to Kirmán, from where, after two years, he proceeded to Iṣfahán for Bahá'í activities. In 1929 he married Miss Nayyírith Zandi. The couple had five children, the first of whom died at the age of 13. At about the same time, he had the privilege of going on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and being in the presence of the Guardian for 18 days. Mr. Ishráqí worked for the Post and Telegraph Office for 14 years, then worked for the National Bank of Írán for 21 years before he retired in 1955. During the Ten Year Plan he homefront pioneered to Arák to help develop the Bahá'í community there, then in 1959 he moved again to Iṣfahán and was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of that city. It was during this time that he was appointed as a member of the Auxiliary Board. During the 45 Months Plan he pioneered to Natanz, then to Shahr-i-Kurd, then returned to Iṣfahán and again to Ṭihrán. During all of this time he served on many national committees, and was delegate to many national conventions in Írán. In 1980 he was appointed an advisor along with Mrs. Zhínús Maḥmúdí and Mr. Shápúr Markazi in working with the National Spiritual Assembly in the absence of Hands of the Cause and Counsellors. When at last Muḥammad Ishráqí was called by phone to go to the prosecutor, it was not unexpected as all knew that his name was on the list of leading Bahá'ís in Írán, and when he left his home to drive to the court he told his daughter that it was a great day in his life. He left his house at about 7:00 a.m. on 16 February 1983 to be there on time, and he did not get home until 4:30 p.m. When he returned there were three people with him, and he told his daughter to bring tea and cookies for their guests. The "guests" took some of Mr Ishráqí's books and papers and sealed his library, then took him away again, telling the family that he would be returned the next day. After five days the guards went to his home and took the remainder of his books. The family had no news of him for some months. When finally they were allowed to visit him, he was spiritually as strong as ever. His family asked him whom they should see to ask for his release he said, "Nobody, God is taking care of us". He was later transferred to Qaṣr prison where his family was allowed to continue to visit him occasionally, always finding him thankful to Bahá'u'lláh and never complaining. Five months later, on 6 September, while visiting, the family was told that he had been taken to court. When they went to the court they were informed that his body had been taken to the morgue, at the morgue they were sent to the cemetery to see the list of people who had been buried recently. There they learned that a death certificate had been issued for Mr. Muḥammad Ishráqí on 31 August 1983.

In that same message of 7 November 1983, the Universal House of Justice wrote, 'Word has also recently been received that in the city of Dizfúl, a Bahá'í woman, Mrs. Írán Raḥímpúr (Khurmá'ní), was executed on 12 May 1982 [that is, almost eighteen months earlier] after giving birth to her child. The baby was taken away by the Muslims and his fate is unknown.'

Mrs. Írán Raḥímpúr was born in the summer of 1938 in Ṭihrán to a Muslim family, the fourth of five daughters, two of whom eventually became Bahá'ís. After receiving her education at the Girls' School of Ṭihrán, Írán found employment in the local office of the Ministry of Communications (Telephone, Telegraph and Post). In 1958 she married Mr. Muḥammad-i-Riyáḍat who later divorced her, the marriage being without issue. In 1964 she married Mr.

Ḥasan Akbarí and bore two daughters, but the union was not a happy one and it terminated in divorce in 1975. Anguished by separation from her children and by family disunity, Írán turned to serious thought and began to read books of history, philosophy and comparative religion. Although she had read material written by authors who were antagonistic to the Bahá'í Faith, and was so obstinately opposed to it that for six months she severed all relations with her two sisters who had espoused its teachings, she became attracted to a co-worker who in time revealed that she was a Bahá'í. Soon Írán embraced the Faith, was reunited with her sisters, became ablaze with a fervour for teaching, arranged for a transfer to the communications office in Dizfúl, and went pioneering to nearby Andímishk where she had a small property. 'How she had changed when we met in 1978,' one of her sisters wrote. 'She talked about nothing but the Cause of God and how to spread the message of Bahá'u'lláh.' Later her family learned that she married one of her colleagues who had accepted the Bahá'í Faith. In January 1981 news reached her sisters that a month before, Írán, now an expectant mother in the fifth month of her pregnancy, had been arrested together with her husband, and that she was still in prison. 'She tried to alleviate our anxiety during our brief phone conversations by reminding us of the tribulations of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and the early believers,' her sister wrote. 'And she would speak enthusiastically about her teaching efforts in the prison.' In April 1981 word reached the family that she had given birth to a son whom she had named Kámyár. In May 1982 it was learned that Írán had been executed on 12 May after being in prison for 17 months, that her husband had recanted after a few lashes of the whip, was fined and sent to the war front, and that the child was in a nursery in the custody of one of the guards. Írán's home had been looted, her car confiscated, and access to the child has been denied to her family. When her sister inquired at the court-house the reason for the execution of Írán Raḥímpúr the reply was, 'She was a Bahá'í, and Bahá'í means Zionist spy.'

The Universal House of Justice concluded its message of 7 November 1983 by saying, 'One of the most obvious examples of persecution and proof of the evil intention of the Iranian authorities to uproot the Faith in that land is the destruction and desecration of Bahá'í cemeteries. Recently there was an official advertisement in the newspapers in Írán indicating that the tombstones in the Bahá'í cemetery in Ṭihrán were being put up for sale. Since all markers on the graves are apparently being eliminated, it is possible that no trace of the Bahá'í cemetery will remain in future.'

The year 1984 opened on an ominous note with a disturbing message being relayed to the Bahá'í world by the Universal House of Justice. On 3 January it telexed: 'DISTRESSED INFORM YOU THAT RECENTLY IRANIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ANOTHER OPPRESSIVE MEASURE AGAINST BAHÁ'Í PRISONERS. IN ORDER TO BE RELEASED PRISONER MUST SIGN FOLLOWING UNDERTAKING: "I UNDERSIGNED (DETAILS OF PERSONAL STATUS INCLUDING RELIGION) UNDERTAKE NOT TO HAVE IN MY POSSESSION ANY BOOK, PAMPHLET, DOCUMENT, SYMBOL OR PICTURE OF THIS MISGUIDED, ZIONIST, ESPIONAGE GROUP OF BAHÁ'ÍS. IF ANY OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED ARTICLES BELONGING TO THIS HATED UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IS FOUND ON MY PERSON OR IN MY HOME, THIS WILL BE TANTAMOUNT TO MY BEING OF THOSE 'WHO WAR AGAINST GOD' AND THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL WOULD BE FREE TO DECIDE AGAINST ME IN THE MANNER HE DEEMS FIT." THE TERMINOLOGY "WHO WAR AGAINST GOD" IS A TERM USED BY PRESENT REGIME TO SIGNIFY A CRIME DESERVING SENTENCE OF DEATH. BAHÁ'Í PRISONERS HAVE REFUSED SIGN SUCH AN INFAMOUS DOCUMENT FALSELY IMPUGNING THEIR FAITH. MOREOVER SIGNING SUCH A DOCUMENT WOULD LEAVE BAHÁ'ÍS OPEN TO HAVING SUCH ITEMS PLANTED ON THEIR PERSON OR IN THEIR HOMES. WAVE OF RECENT ARRESTS OF BAHÁ'ÍS SUGGESTS THAT AUTHORITIES PLAN EXERT PRESSURE ALL BAHÁ'ÍS TO SIGN SUCH AN IMPOSSIBLE UNDERTAKING . . .'

The next telexed report from the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'í world community about the situation in Írán was dated 17 January 1984:

'PRESSURES AGAINST BELEAGUERED BRETHREN CRADLE FAITH UNCEASING. THREE MORE STALWART SUPPORTERS GREATEST NAME JOINED RANKS MARTYRS, AS FOLLOWS: MR. 'ABDU'L-MAJÍD MUṬAHHAR IMPRISONED IṢFAHÁN 4 SEPTEMBER DIED SHORTLY AFTER CONFINEMENT; MR. RAḤMATU'LLÁH ḤAKÍMÁN MYSTERIOUSLY PASSED AWAY

IN PRISON IN KIRMÁN EARLY JANUARY 1984 AFTER BEING IMPRISONED; ON 19 NOVEMBER IN VILLAGE OF MUḤAMMADÍYYIH NEAR IṢFAHÁN, MR. BAHMAN DIHQÁNÍ, WELL KNOWN AND RESPECTED BAHÁ'Í, DIED AS A RESULT OF MOB ATTACK. SINCE BURIAL NOT ALLOWED HIS VILLAGE, BAHÁ'ÍS CARRIED BODY TO NAJAFÁBÁD AND BURIED HIM THERE. FULL DETAILS CIRCUMSTANCES ALL THREE DEATHS UNKNOWN . . .'

Mr. 'Abdu'l-Majid Muṭahhar was born in 1919 to a Bahá'í family in Shahriḍá, a city not far from Iṣfahán. After studying to the highest level that was possible in the place of his birth he then entered the army where, in view of his being unusually well educated, he might have rapidly advanced through the ranks and achieved a comfortable standard of living. However, after a few years he came to the conclusion that the life of a service man and military values were not compatible with the tenets of his belief; therefore, he left the army and entered the field of education. At about the same time he married Miss Aqdas 'Aqdá'í who had been raised in a Bahá'í family as well. The couple decided to pioneer to remote areas of the Province of Iṣfahán. They obtained permission to build primary schools in villages that did not have any and sought to develop existing primary schools in order to teach higher grades. To the extent possible they endeavoured to improve local public health. Their tireless and sacrificial services to the community, rendered in the face of prejudice and fanaticism, and in circumstances of hardship, won them an uncommon degree of popularity among the villagers and no doubt contributed to their protection in an area of the country where fanatical elements could easily rally mobs. Even in this period Mr. Muṭahhar continued to further his education, bicycling long miles along the dusty shoulders of the inter-village roads in order to participate in various teacher-training classes and thus better qualify himself to fulfil his duties. His clear perception and generosity of spirit made him reluctant to impose his views on others but his life was such an attractive and irresistible example that it drew others close to him automatically. After pioneering in various rural areas of the Province of Iṣfahán for about 14 years, Mr. and Mrs. Muṭahhar settled in the city of Iṣfahán in 1961. Mr. Muṭahhar immediately started to render his wide range of activities in the Bahá'í community. He was the secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of Iṣfahán, a member of various committees and a teacher of Bahá'í classes for many years. The firesides at the home of the Muṭahhars were always so crowded with seekers that many called their home 'Iṣfahán's second Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds'. Despite Mr. Muṭahhar's many activities he was never negligent in the matter of the education of his own children and sacrificed all that he could for their material and spiritual well-being. During the last four years of his life, in addition to his regular Bahá'í activities, he spent considerable time coaching Bahá'í students who had been expelled from their schools, to enable them to obtain a high school diploma by passing an extracurricular exam. Although he had many ailments, he bore them cheerfully. At 3:00 a.m. on 4 September 1983 five armed men entered the Muṭahhar home, went through Mr. Muṭahhar's personal belongings including books, family photo albums and his children's address books, blindfolded him and took him away. They also took away one of his sons who was later released. Later it became clear that Mr. Muṭahhar was confined in the Bahá'í Centre of Iṣfahán which had been expropriated and turned into a prison. The pleas and requests of his wife and children to see him were not heeded. Even his doctor who had accepted to examine him in the prison was not given access to him. Mr. Muṭahhar was denied his essential and critically needed medications. The repeated requests of his family for a date to visit him were postponed from one week to the next. He died in prison on 15 December 1983. 'The news of his death reached us through the relatives of some prisoners,' one of his sons wrote. 'Our broken hearts are filled with pain because of the loss of this burning candle of the love of God, this hero of resistance and courage... Father would tell me: "Do not weep and mourn for me after my death. Instead, reflect on the fact that everybody must pass away some day, and the only important point is in what path you give up your life."' The Bahá'í cemetery of Iṣfahán having been confiscated, it was not possible to bury Mr. Muṭahhar's body there; instead, he was buried in a small town in the Province of Iṣfahán. Despite the danger to their lives, about 400 Bahá'ís from Ṭihrán and Iṣfahán attended a memorial gathering to honour Mr. Muṭahhar, a meeting which lasted several hours and terminated only by order of the revolutionary guards.

Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Ḥakímán, a member of a well-known Bahá'í family of Yazd, and the youngest of six children born to Ṣádiq and Kubrá Ḥakímán, was only five years of age when his father died. After completing his studies he was engaged in the service of an international welfare organization and after three years transferred to the Department of Agriculture in a post which necessitated his repeated visits to towns and villages to assist the people, who came to love him greatly. In 1958 he married Miss Parvín Kátibí and three children were born to them. After 28 years of loyal service to his country, Mr. Ḥakímán was discharged from Government service because he was a Bahá'í and, simultaneously, his wife was dismissed from her employment for the same reason. The family had to sell carpets and other household goods to raise some capital with which to open a small stationery store. A few months later both the family home and the shop were confiscated and the contents plundered. Mr. Jalál Ḥakímán, Raḥmatu'lláh's brother, after nine months' imprisonment and torture, was executed on 1 May 1983. On 30 December 1983, Raḥmatu'lláh Ḥakímán was arrested together with eight other members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kirmán. The wives of these men brought food each day to the prison but were not permitted to see their husbands. On 9 January 1984, Mr. Ḥakímán's family learned that a certificate of death had been issued for him on 6 January. It was understood that he died as a result of severe torture. His body was not delivered to his family but was buried during the night.

Mr. Bahman Dihqání Muḥammadí, the son of Ḥájí Muḥammad and Zaha' Baygum Dihqání, was born on 3 January 1941 in the village of Muhammadiyyih Karvan outside of Najafábád in Iṣfahán. He married his wife, Shahnáz, in 1964 and they had seven children. He had an elementary education and had a business in his village for some time, then later became a farmer. He served as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Muhammadiyyih Karvan until he was martyred. On 15 November 1983, around midnight, a group of villagers stoned him to death. As burial was not allowed in his village, the Bahá'ís carried his body to Najafábád and buried him there.

The message of 17 January 1984 from the House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies went on to say:

'SINCE LAST REPORT 7 NOVEMBER OVER 250 BAHÁ'ÍS INCLUDING INFANTS AND CHILDREN HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN ALL PARTS COUNTRY. NEARLY 70 OF THESE WERE DETAINED BETWEEN 31 DECEMBER 1983 AND 3 JANUARY 1984. OTHER DESPICABLE ACTS AGAINST BAHÁ'ÍS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING: REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS PERMITTED ENTER BAHÁ'Í HOMES WITHOUT WARRANTS, CONFISCATE VALUABLE PERSONAL POSSESSIONS. COMPLAINTS TO AUTHORITIES UNAVAILING. SOME IMPRISONED BAHÁ'ÍS WHO WERE EXPELLED FROM THEIR JOBS HAVE BEEN PROMISED RELEASE IF THEY REPAY ALL SALARIES PAID TO THEM FROM BEGINNING THEIR EMPLOYMENT, SOMETIMES UP TO 30 YEARS . . .'

The next report of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world was telexed on 10 April 1984. It announced that the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís 'PERSISTS, TAKING EVEN MORE INSIDIOUS TURN' and explained that in March 'AT LEAST THREE PRISONERS DIED UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES, TWO IN ṬIHRÁN AND ONE IN BÁFT, KIRMÁN'. The body of Muḥsin Raḍaví, a 57-year-old businessman, 'SHOWED EVIDENCE OF HANGING' while the other two men, Ghulám-Ḥusayn Ḥasanzádih-Shákirí, aged 80, and Nuṣratu'lláh Díyá'í, aged 61, 'WERE BURIED WITHOUT FRIENDS RELATIVES BEING INFORMED . . .'

Mr. Muḥsin Raḍaví was born on 6 July 1926 in the town of Sirishábád, Hamadán, to Ḥamídih and Ḥasan Raḍaví. Muḥsin's father, before accepting the Bahá'í Faith, had been a Muslim clergyman who discarded his clerical garb and with his wife travelled around to teach the Cause. Muḥsin was born on one of these journeys. Because of his family's financial circumstances and a chest ailment which caused shortness of breath, he was unable to pursue higher school studies despite his aptitude and eagerness to learn. At age 15 he left his home in search of employment, finally settling in Ṭihrán where he engaged in a number of enterprises including operating a shop that sold spare parts for automobiles. In 1956 he married Miss Parvíndukht Himmatí; two daughters and one son were born of the union. In 1971 Mr. Raḍaví entered Government service where he served first in the Forestry Department and subsequently in the Ministry of Health until he was

discharged for being a Bahá'í; his arrest took place on 5 May 1983 and his death on 4 March 1984. He had pioneered with his family to a number of goal towns within Írán, serving as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly in each. He was obliged to leave his last post, Afsaríyyih, because the populace recognized that he was a Bahá'í and refused to permit him to rent a house, so he located in Ṭihrán-Párs. The family learned of his execution through a telephone call from the office of the Attorney-General during which they were advised that he had already been buried. On 19 January 1985, the family home was confiscated.

Mashhad was the birthplace of Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn Ḥasanzádih-Shákirí. Born in 1903 into what he described as a 'prejudiced Muslim family', he devoted his adolescence, in his own words, to 'becoming the most wicked and mischievous young man of his time'. Even his investigation of the Bahá'í Faith was conducted, he admitted, with a view to harassing the Bahá'ís. Eventually, under the guidance of the famed Bahá'í teacher, Mr. Ishráq Khávarí, he became a devoted and knowledgeable believer. He was fond of saying 'Bahá'u'lláh Himself saved me!' After settling in Ṭihrán, Mr. Ḥasanzádih-Shákirí married Miss Báhirih Zamániyán, and devoted all his time to performing administrative duties for the Faith, even when he reached an advanced age and had become seriously ill. In 1982, Mr. Ḥasanzádih-Shákirí's pension was cut off, and on 10 April 1983 he was imprisoned. He told his wife when she visited him that his interrogators kept asking him to recant his belief and he would be freed due to his old age and his illness, but he would not agree to do so. On 10 March 1984, in his eightieth year, he was executed, a fact which the Universal House of Justice was only able to establish and report in a message dated 15 April 1984 when it advised the Bahá'ís of the world that it had verified that he 'WAS ALSO EXECUTED BY FIRING SQUAD INSTEAD OF DYING MYSTERIOUSLY IN PRISON AS REPORTED'.

Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Ḍíyá'í of Báft was 61 years of age when he died in prison on 19 March 1984. He was a retired employee of the Post and Telegraph Department and had suffered a stroke a few years earlier which had temporarily paralysed his right leg and left his right arm permanently impaired. On 31 December 1983 Mr. Ḍíyá'í's home was invaded and ransacked by the militia, and he was arrested along with his wife and their son, Mihrán, who was home because of illness, and who begged to be allowed to accompany his parents and to help his father. Mihrán was placed in solitary confinement for about eleven days enduring, as he has recounted, 'insults and lack of necessities' as well as frequent interrogations instigated at about 1 a.m. and lasting from three to four hours during which he was forced to wear a blindfold. His answers to the interrogator's questions were rewarded with severe beatings, and after several weeks he and his mother were released under a security bond of 60,000 túmáns. His mother's back, he has testified, was black and blue from being beaten with a rubber hose. The elder Mr. Ḍíyá'í, however, was kept in prison and sustained the same treatment meted out to his son—interrogations, mental torture and physical beatings. His son reported that he saw his father's head smeared with blood and his legs grew so infirm that he could hardly stand or walk. In one conversation Mr. Ḍíyá'í told his son, 'I have been kicked all over my body, worse than on earlier occasions, and they have issued the verdict for my execution.' With delight, he showed his son the paper containing the verdict at the bottom of which he had inscribed a poem, an act for which he was punished when the guard discovered it. At one point the pain in Mr. Ḍíyá'í's waist which originated with the first beating became so intense that he was permitted to enter a hospital for a brief time but was returned to prison before recovery was effected. As mentioned in the message above, burial occurred without the family's being notified.

The message of 10 April 1984 from the House of Justice reflects the difficulties being experienced by the Bahá'ís of Írán at that period. It stated, 'ARRESTS CONTINUE WITH LEAST AMOUNT PUBLICITY. SINCE LAST REPORT 17 JANUARY ALTHOUGH SOME BAHÁ'Í PRISONERS RELEASED, 111 HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, MOST OF WHOM WERE MEMBERS OF SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES BEFORE THEIR DISSOLUTION LAST YEAR. NUMBER BAHÁ'ÍS KNOWN TO BE IN PRISONS IN ÍRÁN TOTALS 704.

'ACCURATE INFORMATION IN HAND DESCRIBES TORTURES PERPETRATED AGAINST SOME VERY PROMINENT BAHÁ'ÍS. FOR EXAMPLE ONE BAHÁ'Í SEVERELY TORTURED UNDER EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES FORCED CONFESS TO FALSE CHARGES. OTHERS SIMILARLY TORTURED RESISTED PRESSURES

EXERTED ON THEM TO MAKE FALSE PUBLIC CONFESSIONS FOR BENEFIT RADIO TELEVISION . . .'

Five days later, on 15 April 1984, another message was sent by the Universal House of Justice reporting a still more sinister turn of events. On a date not then established, but which was later confirmed to be 4 April 1984, three more believers had been executed by firing squad in Evin (if transliterated, Ivín) prison, Ṭihrán. The executions were not announced and the bodies were unceremoniously buried without the families or relatives being informed, which gave the House of Justice grounds to fear that other Bahá'í prisoners might meet the same fate. The three who died on 4 April were the following:

Mr. Kámrán Luṭfí, a 32-year-old university professor who had graduated in mechanical engineering from Tabríz University and who, until the revolution, had taught in the Simnán Technology Faculty. He had languished in prison since 5 May 1983, suffering the maltreatment commonly accorded Bahá'í prisoners.

Mr. Raḥím Raḥímíyán, a 52-year-old businessman, who had also been imprisoned since 5 May 1983.

Mr. Yadu'lláh Ṣábiríyán, a 64-year-old manager of a print shop, whose arrest had occurred on 9 February 1982.

Mr. Kámrán Luṭfí, the son of Yadu'lláh and Aqdas Luṭfí, was born in Iṣfahán on 27 January 1952. He completed his primary and secondary education in the city of his birth and in 1971 entered the College of Technology in Tabríz, graduating in 1976 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Upon completion of his military service in 1978, he married Miss Farzánih Ṣafá'í. A son was born to them. In February 1979, Mr. Luṭfí obtained a teaching position at the College of Technology in Simnán where he continued to work until September 1982 when he was discharged because of his being a Bahá'í. He was always active in the Faith, working on various committees in Iṣfahán, Ṭihrán and Tabríz, conducting deepening classes in Ṭihrán, and serving as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Simnán. He was appointed an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board, and served on a supervisory regional committee for Nármak and surrounding communities. After his arrest in May 1983, he spent three months in solitary confinement in Gawhardasht prison, near Karaj, and was denied the privilege of receiving visitors. During the period when he was in Evin prison, his parents, wife and son were permitted to telephone him once every three weeks but were not allowed to see him. No information is available about the two-and-a-half months he spent in the sanatorium of Evin prison, as his family's visiting privileges were withdrawn during that time. From Mr. Kámrán Luṭfí's will and testament, it was determined that he was executed on 4 April 1984. Since that time, no further information has come to light.

Mr. Raḥím Raḥímíyán, the grandson of the well-known and highly respected physician, Ḥakím Raḥím, for whom he was named, was born on 1 May 1932, the third son in a family of six brothers and four sisters. His birthplace was Arák, and there he spent his childhood. Due to financial problems, Mr. Raḥím Raḥímíyán's father was forced to settle in Ṭihrán. Raḥím, at age 14, started to work, first in the steel industry and then in plastic manufacturing. Denied the opportunity of pursuing higher education, Raḥím nevertheless acquired a sound knowledge of the Bahá'í teachings and was active, as a youth, in the community. His devotion, his friends noticed, further intensified after he made his pilgrimage to the House of Báb in Shíráz in 1954. Two years later, Mr. Raḥímíyán took up residence in the village of Nármak as a homefront pioneer, and served for a number of years on the Local Spiritual Assembly there. He, like his colleague, Mr. Kámrán Luṭfí, served on the regional committee for Nármak and adjacent territories, until the time of his arrest. In 1964, Mr. Raḥímíyán married the writer, Miss Áfáq Murád-'Alí, and two sons were born to them. In October 1977, the Raḥímíyáns left Írán for a pioneering post in India, but being unable to obtain residence visas, they were forced to return eight months later. Mr. Raḥímíyán then placed himself entirely at the disposal of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán and was engaged in ceaseless activities on behalf of the Bahá'í Faith until his arrest in May 1983. He was held in solitary confinement in Gawhardasht prison for three months, and then was transferred to the general prison. His family received permission to visit him on three occasions. On their last visit, which took place on 2 October 1983, he informed his family that his trial had been held and he was

under sentence of death. In the afternoon of the same day, prison officials took him to his home under guard, made a list of all his properties and possessions, and returned him to Gawhardasht prison. He was then transferred to Evin prison and was denied visitors; his family were distressed to learn they could not even deliver to him some necessary items of clothing. His properties were confiscated and the members of his family were evicted from their home. In a telephone conversation with his family on 18 March 1984 he said he experienced no anxiety, and expressed the hope that he would remain firm in his convictions to the last moment of his life. When his family enquired about him on 10 April 1984, they were informed that he had been executed because of his refusal to be 'guided back to Islám'. No information has been made available about the exact date of his martyrdom or the place of his burial. His brief will and testament, in which he assigned his few remaining possessions to his family (one watch, one string of prayer beads, a little cash, some clothing, a driving licence and a pair of glasses) concluded with a line from a prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'O my God, may my life be a sacrifice to Thy loved ones . . .'—words which the prison officials felt it necessary to cross out.

Mr. Yadu'lláh Ṣábiríyán, the son of Muḥammad Ḥasan and Khayru'n-Nisá Ṣábiríyán, was born in 1920 in Simnán. His father, originally a Muslim, had accepted the Bahá'í Faith through contact with his business partner; his mother, although sympathetic, did not register as a believer. Yadu'lláh, the only son, spent his youth in a Muslim environment and often took part in Islamic passion plays playing the rôle of a martyr. He espoused the Bahá'í Faith when he reached maturity. One of his three sisters also accepted the Bahá'í Faith and married Mr. Badí'u'lláh Yazdání, who was martyred on 6 May 1980. Mr. Ṣábiríyán married Miss Mulúk Núri'd-Dín; two sons and a daughter were born to them. After working for some time in a printing firm, Mr. Ṣábiríyán, in partnership with a friend, opened a print shop in 1951 which they called Badí' Printing House. During the thirty years in which he operated this company he attempted to demonstrate to his customers the Bahá'í principles of justice and fair dealing. For several years he served on various local and national committees in Ṭihrán and then in 1960 he settled in the village of Nármak where he was elected first to the regional Spiritual Assembly and subsequently to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Nármak. He accepted his responsibilities with joy and enthusiasm and was noted for his willingness to serve, and for his hospitality. He lavished praise on his wife for providing their children with a loving home and a good education. In February 1982, Mr. Ṣábiríyán was arrested and charged with printing Bahá'í material in his shop. He wrote to his family from prison assuring them that he was well and that his only concern was for their welfare. In a letter to his wife he wrote, 'The moment I think about you, tears of joy stream from my eyes. At midnight, when I pray to God, the beautiful faces of you and the children shine before me. My last advice to you is to preserve your unity now and forever, and if, God forbid, a difference should occur among you, try to resolve it in a spirit of fellowship, and replace it with love and friendship.' The same sentiment was expressed in the very short will he wrote in prison in which he admonished his wife, his children and his relatives to conserve to the end of their lives the love that united them. The prison authorities granted his request to ask for photographs of his grandchildren, but as the girls did not wear Islamic headdress in the pictures, they were withheld from him. On 19 February 1984, the family home was confiscated and Mrs. Ṣábiríyán was left homeless. Then, after more than two years' imprisonment, Mr. Ṣábiríyán was executed. A week elapsed before his family were informed that he had been killed. When his wife enquired why he had been put to death, the chief attorney exclaimed, 'What crime is worse than not responding to three months of guidance in Islám and refusing to recant belief in heresy!'

On 22 May 1984 the Universal House of Justice sent a further report to the Bahá'í world describing events in Írán. It stated that since the beginning of the revolution more than 300 residences of Bahá'ís had been plundered or set afire; some 170 Bahá'ís had been killed by a variety of methods, but principally through execution by firing squads and by hanging; in urban areas personal properties belonging to several hundred Bahá'í families had been seized, while in rural areas many orchards had been destroyed and farms and arable lands confiscated. Petitions to the authorities for redress

of grievances were ignored. In addition, the Ministry of Works and Social Affairs had formally instructed industrial and commercial institutions not to pay the salaries or pensions of their Bahá'í staff; more than 10,000 Bahá'ís employed in government offices or in the private sector had been summarily discharged and their rights to pensions and other employment benefits revoked, and some had received demands for refund of the salaries they had received for the duration of their employment; Bahá'í students had been dismissed from all universities and other institutions of higher learning; in most cities and provinces, Bahá'í children had been denied entry to schools and therefore were without access to basic education; some 700 Bahá'ís including men, women and children were being held in various prisons throughout Írán; for more than nine months visits to 40 Bahá'í prisoners had been prohibited by the authorities and their fate unknown; and in Evin and Gawhardasht prisons a number of Bahá'í prisoners were undergoing relentless torture including floggings of all parts of the body, but especially the legs and feet, involving sometimes up to 400 lashes. The hapless prisoner was then forced to walk, and finding this impossible he or she perforce had to crawl on hands and knees back to a dark cell. In Mashhad and Yazd, Bahá'í prisoners were being regularly whipped on the head and face with thick plastic tubes, and similar procedures were being followed to a lesser degree in other prisons. A number of these victims of torture had lost their sight and hearing, others their mental competence. The bodies of four prisoners subjected to such treatment were seen before being buried in unknown graves. 'It is therefore feared', the House of Justice stated, 'that other prisoners whose bodies have been similarly buried without their families being notified suffered the same fate.'

Nor were the Bahá'ís who were not imprisoned safe. The same report revealed that Bahá'í homes were being entered at will, day or night, by revolutionary guards, who harassed the inhabitants by insulting, threatening and beating them. When the guards failed to find a particular Bahá'í at home, they would seize other members of the household, even children, as hostages, and would ransack the place, confiscating whatever they pleased. 'Whenever the head or some other important member of the family has been killed,' the report concluded, 'and often when such a person has been imprisoned, those remaining behind have been forced from their homes and not permitted to take any belongings, even in the dead of winter. The victims of such treatment have no recourse to justice since their petitions to the authorities are ignored. Bahá'í families in Iṣfahán, Mashhad, Tihrán, Urúmíyyih and Yazd in particular are affected by these conditions.'

The martyrdoms of four more Bahá'ís were announced in the report of 22 May: Mr. Jalál Payraví and Mr. Maqṣúd 'Alízádih who were executed on 5 May in Tabríz and who had been imprisoned on 22 October 1981 and 27 January 1982, respectively; and Mr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Zamání and Mr. Jahángír Hidáyatí who were executed on 15 May in Ṭihrán, the former having been arrested 5 May 1983 and the latter having been abducted in June 1983. It was also stated that Mr. Asadu'lláh Kámil-Muqaddam died in prison on 2 May in circumstances which were then unknown.

Mr. Jalál Payraví was born in Mílán on 26 March 1937 to Aḥmad and Ṭáhirih Payraví, devoted Bahá'ís. He was the fourth of five children and, as their only son, was doted upon by his parents and sisters. The family later moved to Tabríz where Jalál studied engineering and was employed by the government as manager of the Institute for Development of Agricultural Machinery, first in Ardibil and later in Tabríz. In December 1965 he married Miss Símín Dáná and two sons were born to them. He had been active as a youth in the affairs of the Faith and had served on the Spiritual Assemblies of the communities in which he resided. He was a member of the Auxiliary Board. In 1970, Mr. Payraví was transferred by his employers to Gurgán, then to Urúmíyyih, and in 1979 to Tihrán. In May 1981 he was discharged for being a Bahá'í and in October of that year he was arrested. His mother, sorely afflicted by separation from her son, died three months after his arrest. 'He was always thinking of the welfare of others,' one of his sisters wrote of him. 'When I visited him in prison he would urge me to call on the families of the martyrs to see if they were getting along well and whether I could be of assistance to them. In prison he was liked and respected by all, and during visits he was found to have a smile on his lips at all times, and his eyes were illumined with the light of love for his Master. In many of the letters he wrote to

us from prison he cited the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "He doeth as He doeth, and what recourse have we?"'[1] After more than thirty months in prison, Mr. Payraví was shot by a firing squad. One of his sisters received a letter from him dated the day of his execution in which no mention was made of his impending fate, indicating that he was not aware of the sentence until he was taken from the prison. The Bahá'ís learned of his death the following day. The decree of execution, it was reported, stated that Mr. Payraví was to be put to death because of 'intense involvement with Zionism and membership in the misled sect of Bahaism'. More than 100 Bahá'ís from Tabríz and other communities attended the funeral service which was held on 7 May 1984.

The parents of Mr. Maqṣúd 'Alízádih, Aḥmad and Túbá 'Alízádih, had both been raised in Bahá'í families, and they were living in Míyán-Duáb when Maqṣúd, their second son, was born on 28 September 1940. In pursuit of his advanced studies, Maqṣúd went to live with his uncle in Tabríz where he attended high school and went on to obtain a diploma in biology from the Agricultural College in Varámín. After graduation he was engaged by the Department of Land Improvement in the section devoted to promotion of agriculture. In October 1967 Mr. 'Alízádih married Miss Manízhih Na'ímíyán, and from this union two daughters were born. Mrs. 'Alízádih continued her studies in Tabríz, obtained a degree in Laboratory Science, and found employment in the Health Centre laboratory in Riḍá'íyyih. In Riḍá'íyyih, Mr. 'Alízádih served on the youth committee and other service committees and in 1977, with his wife and eldest daughter, he made his pilgrimage to the World Centre. During 1978–1979, when the homes of the Bahá'ís of Míyán-Duáb and suburbs were set on fire, the 'Alízádih family and other friends spent most of their time helping to resettle those who had lost their homes and property. Although he was transferred to the Ṭihrán office of the Department of Land Improvement in 1979, he managed to take short trips to Riḍá'íyyih once every two weeks. In 1981, after twenty years of service, he was retired, and in 1982 his pension was cut off. He then returned to Riḍá'íyyih. While he was visiting Tabríz his home in Riḍá'íyyih was plundered, as were those of other Bahá'ís in that community. In January 1982 he was arrested. His family found him to be cheerful when they visited him in prison, his conversation full of encouragement and references to the need for prayer, study and perseverance. The day after his execution, when his wife and small daughter and his mother-in-law went to the prison, they were informed that he had been killed by firing squad with his fellow believer, Mr. Jalál Payraví.

Mr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Zamání, who was killed in Ṭihrán on 15 May 1984, had been born in June 1929 in the town of Girawgán-i-Jásb. His father, Abu'l-Qásim Zamání, had suffered imprisonment as a Bahá'í and had been honoured with a Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. His mother, Shawkat Ḥaydar, was not a Bahá'í at first but later embraced the Cause. 'Alí-Muḥammad had three sisters and one brother. Part of his childhood was spent in the village of Khániábád where he attended primary classes for Bahá'í children. He pioneered for a time to the village of Ḥamídának and worked for the Hand of the Cause Valíyu'lláh Varqá, and then sold dairy products; finally he entered military service and worked in the communications section of the army. Upon completion of his military service he was employed by a private company. He married Miss Manṣúrih Farahání, and at the time of his martyrdom their three children were aged 7, 13 and 14 years. He took an active interest in the spiritual education of his children and organized Bahá'í children's classes in the community; these and other Bahá'í meetings were held at his home at least five days each week. He was an active member of the Bahá'í community wherever he lived, and his services on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Váḥídíyyih extending over a twelve-year period were described as having a revitalizing effect on that body. Generosity characterized all his actions and he was unstinting in giving to the Bahá'í funds. On 5 May 1983 at 10:00 p.m. 12 militiamen acting on the instructions of the Attorney-General invaded the home, confiscated a number of Bahá'í books and tapes, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and a family album, and arrested Mr. Zamání as well as Mr. Kámrán Luṭfí, Mr. Kámrán Thábit and Mr. Muḥsin Raḍaví. For seven months, Mr. Zamání was detained in Gawhardasht prison, and then was transferred

[1] *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 51.

to Evin prison, where visitors were allowed once every twenty days. It was reported that on one occasion during his trial when the judge was late in arriving, Mr. Zamání said, 'I've been waiting for you here and have been worried that perhaps you had experienced a mishap,' to which the judge replied indignantly, 'Don't worry about me; worry about your own situation.' One of his Bahá'í fellow prisoners commented, 'Despite Mr. Zamání's poor health and the difficulties he suffered from kidney stones, he would wash my clothes.' He was fond of chanting a verse written by Laqá'íy-i-Káshání: 'The tumult of the crowd at my back, the roll of the drum at my front, and me dancing toward the square; how wonderful!' On 8 May 1984 Mr. Zamání's family were informed that he had been found guilty of a 'serious offence' and executed. The sum of 11,000 túmáns, said to be the cost of the bullets and the charge for preparing the body for burial, was demanded of his brother and paid. The body was not shown to the family nor was the place of burial revealed, but it is known that Mr. Zamání and his friend, Mr. Jahángír Hidáyatí, who was executed on the same day, had suffered torture.

Born in 1923 in 'Alíábád, a village near Yazd, the son of a farming family of Zoroastrian background, Mr. Jahángír Hidáyatí was but 13 years of age when he was orphaned, and was thereafter cared for by his older sister and brother. He completed his secondary studies in Yazd and went to Ṭihrán to attend college. After graduation he obtained employment in the Ministry of Roads. In response to the call of Shoghi Effendi for homefront pioneers, he settled in Khunsár, a town on the road to Iṣfahán, but he contracted malaria and found it necessary to move to Iṣfahán, where he devoted much of his time to serving the Bahá'í community as a member of the youth committee. He also took part in preparing and constructing the monuments on the graves of the King of Martyrs and the Beloved of Martyrs. After his military training in Ṭihrán, Mr. Hidáyatí worked for the Department of Civil Aviation. He was married to Miss Mihrangíz Zamadí in 1953; three children were born to them. Mr. Hidáyatí was sent to England by the Civil Aviation Department for further study for two years; subsequently he did postgraduate study at the University of Ṭihrán and obtained a degree in civil engineering. From his home base in Mihrábád, where he served on the Spiritual Assembly, he contributed his time over the course of eighteen years to a number of national and local committees. He was recognized as an accomplished civil engineer and given responsible positions. As the assistant manager of the Department of Planning and Development, he was in charge of planning and supervising the construction of nearly all Iranian airports. When he retired from Government service in 1975 he was engaged by a private firm and sent as a consultant to Somali and the Philippines. For four years he served as the assistant project manager during construction of the airport in greater Ṭihrán. After the Islamic revolution, Mr. Hidáyatí was summoned several times for interrogation along with other members of the Board of Directors of Nawnahálán, the Bahá'í investment company. In January 1982 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly and despite the obvious danger joyously consented to serve. He was re-elected in 1983 and 1984 and continued to serve until the dissolution of the National Assembly. On 30 June 1983 he was arrested and held in solitary confinement for eleven months during which he was tortured repeatedly in an effort to persuade him to appear on television and openly recant the Faith. His wife was not permitted to visit him and only through persistent enquiries was she able to learn that he was in Evin prison. Finally, she was granted one full minute with him. 'Don't worry, I'm all right,' was the message he gave her. On 20 May when she went to the prison hoping for another meeting with her husband she was informed that he had been executed five days before.

Asadu'lláh Kámil-Muqaddam was born in Bábul in 1920, the son of Valíyu'lláh and Fáṭimih. His wife Khadijih was also from Bábul. They were married in 1943, and had four children. After their marriage they moved to Bihshahr, where they lived for eight years while Mr. Muqaddam worked as account manager in the Bihshahr Fabric Plant. Then the family moved to Ṭihrán where he worked for the Mázandarán Fabric Plant until 1970 when he began working in a real estate business until his retirement in 1978. He had been a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly while living in Bihshahr, and was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ariashahr when he and his family lived in that suburb of Ṭihrán. From the begin-

ning of the revolution in Írán he was always under pressure in his neighbourhood for being a Bahá'í and on 27 October 1983 he was arrested in his home in Ariashahr. Two Revolutionary Guards went to his house, and after three-and-a-half-hours of searching and collecting his books and his belongings they took him to jail. He was moved around to different prisons, then after a month he was transferred to solitary confinement in Evin Prison. In March 1984 he was transferred to a public room, and he was there until the day he had a heart attack and passed away in prison. On 25 April 1984 he was buried in Khatun-Abad Cemetery by the Guards. His family was not allowed to see his last will and testament.

The distressing news emanating from the World Centre was accompanied by reports of the achievement of an unprecedented degree of recognition of the Bahá'í Faith throughout the free world. Clear evidence was seen on every side of the emergence of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh from obscurity. In its message to the Bahá'ís of the world at Riḍván of that year (21 April 1984; 141 B.E.) the House of Justice paid tribute in these words:

'The year just closing has been overshadowed by the continued persecution of the friends in Írán. They have been forced to disband their administrative structure, they have been harassed, dispossessed, dismissed from employment, made homeless and their children are refused education. Some six hundred men, women and children are now in prison, some denied any contact with their friends and relatives, some subjected to torture and all under pressure to recant their faith. Their heroic and exemplary steadfastness has been the mainspring in bringing the Cause out of obscurity, and it is the consolation of their hearts that their suffering results in unprecedented advances in teaching and proclaiming the divine Message to a world so desperately in need of its healing power. For this they embrace the final service of martyrdom . . .'

On 3 July 1984 and again on 5 July the Universal House of Justice informed the Bahá'í world about the situation in Írán: on 17 June in Mashhad Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Vaḥdat had been hanged, and an additional 51 believers were being held in prisons, making a total of 751. 'A NUMBER OF FRIENDS ARE NOW IN PARTICULAR DANGER', the House of Justice telexed, stating that after eleven months' imprisonment, Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Kathírí was executed in Ṭihrán on 17 June and his body unceremoniously buried by the authorities without informing his family.

Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Vaḥdat, the son of Valíyu'lláh and Zahrá Vaḥdat, was born in the village of Sangsar in 1933, one of eight children. He was six years old when his father died, and forty days later his eldest brother, aged 18, died as the result of the hardships suffered by the friends in that area during the persecutions in 1939. After completing secondary school in 1956, Mr. Vaḥdat entered the Military Officers' College and upon graduation was assigned to duty in the region of Kurdistán, serving in Sanandaj and Maríván, and becoming known as an honest and efficient officer, and a faithful and devoted Bahá'í. Subsequently he was transferred to Tabríz, Dizfúl, Shíráz, and finally, again, to Kurdistán. In time, he rose to the rank of Colonel. He married Miss Munírih Pársá in 1961 and four children were born to them. After completing an army staff training course in 1979, Mr. Vaḥdat was assigned to duty in Kirmánsháh until he was discharged later that year for being a Bahá'í. He met with high officials in the army and political authorities of the revolutionary regime in an attempt to convey to them a clear understanding of the spiritual ideals of the Bahá'ís, and although the majority of them expressed regret concerning the order for his dismissal they could do nothing to prevent its being implemented. After his discharge he joined his family in Mashhad and actively involved himself in the affairs of the Bahá'í community to such a degree that threats were made to his safety, but he ignored them, feeling it would be cowardly to flee. On 23 July 1983 he and his wife were arrested but were released after fourteen days during which they were terrorized and bullied. On 10 October of that year revolutionary guards came to arrest Mr. Vaḥdat, and not finding him at home arrested his son, Jaláyir, and daughter, Mándáná, and held them as hostages. Mándáná's husband of five months, Mr. Dávar Nabílzádih, was also placed under arrest, as was her uncle, Mr. Muḥammad-'Alí Vaḥdat. Ten days later, Mr. and Mrs. Vaḥdat presented themselves to the court. They were imprisoned and their children released. Colonel Vaḥdat telephoned home after the court's verdict was conveyed to him, in order to take his leave of his family. As only his

youngest daughter was at home he could not find it in his heart to break the news to her and instead merely enquired how the family was faring. Half an hour later he was hanged. When Mándáná visited her mother to inform her of the execution of her father she congratulated the prison attendant on having successfully achieved the aim of putting her father to death. 'You'd better come back when your mother's case has been finalized and you can congratulate us on achieving our aim with regard to both,' was the reply. Advised of the passing of her husband, Mrs. Vaḥdat told her children they could well be proud of their father. 'He was an honourable man,' she said, 'and he is now happy in the presence of his Beloved. You also should be happy and grateful forever.'

A fifth-generation Bahá'í, descended from one of the Báb's early followers, Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Kathírí was born on 3 August 1936 in the town of 'Arab-Khayl. He lost his father at an early age and his education was interrupted; nevertheless he completed his secondary studies and obtained employment with the Ministry of Health, in the branch concerned with the eradication of malaria, and later with the Customs Department. With his wife, Baháríyyih Mazlúm, he settled in Karaj. Three children were born to them. The youngest, named Muná in honor of Miss Muná Maḥmúdnizhád who was martyred a few months before the baby's birth, was but 15 days old when her father was arrested on 28 July 1983; the other children were aged 11 and 7. Two and a half years before his arrest, and after having served on various committees, Mr. Kathírí was elected to the Spiritual Assembly of Karaj and gained a reputation for being meticulous and faithful in carrying out his duties. In January 1976, accompanied by his mother, he made his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and the following year arranged for the pilgrimage of his wife while he stayed home and cared for the children. In 1979, Mr. Kathírí retired and managed to live on a small pension while devoting his life to the service of the Faith. He was, in the words of one admiring friend, 'neither an eminent Bahá'í figure nor a man of wealth and reputation; he was simply a good-natured and humorous young man whose heart was filled with the love of God. All the torture inflicted on him by the authorities, and all their trickery to make him recant, were of no avail, and therefore they decided to end his life.' When their house was invaded and looted by the militia at 4:00 a.m. on 28 July, and her husband was being taken to prison, Mrs. Kathírí found the courage to ask the militia to produce a warrant for his arrest. 'This is our order,' said one of the men, striking her on the head with his gun. Sixteen other Bahá'ís were arrested that night, many of whom were subsequently executed. During the eleven months he spent in prison, no information could be obtained about Mr. Kathírí's trials and interrogations, but two friends who were imprisoned with him later related that he was in high spirits, and was friendly and courteous to the guards who developed respect for him to the degree that one of them, who had been especially unkind to the Bahá'ís, totally changed his manner after coming to know Mr. Kathírí. At her husband's request, Mrs. Kathírí rejected traditional black mourning clothing in favour of white and was a radiant figure in the memorial gatherings held in his honour. 'Neighbors and non-Bahá'í friends were puzzled', she wrote, 'not realizing that no matter how unbearable the loss of a dear one may be, we draw consolation and contentment from the thought that the crown of martyrdom has been bestowed by the will and good pleasure of the Blessed Beauty.'

The execution of yet another Bahá'í in Írán was reported in a telex sent by the Universal House of Justice on 24 August 1984. Dr. Manúchihr Rúḥí had been killed by a firing squad on 16 August in Bujnúrd, Khurásán Province, after having had his properties confiscated and spending eleven months in prison. The House of Justice shared its concern for the lives of twenty-five other Bahá'ís imprisoned in different parts of the country and against whom death sentences had already been pronounced.

Dr. Manúchihr Rúḥí, a pharmacist, was born on 26 June 1936 in Záhidán, the son of Rúḥu'lláh and Shahrbánú Rúḥí. Shortly after his birth the family moved to Gunábád. He was a small child when fanatical people in the town rose against the Bahá'ís; his brother, Ḥusayn, aged 20, was killed by a mob, and his uncle was blinded. The family left Gunábád and settled in Mashhad. Manúchihr was fifteen years old when his father passed away and the burden of meeting the expenses of the family fell on his shoulders. He secured a day job as an apprentice in a pharmacy and pursued his studies in the

evening and thus replaced his father in taking care of his sisters and a young brother. In 1960 he married Miss Badru'n-Nisá Thábití by whom he had two daughters. After years of hard work he was able to purchase his own pharmacy in 1965, in partnership with a friend. He was much loved for his kind and gentle disposition, for his generosity to the poor and for his spirit of public service. In September 1980 the Islamic Revolutionary Court accused him of embezzlement of funds from the public treasury and fined him a hundred thousand túmáns. On 24 September he was arrested, and the following day his house was ransacked and stripped of Bahá'í books. Within two days, seven members of the Local Spiritual Assembly were placed under arrest. It was reported that only Dr. Rúḥí was placed in solitary confinement. On 1 October, Dr. Rúḥí's wife and sister were also arrested but were subsequently released on bail due to illness. On 29 October the homes of all the Bahá'ís were entered and looted and the occupants terrorized. The pharmacy was confiscated on 5 December 1983 and turned over to the Red Crescent Society. After being denied visiting privileges for three months, Dr. Rúḥí's family were finally granted a three-minute visit, and were then able to arrange for fortnightly visits. He was also permitted to see his blind uncle. On one occasion he told his family, 'I have given up everything and think only of the Beloved. They have told me if I don't recant they will execute me. I said to them that I am not equal even to a single hair of those they have executed so far; I have no other wish but to give up my life in the path of God and for the sake of reaching my goal.' The authorities informed his family that as he was a spy, there was no recourse but to execute him.

On 11 October 1984 two more deaths were announced by the Universal House of Justice. Mr. Shápúr (Húshang) Markazí, described by the House of Justice as an outstanding servant of the Faith, had been a member of the previous National Spiritual Assembly and a member of the Auxiliary Board. He had suffered cruel tortures, the telex stated, whose purpose was to force him to admit false charges implicating the Bahá'í institutions as a network involved in espionage and himself as a spy. 'HIS GROWING RESISTANCE INCREASED INTENSITY TORTURES WHICH MAY HAVE CAUSED HIS DEATH 23 SEPTEMBER', the telex continued. He was buried on 25 September without the knowledge of his relatives and friends.

In the same telex it was announced that Mr. Amínu'lláh Qurbánpúr, aged 60, a mason, had died in prison, of unknown causes, on 25 August 1984. His blood-stained clothes were turned over to his family together with his recently washed shoes. The fact that his shoes had been washed aroused suspicion about the circumstances of his death. His body, too, was buried without the knowledge of his relatives.

Mr. Shápúr Markazí was born in the summer of 1929 in Hamadán, although the family home was in Burújird where his father, Khalíl, operated a pharmacy. In 1934 the family transferred their residence to Ṭihrán where Shápúr attended school and quickly distinguished himself as an intelligent student, excelling in literature and composition. He also ranked high among the students who attended Bahá'í study classes. After the death of his father, Shápúr interrupted his studies and pioneered with his mother to the mountain village of Zarnán, situated about twenty miles from Ṭihrán and accessible only by mule or donkey. For two years they lived contentedly in a cold, damp room next to the place where sheep and cattle were kept, and Shápúr organized classes for Bahá'í children, teaching both conventional studies as well as Bahá'í lessons. He contracted jaundice and had to be taken to hospital. After recovering he remained in Ṭihrán until a few years later when he served as a pioneer to Bahrayn Island. Until he could settle there he made the uncomfortable journey by boat from Búshihr where, because of his blue eyes, he was suspected of being a European spy and was severely beaten and robbed of his money and books. He remained in Bahrayn for seven years, at first finding only unsuitable jobs but finally obtaining work as treasurer of a large supermarket. He married Miss Parichihr Ázádih and the couple had two children. Upon his return to Ṭihrán, Mr. Markazí was engaged to work in the statistical department of the Institute of Irrigation, and because of his recognized efficiency he was promoted to positions of increased authority and served in various areas of the country. Often he was elected to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly of the town to which he was posted. In 1980, Mr. and Mrs. Markazí were privileged to make their pilgrimage to the World Centre. In September 1983, when returning to his home

in Gurgán from a teaching trip, Mr. Markazí was arrested and taken directly to prison. During the course of his imprisonment his torturers broke his ribs and damaged one eye so badly that it seriously impaired his vision. After executing him, his captors buried him in a place they call 'Káfaristán', meaning the place reserved for infidels.

Mr. Amínu'lláh Qurbánpúr, who died in prison in his fifty-ninth year, was born into a well-known Bahá'í family in Ádhirbáyján. His father, Rúḥu'lláh, and his mother, Nargís, who were among the early believers of the area near Tabríz, travelled on foot from their home village, Bábákandí, to the Holy Land to make their pilgrimage, and had the privilege of meeting Shoghi Effendi. From earliest childhood, Amínu'lláh had the love of Bahá'u'lláh in his heart. As a young man he served on the youth committee of Bábákandí and after finishing his military service he was elected a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly and served on that body for four years. He was noted for his courage and audacity, and if ever he heard anyone speaking against the Faith he would arise, introduce himself as a Bahá'í, and present the truth about its teachings and principles. If he learned that the Islamic propaganda group planned to hold a meeting for the purpose of vilifying the Bahá'í Faith, he would attend the gathering, obtain the chairman's permission to address the audience, and standing behind the microphone he would give an effective talk in defence of the Cause. In 1944, he married Miss Iḥyá' Mashhadí who bore him seven children. The family moved in 1955 to Majídíyyih, a suburb of Ṭihrán, where Mr. Qurbánpúr earned his living by operating a dairy farm, and for seven years served on the Local Spiritual Assembly. Then, in 1967, he moved his family to a goal community east of Ṭihrán called Khák-i-Sifíd where pioneers were needed. While in the process of building a home for his family he was recognized as a Bahá'í and the residents of the place started a campaign of harassment. Despite this, the Qurbánpúr family remained there and formed a Local Spiritual Assembly on which Mr. Qurbánpúr served until the administrative structure of the Faith was disbanded by Government decree. He was also the representative of the Local Spiritual Assembly in meetings of the regional committee of the Assemblies in East Ṭihrán. In 1976, he and his wife made their pilgrimage to the Holy Land. At midnight on 20 May 1984, the revolutionary guards invaded his home and took him first to the headquarters of the central committee, then to prison. On 11 September, when the family went to visit him in Gawhardasht prison, they were told he had been transferred to Evin, but after going back and forth between the two prisons they eventually learned from a prisoner that Mr. Qurbánpúr had grown ill and died. With great difficulty, and due to the good memory of a mortuary attendant, the family were able to identify the unmarked gravesite in Bihisht-i-Zahrá, the Muslim cemetery. Here they also saw Mr. Qurbánpúr's name on the list of those who had been executed. His clothing which they retrieved from prison contained fragments of glass and bloodstains; his shoes, too, despite having been washed, were stained with blood.

On 11 October 1984 a letter was written by a Bahá'í in Írán which graphically depicts the circumstances under which the Persian believers laboured. Bearing the salutation 'Greetings to my dear brother', it reads:

'Nowadays we learn that a martyrdom has taken place when the person responsible for the graves in the Bahá'í cemetery, or the so-called burial place for infidels, finds out that a new grave has been occupied. Then referring to the list of executions, we see the name of one of the friends who was executed the day before: Oh, Mr. Shápúr Markazí!

'This information starts the process in motion. Then the relatives of the martyr go to the prison to investigate. After waiting quite a while, a man with black bushy whiskers and unkempt clothing comes forward and says, "We killed him last night; go to Bihisht-i-Zahrá cemetery and find out where they have buried him." Such is the reply from a Government prison representative. Thus it is discovered that a dear friend has lost his life through the tortures inflicted upon him by the prison executioners.

'The authorities so far have not derived any benefit from the execution of the Bahá'ís. Recently a man called Tulú'í, who is one of the principal torture-mongers of this regime, has told one of the Bahá'í friends, "We need you in the oil company. I've been asked to talk to you—if you don't want to become Muslim, you may return to your previous religion and become a Zoroastrian." The Bahá'í replied,

"You have confiscated by properties; my life is also at your disposal. I am, however, a believer in my religion and attached to it; I cannot change. If you want me to return to my job you must apologize and give back my properties. Then, if you give me a questionnaire to fill out and sign for re-employment, in the column for creed I will cross out the word 'creed' and write 'Bahá'í religion'." Such is the perseverance of the friends in Írán.

'The Bahá'í friends have used up all their savings; they have no jobs, and do not engage in swindling and fraudulence. Nevertheless, they are confident and trust the Lord. In truth, God is great and grants them strength to continue being alive and active. As the cruelty of the persecutors intensifies, the patience of the friends increases proportionately.

'Last night one of the friends who has had confiscated all his property including his factory, was a guest at our house. A few days ago, men from the Prime Minister's office entered his house and took an inventory of all his belongings in front of his wife and children. They went into the garage to take away his car and said to him, "You must vacate the house." "Where can I take my family?" he pleaded. "That is your affair," they replied. "You are supposed to vacate the house and let us have it." Then my friend invited me to have supper and spend the evening with him before the house is taken from him. The house has an estimated value of 20 million tumáns and like all confiscated properties will be at the disposal of the Prime Minister who is free to sell it and keep the proceeds.

'At present there are about 750 Bahá'ís in prison. After the martyrdom of Mr. Markazí another grave was dug next to his, and someone has been buried in it overnight. The person's identity is not yet known. No doubt he is a Bahá'í, because it is in the area reserved for the Bahá'ís.

'These days there is no execution by firing squad. The Bahá'ís give up their lives to the Bestower of Life while they are being tortured in prison, and all alone cry out "Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá" [O Thou the Glory of Glories!]. Such is the situation of innocent Bahá'ís in the prisons of Írán.

'Write a new history like *Nabíl's Narrative*. You may call it whatever you want, but I would give it the title "Massacre of Bahá'ís under the Islamic Regime of Írán". Write and publish the life accounts of the martyrs, their wills, and their photographs—fill as many volumes as may be required—Vol. I, II, III and IV, each volume containing the life accounts of fifty martyrs. Let us pray that Vol. V may not be needed and that the era of execution may come to an end.

'The Bahá'ís of Írán are mostly wanderers, distressed and jobless, but thankful and happy; anxious at heart, but serene and with smiling countenances. "Whoever cannot see, serves him right."

'The other day I happened to meet and take a stroll with a new friend of mine to whom I said, "Dear friend, I am a Bahá'í; perhaps you don't know. But I tell you all this so that nothing may remain secret between us." He replied, "My wife has told me several times that she believes you are a Bahá'í, as it can be seen from your attitude and conduct. Now that you have mentioned it, I see she has guessed correctly. I am glad of it, and more than that, I congratulate you." He said the reason his wife suspected I was a Bahá'í was that she had lived in a Bahá'í family, although she is not a Bahá'í herself, but she knows how the Bahá'ís behave.

'You can see how the Bahá'ís are distinguished in the community!

'Dear reader, I don't know what you will do with this letter. Only remember this is a letter written by an Iranian Bahá'í. What may be your reaction to the letter is entirely your business. If you choose to translate and publish it, that also is your business. But please don't throw it away.'

Another believer wrote to the World Centre stating that he visited the grave of his wife frequently, but was forbidden to erect a marker over the resting-place of an 'infidel'. Any time he had left a small piece of paper with her name to mark the grave, it had been either removed, or had obscenities scrawled on it. He reported that a number of Bahá'í tombs had been defaced and that the walls of the cemetery were covered with graffiti defaming the Bahá'ís.

On at least one occasion the Persian press outside Írán carried a story about someone who claimed to be a Bahá'í, perhaps with a view to obtaining increased sympathy for the victim and to discredit the Government. An example is found in the 25 October 1984 issue of the German magazine *Punte* which carried a translation of a story that appeared in a Persian

newspaper published outside Írán by groups antagonistic to the present regime. The article, which appeared to be fictional, contained details of what purported to be the martyrdom of two Bahá'ís in Shíráz, and the torture and subsequent escape of their daughter, but no such incident was reported to the World Centre nor was there any record of a girl bearing the name used in the article among the daughters of Bahá'í married couples in Shíráz.

The executions of three more Bahá'ís were announced by the Universal House of Justice in a message sent on 9 November 1984. Mr. Aḥmad Bashírí, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly which had been disbanded on 29 August 1983, and Mr. Yúnis Nawrúzí-Íránzád, a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Karaj, the House of Justice stated, had been executed by hanging, while the third believer, Mr. Fírúz Purdil, died by means not then known. The telex continued, 'IT IS CERTAIN THAT MR. BASHÍRÍ IN HIS FIFTEEN MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT SUFFERED CRUEL INHUMAN TORTURES DESIGNED TO OBTAIN FALSE DECLARATION FROM HIM IMPLICATING DISBANDED BAHÁ'Í ADMINISTRATION IN IRAN AS ESPIONAGE NETWORK. HIS ENDURANCE, STEADFASTNESS, LIKE THAT OF HIS HEROIC FELLOW BELIEVERS, THWARTED IMFAMOUS DESIGNS. MR. BASHÍRÍ AND MR. NAWRÚZÍ [ÍRÁNZÁD] ALONG WITH MR. SHÁPÚR MARKAZÍ PREVIOUSLY REPORTED WERE INCLUDED IN LIST BAHÁ'ÍS ALREADY CONDEMNED TO DEATH. THIS CAUSES GRAVE CONCERN FATE REMAINING VALIANT SOULS LANGUISHING IN PRISON . . .'

Mr. Aḥmad Bashírí was born in 1915 into a Muslim family residing in Iṣfahán. His father, Faraju'lláh, died when Aḥmad was seven, and he was raised lovingly by his mother and brother. Sulṭán, his mother, converted to the Bahá'í Faith when she learned of it from her other son, Muḥammad-'Alí, who had accepted the Cause in Yazd. Thus Aḥmad was raised as a Bahá'í child. After completing his primary and secondary education he enrolled in the Teachers' College in Iṣfahán and upon graduation was employed by the Department of Education as a teacher and school principal in Gulpáyigán. 'In order to fulfill the compulsory service requirement,' Mr. Bashírí has written, 'I spent one year in the Officers' College and one year in the first army division. I started serving in the Ministry of Culture after completion of my military service. For three years, I worked as a teacher and as supervisor of the education and endowments office in Tafrish and Áshtíyán. I was transferred, then, to Iṣfahán and served there for twenty-one years in teaching, headmastership, a legal advisory capacity and as head counsellor of legal affairs in the Ministry of Culture of the Province of Iṣfahán. I continued my education while I was working. After obtaining a diploma in literature, I entered the school of law in Ṭihrán University and in 1951 obtained my Bachelor's degree in legal studies.' In Iṣfahán he was active in Bahá'í community life and was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly. He served also on the Spiritual Assemblies of Tajrish and Iláhíyih, and on local and national Bahá'í committees. In the winter of 1965, through the intrigue of people hostile to the Faith, he was banished to Yazd; a year later, he retired, after thirty years' dedicated public service in the field of education. 'A point worth mentioning,' he recorded in the brief summary of his life that he prepared, 'is that since I started serving, I accomplished my assignments with meticulous care, sincerity and a sense of responsibility which was always admired, appreciated and rewarded by my supervisors. I have also had a calm and clear conscience. I considered work as an act of worship, a moral obligation and an ethical matter. During the entire expanse of my service, I tried to perform the assigned task to the best of my ability.' With the approval of the Spiritual Assembly of Iṣfahán, Mr. Aḥmad Bashírí went to Ṭihrán and continued to serve the Cause in the capital where, after several years, he was elected to serve on the Local and the National Assemblies. In the period of the revolution he often worked twelve to fourteen hours a day until, in July 1983, he was arrested and imprisoned. On 1 November 1984, he was hanged. He left three sons and three daughters—Mahshíd, Mahvash, Mihrshíd, Mihrán, Mihrdád and Mihryár—the fruit of his union with Miss Ṭáhirih Furúghí, the daughter of Isfandíyár and Bushrá Furúghí, whom he had married in October 1965.

Mr. Yúnis Nawrúzí-Íránzád's family roots were in Russia from whence his parents, Abdu'lláh and Ma'súmih Nawrúzí-Íránzád, migrated to Írán and settled in Tabríz where they learned of and accepted the Bahá'í Faith. Yúnis was born on 8 August 1926 in Marand, Ádhirbáyján, where he attended primary

school, completing his secondary studies in Ṭihrán. After completing his military service, he was engaged as a teacher by the Ministry of Education and worked in Ábádán until he was discharged for being a Bahá'í. Unemployed for a while, he eventually found work in the National Bank and was sent to Sírján in the Province of Kirmán, and then to Fasá, a town in Fars. At last he was transferred to the central branch in Ṭihrán where he worked until retirement. In his various communities of residence, he taught children's classes and served on committees. He was, for a time, a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Karaj. In addition to his Bahá'í activities in Karaj, Mr. Nawrúzí-Íránzád served as an accountant to the committee for combating illiteracy, and his competence and dedication were highly appreciated and praised by the authorities. After the untimely death of his first wife, Miss Shahíndukht Muhájir, by whom he had three children, he married Miss Vajíhih Masrúrí, to whom two children were born. In 1981, he was deprived of his pension for being a Bahá'í, and on 27 July 1983 he was arrested at his home and placed in prison. After fifteen months' imprisonment and torture, he was executed on 28 October in his fifty-eighth year. One of his sons wrote of him, 'No doubt, many of those heroic Bahá'í martyrs in Írán have been just that—very special persons, outstanding in their professions or careers, as well as in their services to their Faith. But among them have also been lesser, unknown persons, largely anonymous in society and equally unobtrusive in their devotion to Bahá'u'lláh. It is these martyrdoms which seem the most pointless. Yet, the smallest and the ordinary too have their place in the Bahá'í Faith. For the stories of these simple lives have caused thousands of Bahá'ís world-wide to restructure their definition of "heroism"; and they have served as an eye-opener to the rest of the world, clearly showing the massacre of the Bahá'ís of Írán in its true light ... by what stretch of imagination could [my father], a banker and a music teacher, be accused of "warring with God"?'

Mr. Fírúz Purdil was born in February 1944, the son of Munír and Marḍíyyih Ghulámí Purdil, who came to Írán from 'Ishqábád, settling first in Ṭihrán and later in Mashhad. Fírúz was called for military service after graduation with a degree in mechanics from the Technical College of Ṭihrán University, and then he worked for the National Iranian Oil Company and later in a communications operation. Because of being a Bahá'í he was discharged after the revolution began. His marriage to Miss Nasrín Thábití in 1971 resulted in the birth of two daughters. In 1973, Mr. and Mrs. Purdil made their pilgrimage to the World Centre. Increasingly, he devoted all his free time to service on the Bahá'í youth committee and to teaching children's classes. In 1979, as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Mashhad, he devoted his energies to attending to the needs of persecuted Bahá'í families. His activities led to his being arrested in September 1983. In prison he was severely lashed but he uttered no complaint. His family reported that whenever they visited him they found him perfectly calm and serene, and he counselled them to be content with whatever God had ordained for him. On 30 October 1984, Mr. Purdil was executed, but the family was not informed until 2 November, their anxieties being fed by rumours and suspicions as to his fate. Through the fearless insistence of his wife, Mr. Purdil's body was delivered to his family on 4 November and, under the supervision of the militia, they were able to make preparations for his burial. In the presence of a group of militia men, eight family members chanted prayers for the deceased, but were forbidden to weep or lament. Nevertheless, so poignant an atmosphere was created that tears streamed from the eyes of at least one observer. Many floral tributes were received by the family among which was one from a Bahá'í prisoner who had been sentenced to life imprisonment. With it was a card bearing the message: 'Dear Fírúz, congratulations to you on donning the robe of martyrdom!' And when they were informed of the death of Mr. Purdil, some of his fellow prisoners composed a poem in his memory, praising him as a pure-hearted lover of God who remained firm in the covenant and proved worthy of attaining the rose garden of martyrdom. The esteem in which Mr. Purdil was held among non-Bahá'ís was clearly demonstrated by the presence of large numbers of them at the memorial meetings held in his honour.

Grim news was communicated to the Bahá'í world again on 17 December 1984 when the House of Justice announced the execution of six Bahá'ís in Ṭihrán. Although the executions

took place on 9 December the details were unknown at that point, as neither the relatives nor friends of the martyrs were informed, and the fact of the executions was discovered only eight days later. Those who gave up their lives were: Dr. Rúḥu'lláh Ta'lím, Mr. Fírúz Aṭharí, Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ḥaqíqí, Mr. Jamshíd Púr-Ustádkár, Mr. Jamál Káshání, and Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn Farhand. Another telex followed on 18 December in which the Universal House of Justice stated that after four months' imprisonment and torture, Dr. Farhád Aṣdaqí had been hanged on 19 November; and that, although the cause of death had not been established, Mr. 'Alí-Riḍá Níyákán died on 11 November, and Mr. Ḍíyá'u'lláh Maní'i-Uskú'í died on 6 November, both in Tabríz prison, where they had spent two and a half years.

Dr. Rúḥu'lláh Ta'lím was born on 29 September 1937 in Ṭihrán. His father was a Bahá'í of Jewish background and of humble means, and although his mother did not convert from her Jewish faith, she was content to have her children raised as Bahá'ís. An extremely bright, docile and well-behaved child, Rúḥu'lláh excelled in his studies, was among the top students in his school, and at age 19 entered medical college. After graduation, he specialized in gynaecology and worked as a trainee in various hospitals in Ṭihrán. He then established a private practice in Kirmánsháh where he became well known for his spirit of dedication to the people. The size of his practice grew very large. Eventually he established a hospital called Áryá and for the benefit of his fellow physicians he created a company in which they could become shareholders. In 1972 he married a young woman of Muslim background by whom he had two daughters. On 5 December 1983 he was arrested, later released, and then arrested again. In his will he took tender leave of his family and closed with the words, '... in a few moments I will say goodbye to you forever. I ask you to forgive me. I apologize. You, my dear daughters, I ask you to assist your mother whom I love above all others.'

Mr. Fírúz Aṭharí was born in 1932 in Míyán-Duáb, Ádhirbáyján. His grandfather, Ṭáhir Mírzá Qájár, although not a believer, had assisted the Bahá'ís at one point, and for this was praised in a Tablet addressed to him by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Mr. Fírúz Aṭharí's parents spent their lives as pioneers, a service which included twenty-five years in the town of Máh-Kú. In his turn, Fírúz Aṭharí served the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh as a pioneer, first in the Fort of Máh-Kú, then in Sháhín-Dizh-i-Afshár, a town near Míyán-Duáb, and finally in Karaj, a town near Ṭihrán. He was employed by a Bahá'í firm in Ṭihrán called Fírúz Company, but he made his residence in Karaj. In 1963, he married Miss Ṭáhirih Thábit-Imání, of a well-known Bahá'í family of Yazd, and the fruit of this union was two daughters. Mr. Aṭharí was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Karaj at the time of his arrest in October 1983 when his home was invaded in the small hours of the morning and stripped of valuables. Mr. Aṭharí was led away blindfolded and his family was unable to obtain information concerning his whereabouts until Naw-Rúz, 1984, when he was permitted telephonic contact with them. Later, permission was granted him to receive, once every three weeks, visits from members of the family and close relatives over forty years of age. One of his sisters who saw him two days before his execution described his condition in these words: 'His body has been wasted; all his teeth are broken or missing; the torture he endures becomes more intense every day; all that is left is skin and bones and one great spirit. We are waiting anxiously to visit him again in two weeks' time, although on each occasion that I see him it ages me ten years.' But the anticipated visit did not take place. As one of his daughters wrote: 'We had ten visits with dad during which he always consoled us and repeated the same counsel, that we should be patient and firm in facing tribulations, that we should not be disturbed because of what has taken place, and that we should be content with the divine will and place our trust in God. On the eleventh occasion, when we went to get the visitors' pass, we were told that my father's name was not on the list of prisoners. They denied having ever had his name in their book. Finally, we were given a telephone number to contact. Very anxious and worried, we returned home and called the number. We were asked to leave our number, and were told they would be in touch with us later. We realized there was something amiss, and they were trying to conceal the truth from us. Accompanied by several friends, we went to the Bihisht-i-Zahrá cemetery. There we were given the number and location of the grave and the date of burial.

We had to go to another cemetery to visit dad's grave. We found out he had been buried thirteen days before, and we hadn't been informed.' No answer was forthcoming when the family enquired about the circumstances of the death of Mr. Fírúz Aṭharí, but on his identification card, which they later saw, was written, 'Cancelled because of hanging.'

Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ḥaqíqí, the son of Fatḥu'lláh and Fátimih Sulṭán Ḥaqíqí, was born on 13 August 1933 in Najafábád where he attended primary school, completing his secondary studies in the Technical School of Iṣfahán in 1957. After completing his military service, he went to Ṭihrán where he found employment as a technician in a power station. In 1960 he married Miss Núráníyyih Dayhímpúr, and three sons were born to them. In 1969, Mr. Ḥaqíqí, an active Bahá'í since his youth, was elected as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Daryán-i-Naw. Twice he made pilgrimage to the Holy Land with his wife, in June 1975 and in February 1977. He transferred his residence to Karaj in 1976, and in 1980 was elected to the Local Assembly. He was a studious Bahá'í and acquired a copy of each new book the Publishing Trust produced. At Nineteen Day Feasts he gave brief summaries of the books and was in charge of book sales. In June 1982, after twenty-three years' faithful service in the Department of Electric Power, he was discharged for being a Bahá'í. Two hours after midnight on 28 July 1983 he was arrested at his home and taken to prison. 'Our last visit with him was on 2 December 1984,' his wife has written. 'His face radiated with joy and happiness and he kept repeating that we should trust the Lord and remain unperturbed.' When his wife attempted to see him on 16 December, she was advised that he had been executed. She wrote, 'At that moment I felt like a bird that had lost one wing; how can a bird fly with only one wing?'

Simnán was the birthplace of Mr. Jamshíd Púr-Ustádkár. He was born on 6 September 1953. His father, Hidáyatu'lláh, was from Sangsar, and his mother, Ṣadíqih, was from Shahmírzád; both were deeply committed Bahá'ís. The family, consisting of the parents and four sons and two daughters, established their residence in Gulshahr-Vílá, a suburb of Karaj, after Jamshíd completed his military service in 1974. He qualified as an accountant and worked as chief accountant for a well-known firm in Ṭihrán, commuting from Gulshahr-Vílá where he served on the Local Spiritual Assembly. In 1979, he married Miss Mahvash Muṭlaq Árání, who bore a son. The child was three years of age when his father was executed. In March 1982 Jamshíd was discharged from his employment for being a Bahá'í and, unable to find a job, he started to transport passengers in his motor car between Karaj and Ṭihrán. In the early hours of 28 July 1983, he was arrested after the militia had searched for him in his father's home. For two hours they slapped the faces and lashed the bodies of his father and his 13-year-old brother, following which they entered the home of his mother-in-law, lashed her son until he fainted, and attempted to terrorize her by making her stand on a chair, placing a noose about her throat, and threatening to hang her when she protested their removing her Bahá'í books, and freeing her only when it was apparent she had no fear of death. The house was stripped of all valuables, and the militia left. For three months after the arrest of Mr. Púr-Ustádkár there was no news about where he had been taken, or whether he was alive or dead. When it was learned that he was in prison, visits were allowed once every fifteen days, and each time the prison guards demanded money for the expense of washing his clothing. After eighteen months' imprisonment he was executed, although his family has been unable to learn by what means. In his will dated 4 December he states that his relationship with his wife began with the remembrance of God and that in the short time in which they lived together she brought him great happiness; he urges her to do the best she can for the education of their son; he expresses gratitude to his parents for their unselfish care of him; he extends his loving greetings to his wife's parents, and to his brothers and sisters; and he commits all of them to the care of God.

Mr. Jamál Káshání was born in the autumn of 1949 in Ṭihrán, the son of 'Alí-Akbar and Báhirih Sulaymáni Káshání. Jamál's father was descended from a martyr who had died for the Bahá'í Faith in the time of Bahá'u'lláh. When Jamál was four years of age his parents pioneered to the village of 'Alíabád-Tapánchih where they remained for three years, experiencing great difficulty in finding employment or earning a livelihood, until they moved to

another pioneering post near Gunbad-i-Qábús where they farmed, grew a few vegetables, and raised sheep and cattle. Their living conditions were very primitive, their home being made of reeds and wattle, hot in summer and cold in winter, and they had to draw their drinking water from a well, strain it to remove worms and other impurities, and then boil it. The family remained there for twelve years and with the arrival of other pioneers a Local Spiritual Assembly was formed. Jamál and his brother and sister stayed with their grandmother in Gunbad-i-Qábús where they attended school. The family then moved to Gurgán where Jamál attended high school. At age sixteen, Jamál trained in Ṭihrán as an electrical technician, and at age twenty-four he married Miss Afsánih (Ilhám) Shahídí who was also descended from an early martyr. Two daughters were born to them. For nine years Jamál and his wife lived in Dihqán-Vílá where he served on the Local Spiritual Assembly. Most of the meetings of the Spiritual Assembly were held in the Káshání home. On 24 July 1983, Mr. Káshání was arrested. His mother wept, she wrote, when on one of her visits to the prison she noted that his fingers were pale yellow and his nails were blackened. 'Don't grieve, mother,' he told her, 'Trust in God; whatsoever He has ordained for us is to our true benefit.' Three non-Bahá'ís who befriended Mr. Káshání when they were imprisoned with him later visited his father and told him of the bravery and steadfastness of his son whom they had nicknamed 'Valiant'. They described his returning from the interrogations with bruises on his face and throat, but, they said, he would not recant and he was uncomplaining. On 17 December 1984, when Jamál Káshání's father visited the prison, he was informed that his son had been executed on 9 December, and was handed his clothing in a bundle.

Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn Farhand, the son of Raḥmatu'lláh and 'Aṭá Farhand, was born in Hamadán in March 1927, the second of the seven children born to this couple. When Ghulám-Ḥusayn was still a youngster, his father's people ostracized Raḥmatu'lláh and 'Aṭá, expelling them from the family, and the couple moved to Ahváz as they were no longer welcome in Hamadán. After completing his secondary school education in Ahváz, Ghulám-Ḥusayn Farhand found employment with the National Oil Company. He was a young man when his father passed away and he had to assume responsibility for the whole family. At age twenty-five, he married Miss Akram Jahángírí, and four children were born to them. Mr. Farhand served in various capacities on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ahváz. In 1961, his company transferred him to Ṭihrán and in 1978 he pioneered with his wife and family to Karaj where he was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly and served, variously, as secretary and chairman. At the beginning of the revolution he was discharged from his employment because of his being a Bahá'í, so he earned his living by doing carpentry work. He was arrested on 27 July 1983 together with six other members of the Spiritual Assembly. Although Mrs. Farhand was visiting in Ṭihrán at the time of her husband's arrest, two of their sons, Farshád and Fardád, were at home when the militia burst into the family home in the early hours of the morning. Farshád, aged 12, woke up feeling the cold metal of a gun against his temple, and witnessed the painful scene of his father being beaten and the house being looted of all valuables, including even the pocket money which the boy had received from his father the previous evening. When his brother, Fardád, protested the injustice of his father's arrest he, too, was beaten. It fell to Fardád's lot to acquaint his mother in Ṭihrán with the bad news; later, Mrs. Farhand and her children took refuge in the basement of a relative's home. After ten months of anxious enquiry, Mrs. Farhand finally received news of her husband's whereabouts. Her first visit with him took place in Evin prison in April 1984, and thereafter she was permitted to see him every few weeks until his execution on 9 December 1984. The family came to know about his execution some thirteen days after it occurred. When they called at the prison to visit him they were told he had been transferred to another prison. Because they persisted in their enquiries, they were given a phone number of the prosecutor who had given orders for the executions of Mr. Farhand and others. After insulting Mrs. Farhand and swearing abusively, the prosecutor, known to the Bahá'ís as 'Mr. Tulú'í', finally admitted that Mr. Farhand had been executed.

Ṭihrán was the birthplace of Dr. Farhád Aṣdaqí who was born on 22 September 1952, the son of staunch Bahá'ís whose ancestors

had accepted the Faith during the time of Bahá'u'lláh. After graduating from Alburz High School with excellent marks he studied medicine at the National University of Írán. In 1979 he enlisted for military service, was stationed in Bírjand, and opened a private office for medical practice. Since there was no ophthalmologist in that town he studied the subject and tried, so far as possible, to extend assistance to the people needing treatment in that line. After his military service was over, he remained in Bírjand in private practice, offering his services without charge to those unable to pay. For a time he was a member of the Spiritual Assembly of that town. Throughout his youth he had been active in service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and he served on a number of committees including the youth committee of Ṭihrán, the national teaching committee, and the national youth committee. He was one of those who were instrumental in establishing the youth teaching institute in Ṭihrán and, with others, he pioneered to Shíyán to establish a Local Spiritual Assembly. In addition, he was an assistant to the Auxiliary Board and was later appointed to the Board. In September 1981 he was arrested but to everyone's surprise he was granted his freedom on 13 December, the very day the members of the second National Spiritual Assembly were arrested, and the following day he was called to Ṭihrán to serve on the national body. Despite numerous obstacles and difficulties, he served diligently on the National Spiritual Assembly until it was disbanded in September 1983. In obedience to government regulations under which physicians were to contribute one month's service annually to the poor in the war zone, Dr. Aṣdaqí went to Bandar-i-'Abbás in May 1983. A few days later his home was invaded by the militia who had orders to arrest him. Therefore, he did not return to his home but became a wanderer. In June 1982, Dr. Aṣdaqí married a young woman from Mashhad whose father, Mr. Ni'matu'lláh Kátibpúr-Shahídí, had been martyred the previous year. Their son was born in July 1983, but Dr. Aṣdaqí did not dare visit his wife in hospital. Because their home was being watched, Mrs. Aṣdaqí with the infant became an itinerant, staying in a different place every night, just as her husband was. Only two and a half months later was Dr. Aṣdaqí able to see the child, and from that time on the three wandered from town to town and from house to house until he was arrested in June 1984. Before his arrest, he devoted his energies to assisting the oppressed and homeless Bahá'ís, but he sensed what was in store for him, and often spoke of his impending arrest and torture. 'I have pledged this to the Blessed Beauty,' he said on one occasion. His family found him resigned to the will of God on the two occasions when they were permitted to visit him in prison. The third time they were not allowed to see him, and on the fourth occasion they were told of his execution.

At the time this volume of *The Bahá'í World* was sent to press, due to the difficulties involved in communicating with the Bahá'ís in Írán, no biographical information about Mr. 'Alí-Riḍá Níyákán, or further details surrounding his martyrdom, had reached the World Centre.

Mr. Ḍíyá'u'lláh Maní'i-Uskú'í was born in 1920 in 'Ishqábád of Bahá'í parents of Persian nationality. When Ḍíyá'u'lláh was seven years of age his parents returned to Írán. After completing his primary and secondary education and his military service, Ḍíyá'u'lláh at the age of 19 volunteered to go pioneering under the 45-month teaching plan of the National Spiritual Assembly and was assigned to Zábul where the climate and living conditions were considered the worst in the country. It was difficult to earn a living but after enduring hardships for several years Mr. Maní'i-Uskú'í was able to open a small photo studio which enjoyed success despite the fact that religious extremists in the town would sometimes harangue his customers for doing business with a Bahá'í. In 1948 Mr. Maní'i-Uskú'í married Miss Ṭulú'íyyih Majídí; their home in Zábul became a centre for gathering the Bahá'í friends. One of their sons developed severe mental problems in 1974 as a result of the harassment and ridicule he suffered from the students and teachers at school, and upon the recommendation of a physician his mother and the other children moved to Ṭihrán so the boy, aged 13, could be treated. Mr. Maní'i-Uskú'í was reluctant to abandon his pioneering post where he had spent so many years, but in 1978, with the approval of the Universal House of Justice, he joined his wife and children, and chose to settle in Urúmíyyih for the purpose of better serving the Faith. He opened a shop and also conducted classes for Bahá'í youth. To the amazement of the doctors,

his son recovered. On 27 July 1981, at the peak of the revolutionary period in Írán, Mr. Maní'i-Uskú'í was taken to prison, the first Bahá'í to be arrested in Urúmíyyih. When his wife asked the authorities what crime her husband had committed, she was told he was guilty of attempting to attract people to the Bahá'í Faith not by words but by his example of showing loving kindness. The result of his trial was that he was condemned to death, but in view of his age the court later mitigated the sentence by ordering that he spend ten years in prison. On 6 November 1984 he died as a result of a heart attack after a life of service distinguished by humility and lack of ostentation. In his will he expressed heartfelt love and gratitude to his wife for her many sacrifices, and to his two sons and two daughters for their commitment to the Faith, and drew to their attention the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá about joy and sorrow, and about the perils of pride and egotism.

On 29 January 1985, when the Universal House of Justice again reported to the Bahá'ís of the world, it announced that it had just received news of the execution in Yazd of Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Ḥaṣúrí, and confirmation of the death in prison in Ṭihrán of Mr. Rustam Varjávandí who died on 15 September 1984. The number of Bahá'ís in prison, the House of Justice stated, as far as could then be ascertained, totalled 707. The telex continued, 'GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WHO WERE DISMISSED OR THEIR PENSIONS STOPPED BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH ARE NOW BEING SUMMONED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL AND COMPELLED PAY BACK ALL THE SALARIES RECEIVED FOR MANY YEARS, EVEN DECADES, FAILING WHICH THEY WILL BE IMPRISONED. CAUSE MANY RECENT IMPRISONMENTS IS INABILITY TO PAY BACK SALARIES BAHÁ'ÍS HAD RECEIVED WHILE LAWFULLY EMPLOYED BY GOVERNMENT.'

Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Ḥaṣúrí was born in 1942 in the village of Sharífábád, near the city of Yazd, the son of Yaḥyá and Rubábih Ḥaṣúrí. He had three brothers and one sister. After some years of study in the primary school in the place of his birth, Rúḥu'lláh Ḥaṣúrí continued his education by taking night classes while working in Ṭihrán. Even after his marriage in 1967 to Miss Nuṣrat Mírzá'í, the daughter of Ghulám-Riḍá and Ṭúbá Mírzá'í, he continued to pursue his studies, qualifying himself as an electrical technician. When Rúḥu'lláh was 15 years of age, his father took ill, and because Rúḥu'lláh's older brother was married, responsibility for the welfare of the family fell on Rúḥu'lláh's shoulders. Two years later, his father passed away; his mother had died previously. Rúḥu'lláh went to Ṭihrán with his family after his father's death. The many difficulties and obstacles he faced there challenged him and perhaps contributed to the depth of his character. He held various jobs including working as an optician, and six months after his marriage he began work as a driver for a radio and television organization. Subsequently, on obtaining his diploma as an electrical technician, he followed that line of employment, and in 1976 transferred to Yazd where he helped inaugurate television facilities. In addition to his principal responsibilities, he was also a director and broadcast operator of the station. In the summer of 1980, he was fired because of his being a Bahá'í, but due to the protests raised by his colleagues, the decree was altered and he was 'retired'. Even after his forced withdrawal from his job, his coworkers continued to refer to him for technical assistance and advice. He would go to the station without hesitation and lend them whatever help and support he could. In this period he was called to Ṭihrán three times by the television authorities who would have been glad to reinstate him because of his skill, but as he would not deny his Faith his pension was terminated. Thereafter, although he did odd jobs like plumbing and electrical wiring, he devoted most of his time to serving the Faith. Although while in Ṭihrán he had formerly conducted children's classes and performed other services, he now was able to increase his labours. In 1981, he was appointed an assistant to Mrs. Zhínús Ni'mat Maḥmúdí, a member of the Auxiliary Board, and the following year he was elected to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Yazd. The year after that he was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly again, and was vice-chairman, as well as being a member of the Covenant Committee. Two sons were born to Mr. and Mrs. Ḥaṣúrí. 'My husband was by nature very kind and he helped everyone in any possible way,' Mrs. Ḥaṣúrí has written. 'He listened to people's problems and would suggest solutions. He was extremely sensitive when talking with friends. At his job, or when serving the Faith, he felt deeply responsible and always did his best. He always told me not to worry

about any uncompleted housework or unaccomplished chores. "Don't worry about them," he would say, "the work of the Cause has priority over every other task." ' One of Mr. Ḥasúrí's brothers said in tribute to him, 'I didn't notice anything but kindness, a giving attitude and sacrifice on Rúḥu'lláh's part, both when he was a child and also when he matured. His sole purpose in life was serving mankind and, at the end, he sacrificed his life for this.' Rúḥu'lláh Ḥaṣúrí's arrest took place on 16 May 1982. The doorbell of the Ḥaṣúrí's home rang at 12:30 p.m. A man's voice speaking over the intercom system said, 'I have come to read the counter on the water metre.' Mrs. Ḥaṣúrí noticed a man on the roof as she stepped out to open the door, a man who had been instrumental in the arrest of the group of seven martyrs of Yazd, and who had used every opportunity to persecute the Bahá'ís and plunder their properties; within a few days of the arrest of Mr. Ḥaṣúrí, this individual was himself arrested on charges of bribery, extortion and theft, and was sentenced to prison. Although Mr. Ḥaṣúrí was not at home at the time, the guards awaited his return and arrested him. He was released, but was required to return to the court house the next day which he did, telling the Bahá'í friends, 'I do not retreat from the front line and desert my friends.' After 25 days, through the persistent efforts of his family, a brief meeting was arranged before the assistant prosecutor; Mr. Ḥaṣúrí had grown a long beard and it was clear that he had been in solitary confinement. Mr. Ḥaṣúrí and four of his friends were transferred to another prison in November 1983. In the following month he was transferred to yet another prison and for about 45 days no one had news of his whereabouts, the authorities, as was the case for the most part with Bahá'í prisoners, refusing to release information, or in some instances releasing false information. From the militia prison he was taken to court, and then to the police prison again. Finally, on 21 January 1985, in his forty-third year, he was executed by firing squad.

Mr. Rustam Varjávandí was born on 30 November 1917 in Maryamábád, near Yazd. At the time of his birth his father, originally a Zoroastrian, had just embraced the Bahá'í Faith but his mother had not converted. In accordance with Zoroastrian rites, she bathed the seven-day-old child in open air, as a result of which he caught a cold which developed into pneumonia and threatened his life. This led to serious discussion between Rustam's parents and the acceptance by his mother of the new teachings. After Rustam completed his primary school studies, Rustam's father, himself a well-known merchant of Yazd, apprenticed his son under a five-year contract to a Zoroastrian relative who owned a wholesale business in Ṭihrán. Although delighted to pursue his studies in a large centre, Rustam's movements were monitored by his employer who forbade the young man to attend Bahá'í classes and ridiculed him for refusing wine. Rustam, however, was able to buy Bahá'í books and study in his free time. Eventually, his employer's mother-in-law, who lived with them, grew sympathetic to Rustam, defended him against insults, and encouraged him to attend Bahá'í classes on Friday mornings while excusing his absence on the grounds of his visiting the public baths. When the five years ended, Mr. Varjávandí worked for another two years with the same employer as a partner on behalf of his father, then spent two years in military service. After that he worked in a wholesale company established in Saráy-i-Amír, Ṭihrán, by his father, for the sale of textiles from Yazd, as well as imported fabrics. In 1941 he and his cousin, Miss Qudsíyyih Varjávandí, were married, and two sons and two daughters were born to them. The family pioneered to Sárí for two years but the climate aggravated Mr. Varjávandí's asthma, a condition to which his illness in infancy had predisposed him, and they moved to Darrús and then to Chízar to form a Local Spiritual Assembly, after which they settled in Rustamábád Shimírán. Mr. Varjávandí commuted to work in Ṭihrán and became a well-established merchant in the bazaar until he was forced out of business through the machinations of envious merchants who resented having a Bahá'í in their midst. With complete resignation, Mr. Varjávandí sold everything he owned, settled his debts, and became a keeper of stores for a pharmaceutical company which employed him during the period 1964–1974. After sustaining a stroke from which he made a remarkable recovery, in 1976 he started to work in the office of the National Spiritual Assembly, his services being brought to a halt when the revolution gained momentum. On 30 October 1983, Mrs. Varjávandí was seized as a hostage and taken to

prison where she was interrogated for three days. Learning that she had been incarcerated, Mr. Varjávandí surrendered himself to the militia and begged them to release his wife, but she was brought to trial with him and Mr. Suhráb Varjávandí, and after refusing to deny her belief was, as they were, accused of bribing Muslims with cash to convert to the Bahá'í Faith, among other things. On 15 October 1984 Mr. Varjávandí's daughters were informed that their father had died of heart failure. Although permission was granted to his wife to have three days' leave to attend the funeral, through a misunderstanding the order permitting this did not reach her until the burial had taken place. After serving her sentence, she was released from prison on 19 November 1984.

After a few weeks of peace, on 14 March 1985 the Universal House of Justice informed the Bahá'í world of the deaths of two more believers, Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Bahrámsháhí, who was executed in Yazd on 25 February 1985, and Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Subḥání, who was executed in Ṭihrán on 5 March 1985.

Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Bahrámsháhí was born in 1933 in the village of Ráḥatábád, a suburb of Taft. His father, Gushtásb, who had accepted the Faith after investigation, was privileged to go on pilgrimage and attain the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and, much affected by the story of the martyr Rúḥu'lláh Varqá, named his son after him unaware, of course, that his son, too, would wear the crown of martyrdom. Rúḥu'lláh Bahrámsháhí's mother, Surúr, who passed away one week after the execution of her son, had been raised in a Bahá'í family. She was young when she was widowed and experienced much hardship in raising her four children, but spared no effort for their education. After the seventh grade, Rúḥu'lláh joined a group of young people, travelled to Pakistan and India, and found work in a shop in Bombay. Learning of the call issued by Shoghi Effendi for pioneers, he consulted the National Spiritual Assembly of India and was sent to the virgin territory of Alláhábád where he rented a room in a Persian hotel, and together with a young relative from Taft started a small bakery shop. They spread the Bahá'í teachings throughout a vast area and, with the establishment of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Alláhábád, won the praise of Shoghi Effendi. After their return to Írán, Rúḥu'lláh married Miss Ṭáhirih Ḍaymaráni. About a year later he returned to India with his bride. In time, however, realizing that his mother was alone, the couple went back to Taft, and then settled in a suburb of Yazd to aid in forming a Local Spiritual Assembly. Five years later they moved to Yazd. Mr. Bahrámsháhí worked in a textile mill as personnel manager but was discharged after the upheaval of 1955 when Bahá'ís throughout Írán were persecuted. In 1980, he was appointed an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board, and in 1981 and 1982 he served on the Spiritual Assembly of Yazd. On 16 May 1983, while Mr. Bahrámsháhí was in Taft, the militia entered the family dwelling and, not finding him at home, they struck Mrs. Bahrámsháhí on the head with a book, attempted to frighten and humiliate her, and took away all Bahá'í photographs, documents and books. Finally, on 18 May 1984, their true quarry was located in Taft, and arrested. Mr. Bahrámsháhí was held for fifteen days without his family having news of his welfare. After a long struggle they were permitted to see him. He was barely recognizable, with unkempt clothing, long whiskers, a shaved head, and inflamed lips and cheeks. He was in pain and could hardly speak. He kissed his mother and begged her not to weep. His wife and aunt, on their last visit, when his mother lay ill in bed, found him attired in clean clothing and looking radiant. 'Tonight I am going to the Abhá Kingdom!' he exclaimed. His wife attempted to see the Imám-Jum'ih of Yazd to beg him to intercede, not to stop the execution but to delay it long enough for the mother to bid farewell to her son, but the guard at the chief mulláh's gate refused her entry because of the lateness of the hour. However, after enquiring, he kindly informed her that the body had been delivered to Khuld-i-Barín cemetery. When news of Mr. Bahrámsháhí's execution was delivered to his mother who was critically ill, she roused herself briefly and uttered the last words she ever spoke: 'Good for him!'

Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Subḥání was born in Sháhí in 1932 and was raised as a Bahá'í. Even as a child he enjoyed memorizing the Bahá'í Writings. His father recalls having a temporary memory lapse, on one occasion, while chanting the long obligatory prayer, and his son, then aged six, who had the prayer by rote, spontaneously completing the recitation for him. When Nuṣratu'lláh Subḥání was nine years old,

his family pioneered to Shírv'an during the course of the 45-month teaching plan and, this period being one during which the believers experienced strenuous opposition from bigoted elements in the population, for a year lived in the only quarters they could find, a garage. Subsequently the family moved to Gunbad-i-Kávús where Nuṣratu'lláh Subḥání spent most of his life. He married, and five children were born of the union. He was always active in the Faith and, in 1975, with his wife and children, he pioneered to India for five years. Upon returning to Írán, he found a new spirit which intoxicated him, and his devotion to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh waxed even stronger. The last four years of his life, before his imprisonment, were spent entirely in the service of the Bahá'í Faith. About two months before his arrest on 17 June 1984, a member of the revolutionary guards visited him and, feigning friendly concern, informed him about his forthcoming arrest; in reality, he expected a bribe. Mr. Subḥání who was always even-tempered and kind, was unperturbed and made clear to his informant that he did not fear imprisonment. However, recognizing the inevitability of his being arrested, he made plans to visit friends in Iṣfahán and Shíráz in order to say farewell. On 17 June he left his home in the morning to visit friends and never returned. After a week of anxious searching, his wife and relatives at last learned his whereabouts, but for six months no visitors were permitted to see him in prison. Even his wife's letters to him, and sums of money for his expenses in prison, did not reach him, although they were handed over to the prison authorities. Then, in the period of one month, his wife was permitted to visit him twice. Following that, he was transferred to another location and visiting privileges were denied. The day before his execution, his wife was summoned to the prison and was able to spend a few moments with him, but left without knowledge of the fact that he was to be killed. Two days later the family received the news that he had been hanged on 5 March 1984. In his will and testament, Mr. Subḥání expressed his love for his family, and urged them to remain steadfast and follow the path of truth. He concluded the brief document by expressing thanks to God that he had no material substance to bequeath anyone. 'Although his neck was scarred and bruised,' said a relative who glimpsed him at the time of his burial, 'his face was serene and content, and his lips conveyed the hint of a smile.'

In March 1982 a report entitled *The Bahá'ís of Iran*, published by the Minority Rights Group Ltd., an international research institute based in the United Kingdom, had been distributed to National Spiritual Assemblies by the Universal House of Justice. In August 1985 a corrected and updated copy of the document was disseminated. And then, on 19 September 1985, after a few months' cessation of executions of Bahá'ís in Írán, the Universal House of Justice telexed the news of two further executions. On 1 August, Mr. 'Abbás Ídilkhání was executed in prison without his family's being notified, his grave being accidentally discovered near Ṭihrán. At that time, the manner of his execution was not known. He had been imprisoned on 26 April 1982 in Zanján where he remained until April 1985 when he was taken to Ṭihrán. Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Vujdání, who was arrested in Bandar-'Abbás in July 1984, was executed by firing squad on 28 August 1985. 'FROM THE END JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1985', the House of Justice stated in its telex, '63 BAHÁ'ÍS WERE ARRESTED AND 39 RELEASED. TOTAL NUMBER PRISONERS NOW 741. THIS FIGURE INCLUDES 39 PRISONERS RELEASED DURING PERIOD. BAHÁ'Í STUDENTS OF ALL LEVELS HAVE TO COMPLETE ADMISSION FORMS WHICH INCLUDE SPACE FOR ONLY FOUR OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED RELIGIONS. BAHÁ'Í STUDENTS WHO STATE THEY ARE BAHÁ'ÍS ARE DENIED SCHOOLING OR IF ADMITTED FACE TREMENDOUS PRESSURE AND HARASSMENT. OTHER FORMS PERSECUTION INNOCENT BAHÁ'ÍS PERSIST.'

Mr. 'Abbás Ídilkhání was born in 1931 in Zanján. His father, Asadu'lláh, had embraced the Bahá'í Faith through his own effort and investigation, but his mother was a Muslim. 'Abbás spent his youth in Ṭihrán training as a blacksmith, and later he qualified himself as an electrical technician specializing in the installation and repair of air-conditioning units. His scholastic education did not go beyond primary school, but he learned a great deal through the study of the Bahá'í Writings. When he was about thirty years of age, Mr. Ídilkhání married Miss Parvín Faná'íyán; two children were born to them, a boy and a girl. The couple made their home a centre for teaching the Faith, and when Mr. Aydilkhání addressed gatherings of

seekers he deeply impressed them by his eloquent exposition of the Bahá'í teachings and principles. A few years after their marriage, the Ídilkhánís settled in Zanján as pioneers where they constructed a building to serve as their living quarters and place of business. Enemies of the Faith mistook the structure for a Bahá'í Centre and caused trouble for Mr. Ídilkhání, but he dealt with the situation in good humour and showed friendly conduct toward the neighbours, and completed the construction. Moreover, after living among them for a few years, he won the hearts of the townspeople to a degree that was remarked upon by anyone who visited. 'The people of Zanján would write a book two metres thick if they were asked to describe his virtues and qualities, so loved and respected was he!' his brother-in-law has written. Throughout his imprisonment he put his skills at the service of his jailers. One year after being arrested, his family were denied the opportunity to visit him. On 4 August 1985, Mrs. Ídilkhání received a telephone call from the public prosecutor who instructed her to visit her husband. She went to the prison and was herself incarcerated and not allowed to return home. A few days later, the family was told by the authorities that 'Abbás Ídilkhání had died of heart failure on 1 August, but when they called for his belongings they heard various accounts of his death and were unable to obtain definite information. Mrs. Ídilkhání was imprisoned, her family concluded, in order to avoid having the people of Zanján visit her in large numbers to console her when news of the death of her husband reached them.

Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Vujdání, the son of Ṣafar-'Alí and Fáṭimih Vujdání, was born in Bandar-'Abbás in 1928. His father had accepted the Faith as a result of his own investigations, and had then introduced it to his wife who also embraced it. As a child, Raḥmatu'lláh was distinguished among the children for his intelligence, and as a Bahá'í youth he excelled others in literary talent; his chanting of the Holy Writings and prayers in meetings attracted the hearts of all those present. After receiving his education he was employed by the Ministry of Education as a teacher in a village not far from Bandar-'Abbás. He spent four years in the township of Ḥájíábád and formed the first Bahá'í group there. In 1949 he married Miss Ishráqíyyih 'Aẓímí; six children were born to them. In 1953 he was transferred to the township of Mínáb where the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed, largely through his efforts. Fanatical and prejudiced people in the town, enraged by the formation of the Spiritual Assembly, complained to the authorities about the Vujdání family and as a result Mr. Vujdání was, as a punishment, transferred to the remote island of Súzá, which has a difficult climate and where camels are the sole means of transportation. Here, together with his expectant wife, two small children, and his blind brother, he spent two trying years under arduous circumstances, but he succeeded in delivering the Bahá'í message to the inhabitants of the island. In March 1955, he was suspended from service for eight months because of registering as a Bahá'í on a questionnaire, but after strenuous efforts he succeeded in appealing the verdict of dismissal and was reinstated in his job in Súzá. Subsequently he was transferred to the island of Qishm, then to Bandar-'Abbás and finally to Mínáb where he remained for five years, his sincerity and effectiveness resulting in his being appointed supervisor of physical education in the township. Meanwhile, he continued his studies and eventually obtained his degree in literature. In July 1972, while living in Iṣfahán, the Vujdánís learned of the death of their son, Farámarz, a student at Mindanao State University in the Philippines, who with two of his Bahá'í friends had been murdered there while on a teaching trip to a rural area inhabited by Muslims.[1] Upon Mr. Vujdání's return to Bandar-'Abbás in 1977 he was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly and served as its secretary. At midnight on 24 July 1984 he was arrested, and he gave up his life in the path of his Beloved on 28 August 1985, his body being consigned for burial in the section of the Muslim cemetery reserved for infidels, despite the family's protestations. Nevertheless, the family was able to arrange to wash and shroud the body, and offer Bahá'í prayers. The guards assigned to supervise the funeral became so affected by the serenity and dignity of the family and the other Bahá'ís that they asked many questions about the Bahá'í teachings; they laid aside their guns to participate in the burial, expressed their regrets for the martyrdom of one so loved and respected, and embraced members of the family

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, pp. 514–16.

at the end of the ceremony. One non-Bahá'í among the many who attended the funeral was heard to exclaim, 'Mr. Vujdání was well known for his good character and his gentleness; why have they done this to him?'

It was reported to the World Centre on 21 November 1985 that Mr. Núru'd-Dín Ṭá'ifí died of a heart attack in the hospital prison in Pahlavídizh (Gurgán) on 12 October 1985. His body was given to his family in Gurgán, and he was buried with a Bahá'í burial ceremony. Mr. Ṭá'ifí, one of whose maternal uncles had been martyred for the Faith in Sháhrúd, was born into a devout Bahá'í family about 1925. He trained as a pharmacist and in his thirty-first year pioneered to a small village in the vicinity of Gurgán where he established a pharmacy which, despite his not being from the area, was always full of customers who reposed great trust in him. Often those who were without funds were given free medicine. His geniality, honesty, hospitality and good moral character resulted in his acquiring many friends. He never lost an opportunity to speak about the principles of the Faith when talking with his acquaintances and associates, and because of his familiarity with Islamic traditions he was able to present eloquently the verities of the Faith. He constantly participated actively in the work of the Bahá'í Faith and served on a number of committees including the translation committee. He was tireless in his encouragement of pioneers and travelling teachers to outlying areas, and generous in his support of the Bahá'í Fund. In the mid-1950s he married Miss Ṭáhirih Thaná'í; seven sons were born to them. With three other members of the Local Spiritual Assembly, Mr. Ṭá'ifí, who had suffered a heart ailment for many years and required medication, rest and a special diet, was arrested on 30 October 1983. He was transferred from one prison to another and was unable to follow his normal medical regimen. His requests for medication and medical treatment, which he offered to pay for, were ignored. He was consistently subjected to severe psychological torture not only by his interrogators but by a circle of political prisoners into whose midst he was thrown. He experienced physical torture, too. On one occasion, clad only in his thin underclothing, he was led out of doors by the guards and left standing for several hours in the bitter cold with his hands tied, one arm being placed behind his head, and the other twisted behind his back. He refused to recant his Faith and bore his sufferings with dignity. The uncertainty of his fate and that of his friends added to his difficulties and anguish. When the verdict of the court was finally handed down, Mr. Ṭá'ifí was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. The effects of his maltreatment took their toll. On one of the visits from his family, they found him disoriented and bewildered. Once when he was at last able to see a physician the doctor warned the authorities that unless Mr. Ṭá'ifí were able to have rest and medication, he would die within six months. The warning went unheeded. After many months' imprisonment he sustained a massive heart attack. A number of hours went by before he was moved to a hospital. But it was too late. Despite the diligent efforts of the doctors, he died ten days later.

On 24 November 1985 the Universal House of Justice released to the Bahá'í world news of the execution by firing squad on 19 November 1985 of Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Ashjárí, a Bahá'í prisoner in Tabríz, who had been imprisoned for over four years. His body was given to the family, as was not the case with many other executed Bahá'ís, and burial took place on 22 November, the House of Justice stated. It concluded the message by pointing out that 767 Bahá'ís were still reported to be in prison.

Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Ashjárí, who was martyred in his fiftieth year, was born in Karaj to Bahá'í parents, his mother, Rubábih, being descended from an early martyr of Yazd, and his father, Muḥammad-'Alí, being also a devout believer, though both lived circumspect lives and concealed their association with the Faith in order to avoid arousing hostility among their Muslim neighbours. As a youth, 'Azízu'lláh, showed no inclination toward religion but idled his time away in cafes and bars, drinking with youth who had sympathy for communistic ideologies. Through meeting a Bahá'í youth from Kirmán, about 1956, he became attracted to the Faith, to the delight of his parents, and a year or so later devoted himself to it wholeheartedly. In time, he became a home decorator and ran a factory that manufactured mosaic tiles. He suffered business losses through the machinations of former friends who conspired against him, angered by his affiliation with the Bahá'í

Faith. Although his formal education did not extend beyond junior high school, as a result of assiduous study of the Bahá'í teachings he became a knowledgeable Bahá'í teacher and speaker. In 1959, Mr. Ashjárí married Miss Manízhih 'Abbúdí. The fruit of this union was a daughter and a son. In 1973, Mr. and Mrs. Ashjárí pioneered from Ṭihrán to Ardibíl in the Province of Ádhirbáyján where Mr. Ashjárí served as an assistant to the Auxiliary Board, travelling throughout the Province to encourage Local Spiritual Assemblies and groups. He was arrested in Ardibíl on 7 September 1981. Until his death in November 1984, he wrote letters to his family from prison, urging them to be patient and trust in the Lord.

Although the end of the year 1985 did not mark the cessation of oppression of the believers in Írán, it brought significant news which was surely a direct result of the sacrifices of the Persian friends in that land. On 17 December the Universal House of Justice telexed the Bahá'í world: 'WITH JOYFUL HEARTS WE ACCLAIM UNPRECEDENTED RECOGNITION BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY THROUGH ADOPTION BY UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF RESOLUTION MAKING SPECIFIC REFERENCE PERSECUTED FRIENDS IRAN. FOR FIRST TIME NAME PRECIOUS FAITH BAHÁ'U'LLÁH MENTIONED HIGHEST MOST WIDELY REPRESENTATIVE INTERNATIONAL FORUM YET ESTABLISHED THUS FULFILLING LONG-CHERISHED WISH BELOVED GUARDIAN. SIGNIFICANCE THIS MOMENTOUS DEVELOPMENT ALSO UNDERSCORED BY FACT THAT ONLY IN THREE INSTANCES BEFORE HAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ITSELF ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS CENSURING PARTICULAR COUNTRIES FOR BAD HUMAN RIGHTS RECORDS. PROCESS WHICH RESULTED SUCH A REMARKABLE OUTCOME BEGAN TWO YEARS AGO WITH DECISION UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO SEND REPRESENTATIVE IRAN INVESTIGATE VIOLATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS INCLUDING THOSE DIRECTLY AFFECTING BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY. THE COMMISSION DETERRED IN ITS INTENTION BY IRANIAN AUTHORITIES REFERRED ISSUE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHERE MATTER WAS DISCUSSED FIRST IN THIRD COMMITTEE WHEN INTERESTS FAITH WERE VIGOROUSLY UPHELD BY REPRESENTATIVES VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND RESOLUTION WAS PROPOSED AND THEN IN PLENARY SESSION WHICH RATIFIED RESOLUTION ON 13 DECEMBER. NOTABLE CONSEQUENCE IS RETENTION ISSUE AGENDA GENERAL ASSEMBLY THUS PERMITTING INTENSIFICATION EFFORTS RELIEVE SITUATION SUFFERING BELIEVERS IRAN IN ANTICIPATION DAY COMPLETE EMANCIPATION FAITH GOD THAT LAND. WARMLY COMMEND ACKNOWLEDGE UNTIRING EFFORTS UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVES BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RESOLUTELY SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES ALL CONTINENTS.

'OCCURRING IN CONJUNCTION WITH PRESENTATION PEACE STATEMENT BY AMATU'L-BAHÁ RÚḤÍYYIH KHÁNUM TO SECRETARY-GENERAL UNITED NATIONS ONLY FEW WEEKS BEFORE, WITH ONGOING DELIVERY SAME STATEMENT TO HEADS STATE THROUGHOUT WORLD AND WITH UNEQUIVOCAL PUBLIC DEFENCE IRANIAN BAHÁ'ÍS BY PRESIDENT UNITED STATES AT HUMAN RIGHTS DAY CEREMONY, THIS INESTIMABLE ACHIEVEMENT DEFINITELY AFFIRMS EMERGENCE FAITH OBSCURITY HERALDS NEW PHASE IRREPRESSIBLE UNFOLDMENT DIVINELY APPOINTED WORLD ORDER BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.'

The love, courage, and steadfastness of the friends in the Cradle of the Faith, despite the hardships heaped upon them by an intolerant fanaticism in that country in the years since the Islamic revolution of 1978, have been a source of constant inspiration to Bahá'ís throughout the world, giving impetus to their activities and impelling them to increased and more audacious efforts to acquaint their fellow men with the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh. The steadfastness of the Iranian believers was further symbolized by a gift of 184 red roses, purchased from the donations of Bahá'í prisoners in three prisons in Írán, and presented to a number of National Conventions—Australia, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States—at Riḍván 1986. An accompanying note said: 'An offering of love presented by the friends of the Cradle of the Faith in memory of the known martyrs of Írán and those who have disappeared in that land to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of... in grateful appreciation of your continuing efforts to vindicate the rights of Iranian believers—rights that are not yet recognized and of which they are still deprived.'

Telex reports from National Conventions conveyed the impact of this touching gesture on the receiving communities. The Australian National Convention responded. 'OVERWHELMED EMOTION RECEIPT GIFT RED ROSES FROM IMPRISONED IRANIAN BELIEVERS BEHALF MAR-

TYRS. IN RESPONSE DELEGATES MOVED RECOMMEND NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY LAUNCH UNPRECEDENTED NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF PUBLICITY BRING NAME TEACHINGS BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO ALL AUSTRALIANS.'

The National Spiritual Assembly of Germany replied in acknowledgement of the gift: 'MOST TOUCHING, MOST MOVING, MOST OVERWHELMING EVENT ON EVE OF 2 MAY 1986 WHEN MORE THAN 400 BELIEVERS FROM GERMANY AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ASSEMBLED ... MEMORIAL GATHERING MARTYRS CRADLE FAITH. IN PRESENCE COUNSELLORS ADIB TAHERZADEH, HARTMUT GROSSMANN 184 RED ROSES CONTRIBUTED BY THE ADMIRED BELIEVERS PRESENTLY IMPRISONED IN THREE MAJOR PRISONS OF IRAN WERE BROUGHT INTO HALL IMPELLING CRYING ASSEMBLAGE TO ARISE AND STAND UP AS SYMBOL OF LOVE AND UTMOST RESPECT LISTENING TO SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM FRIENDS IRAN. FEELINGS OF RESPECT SORROW LOVE NEW DEDICATION IMPOSSIBLE TO DESCRIBE ... AFTER ADDRESS OF COUNSELLOR TAHERZADEH WHO CONCENTRATED THOUGHTS OF BELIEVERS ON SPIRITUAL REALM, THE ASSEMBLAGE PROCEEDED—ESCORTED BY ROSES FROM IRAN—TO MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR WHERE 195 LIGHTED TORCHES SURROUNDED HOUSE OF WORSHIP AND WELCOMED WITH THEIR BRIGHT FLAMES THE PROCESSION WHICH CIRCUMAMBULATED MOTHER TEMPLE EUROPE TO ENTER INNER HALL ... A MOVING MEMORIAL SERVICE WAS HELD ... OUR PROMISE GOES TO THE FRIENDS IN THE PRISONS OF IRAN FOR NEW SERVICE NEW EFFORTS INCREASED TEACHING BELOVED FAITH.'

The National Convention of Canada opened its Convention report with: 'OVER 1000 BAHÁ'ÍS GATHERED NATIONAL CONVENTION CANADA THRILLED, HUMBLED, HEART-RENDING GIFT BAHÁ'Í PRISONERS IRAN.'

The National Convention of the United Kingdom telexed: 'THE MOST MOVING CLIMAX OF CONVENTION OCCURRED WHEN 184 DEEP RED ROSES, SYMBOLS OF THE IRANIAN BAHÁ'ÍS' SACRIFICIAL LOVE, WERE PRESENTED. ALL HEARTS WERE PROFOUNDLY STIRRED AND MANY EYES FILLED WITH TEARS AT THIS BEAUTIFUL EVIDENCE OF STEADFAST LOVE FOR BAHÁ'U'LLÁH BY SOULS OVERSHADOWED BY DEATH AND PERSECUTION. SUCH SUBLIME LOVE MUST SURELY INSPIRE A DEEP RESOLVE IN ALL OUR HEARTS TO SERVE THE FAITH WITH THE UTMOST DEDICATION, AND TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE SIX YEAR PLAN.'

The friends gathered at the National Convention of the United States sent the message: 'THE LOVE EXPRESSED THROUGH THE WORDS AND THE ROSES SENT TO US BY OUR STALWART PERSIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS HAVE DEEPLY MOVED OUR HEARTS AND CHALLENGED US TO ACTION.'

Expressions of appreciation, pledges, and reports of projects initiated in the name of the 'gift of red roses' or in honour of the prisoners and martyrs, reached the World Centre from every corner of the globe.

In its message to the Bahá'ís of the world at Riḍván 1986 in which the Universal House of Justice reviewed the conspicuous progress of the Bahá'í Faith during the preceding year, and in which it described the Seven Year Plan as 'a Plan which will be remembered as having set the seal on the third epoch of the Formative age', tribute was paid to those who gave their lives. It was stated: 'The opening of that Plan coincided with the recrudescence of savage persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán, a deliberate effort to eliminate the Cause of God from the land of its birth. The heroic steadfastness of the Persian friends has been the mainspring of tremendous international attention focused on the Cause, eventually bringing it to the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and, together with world-wide publicity in all the media, accomplishing its emergence from the obscurity which characterized and sheltered the first period of its life. This dramatic process impelled the Universal House of Justice to address a Statement on Peace to the Peoples of the World and arrange for its delivery to Heads of State and the generality of the rulers.'

Thus, even in the flush of victory, the followers of Bahá'u'lláh remembered with awe, gratitude and admiration those whose blood was spilled to water the tree of the Cause of God and who, from the invisible realm, hasten the inevitable day when its outreaching branches will shelter all mankind.

But even as the Bahá'í world rejoiced yet another atrocity was about to be perpetrated upon the hapless Iranian Bahá'í community, an event which was to yield the youngest martyr to give his life in the period under survey and indeed, so far as is known, the youngest since the beginning of the Islamic revolution in 1979. Although the exact date of the incident is unknown, it would have occurred not long

before 28 April 1986 when it was reported to the World Centre. Communicating the news to the Bahá'í world community on 12 May 1986, the Universal House of Justice stated, 'FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD PAYMÁN SUBḤÁNÍ TOGETHER WITH HIS FATHER RÚḤU'L-AMÍN WAS TAKEN BY A GROUP OF FANATICS, ENCOURAGED BY OFFICIAL RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS, TO THE MOUNTAINS, WHERE THEY WERE BEATEN AND STONED. BOTH WERE PRESUMED DEAD AND THROWN OVER A CLIFF. ACCIDENTALLY A VEHICLE STRAYED INTO THE AREA AND FOUND THEM. THE FATHER, BARELY ALIVE, WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL IN ṬIHRÁN WHERE HE IS STILL IN SERIOUS CONDITION. THE SON, PAYMÁN, WAS DEAD. THESE CRIMES AFTER RELATIVE QUIET PERIOD IN ÍRÁN HAVE CAUSED CONCERN SAFETY, WELL BEING IRANIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY . . .'

Approximately twenty-five years ago, Ṭáhirih and Rúḥu'l-Amín Subḥání, the parents of Paymán Subḥání, pioneered to Súrán, a town about twenty-five miles from Saráván, in the Province of Balúchistán and Sístán, and established a small business there. Paymán's father became well-known among the townspeople for his good conduct and his trustworthy character, but at the beginning of the Islamic revolution, hostile elements in the community spoke against him, and on one occasion a ruffian tried to invade Mr. Rúḥu'l-Amín Subḥání's home. Although the police promised to guard Mr. Subḥání's house when he reported the incident, he and his family were frequently threatened by fanatical townsmen, and in 1981 he settled his family first in Saráván and then in Yazd, and returned alone to Súrán to attend to his shop. He was subsequently informed that he was to be arrested and brought to trial, so for two years he went into hiding and then returned to Súrán to reopen his shop. He was on one or two occasions taken into custody and questioned about his service as secretary of the Bahá'í community of Súrán, and one of his sons was also interrogated at least once. In 1983, Mr. Rúḥu'l-Amín spent twelve days in prison and was released after two Muslim Baluchis, who were his friends and business associates and who patiently endured the insults of the prison officials, signed as guarantors. One spring morning in 1986 a stranger entered the shop owned by Mr. Subḥání and purchased some bales of cotton. Saying that he had no car, he asked Mr. Subḥání to give him a lift with the goods to a nearby address. Paymán who often assisted his father in the shop asked to join them, as he and his father intended to proceed to their home after delivering the merchandise. In the middle of town the passenger asked Mr. Subḥání to stop for two of his friends who flagged them down, and these two men who were also unknown to Mr. Subḥání climbed into the back of the small van. As they reached the outskirts of the town, Mr. Subḥání began to suspect a plot. Before he could bring the van to a halt, one of the men riding in the back jumped into the front seat, pushed him aside and took the wheel, saying, 'This is a hold-up.' Mr. Subḥání said they could have the van and his money, and the key to his home and the safe, but pleaded with them to spare their lives. He and Paymán were then blindfolded and their hands were bound. Their captors drove them into the wilderness about two hours' journey from town, and ordered them to step out. Mr. Subḥání was given the choice of being beheaded, having his skull crushed under the wheels of the van, or being thrown down the mountain. Paymán, his father later reported, cried out, 'Don't separate me from my father; let me die with him!' But his request was ignored. After begging that Paymán not be injured and being assured that he would not be, Mr. Subḥání chose to be thrown from the cliff. He was beaten senseless, his body cast from the heights, and he was left for dead. He regained consciousness after eighteen hours, crawled up the side of the mountain, hailed down a truck that was loading rocks, and was eventually able to obtain much-needed medical assistance. Mr. Subḥání made a partial recovery, although half his face is now paralysed, he is deaf in one ear and has impaired hearing in the other, and his vision has seriously deteriorated. Despite this, he speaks of the incident with spiritual poise and mental tranquillity. Only when he mentions his young son, Paymán, can one detect the depth of Mr. Subḥání's grief and shock. Several days after the incident described above, the body of Paymán was discovered in a field. His hands and feet were bound, and his body had been savagely stoned, beaten and mutilated. Shortly after the tragic loss of Paymán, his mother, who at the time of his martyrdom was pregnant, gave birth to twin daughters.

At age fifteen, Paymán Subḥání is thus far the youngest Bahá'í to have given his life for

the Bahá'í Faith in the present episode of persecutions; the first to do so within the Six Year Plan which opened on 21 April 1986 and terminated on 20 April 1992; and again the first to do so during the earliest hours of the fourth epoch of the Formative Age—that age whose inception, the Universal House of Justice declared in its letter of 2 January 1986 to 'the Bahá'ís of the world', was recognized in the 'new development in the maturation of Bahá'í institutions' through the setting of national goals of the Six Year Plan 'largely formulated by National Spiritual Assemblies and Boards of Counsellors'.

# BAHÁ'ÍS KILLED IN ÍRÁN (1978–20 April 1986)

ALL praise be to God Who, from every drop of blood shed by His chosen ones, hath brought forth a vast creation whose number none but Himself can reckon. He hath raised them to be the embodiments of His love and the manifestations of His tender affection. It is they who are the hands of His Cause amongst men. It is they who have rendered aid unto God in every age and have arisen to promote that which He hath purposed in such wise that the majesty of the kings and their dreadful might have failed to affright them, nor have they been hindered from following the path of truth by the clash of arms and the furious clamour of battalions. They have raised their triumphal cry amidst all that dwell in the heavens and on the earth, summoning everyone unto the Lord of all mankind, He Who is the Ruler of this world and of the next, the God of the throne on high and of the earth below.

*He is God—Blessed and Exalted is He*

ALL praise unto the Almighty the Sanctified—glorified be His power—Who hath ordained that the tyranny of the unjust and the violence of the oppressors should become the means whereby the true lovers draw nigh unto the glorious habitation of the Best Beloved and the sincere among His servants attain the Paradise of communion with Him Who is the Desire of all men, and that sufferings and tribulations should serve as the instrument whereby His Word of command is spread abroad and the standards of His praise are unfurled in all regions.

How great is His transcendent power, how immensely exalted His all-embracing Will, inasmuch as He produceth light from fire and joy from sorrow.

They that are sunk in heedlessness fondly imagine that massacre and crucifixion cause the fire of the Word of God to be extinguished, and regard martrydom as a devastating injury. They are utterly oblivious of the truth that through such afflictions the Cause of God is exalted, its fame is blazoned far and wide, and the martyrs themselves are enabled to attain the boundless retreats of nearness unto God. Immeasurably exalted is the Lord of Wisdom who doeth that which He willeth and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.

*Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.*

Bahá'u'lláh

*Note:* This list, based on information received at the World Centre subsequent to the publication of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII (1979–1983), corrects and supersedes that which appeared on pages 291–293 of that volume, and is followed by photographs, where available, of those who were martyred, or abducted and presumed dead, between 21 April 1979 and 21 April 1986, and whose photographs were not available at the time vol. XVIII went to press.

The gathering of biographical and other information about the martyrs, and their photographs, is an ongoing process of vital interest to the Bahá'í World Centre. Although many of the martyrs served at various times as members of Bahá'í institutions, an effort has been made to identify the kind of services they were performing at the time of arrest and execution, as indicated by the following key:

■■ denotes member of the Continental Board of Counsellors
■ denotes member of the Auxiliary Board
** denotes member of the National Spiritual Assembly
* denotes member of a Local Spiritual Assembly

| *No.* | *Name* | *Date* | *Place where martyrdom occurred* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **1978** | |
| 1. | Mr. Aḥmad Ismá'ílí | 1978 | Ahram, Búshihr |
| 2. | Mr. Ḍíyá'u'lláh Ḥaqíqat | 13 Aug. 1978 | Jahrum, Fárs |
| 3. | Mr. Shír-Muḥammad Dastpish | Dec. 1978 | Buyr-Aḥmad, Iṣfahán |
| 4. | Mrs. 'Avaḍ-Gul Fahandizh | 14 Dec. 1978 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 5. | Mr. Ṣifátu'lláh Fahandizh | 14 Dec. 1978 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 6. | Mr. Khusraw Afnání | 22 Dec. 1978 | Miyán-Duáb, Ádhirbáyján |
| 7. | Mr. Parvíz Afnání | 22 Dec. 1978 | Miyán-Duáb, Ádhirbáyján |
| | | **1979** | |
| 8. | Mr. Ibráhím Ma'naví | early 1979 | Hiṣár, Khurásán |
| 9. | Mr. Ḥájí-Muḥammad 'Azízí | 9 Jan. 1979 | Khurmúj, Bushihr |
| 10. | Mr. Ḥusayn Shakúrí | 2 Apr. 1979 | Ushnavíyyih, Ádhirbáyján |
| 11. | Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Khursandí* | 12 Apr. 1979 | Tihrán, Tihrán |
| 12. | Mr. Bahár Vujdání | 27 Sep. 1979 | Mahábád, Ádhirbáyján |
| 13. | Mr. 'Alí Sattárzádih | 28 Oct. 1979 | Búkán, Suristán |
| 14. | Mr. 'Aẓamatu'lláh Fahandizh | 14 Dec. 1979 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| | | **1980** | |
| 15. | Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Panáhí | 4 Feb. 1980 | Urúmíyyih, Ádhirbáyján |

*Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.*

Bahá'u'lláh

| *No.* | *Name* | *Date* | *Place where martyrdom occurred* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16. | Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn A'ẓamí | 6 May 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 17. | Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Mu'íní | 6 May 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 18. | Mr. Badí'u'lláh Yazdání | 6 May 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 19. | Mr. Parvíz Bayání | 11 May 1980 | Píránshahr |
| 20. | Mr. Mír-Asadu'lláh Mukhtárí | 18 May 1980 | Andrún, Khurásán |
| 21. | Mr. Ḥasan Ismá'ílzádih | Jun. 1980 | Sanandaj, Kurdistan |
| 22. | Mr. Yúsif Subḥání | 27 Jun. 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 23. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Ástání* | 14 Jul. 1980 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 24. | Dr. Farámarz Samandarí* | 14 Jul. 1980 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 25. | Mr. Muḥammad Akbarí | 16 Jul. 1980 | Rasht, Mázindarán |
| 26. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Maḥbúbíyán | 30 Jul. 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 27. | Mr. Dhabíḥu'lláh Mu'miní | 15 Aug. 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 28. | Mr. Núru'lláh Akhtar-Khávarí■ | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 29. | Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Dhabíḥíyán■ | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 30. | Mr. Firaydún Farídání■ | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 31. | Mr. Maḥmúd Ḥasanzádih | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 32. | Mr. 'Abdu'l-Vahháb Kázimí-Manshádí | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 33. | Mr. Jalál Mustaqím* | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 34. | Mr. 'Alí Muṭahharí* | 8 Sep. 1980 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 35. | Mr. Riḍá Fírúzí | 9 Nov. 1980 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 36. | Mr. Muḥammad-Ḥusayn Ma'ṣúmí | 23 Nov. 1980 | Núk, Bírjand |
| 37. | Mrs. Shikkar-Nisá' Ma'ṣúmí | 23 Nov. 1980 | Núk, Bírjand |
| 38. | Mr. Bihrúz Saná'í | 17 Dec. 1980 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| | **1981** | | |
| 39. | Prof. Manúchihr Ḥakím** | 12 Jan. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 40. | Mr. Mihdí Anvarí | 17 Mar. 1981 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 41. | Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání | 17 Mar. 1981 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 42. | Mrs. Núráníyyih Yársháṭir | Apr. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 43. | Mr. Sattár Khushkhú | 30 Apr. 1981 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 44. | Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Mihdi-Zádih | 30 Apr. 1981 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 45. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat■ | 30 Apr. 1981 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 46. | Mr. Muḥammad (Suhráb) Ḥabíbí* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |
| 47. | Mr. Muḥammad-Báqir (Suhayl) Ḥabíbí* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |
| 48. | Mr. Ḥusayn Khándil* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |
| 49. | Mr. Ṭarázu'lláh Khuzayn* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |

*Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.*

Bahá'u'lláh

| *No.* | *Name* | *Date* | *Place where martyrdom occurred* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 50. | Mr. Ḥusayn Muṭlaq* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |
| 51. | Dr. Fírúz Na'ímí* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |
| 52. | Dr. Náṣir Vafá'í* | 14 Jun. 1981 | Hamadán, Hamadán |
| 53. | Mr. Buzurg 'Alavíyán* | 23 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 54. | Mr. Háshim Farnúsh■* | 23 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 55. | Mr. Farhang Mavaddat* | 23 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 56. | Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí■■ | 24 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 57. | Mr. Badí'u'lláh Faríd | 24 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 58. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí | 24 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 59. | Mr. Varqá Tibyáníyán (Tibyání) | 24 Jun. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 60. | Mr. Kamálu'd-Dín Bakhtávar | 26 Jul. 1981 | Mashhad, Khurásán |
| 61. | Mr. Ni'matu'lláh Kátibpúr-Shahídí | 26 Jul. 1981 | Mashhad, Khurásán |
| 62. | Mr. 'Abdu'l-'Alí Asadyárí* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 63. | Mr. Ḥusayn Asadu'lláh-Zádih* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 64. | Mr. Mihdí Báhirí* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 65. | Dr. Masrúr Dakhílí* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 66. | Dr. Parvíz Fírúzí* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 67. | Mr. Manúchihr Khádí'í* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 68. | Mr. Alláh-Virdí Míthágí | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 69. | Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Taḥqíqí* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 70. | Mr. Ismá'íl Zihtáb* | 29 Jul. 1981 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 71. | Mr. Ḥusayn Rastigár-Námdár | 5 Aug. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 72. | Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh 'Azízí* | 29 Aug. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 73. | Mr. Bahman 'Áṭifí | 11 Sep. 1981 | Dáryún, Iṣfahán |
| 74. | Mr. 'Izzat 'Áṭifí | 11 Sep. 1981 | Dáryún, Iṣfahán |
| 75. | Mr. Aḥmad Riḍvání | 11 Sep. 1981 | Dáryún, Iṣfahán |
| 76. | Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Rawḥání | 11 Sep. 1981 | Dáryún, Iṣfahán |
| 77. | Mr. Gushtásb Thábit-Rásikh | 11 Sep. 1981 | Dáryún, Iṣfahán |
| 78. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Sipihr-Arfa' | 23 Oct. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 79. | Mr. Mihdí Amín Amín** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 80. | Mr. Jalál 'Azízí** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 81. | Dr. 'Izzatu'lláh Furúhí■** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 82. | Mrs. Zhínús Ni'mat Maḥmúdí■** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 83. | Dr. Maḥmúd Majdhúb** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 84. | Mr. Qudratu'lláh Rawḥání** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 85. | Dr. Sírús Rawshaní** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 86. | Mr. Kámrán Ṣamímí** | 27 Dec. 1981 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |

*Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.*

Bahá'u'lláh

| *No.* | *Name* | *Date* | *Place where martyrdom occurred* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **1982** | | |
| 87. | Mrs. Shívá Maḥmúdí Asadu'lláh-Zádih* | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 88. | Mr. Iskandar 'Azízí* | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 89. | Mrs. Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá Baqá | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 90. | Mr. Fatḥu'lláh Firdawsí* | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 91. | Mr. Khusraw Muhandisí* | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 92. | Mr. Kúrush Ṭalá'í* | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 93. | Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Yávarí* | 4 Jan. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 94. | Mr. Ibráhím Khayrkháh | 26 Feb. 1982 | Bábul-Sar, Mázindarán |
| 95. | Mr. Ḥusayn Vaḥdat-i-Ḥaqq | 28 Feb. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 96. | Mr. 'Askar Muḥammadí | 2 Apr. 1982 | Raḥímkhán, Kirmán |
| 97. | Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Khayyámí | 12 Apr. 1982 | Urúmíyyih, Ádhirbáyján |
| 98. | Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Gulshaní | 29 Apr. 1982 | Mashhad, Khurásán |
| 99. | Mrs. Ishráqíyyih Furúhar* | 8 May 1982 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 100. | Mr. Maḥmúd Farúhar* | 8 May 1982 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 101. | Mr. Badí'u'lláh Ḥaqpaykar* | 8 May 1982 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 102. | Mr. Ágáhu'lláh Tízfahm | 10 May 1982 | Urúmíyyih, Ádhirbáyján |
| 103. | Miss Jalálíyyih Mushta'il-Uskú'í | 10 May 1982 | Urúmíyyih, Ádhirbáyján |
| 104. | Mrs. Írán Raḥímpúr (Khurmá'í) | 12 May 1982 | Dizfúl, Khuzistan |
| 105. | Mr. Naṣru'lláh Amíní* | 16 May 1982 | Kháníábád, Ṭihrán |
| 106. | Mr. Sa'du'lláh Bábázádih* | 16 May 1982 | Kháníábád, Ṭihrán |
| 107. | Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Ḥaqqání | 1 Jun. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 108. | Mr. Muḥammad 'Abbásí* | 9 Jul. 1982 | Qazvín, Ṭihrán |
| 109. | Mr. Jadídu'lláh Ashraf* | 9 Jul. 1982 | Qazvín, Ṭihrán |
| 110. | Mr. Manúchihr Farzánih-Mu'ayyad* | 9 Jul. 1982 | Qazvín, Ṭihrán |
| 111. | Mr. Muḥammad Manṣúrí* | 9 Jul. 1982 | Qazvín, Ṭihrán |
| 112. | Mr. Manúchihr Vafá'í | 9 Jul. 1982 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 113. | Mr. 'Abbás-'Alí Ṣádiqípúr | 15 Jul. 1982 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 114. | Mr. 'Alí Na'ímíyán | 11 Aug. 1982 | Urúmíyyih, Ádhirbáyján |
| 115. | Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Awjí | 16 Nov. 1982 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 116. | Dr. Dhíyá'u'lláh Aḥrárí* | 21 Nov. 1982 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 117. | Mr. Ḥusayn Nayyírí-Iṣfahání | 29 Nov. 1982 | Iṣfahán, Iṣfahán |
| 118. | Mrs. Guldánih 'Alípúr | 24 Dec. 1982 | Sárí, Mázindarán |
| | **1983** | | |
| 119. | Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Síyávushí* | 1 Jan. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 120. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Maḥmúdnizhád■* | 12 Mar. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |

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Bahá'u'lláh

| *No.* | *Name* | *Date* | *Place where martyrdom occurred* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 121. | Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Vafá'í* | 12 Mar. 1983 | Shíráz, Marvdasht, Fárs |
| 122. | Mrs. Ṭúbá Zá'irpúr | 12 Mar. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 123. | Mr. 'Adadu'lláh ('Azíz) Zaydí | 1 Apr. 1983 | Miyán-Dúab |
| 124. | Mr. Jalál Ḥakímán | 1 May 1983 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 125. | Mr. Suhayl Ṣafá'í | 1 May 1983 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 126. | Dr. Bahrám Afnán* | 16 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 127. | Mr. 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Ázádí* | 16 Jun. 1983 | Akbarábád, Fárs |
| 128. | Mr. Kúrush Ḥaqbín* | 16 Jun. 1983 | Marvdasht, Fárs |
| 129. | Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí | 16 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 130. | Mr. Jamshíd Síyávushí* | 16 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 131. | Mr. Bahrám Yaldá'í | 16 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 132. | Miss Shahín (Shírín) Dálvand | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 133. | Mrs. 'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 134. | Miss Ru'yá Ishráqí | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 135. | Miss Muná Maḥmúdnizhád | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 136. | Miss Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 137. | Miss Mahshíd Nírúmand | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 138. | Miss Símín Ṣábirí | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 139. | Mrs. Ṭáhirih Arjumandí Síyávushí | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 140. | Miss Akhtar Thábit | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 141. | Mrs. Nuṣrat Ghufrání Yaldá'í* | 18 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 142. | Mr. Suhayl Húshmand | 28 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 143. | Mr. Aḥmad-'Alí Thábit-Sarvistání | 30 Jun. 1983 | Shíráz, Fárs |
| 144. | Mr. Muḥammad Ishráqí■ | 31 Aug. 1983 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 145. | Mr. Akbar Ḥaqíqí | 19 Sep. 1983 | Khuy, Ádhirbáyján |
| 146. | Mr. Bahman Dihqání | 19 Nov. 1983 | Muḥammadíyyih, Iṣfahán |
| 147. | Mr. 'Abdu'l-Majíd Muṭahhar | 15 Dec. 1983 | Iṣfahán, Iṣfahán |
| | **1984** | | |
| 148. | Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Ḥakímán | 11 Jan. 1984 | Kirmán, Kirmán |
| 149. | Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn Ḥasanzádih-Shákirí | 10 Mar. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 150. | Mr. Muḥsin Raḍaví | 4 Mar. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 151. | Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Ḍíyá'í | 19 Mar. 1984 | Báft, Kirmán |
| 152. | Mr. Kámrán Luṭfí | 9 Apr. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 153. | Mr. Raḥím Raḥímíyán | 9 Apr. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 154. | Mr. Yadu'lláh Ṣábiríyán | 9 Apr. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |

*Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.*

Bahá'u'lláh

| *No.* | *Name* | *Date* | *Place where martyrdom occurred* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 155. | Mr. Asadu'lláh Kámil-Muqaddam | 2 May 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 156. | Mr. Maqṣúd 'Alízádih | 5 May 1984 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 157. | Mr. Jalál Payravíⁿ | 5 May 1984 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 158. | Mr. Jahángír Hidáyatí** | 15 May 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 159. | Mr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Zamání | 15 May 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 160. | Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Vaḥdat | 17 Jun. 1984 | Mashhad, Khurásán |
| 161. | Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Kathírí | 27 Jun. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 162. | Dr. Manúchihr Rúḥí | 16 Aug. 1984 | Bujnúrd, Khurásán |
| 163. | Mr. Amínu'lláh Qurbánpúr | 25 Aug. 1984 | near Ṭihrán |
| 164. | Mr. Rustam Varjávandíⁿ** | 15 Sept. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 165. | Mr. Shápúr (Húshang) Markazí | 23 Sept. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 166. | Mr. Fírúz Purdil | 30 Oct. 1984 | Mashhad, Khurásán |
| 167. | Mr. Aḥmad Bashírí** | 1 Nov. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 168. | Mr. Yúnis Nawrúzí-Iránzád* | 1 Nov. 1984 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 169. | Mr. Ḍíyá'u'lláh Maní'i-Uskú'í | 6 Nov. 1984 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 170. | Mr. 'Alíriḍá Níyákán | 11 Nov. 1984 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| 171. | Dr. Farhád Aṣdaqí** | 19 Nov. 1984 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 172. | Mr. Fírúz Aṭharí* | 9 Dec. 1984 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 173. | Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn Farhand* | 9 Dec. 1984 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 174. | Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ḥaqíqí* | 9 Dec. 1984 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 175. | Mr. Jamál Káshání* | 9 Dec. 1984 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 176. | Mr. Jamshíd Púr-Ustádkár* | 9 Dec. 1984 | Karaj, Ṭihrán |
| 177. | Dr. Rúḥu'lláh Ta'lím* | 9 Dec. 1984 | Kirmánsháh |
| | **1985** | | |
| 178. | Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Ḥasúríⁿ* | 21 Jan. 1985 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 179. | Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Bahrámsháhí* | 25 Feb. 1985 | Yazd, Yazd |
| 180. | Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Subḥání | 5 Mar. 1985 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 181. | Mr. 'Abbás Ídilkhání | 1 Aug. 1985 | Ṭihrán, Ṭihrán |
| 182. | Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Vujdání* | 31 Aug. 1985 | Bandar-'Abbas |
| 183. | Mr. Núru'd-Dín Ṭá'íf í | 12 Oct. 1985 | Pahlavídizh, Mázindarán |
| 184. | Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Ashjárí | 19 Nov. 1985 | Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján |
| | **1986** | | |
| 185. | Mr Paymán Subḥání | 28 Apr. 1986 | Saráván |

*Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.*

Bahá'u'lláh

# BAHÁ'ÍS WHO DISAPPEARED WITHOUT TRACE IN ÍRÁN AND ARE PRESUMED DEAD 1979–20 April 1986

■ denotes member of the Auxiliary Board
** denotes member of the National Spiritual Assembly

| *No.* | *Name* | *Where Disappeared* | *Date Disappeared* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **1979** | |
| 1. | Mr. Muḥammad Muvaḥḥid | Ṭihrán | 24 May 1979 |
| 2. | Dr. 'Alímurád Dávúdí | Ṭihrán | 11 November 1979 |
| | | **1980** | |
| 3. | Mr. Rúḥí Rawshaní | Ṭihrán | 3 January 1980 |
| 4. | Mr. 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Taslímí** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 5. | Mr. Húshang Maḥmúdí** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 6. | Mr. Ibráhím Raḥmání** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 7. | Dr. Ḥusayn Nají** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 8. | Mr. Manúhir Qá'im Maqámí** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 9. | Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Muqarrabí** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 10. | Mr. Yúsif Qadímí** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 11. | Mrs. Bahíyyih Nádirí** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 12. | Dr. Kámbíz Ṣadiqzádih** | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 13. | Dr. Yúsif 'Abbásiyán■ | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |
| 14. | Dr. Hishmatu'lláh Rawḥání■ | Ṭihrán | 21 August 1980 |

*Aḥmad Ismá'íli*

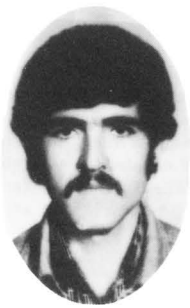
*Ḍíyá'u'lláh Ḥaqíqat*

*Khusraw Afnání*

*Parvíz Afnání*

*Ḥusayn Shakúrí*

*Ibráhím Ma'naví*



*'Alí Sattárzádih*

*Rúḥí Rawshaní*

*Ghulám-Ḥusayn A'zamí*

*'Alí-Akbar Mu'íní*

*Badí'u'lláh Yazdání*

*Parvíz Bayání*

*Ḥasan Ismá'ílzádih*

*Muḥammad Akbarí*

*Núráníyyih Yárs<u>h</u>áṭir*

*'Abdu'l-'Alí Asadyárí*

*Manú<u>ch</u>ihr <u>K</u>hádí'í*

*Alláh-Virdí Mi<u>th</u>áqí*

*Ḥusayn Rastigár-Námdár*

*Khusraw Muhandisí*

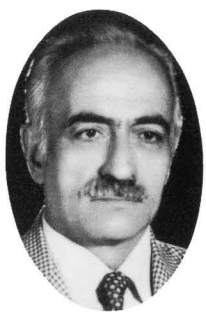
*Ibráhím Khayrkháh*

*'Askar Muḥammadí*

*'Azízu'llah Gulshaní*

*Badí'u'lláh Ḥaqpaykar*

*Muḥammad Manṣúrí*



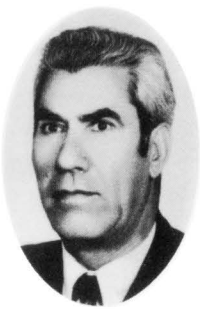
*Manúchihr Farzánih-Mu'ayyad*

*Jadídu'lláh Ashraf*

*Muḥammad 'Abbásí*

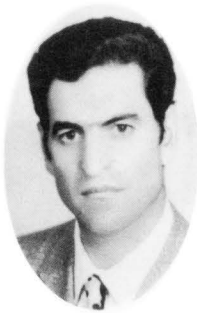
*Manúchihr Vafá'í*

*'Abbás-'Alí Ṣádiqípúr*

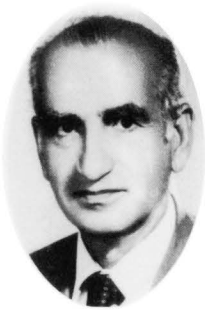


*'Alí Na'ímíyán*

*Ḥabíbu'lláh Awjí*



*Dhíyá'u'lláh Aḥrárí*

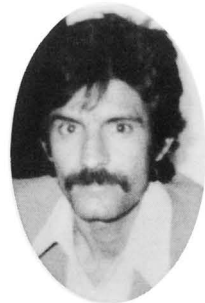


*Ḥusayn Nayyírí-Iṣfahání*

*Guldánih 'Alipúr*

*Bahrám Afnán*

*'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Ázádí*



*Kúrush Ḥaqqbín*

*'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí*

*Jamshíd Siyávushí*

*Bahrám Yaldá'í*

*Mahshíd Nirúmand*

*Ru'yá Ishráqí*

*'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí*

*Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih*

*Muná Maḥmúdnizhád*

*Shahín (Shírín) Dálvand*

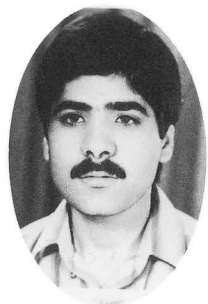
*Simín Ṣábirí*

*Ṭáhirih Arjumandí Siyávushí*

*Akhtar Thábit*

*Nuṣrat Ghufráni Yaldá'í*

*Aḥmad-'Alí Thábit-Sarvistání*



*Suhayl Húshmand*

*Muḥammad Iṣhráqí*

*Akbar Ḥaqíqí*

*Bahman Dihqání*

*'Abdu'l-Majíd Muṭahhar*

*Ghulám-Ḥusayn Ḥasanzádih-Shákirí*

*Raḥmatu'lláh Ḥakímán*

*Muḥsin Raḍaví*

*Nuṣratu'lláh Ḍiyá'í*

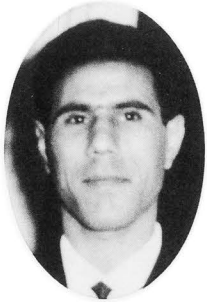
*Kámrán Lutfí*

*Raḥím Raḥimíyán*

*Asadu'lláh Kámil-Muqaddam*

*Yadu'lláh Ṣábiríyán*

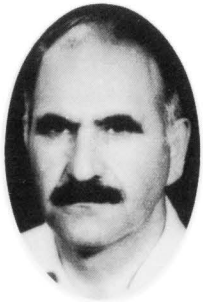
*Jalál Payravi*



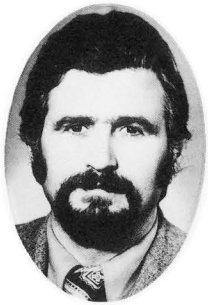
*Maqṣúd 'Alízádih*

*Jahángír Hidáyatí*

*'Alí-Muḥammad Zamáni*

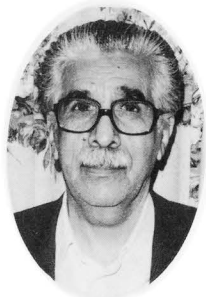


*Nuṣratu'lláh Vaḥdat*

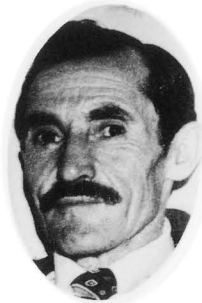


*Iḥsánu'lláh Kat<u>ḥ</u>íri*

*Manúchihr Rúḥí*

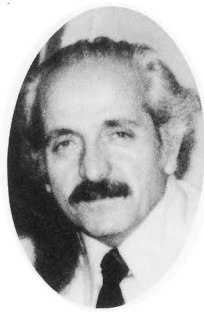


*Rustam Varjávandí*



*Amínu'lláh Qurbánpúr*

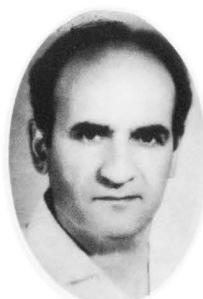
*Fírúz Purdil*



*Sháhpúr (Húshang) Markazí*

*Aḥmad Bashírí*

*Yúnis Nawrúzí-Iránzád*



*Ḍiyá'u'lláh Mání'í-Uskú'í*

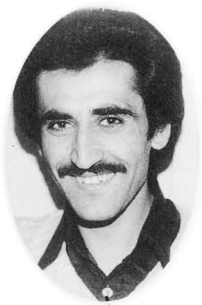
*'Alíriḍá Níyákán*

*Farhád Aṣdaqí*

*Fírúz Aṭharí*

*'Ináyatu'lláh Ḥaqíqí*

*Rúḥu'lláh Ta'lím*



*Jamshíd Púr-Ustádkár*

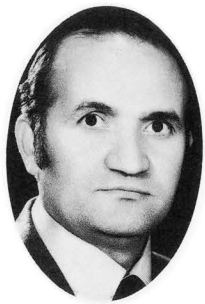
*Jamál Káshání*

*Ghulám-Ḥusayn Farhand*

*Rúḥu'lláh Ḥaṣúrí*

*Rúḥu'lláh Bahrámsháhí*

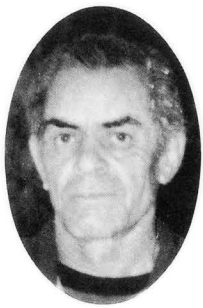
*Nuṣratu'lláh Subḥání*



*'Abbás Ídilkhání*

*Raḥmatu'lláh Vujdání*

*Núru'd-Dín Ṭá'ifí*

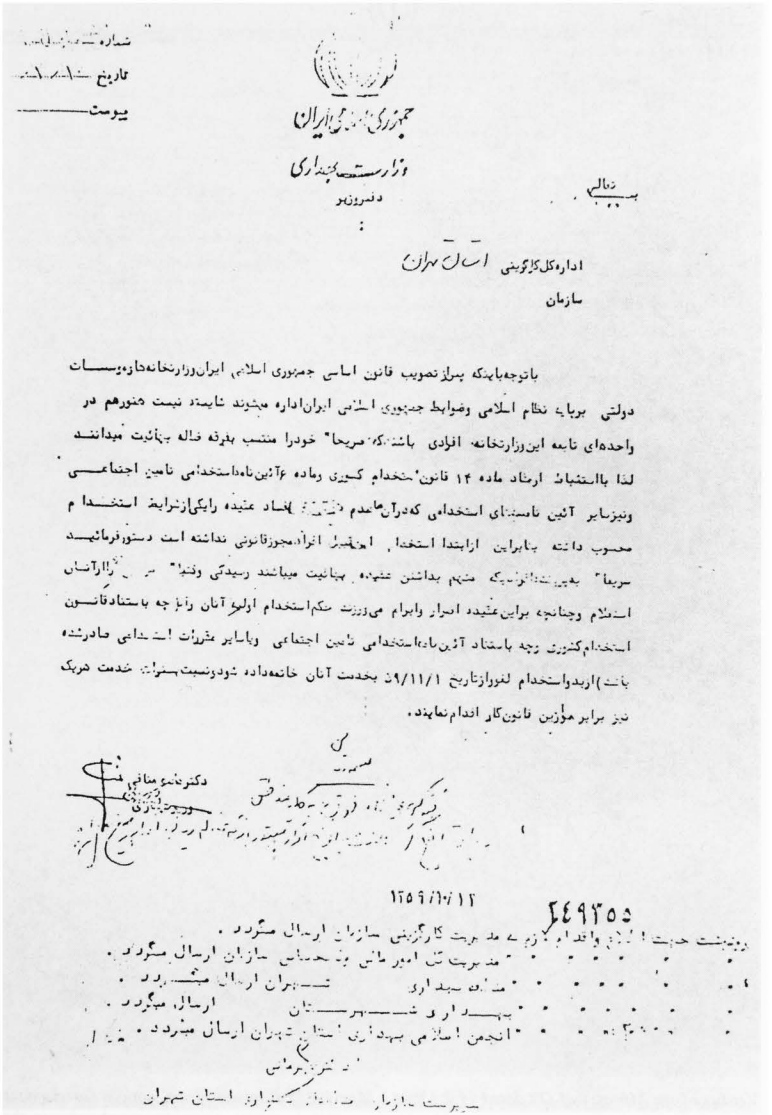


*'Azízu'lláh Ashjárí*

*Paymán Subḥání*

*'Aṭá'u'lláh Ḥaqqání*

## D. A REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION OF DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATING THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF ÍRÁN 1983–1986



جمهوری اسلامی ایران

وزارت بهداری

دفتر وزیر

اداره کل کارگزینی استان تهران

سازمان

باتوجه‌باینکه پس‌از تصویب قانون اساسی جمهوری اسلامی ایران‌وزارتخانه‌ها و مؤسسات دولتی برپایه نظام اسلامی وضوابط جمهوری اسلامی ایران‌اداره میشوند نامبرده نیست همنورهم در واحدهای تابعه این‌وزارتخانه افرادی باشند که مربعاً خودرا منتسب بفرقه ضاله بهائیت میدانند لذا بااستنباط ازمفاد ماده ۱۴ قانون‌استخدام کشوری وماده ۶آئین‌نامه‌استخدامی تامین اجتماعی ونیزسایر آئین نامه‌های استخدامی که‌درآن‌عدم وجود سابقه فساد عقیده رابیکی‌ازشرایط استخدام محسوب داشته پابرایان ازابتدا استخدام اشخاص مجوزقانونی نداشته است دستورفرمائید بعرض‌برسانم‌که‌چون‌بهائیت عقیده مبتنی بداشتن عقیده بهائیت میباشند رسیدگی وقضاوت در مورد آنان ازاحکام اسلام وچنانچه برایان‌عقیده اصرار وابرام می‌ورزند حکم‌استخدام اولیه آنان رابا چه باستنادقانون استخدام‌کشوری رچه باستناد آئین‌نامه‌استخدامی تامین اجتماعی وسایر مقررات استخدامی صادرشده باشد)ازروزاستخدام لغوواز تاریخ ۵۹/۱۱/۱ بخدمت آنان خاتمه‌داده شودونسبت‌بسوابق خدمت آنان نیز برابر موازین قانون‌کار اقدام‌نمایند.

دکتر ناصر میانی

۱۳۵۹/۱۰/۱۱

۲۴۹۳۵۵

رونوشت جهت اطلاع واقدام لازم به مدیریت کارگزینی سازمان ارسال میگردد.

" " " مدیریت امور مالی و محاسبات سازمان ارسال میگردد.

" " " شهران ارسال میگردد.

" " " بهداری شهران ارسال میگردد.

" " " انجمن اسلامی بهداری استان شهران ارسال میگردد.

مدیریت سازمان بهداری استان شهران

*Letter from the Ministry of Health to the Head of the Personnel Office of Tihrán Province (date not legible) advising them of the inappropriateness of employing Bahá'ís in Government organizations, and the need for the present employees to either recant or be dismissed.*

جمهوری اسلامی ایران
وزارت نفت

تاریخ ۱۳۶۲/۲/۱۱
شماره ۱۲۱۳۰۷
پیوست

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

رأی شماره.....۴۴۶.....تاریخ ۱۳۶۲/۲/۱۱
مرجع رسیدگی: هیات بدوی بازسازی نیروی انسانی شماره هفت (۰۷).....
نوع اتهام: ماده (۲۹) بند (۸).....
گردش کار: پرونده اتهامی آقای/خانم ابتهال نام خانوادگی ابتهالی فرزند فلامجین
متولد سال ۱۳۱۵.....شماره شناسنامه ۱۷۰۰..صادره از زابل..پست سازمانی بازنشسته
سابقه کار ۲۰ سال..محل کار نامشخص شماره پرسنلی مستخدم ۴۹۸۲۰۳ تحصیلات سوم متوسطه
متاهل توسط هیات مورد رسیدگی قرارگرفت. هیات درجلسه مورخ ۱۳۶۲/۲/۱۰ با در نظرگرفتن مستندات ارائه‌شده رأی خودرا به شرح زیراعلام میدارد:

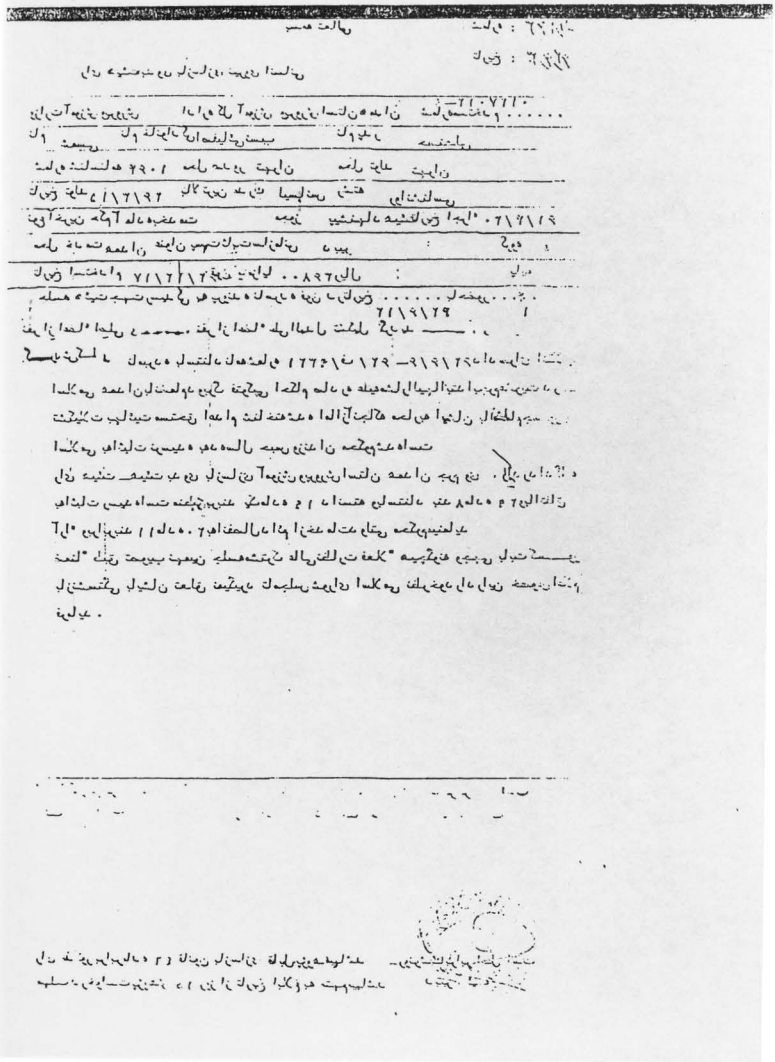
«رأی هیات»

باتوجه به محتویات پرونده وگزارش گروه تحقیق ☒ ،اقرار متهم ☒ ،مدافعات متهم ☒ ، اظهارات شهود □ ، نظریه کارشناس □ و اظهارات مطلعین □ و .....□ و
باتوجه به سایر اوضاع واحوال وقرائن موجود درپرونده امر، ابهامات منتسب به متهم بنظرهیات ثابت و محرز است و نامبرده منطبق است با
۱-.....عضویت در فرقه ضاله بهائیت..... موضوع بند.....۸.....ماده.....۲۹.....و
۲-.....موضوع بند.....ماده.....و
۳-.....موضوع بند.....ماده.....و
۴-.....موضوع بند.....ماده.....
قانون بازسازی نیروی انسانی وزارتخانه‌ها ومؤسسات دولتی وابسته به دولت مصوب ۱۳۶۰/۷/۵ که مستنداً به بند.....۱.....ماده.....۲۰.....قانون مذکور به انفصال دائم از خدمات دولتی ومؤسسات وابسته محکوم میگردد. این رأی به استناد ماده ۴۶ قانون مذکور قطعی ولازم الاجراست □ ، ظرف ۱۵ روز از تاریخ ابلاغ به متهم(اعم از واقعی یاقانونی) قابل پژوهش درهیات تجدید نظر می‌باشد ☒
هیات بدوی:

هیئت بدوی بازسازی نیروی انسانی شماره هفت (۰۷)
هیئت بدوی

ارتباط ۲۵/۲/۶۲ رد شکایت
به اطلاع ۱۰ رسید

*Verdict of the Ministry of Oil dated 11.2.1362 (1 May 1983) dismissing from work in Government organizations and affiliated institutions Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Imtithálí, due to his membership in the Bahá'í Faith.*



*Verdict of the Manpower Reforming Council dated 30.6.1362 (21 September 1983) stating that the accused, Mrs. Shamsi Asfiyá'i-Nasab, being a member of the Bahá'í administration, is sentenced to death. But, as her opposition to the Islamic Republic has not yet been proven, she is sentenced to ten years of imprisonment.*

بسمه تعالی

جمهوری اسلامی ایران
شهرداری نوشهر

شماره ۱۱۲۴۱
تاریخ ۱۳۶۴/۵/۳۰
پیوست

از :
به : آقای علیرضا خانلری
موضوع :

پاسخ تقاضای مورخه ۸۴/۵/۲۸ م درخصوص ملت عدم موافقت صدور جواز کسب در حرفه عکاسی با اطلاع میرساند .

براساس مذاکره بامقام محترم استانداری فرارشد در مورد صدور پروانه کسب برای فرقه ضاله ( بهائیت ) بخشنامه ای صادر وارسال دارند درنتیجه شهرداری تااطلاع ثانوی از دادن جواز کسب بشما معذور است. م

جهانگیر واحدی
شهردار نوشهر

*Letter from the Municipality of Nawshahr to Mr. 'Alí-Riḍá Khánlarí, dated 30.5.1364 (21 August 1985) informing him of their refusal to issue him with a work permit due to his membership in the 'wayward sect' of Bahá'í.*

بسمه تعالی

...ان صنایع ملی ایران

INDUSTRIES

تاریخ ۶۳/۱/۱۸

شماره .....


س کارخانه : جاده قدیم کرج ـ خیابان کارتن سازی
آباد خیابان کارگران تلفن ۷ـ۹۶۱۰۴۶
P-O-BOX 443 TEHRAN IRAN
TELEX 212963 ADEL IR

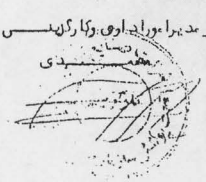
گروه صنعتی

تهران : خیابان انقلاب ـ روبروی لاله زار نو ـ پلاک ۵۷۷
صندوق پستی ۴۴۳ تهران تلفن ۸۲۱۴۸۰
تلگرافی شرکت آدل تلکس ۲۱۲۹۶۳ آدل ایر

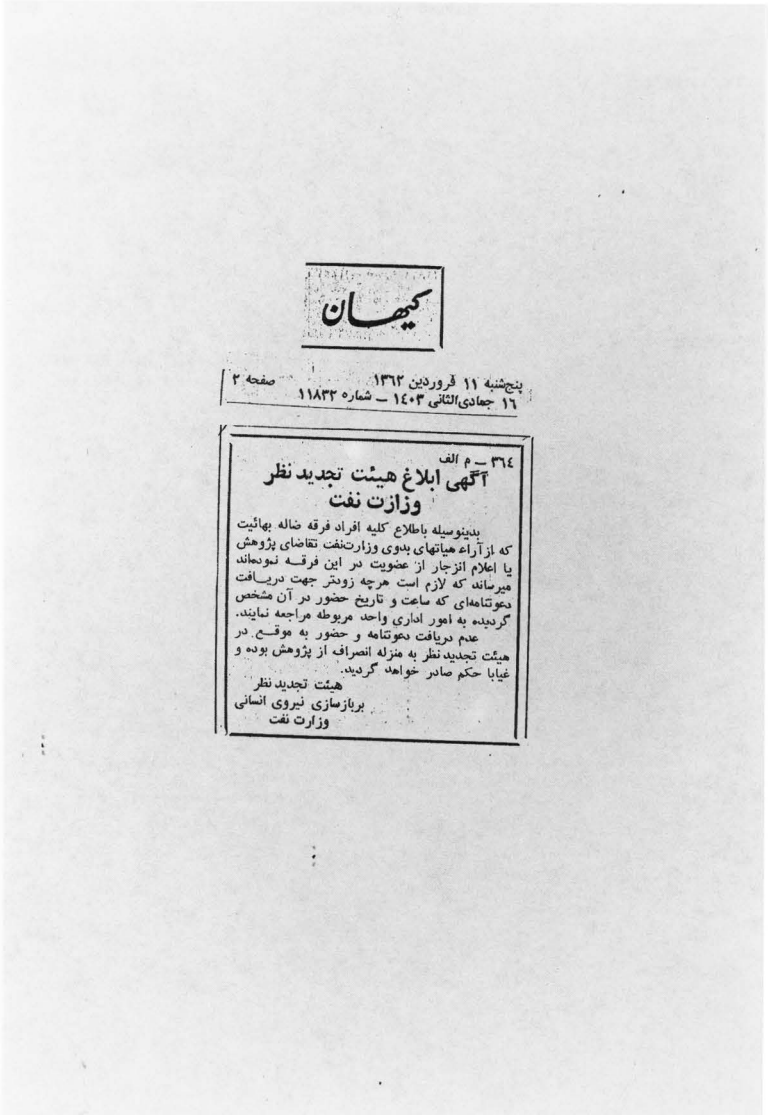

آقای هوشنگ کشاورز

با توجه به پشتکار وشایستگی که جنابعالی در پیشبرد امور شرکت وصرفه جوئی در هزینه ها ازخود نشان داده اید وبا در نظر گرفتن حسن اخلاق ورفتار شما در مدت اشتغال لذا بموجب بخشنامه شماره ۲۰۲۶۱ مورخ ۱۳۶۰/۹/۱۶ اداره کل کارومراجتماعی مبنی براخراج افراد بهائی که به اجماع مسلمین خارج ازاسلام شناخته شده اند ازتاریخ ۱۳۶۳/۱/۱۸ به کارشما در این شرکت خاتمه داده میشود .

از طرف مدیر امور اداری وکارگزینی



*Letter from the Iranian National Industries Company to Mr. Húshang Kishávarz dated 18.1.1363 (7 April 1984) informing him of his dismissal from services. 'Despite your perseverance and competence in the progress of the affairs of the company, and your economising of its funds, and also despite your good manners and goodly behaviour throughout the period of your services, based on the circular letter number 20261 dated 16.9.1360 (7 December 1981), regarding the dismissal of Bahá'í employees, your services in this company are ended as of 18.1.1363 (7 April 1983).*



کیهان

پنج‌شنبه ۱۱ فروردین ۱۳۶۲ صفحه ۲
۱۶ جمادی‌الثانی ۱۴۰۳ ـ شماره ۱۱۸۳۲

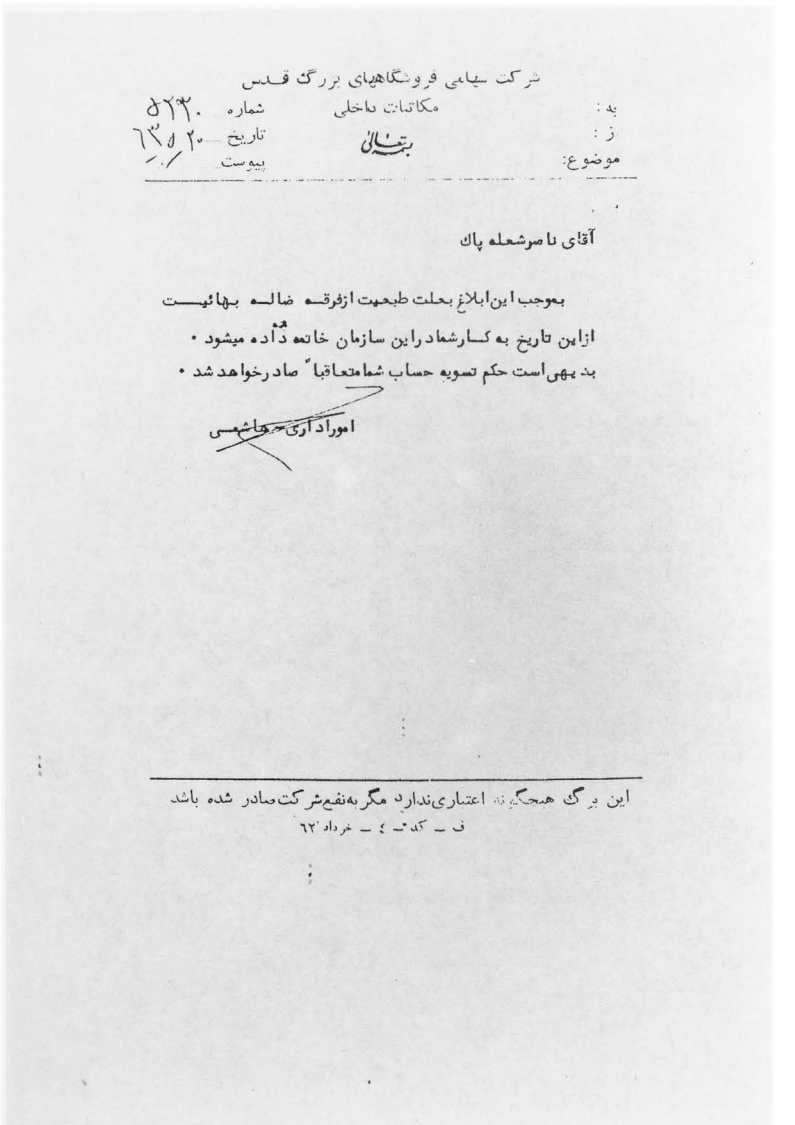
۳۶٤ ـ م الف

**آگهی ابلاغ هیئت تجدید نظر وزارت نفت**

بدینوسیله باطلاع کلیه افراد فرقه ضاله بهائیت که از آراء هیاتهای بدوی وزارت‌نفت تقاضای پژوهش یا اعلام انزجار از عضویت در این فرقه نموده‌اند میرساند که لازم است هرچه زودتر جهت دریافت دعوتنامه‌ای که ساعت و تاریخ حضور در آن مشخص گردیده به امور اداری واحد مربوطه مراجعه نمایند. عدم دریافت دعوتنامه و حضور به موقع در هیئت تجدید نظر به منزله انصراف از پژوهش بوده و غیابا حکم صادر خواهد گردید.

هیئت تجدید نظر
برباززسازی نیروی انسانی
وزارت نفت

*Notice regarding the Reviewing Council of the Ministry of Oil published in* Kayhán *newspaper, issue number 11832, dated 11.1.1362 (31 March 1983). 'We hereby notify all members of the wayward Bahá'í sect who have appealed for a review ... that they should come to receive their invitation forms as soon as possible. Failure to do so would lead to a verdict being issued in their absence.'*



شرکت سهامی فروشگاههای بزرگ قدس

به : مکاتبات داخلی شماره ۵۲۲۰

از : بنکداری تاریخ ۶۳/۵/۲۰

موضوع: بیمست

آقای ناصرشعله پاك

بموجب این ابلاغ بعلت طبعیت ازفرقه ضاله بهائیت ازاین تاریخ به کارشما دراین سازمان خاتمه داده میشود .

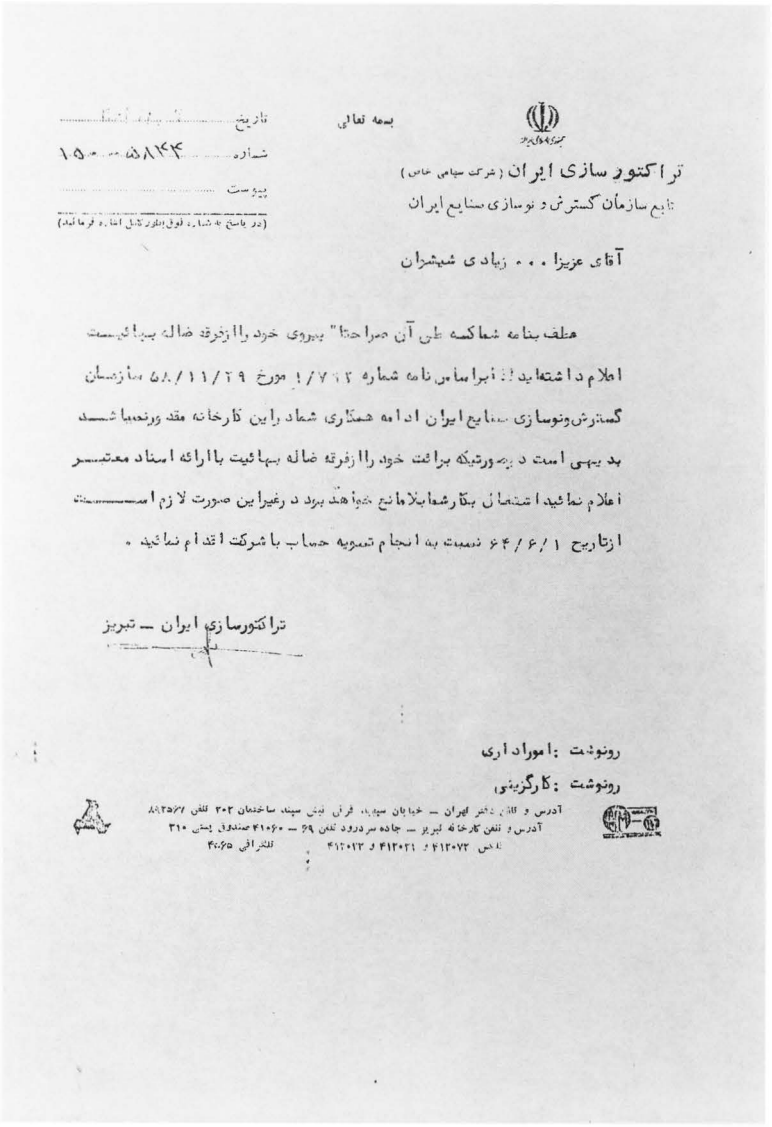
بدیهی است حکم تسویه حساب شما متعاقباً صادرخواهد شد .

امورادارى هاشمى

این برگ هیچگونه اعتباری ندارد مگر به نفع شرکت صادر شده باشد

ف ـ ک ـ ت ـ ۲ ـ خرداد ۶۲

*Letter from the joint-stock companies of Quds Stores to Mr. Náṣir Shu'lih-Pák dated 20.5.1363 (11 August 1984) informing him of his dismissal from work due to his membership in the 'wayward Bahá'í sect'.*



بسمه تعالی

تاریخ .....
شماره ۱۵۰ ... ۵۸۱۴۴
پیوست .....
(در پاسخ به شماره فوق بایستی ذکر شود)

تراکتورسازی ایران (شرکت سهامی خاص)
تابع سازمان گسترش و نوسازی صنایع ایران

آقای عزیزا ... زیادی شیشوان

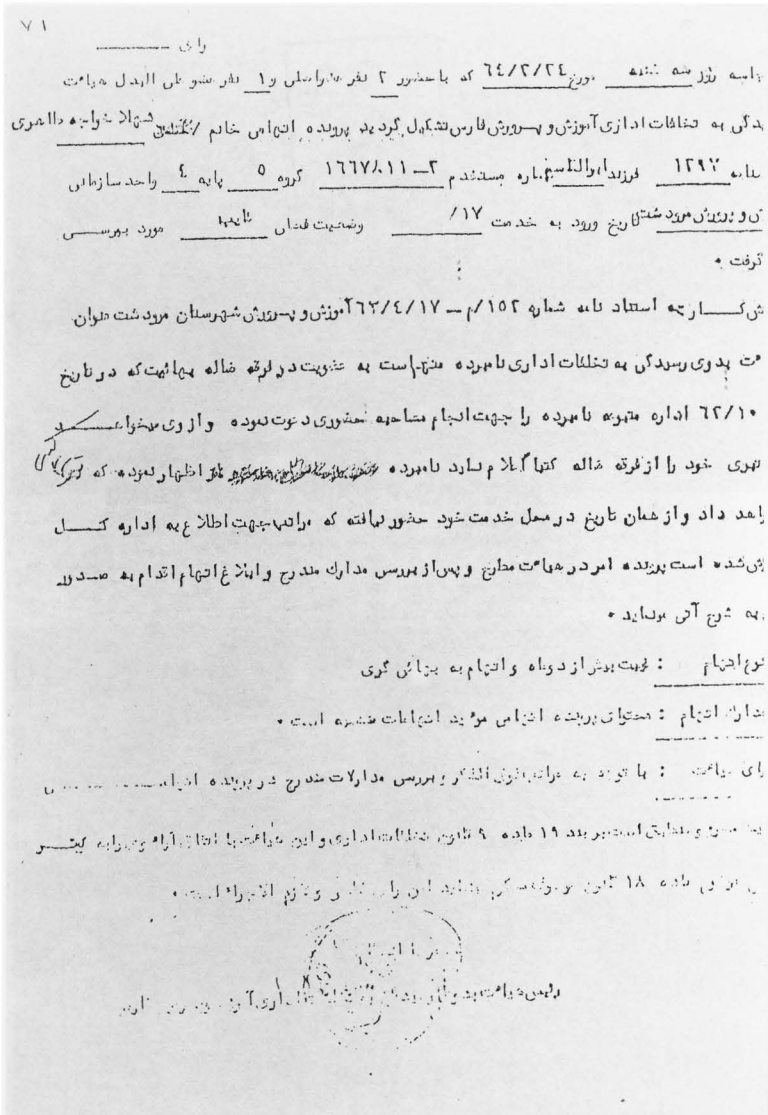
عطف بنامه شماره ... مورخ ... که آن ... پیروی خود را از فرقه ضاله بهائیت ... اعلام داشته‌اید از ... نامه شماره ۱/۷۱۲ مورخ ۶۸/۱۱/۲۹ سازمان گسترش و نوسازی صنایع ایران ادامه همکاری شما در این کارخانه مقدور نخواهد شد بدیهی است در صورتیکه براءت خود را از فرقه ضاله بهائیت با ارائه اسناد معتبر اعلام نمائید اشتغال شما بلامانع خواهد بود در غیر این صورت لازم است از تاریخ ۶۴/۶/۱ نسبت به انجام تصویه حساب با شرکت اقدام نمائید.

تراکتورسازی ایران ــ تبریز

رونوشت: امور اداری
رونوشت: کارگزینی

آدرس و تلفن دفتر تهران ــ خیابان سپیدار، قرن نبش سپند ساختمان ۳۰۲ تلفن ۸۹۳۵۶۷
آدرس و تلفن کارخانه تبریز ــ جاده سردرود تلفن ۶۹ ــ ۴۱۰۶۰ صندوق پستی ۳۱۰
تلکس ۴۱۲۰۷۲ و ۴۱۲۰۲۱ و ۴۱۲۰۲۳ تلگرافی ۴۰۰۶۵

*Letter from the tractor factory in Írán to Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Zíyádí-Shíshván (date not legible) informing him of dismissal from work. 'Of course, should you announce your acquittal from the wayward Bahá'í sect by producing valid documents, there will be no objection to you working here. . . .'*



*Verdict issued regarding Mrs. Shahlá Khájih Ṭáhirí, who was accused of membership in the wayward Bahá'í sect and who was invited to an interview and requested to recant. She has not attended work since that interview.*

به حکم دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی مرکز

# پروانه وکالت ۳۲ وکیل بهایی لغوشد

در صفحه ۱۳

اطلاعات

دوشنبه ۱۴ شهریورماه ۱۳۶۲ شماره ۱۷۱۰۱ ۱۳

بحکم دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی مرکز

## پروانه‌وکالت ۳۲ نفراز وکلای بهائی لغوشد

بحکم دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی مرکزجواز وکالت‌عده‌ای از وکلای دادگستری به جرم شرکت در طرحهای پنهانی سازمان جهنمی صیاء لغو شد .

در همین رابطه این اطلاعیه‌از سوی دادستانی‌انقلاب اسلامی مرکز انتشار یافت :

بسمه تعالی ـ دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی مرکز روزهشتم شهریور ماه بمنظور رسیدگی به درخواست دادستان محترم انقلاب اسلامی مرکز در خصوص لغو جواز و منع اشتغال عده‌ای ازاپادی صهیونیسم وابسته به حزب خائن بهائیت تشکیل گردیده و با ملاحظه سوابق به شرح ذیل مبادرت به اتخاذ تصمیم نمود .

پس‌از بررسی و مشخص شدن عضویت نامبردگان ذیل در کادر تشکیلاتی حزب وابسته فوق‌الذکر نظر به اینکه :

۱ـ تشکیلات مزبور قبل از پیروزی انقلاب اسلامی به نمایندگی مفسدین جهانی با تمام قوا در جهت ایجاد فساد فرهنگی ، سیاسی و اقتصادی کوشا بوده و از تحکیم کنندگان اصلی و ازپادی رژیم منفور پهلوی بحساب میامدند ، تا جائیکه اسناد بدست آمده موجود شاه معدوم ، سران آنها را محرم اسرار و نزدیکترین مشاوران مورد اعتماد خود برگزیده بود وحتی در غیاب خودطبق دست خط رسمی بدست آمده از این خائن ، تصمیمگیری های عالیه به عنوان فرمانده کل قوا را به عهده یکنفر بهائی به نیابت خویش محول میکرد .

۲ـ این تشکیلات ساخته‌ی دست اجنبی در غارت اقتصادی مملکت و پشتوانه اعتباری دولت غاصب فلسطین اشغالی و همکاری رژیم منفور پهلوی مانند سرطان نابوده کننده ، شئون اقتصادی کشور مسلمین را به نیابهی کشانید وهمکاری با صهیونیستها رادرجهت رواج فرهنگ مادی غرب و بخصوص اشاعه فحشاء به اوج خـود رسانید .

۳ـ بمداز پیروزی انقلاب اسلامی این شبکه ضدبشری تاکنون مخفیانه و موذیانه طرحهای‌پنهانی سازمان جهنمی (سی. آی. ا) را به اجرا در آورده، منجمله نسبت به ساختـــن و پخش شایعـــات از پیش ساختـــه شـــده جـامعه شناسان وروا نشناسان صهیونیستی متناسب با هر موقعیت دقیقا عمل کرده ، تا جائیکه قدرت داشته است همزمان در نگران‌کردن مردم و بدبین کردن آنها به رژیم جمهوری اسلامی در کوچه و خیابان و وسائل نقلیه عمومی و غیره توسط افرادمحدود در اساس مسلمان و با ظاهر غربیگارانه و دلسوزانه‌عملش کرده است

۴ـ اپادی این حزب به دستور تشکیلات و بنابه اقاریر خود از هر طریق حتی احتکار اجناس مورد لزوم مردم با قصد تضعیف و سرنگونی جمهوری اسلامی در شرایط جنگی اقدام نموده‌اند .

۵ـ همکاری صمیمانه این تشکیلات خارجی بابیگانگان به قدری برای اربابانشان ارزشمند بود که بمداز دستگیری چند نفر از سران آنها ریگان این سردسته غارتگران و جنایتکاران مدرنیزه قرن بیستم که بر مقدرات مردم آمریکا حاکم شده است به حمایت از آنها برخاسته و رسانه‌های گروهی استکبار جهانی در سطح بین‌المللی غوغائی بپاه انداختند که تاکنون نسبتبه کمتر نوکری اینچنین‌حساسیت و دلسوزی نشان داده بودند .

لذا دادگاه با درخواست دادسرای انقلاب‌اسلامی مرکز در مورد لغو جواز وکالت عده‌ای از اعضای این شبکه موافقت کرده وبدین وسیله کانون وکلایدادگستری را ملزم به لغو پروانه آنان نموده و منع اشتغال‌شان را درکلیه نهادهای جمهوری اسلامی اعلام داشت .

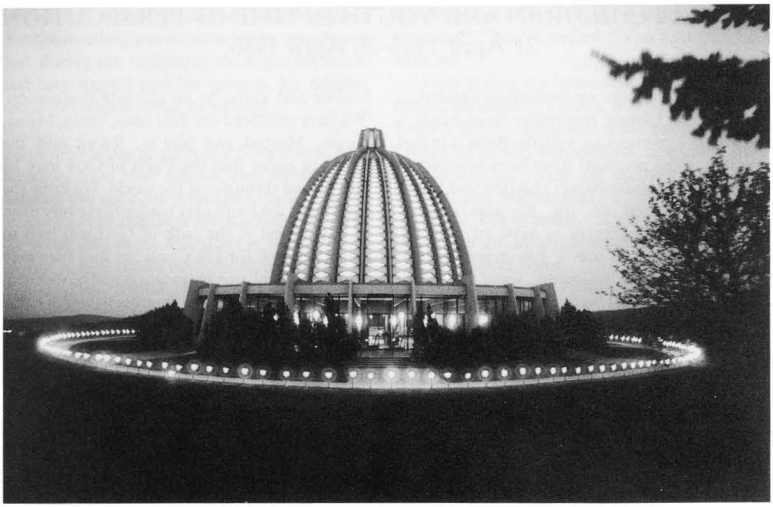
همچنین دادگاه شرعا بر دادسرای انقلاب اسلامی و کلیه مسئولین قضائی و ذیربط دانست که باین ریشه‌های فاسد و اذناب آمریکا مجال نداده و اجازه ندهند شرآنها همچنان ادامه پیدا کند .

اسامی وکلای فوق‌الذکر به این‌قرار است :

۱ـ غلامحسین اعظمی فرزند کوچک ۲ـ فریبرز امجدی ۳ـ ممتاز اسماعیل زادگان ۴ـ نصرت‌الله ایقانی ۵ـ رحمت‌الله آقازاده ۶ـ احمد بدیعی ۷ـ فریدون‌پیرومند۸ـ فائزه توفیق ۹ـ سید مهدی جاوید ۱۰ـ منوچهر حقیقی ۱۱ـ عباس جنیان ۱۲ـ فرهنگ حفیظ‌جو ۱۳ـ ایرج خادمی عراقی ۱۴ـ هدایت رحیمی ۱۵ـ وحدت سعادت ۱۶ـ بدیع‌الله فرید ۱۷ـ منوچهر قائم‌مقامی ۱۸ـ حبیب‌الله قدس جوراپچی ۱۹ـ جواد قوچانی ۲۰ـ ابو القاسم قدس ۲۱ـ عباس کاشف ۲۲ـ سیامک کوثری ۲۳ـ احمدکسائیان ۲۴ـ حبیب‌الله گلشنی ۲۵ـ ولی‌الله بهاب ۲۶ـ سیاوش بوید ۲۷ـ رضا موید ضیائی ۲۸ـ عزیزالله ممدوحی ۲۹ـ سیروس منشی ۳۰ـ بهرام باری ۳۱ـ مظفر یوسفیان ۳۲ـ بیژن شهریاری زواره .

دادستانی انقلاب اسلامی مرکز

*Article in the* Ittilá'át *newspaper, issue number 17101, dated 14 Shahrivar 1362 (5 September 1983) announcing that, 'At the order of the Central Court of the Islamic Revolution, the licenses of 32 Bahá'í attorneys have been withdrawn.'*



*The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Germany surrounded by 195 torches during a memorial service for the Bahá'ís in Írán held in May 1986.*

*Two bouquets of roses placed inside the House of Worship in Germany as a gift from the friends imprisoned in the three major prisons of Írán.*

# E. BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN TIME OF PERSECUTION 21 April 1983–20 April 1986

ALTHOUGH the circumstances created in Írán by the Islamic revolution have made it difficult to communicate with the Bahá'ís in that country, some accounts have been received of the significant share Bahá'í children and youth have contributed to the heroism demonstrated by the believers in time of persecution. Given below are a few representative examples of such accounts, some of which were shared with all National Spiritual Assemblies on 10 January 1985 primarily for circulation among Bahá'í youth who, the Universal House of Justice stated, 'may derive inspiration ... for their activities during International Youth Year'. The names of persons and places, in most instances, have been omitted in order to protect the authors of the reports. An account of the responses of Bahá'í children and youth to persecution and harassment in the period 1979–83 appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, pp. 331–36.

*Excerpt from a letter received from a Bahá'í in Írán:*

'My dear friend, a few days ago I was talking with —— about the latest events and about the martyrdoms. She analyses every problem so well, in spite of her tender years. She said to me, "The darkness of egotism and selfishness has covered the face of the earth; the Bahá'í Faith is like a light which illumines all that it shines upon. Those whose eyes are accustomed to darkness cannot bear the glare of the light, and want to put it out." You see, my dear friend, what a beautiful comparison this 7-year-old child has made. I said to her, "There is an old proverb: Whoever blows upon the light kindled by God will singe his beard!" She liked the proverb and has memorized it. She is fond of proverbs and often recites one appropriate to a situation.'

*Excerpt from a girl student's essay written to honour the ten women who were martyred in Shíráz on 18 June 1983:*

'We rejoice for the great bounty vouchsafed to them, and rather than crying and moaning, we thank God for bestowing upon them the strength to bear this most great burden, with honour and glory, to its ultimate destination. 'We have sacrificed our dear ones, Símín, Múná, Zarrín, Mashíd and Shír'in, Ru'yá and the others in order that the Faith of God may be proclaimed throughout the world. We hope the enemies of the Faith may realize that every drop of blood shed in the path of God will lead to a new triumph for His Cause, so that they may put an end to all this persecution and bloodshed. 'Were it not for what the enemies have done, the Faith of God would not have been introduced to the people of the world, and the newspaper reporters and television and radio commentators would not have arisen to defend us. So, we must be grateful rather than complain. On the other hand, God has pledged Himself not to forgive any man's injustice! Only God knows how these oppressors will be judged or what retribution they will receive for their tyranny.'

*Excerpt from a letter from a Bahá'í who was released from prison:*

'My dear and respected spiritual brother ... I hope that you are safe under the protection of the Blessed Beauty. Some time ago I sent you a brief explanation of the courage of some of the martyrs and brave women who were examples of loyalty and steadfastness. Now I will relate another part of the life history of these servants of the Beloved ... O God, what a bounty Thou has bestowed upon us: Thou hast welded the hearts into one heart, O Powerful One, Thou who canst bestow upon a straw the strength of a mountain, I do not know whether I should call to mind the mother whose whole being was illumined with the love of God and whose entire life was spent in the service of the Cause of God and who, while in prison, though sorely longing to see her children who were studying abroad nevertheless said goodbye to all such human desires and approached the noose on her own feet and offered her head like an unworthy commodity in the pathway of her Loved One; or whether, perhaps, I should make mention of her 12-year-old son who at 5:00 a.m. stood like a protective shield before the gate of the family house, his innocent face sad and grave, having stationed himself there in order

to warn any of the friends who might approach that the dwelling was surrounded by guards and that during the middle of the night his home had been raided and his parents, his brother and a neighbour taken to prison...'

*Group after group of the young Bahá'ís have been dismissed from their schools, even kindergarten children, but none are prepared to submit to the pressure to say that they are not Bahá'ís. There are youth who in the last years of their medical college or high school were dismissed, ruining all their academic achievements, but they stood firm. There have been scores of such injustices meted out to the young Bahá'ís. Bahá'í boys and girls have prepared themselves outside the school for the Government examinations and the successful results have been staggering.*

*The following report is taken from a letter written by a boy 16 years of age:*

'The teacher in my high school was giving a lesson in sociology on the subject of cultural colonialism. As an example, he cited the Bahá'í Faith as a type of cultural colonialism. According to my spiritual obligation, I had to reply. I got permission and to the extent possible for me, I gave a speech on the Faith and countered the statement of my teacher. After a few days the principal called me to his office, accusing me of apostasy, stating that Islám is the last religion of God, etc. One of those present asked me what I believed. I told him I was a Bahá'í. The Ḥájí, the principal, rose from his chair, agitated and shouting, "You have no place in this school! I thought you were a good boy! Now everything is changed and you have no right to go to your class until your situation is cleared!"

'After a week there was a summons from the office of the Imám Jum'ih [High Priest of the town, who is usually appointed by the Central Government to carry out its policy]. On the way I was trembling, thinking of what they might ask and what I should reply and what would be my fate. I entered the Imám's office in this condition, but as soon as I was confronted by him I was not the same person any more. It was as if somebody had taken me by both hands. Not only did I not tremble but I was as erect as a column of steel. In the office of the Imám Jum'ih were eight of the 'Ulamá with turbans, and the bodyguard of the Imám were standing close behind me. After some time the Imám looked at me asking, "Do you have any business?" "No," I replied, "You have business with me."

'After asking my name and the name of my father, he asked if I was a Muslim. I told him I was a Bahá'í. He asked what my father did. I told him he was unemployed. The Imám then started saying, "You are against Islám, the Qur'án, and Muḥammad."

'"No," I responded, "We believe in Islám, in the Qur'án, in Muḥammad and the Imáms, and we respect them."

'"Now that you say that you are a Muslim and believe in the Qur'án..."

'I interrupted him with an apology and said, "Sir, I never said that I was a Muslim. I only told you that I believe in Islám. I believe in Islám as you believe in Judaism and Christ and Christianity and believe in the Bible."

'Then he said, "All right. Now that you believe in Islám, have you ever read any books of the Imáms?"

'"Yes, to the extent possible."

'"If you have read these books, tell me where is it written that a wretched woman will give birth to a boy named Siyyid 'Alí-Muhammad, called the Báb, and that he would be the Promised One?"

'"First of all, it is not proper that you name a woman in a derogatory manner. We have famous women in history, like Mary, Khadíjih, Fáṭimih,...

'He interrupted me saying, "Tell me where is it written in those books about the Báb?"

'"It is not written in that way, but you show me in those books where it is written that He is not coming!"

[The report states that there was then a long discussion about the Bahá'í Faith and the writer quoted verses from the Qur'án and the Imáms showing that the Promised One will bring a new religion.]

'On this note another Mullá who was present changed the subject. He told me that the Bahá'ís are forces of Russia and that a Russian official called Dolgorouki[1] confessed that he trained Siyyid 'Alí Muḥammad to say first that he was the Promised One, then to

[1] 'The persistent and decisive intervention of the Russian Minister, Prince Dolgorouki, who left no stone unturned to establish the innocence of Bahá'u'lláh ...' (See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 104).

claim to be the Light of God, and ultimately to be God, Himself.'

'I very boldly replied, "The Bahá'í community does not know what tune to dance to. One says that we are forces of Russia; another says that we are American stooges; still another says we are agents of Britain and recently of Israel. You should know philosophy," I said. "If there is truth then there should be unanimity in the understanding of that truth. Everybody understands that when the water reaches 100 degrees it boils. For boiling water, one doesn't say when it reaches 80 degrees or 120 degrees it boils. Therefore, it is not fair for you to present a false thing."

'The Imám suddenly shouted at me, "Be quiet! Islám is the last religion! No religion will come after it! You are not right! You are an apostate!"

'I asked, "Sir, do you give me permission to speak?"

'He replied, "No."

'"Then I am afraid I must speak without your permission. We are not apostates. We are right, and the time for Islám is over."

'He interrupted me sharply, shouting, "Islám is eternal!" and he quoted an Arabic verse which I could not understand. Then I quoted a verse from the Qur'án, saying every religion has an end.

[Here the writer gives a long discourse about the meaning of this verse and at the end he quoted a verse from a reliable Shí'ih book of traditions to the effect that if Muslims are virtuous, the life of Islám will be 1,000 years and if not, it will be 500.]

'Then I told him, "You have been virtuous and Islám has lasted 1,000 years. Now is the time for the Faith [of Bahá'u'lláh], and no power on earth can arrest it!"

'He shouted, "Shut up! Don't be impudent!" Then he continued to say that the Bahá'ís are aiding Israel. I replied that to do so would be a political act and we are not involved in politics.

'He said that we had buildings in Israel. "You have a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár [House of Worship]."

'"They are our Holy Places."

'"Take your Holy Places out of there!"

'"Holy Places cannot be moved. If they could, why don't you bring out the Mosque of Aqsá from Jerusalem."

'"The Mosque fits that place very well!"

'"So do our Holy Places."

'Again he shouted, "Shut up!" And then he added, "Get out of the room!"

'Throughout the conversation I was very polite and soft-spoken, and then I bade farewell with great politeness, smiled, excused myself, and came out.

'On the way out of the room, another Mullá said, "Look, my son, many of us have returned to the bosom of Islám. You have reached the age of maturity [15]; you should follow those who have come back to Islám."

'I replied, "Yes, I have reached the age of maturity. I have accepted my Faith by my own choice. And to the last breath of my life I will support it. I am prepared to undergo any torture, any difficulty for my Faith! I don't consider my blood to be more red than that of my fellow Bahá'ís who are offering it to God."

'The Imám said, "In that case, we have to expel you from school."

'"Do whatever your duty demands."

'After I left the office of the Imám Jum'ih, to my surprise again I started trembling. I went to my school and said goodbye to my fellow students, got my dismissal order and went back home.'

[This dismissal order is now one of the documents preserved in the hands of the Bahá'ís.]

*Two teenage sisters were walking in the street and were stopped for a routine check. When asked about their political affiliation, the girls said that as Bahá'ís they had no political affiliation. The word 'Bahá'í' was enough for the guards to take them to prison. There follows an extract from the letter they wrote describing their experiences:*

'They blindfolded us and took us to the car. We did not know where we were going. They separated us and placed us in separate small cells. After an hour there, and while we were still blindfolded, they took us to another place by car. We found out later that this was the place of the Committees, which are manned by members of the Ḥujjatíyyih [an anti-Bahá'í group].

'We were taken to a room which was an office. We heard the voices of two women, one old and one younger. The typewriter was running. After about an hour a man entered and asked what group we belonged to. We told him that we do not belong to a group but that we belong to the Bahá'í religion. He asked which branch

of Bahá'ís. We told him that there are no branches in the Bahá'í Faith. He laughed sarcastically, called the Fáith a misguided group, and left the room.

'When the man left, the two women who heard that we were Bahá'ís started abusing us, swearing against the Faith, saying that the Bahá'ís do not believe in God, and complaining that we had defiled their office by our presence. The older woman, who was full of hatred, started beating us, slapping us, abusing and insulting us, complaining, "Why do you not become Muslims and come to the true path!"

'"What path is more true than belief in the Greatest Name?"

'"What is the Greatest Name?"

'"It means that we believe in God."

'She didn't say another word. Meanwhile we were thirsty and asked for water. They said we would defile the glass if they gave us water. We said, "Let us drink from the tap, then." They refused. The younger woman, however, later on brought us some water in a milk container.

[The girls underwent a long interrogation which is reported in detail. This interrogation was about the Bahá'í Faith and particularly the Bahá'í administration. They wanted the names of the members of the Spiritual Assembly, etc. The same night that the girls were detained, a group was sent to their home, where they confiscated Bahá'í books and family albums. After harrassing a member of the family and breaking the frame of a picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, they left.]

*Two Bahá'ís, 11 and 12 years old, were in the 4th and 5th grades at the time of the following incident which occurred at a time before Bahá'í students were all expelled from schools, and indicates how on certain occasions the staunchness of the Bahá'í youth won the admiration of their school friends and teachers:*

'When the teacher called the students to perform the congregational Muslim prayer, the two Bahá'ís refused to join. The Government teacher asked why they wouldn't participate. They replied, "We are Bahá'ís, and until we are 15 it is not compulsory for us to perform obligatory prayers. But at that time we will recite a different kind of prayer."

'"All right," the teacher said, "That is fine. But today I have asked you to go and participate in the prayers."

'"Congregational prayer is forbidden in the Bahá'í Faith, and I am not going at all," replied one of the boys.

'The teacher became furious. "In that case you say your own prayer!"

'While about 500 children were saying their congregational prayers, one of the Bahá'ís, obeying the teacher's instruction, chanted, very beautifully, a prayer by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. All the children stopped their prayers and gathered round him to listen and watch. This action greatly moved the teacher. When he saw that the boy was chanting with folded arms as a sign of reverence, the teacher stood in the same way.

'The teacher took the boy to the office of the principal where the teachers were gathered for prayers and he encouraged him to chant prayers there, too. These prayers also greatly influenced the teachers and the principal, who said with kindness, "Hereafter you say your own prayers at the school."

*The execution of the youth in Shíráz on 18 June 1983 has already been announced to the Bahá'í world and is reported in the survey of events in the preceding pages of this volume. However, details of their encounters in prison, written by those who were with them during the last days of their lives, are so dramatic that they will surely be retold many times.*

*The following is an account of what Ru'yá Ishráqí, a teenage girl who was martyred with her parents, told a fellow prisoner. This prisoner was later released and conveyed Ru'yá's story in a letter:*

'On one of the days of the trial, she said to the judge, "I have not seen my father for the past 32 days. If you allow me to turn around and see for a minute the face of my father..." [Before the prisoners were taken to the trial session, they were first blindfolded, then deliberately taken to wrong rooms and zig-zagged through the prison while abuses and insults were heaped upon them. Then they were taken to a wall, their blindfolds were removed, and they were then given their file and required to write a reply to the questions presented.] The judge hesitated for a moment. However, he agreed that Ru'yá could see her father in the adjoining room for a few minutes.

'She kissed her father, telling him how she loved him and encouraging him to be brave and steadfast. Touching the face of her father, she

asked why he had not shaved. The reply was they were not allowed to shave.

'At the time Ru'yá was looking at her father with great love and kissing his face, the judge interfered saying, "Isn't it a pity that you refrain from saying only one word—that you are not Bahá'ís—by which you could avoid such trouble. If you say those words, all three of you will be free and all the frozen assets of your father [including his pension] will be given to him."

'Ru'yá, with her customary smile and decisive look, replied, "The love between parents and children is natural, but my love for my Beloved is even greater than my love for my parents."

'The judge asked, "Are you holding to this view until the moment of your execution?" And Ru'yá replied, "I pray and hope that to the last breath, I will stand firm in my love for my Beloved."'

*Eight Bahá'ís who were students in a girls' high school were asked to participate in a political walk and to shout slogans aloud, but they refused on the grounds that they were Bahá'ís and could not participate in political affairs, including protest marches. The incident was reported in these words:*

'They were taken to the principal's office and each student was questioned separately. The eight students all identified themselves as Bahá'ís and said they could not participate in political matters. As a result, it was decided to expel the eight students from school. These students had shown themselves to be Bahá'ís by word and deed. Many of their fellow students were astonished at the expulsion order, but the Bahá'í students, resigning themselves to being deprived of normal education, placed their trust in divine confirmation, were confident of being protected by invisible hosts, and felt assured that in time they would be granted their rights. They followed Bahá'u'lláh's exhortation to be obedient to the Government, hoping meanwhile that erelong the injustice of which they were victims would be redressed and they would be allowed to return to their classes in the school. As a result of appeals to the Authorities in the Ministry of Education, the Bahá'í children were eventually allowed to register in another school and continue their education.'

*The use of children as a means of intimidating Bahá'í parents who are prisoners, and attempting to provoke their recantation, is illustrated by the following excerpt from a letter written to the Universal House of Justice by a young woman in Írán:*

'In September 1982, my parents, Dr. and Mrs. ——, with thirteen other Bahá'ís from the town of ——, were arrested by revolutionary guards, accused of involvement in Bahá'í activities, and sent to —— prison. My mother, the only woman in the group, was placed in solitary confinement for twenty-five days and was not permitted to have visitors. The cell to which she was consigned was one metre in length by two metres in width, and her sole possessions were one blanket and one chádur. After twenty-five days she was permitted to visit my father in the men's prison, but the visit lasted only a few minutes. On the first day of my mother's imprisonment, the guards took my younger sister, who was only six at the time, to visit my mother, in an effort to shake her confidence and cause her to recant and go free. As the desired result was not obtained, further visits were temporarily suspended.

'The wedding anniversary of my parents occurred during their term of imprisonment. Making a dough from the bread and water which were allotted her as food, my mother moulded it in the form of a spray of roses, and gave it to my father as an anniversary gift. After my mother and father were released from prison they coloured the flowers and had them set in a frame.

'The framed floral arrangement is being forwarded to the Universal House of Justice on behalf of my parents.'

*Excerpt from a report written by a Bahá'í who was imprisoned with the young martyrs Shahín (Shirín) Dálvand, Miss Ru'yá Ishráqí, and others. The report describes the conditions under which these young women lived and the kinds of intimidation to which they were subjected:*

'On the first day in prison, I was surprised to see among the prisoners a number of children ranging in age from six months to three years. During the daylight hours I tried not to approach the children. I was afraid that my motherly instinct might overwhelm me and remind me of my separation from my own child and cause me to falter in detachment from all but the love of my True Beloved. Sometimes

at night, however, when I had remained awake in order to whisper my prayers, I would notice that the blanket covering one of the children had slipped off, exposing the child to the cold, and I would rise and replace it. In my heart I said, "O 'Abdu'l-Bahá! At this hour of the night is there someone to look after my poor child?"

'Most prisoners were friendly with the Bahá'ís. They used to say, "You Bahá'ís are the source of strength to our morale. You love each other just like the members of one family—we envy you!" Often they quarrelled among themselves, and the prison attendant would scold them, saying, "Learn from the Bahá'ís how to be united and behave like friends!"

'The prison cell consisted of two rooms, two bathrooms, and two corridors. In each room, which measured a little over 18' by 12', forty and sometimes fifty prisoners were confined. Each one of us had no more than five square feet of space, hardly enough to lie down. It was very difficult, especially at night. Two small windows protected by an iron grille were the only source of air and light. Heaters were installed in the corridors and were turned off during the night. Sometimes it was so cold we could not sleep. We had to lie down on the floor with one blanket under us and one covering us; and when the number of prisoners increased we were allowed only one blanket. The Bahá'ís had a separate sleeping quarter ... The number of plates for meals was limited. By order of the religious magistrate our plates were kept separate from those used by others, and three of us had to eat from each plate ... The first day I was amused to see some soup poured in our plate and to be told, "This is for the three of you; eat it with your hand; no spoon will be provided." Cleaning up and washing the dishes was done by the prisoners. The Bahá'ís took part in sweeping the floor, cleaning the bathroom, and washing the dishes, except for rinsing and wiping which, by order of the religious magistrate, Bahá'ís were not permitted to do because they were "unclean". Taking a bath was another problem; every day a limited number were permitted to bathe.

'At 4:00 a.m. every day the prisoners were awakened by a loudspeaker for morning prayer. We were told by the prison attendant that the previous group of Bahá'ís used to gather together and chant prayers aloud which attracted the attention of others in prison. The religious magistrate has forbidden that, and therefore we said our prayers quietly and observed caution. After a few days, however, orders came from the religious magistrate that Bahá'ís should not be allowed to pray at all. So we had to get up when others were asleep and whisper our prayers. Even then, the spies in prison had noticed and reported to the authorities that they had seen our lips moving silently ...

'Three days after our arrest and imprisonment ... a number of us ... were blindfolded and led in single file, each holding the robe of the one in front of her, to an unknown place. On the way the guards kept insulting us; they made humiliating remarks about our being Bahá'ís, and said we deserved to be executed. When we reached the place, they made us stand against and facing the wall, and kept us in that position for some time; and now and then the guards insulted us. All of a sudden one yelled, "Kill these infidels!" I felt they really were going to shoot us, and I was quite happy to be freed from their hands so soon, but after a while they started to call us one by one, and they led us to another place. When it was my turn and we reached the place, I was told to remove my blindfold. A photographer and three other people were there. They asked my name, and put questions to me about my family. One of them said, "Are you from the town of ——?" When I said that I was, he shouted, "Shame on you, you infidel!" Then he rudely ordered me to pull down the robe on my shoulder. I had my head covered with a scarf and around my neck on a chain hung a brass tag with my prison number on it. They wanted me to hold the plate with my right hand so that my ring with the symbol of the Greatest Name on it might be shown in the photograph and presented to the court as proof of my being a Bahá'í. Again I was blindfolded and returned to prison.

'Ten days later —— who was in prison with us was called for investigation, and returned after two hours in a pitiful condition. She was so weak I had to hold her arm ... Quietly—because we were watched—I asked her what happened. She said, "They made me walk down many steps toward the basement, where I heard the cries of people in agony and pain. The blindfold was taken off, and what I saw filled me with terror. There were eight benches on which

eight persons were tied with chains, face down. They were being lashed with cable whips and severely tortured. I was so terrified that I became unconscious, and when I recovered I found myself lying on a hospital bed. Again I was humiliated and threatened, and was told, "Now you can go, but remember that we will see you again!" From this account I realized what was in store for us and the savagery of those in whose hands we were caught.

'On the days when we had no interrogation, three men came and conducted indoctrination sessions for the prisoners. Their object was to humiliate us and weaken our spirits. They would proclaim, "These Bahá'ís are agnostics; they are apostates and enemies of Islám; they are unclean; they are all spies of Israel." Then they would ask those present to write down their comments and questions for the afternoon session. One day a non-Bahá'í lady called —— who had heard about the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings from a fellow prisoner Mrs —— wrote this question: "What is the reason for the arrest of the Bahá'ís? You say they are agnostics and infidels, while they claim to have faith in God, to believe in life after death, among other teachings, and to uphold the Qur'án." When the head investigator saw the question he exclaimed, "Who has written this? These Bahá'ís have no regard for chastity; their marriage is not legal; brother marries sister; they are all spies of Israel, Russia and Britain. They are apostates and, according to the Qur'án, the limb of those who war against God and His Prophet must be amputated while he is alive.[1] We have done that in one instance." He immediately stopped talking and left the room. We had a feeling that perhaps he referred to the case of —— because the authorities refused to turn over the body to the relatives after the martyrdom.

'Some of the prisoners were very kind and tried to console us; they said they knew that all these accusations against us were false...'

*Excerpt from a letter written by Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih (who was martyred on 18 June 1983, as detailed in the preceding section of this volume) to her sister, about the martyrdom of two Bahá'í friends:*

'Today is the 13th of Naw-Rúz (New Year). The weather is sunny and clear, but windy. It is 8:15 in the morning. I have a holiday today, and want to write a letter to you. I don't know where to begin. Words are too weak and insignificant to express the grandeur of what has taken place...

'Two weeks have passed and still it is difficult to describe what I have witnessed. —— the son of —— is my classmate. On Monday ... the anniversary of the martyrdom of the seven martyrs of Ṭihrán, a number of us young people were together in a friend's home, and —— was among us. We wanted to have one of the Holy verses written with good penmanship and —— volunteered. I dictated the sentence, "A man is nonexistent who does not sacrifice his life in the path of Thy love." He wrote that on a piece of paper and handed it to me. While I was looking at it the telephone rang, and —— was called. We heard him say with an anxious voice, "What has happened to my dad?" When he returned to the room he excused himself, saying, "I'm sorry, I must leave. They have telephoned from prison that I must go and attend to matters connected with my father." We said, "No doubt they want to release your father." They had released two prisoners some time earlier. We asked him to let us know the good news of his father's freedom, so that we also might rejoice. He said he would try, and left hurriedly.

'About an hour and a half passed; it was 6:30 p.m., time to break our fast. The hostess had prepared food and had set the table. The doorbell rang; we all rushed to the door, hoping to see —— enter with his father. I looked through the window and saw —— and his sister ... wearing peculiar expressions on their faces. When they entered the room —— cried out, "Children, congratulate me; my father is freed." Then her brother, striking the table with some force, said, "The martyrs of Ṭihrán are renewed! Shíráz lacked martyrs; it needed martyrs!" Puzzled, we asked what he meant. He said, "My father told me that tomorrow he and Mr. —— will go to the Threshold of God, and he has advised us not to bewail and lament, but to fête the executioners with sweetmeats and bear no grudge against them." Then his sister cried out, "Father's real life was during the months he spent in prison. No, I bear no grudge against any of them. What a blessed day—my father will be freed on the anniversary of the seven martyrs of Ṭihrán."

[1] Possibly a reference to the Qur'án, súrih 5, verse 33.

'At this moment their mother entered, supported on the arms of friends. She was heartsick and shedding tears. Her son drew her to him, put her head on his chest, and said, "Mama, why do you cry? Didn't dad say you should not wail and lament? If father had died as the result of an accident, or from illness, would you have found it more acceptable?"

'You can imagine how we all felt. I could not stand on my feet and had to sit down. I could not believe what I witnessed was reality. The two young people, holding their mother's arms, walked out of the room and left, the son turning to say, "Please pray for us." They left us in an indescribable state. We prayed, but the sound of praying was lost in the sound of sobbing. The food on the table was untouched and got cold. I don't remember how I came home; I only know that two boys helped me get to the car. We kept repeating "Yá Bahá'u'-Abhá! O Bahá'u'llah! O Blessed Beauty!" God knows how we spent the hours till dawn. All night long we prayed and shed tears ... Finally at 8:30 a.m. we went to the house of a friend. As she came towards us with swollen eyes father asked her what the news was and she said, "It's all over." Afterward we learned that during the night, shortly after —— with his sister and his mother had left the prison, both Mr. —— and Mr. —— were martyred.

'The following day ... the funeral services were held ... the friends' hearts seemed to be joined into one heart, throbbing in unison. I saw —— and —— in the crowd; they were not crying but seemed to have a smile on their lips. —— was chanting a prayer and his voice seemed to reflect the call from the secret realms of God urging us who are attached to this earthly darkness to seek the altar of sacrifice and give our lives in the path of God. All the friends chanted with a loud voice, "Is there any remover of difficulties save God" and the angels from the Kingdom seemed to answer, "Say, praised be God, He is God." Weeping and laughing, tears and smiles, dust and flowers, all seemed to be mixed together. The tall wreaths of flowers gazed placidly upon our celestial gathering; the friends were all embracing each other; they seemed to have just discovered the paradise in which they lived. At the graveside of his father, —— said, "My father was martyred for the welfare of mankind and to unite the hearts of the friends. At the last moment I assured my father that by the act of martyring him, his executioners could not drive the love of 'Abdu'l-Bahá from our hearts."

'From that moment on, if I ever shed tears, it was not for the memory of those two holy souls who were martyred, but for our own failure in not recognizing that they had been martyrs all their lives. God wanted us to recognize their station.

'Relating to us the life account of his father, —— used to say, "My father was a pioneer in remote villages of Írán for many years. We lived in villages where people had no idea about cleanliness and health. He worked very hard to make them realize the advantages of a clean and healthy environment. He endured many hardships in the villages; several times his house was pillaged. In spite of all this, he continued to serve the Cause cheerfully and unceasingly."

'The life of Mr. —— according to the friends from —— was also of the same character; his dedicated service to the Cause of God and to his fellow men forms a glorious chapter in the history of the Faith in that town ...

'The youth spent the following days with the martyr's children and witnessed their wonderful patience and perseverance. The daughter of one of the martyrs said, "During our last visit with Dad, before leaving, I turned around, looked at him and said, 'Dad, don't worry about us, and have no attachment to us; keep your heart firm and strong.' Dad said, 'Rest assured my heart is firm and I have no attachment to you.' The 11-year-old daughter of this martyr had prayed, "O Bahá'u'lláh, please accept my father's martyrdom."

'... this sounds like fiction, but it is the absolute truth. How lucky we are that the Blessed Beauty has bestowed upon us the bounty of witnessing with our own eyes a small part of the glory of His heroes! We can only implore Him sincerely to assist us in the service of His Cause, and to keep our hearts illumined with the light of His love...'

*Excerpt from a letter written to the sister of Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih by a Bahá'í who was imprisoned with Zarrín:*

'I knew Zarrín from many years ago. She was a symbol of faith and a priceless and incomparable gem. Her entire being was always aglow with the love of Bahá'u'lláh. She worked and

sincerely served day and night. Surely her purity of intention caused her to attain the station of martyrdom and gain the most great bounty...

'[When I was imprisoned] Zarrín was also there ... the strength and spirit of the Bahá'í prisoners were such that many of the other prisoners would gather about them and ask questions. They always said that the presence of Bahá'ís boosted their morale and raised their spirits. The manners and behaviour of our youth, and our unity, were the best teachers for the Faith. The prison has three storeys. Each level has many cells. Bahá'ís were put in cells on the third floor among the prostitutes, murderers, addicts and the ill. ... Showers and baths, facilities for sleeping, and the food, were bad. Our movements were strictly monitored and controlled...

'Zarrín in her several trials had courageously confessed that she was an active Bahá'í, and had said that she believed in the truth of the previous dispensations and also in the Manifestation of the new religion, Bahá'u'lláh. Since she utilized her profound knowledge of the Faith in the interrogations, she had caused consternation among the judges. On one occasion, speaking of her repeated trials before the religious magistrate, she told me, "One day they blindfolded me as usual and took me to the trial room again. Unlike other days when the trials involved answering questions in written form, I noticed that the questions were being asked orally. It took a long time. The questions had to do with my beliefs as a Bahá'í, and some related to Súrihs of the Qur'án. I answered them all, basing my responses on the Bahá'í Tablets as well as verses of the Qur'án. Suddenly, after about an hour, I heard the voice of the judge who was trying me. He said, 'Now, what answer do you have to give this young lady? Anyone of you who has a question can put it; I am tired. What will you say to this girl? She admits that she is a Bahá'í and claims that according to the verses of the Qur'án the Promised One has come. Which one of you has a question to ask or an answer to give her?' I felt that they all got up and left, as I could hear their footsteps. I addressed the judge (religious magistrate) saying that I was blindfolded, and asking how many people had been present during the interrogation. The judge replied, 'I tried you several times. When I told the other judges of your courage and knowledge, they didn't believe me. So today I asked them to come and see for themselves and to state what sentence they would pronounce upon you.' Then the judge asked me to guess what sentence would be pronounced in my case, and I said, 'The most severe penalty you can impose is to order my execution, but I preferred to speak the truth in court and to acquaint you with the knowledge I have, so that in the next world I won't be found guilty in the presence of God's justice.'"

'For the third stage of Zarrín's trial, I was still in prison. She was summoned in the normal way and, in the customary fashion, the judge told her to recant or die. Zarrín replied, "I have found the path of truth and I won't abandon it at any price. Therefore, I welcome with a kiss the judge's decree."

'Zarrín became the honour and pride of women and a light to the world, and she refreshed her soul with the melodies of the Beloved ... From the narrowness of prison she winged her way to the heights of the heavenly abode. Therefore, you must be content and patient...'

*Excerpt from a report by a Bahá'í prisoner who was imprisoned with Muná Maḥmúdnizhád:*

'Muná was a young teenage girl when she was martyred. She was a teacher of Bahá'í children's classes ... Twice the order for Muná's release was issued but at the third stage in her trial the religious magistrate ... after insulting and humiliating Muná to a considerable degree, said to her, "Your father and mother have deceived and misled you". In reply, Muná said, "Your honour, it is true I have learned about the Bahá'í Faith from my parents, but I have done my own reasoning. In the Bahá'í Faith one adheres to religion after investigation, not through blind imitation. You have many of our books; you can read and find out for yourself. My father and mother did not insist on my accepting their belief, neither did they force me to become a Bahá'í. If the religious magistrate thinks I should abandon my belief I will never do so; I prefer submitting to the order of execution."

'The religious magistrate, astounded, said, "Young girl, what do you know about religion!"

'Muná exclaimed, "Your honour, I have been brought here from the school classroom; I have been imprisoned and tried for three months. What better proof is there of my religious certitude than my perseverance and steadfastness in the Bahá'í Faith? It is this faith which gives

me confidence to be tried and examined in your presence!"

'The religious magistrate, impressed by Muná's sincerity, asked her to recite a prayer. With her usual respect and humility, she recited a prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá ... after which the religious magistrate remained silent for a while, then said to her, "What harm did you find in Islám that you have turned to Bahaism?" Muná's answer was, "The foundation of all religions is one. From age to age, according to the exigencies of time and place, God sends His Messenger to renew religion and guide the people in the right path. The Bahá'í religion upholds the truth of Islám, but if by 'Islám' you mean the prevailing animosity, murder and bloodshed in the country, a sample of which I have observed in this prison, this is the reason I have chosen to be a Bahá'í."

'Muná's answer was for quite a while the subject of conversation among the imprisoned friends: How had she dared to speak so forthrightly to the religious magistrate!'

The martyrdom of Muná Maḥmúdnizhád who was hanged on 18 June 1983 for refusing to recant her belief in the Bahá'í Faith is detailed in the preceding section of this volume.

*Thus far, the youngest martyr in the present-day episode of oppression is Paymán Subḥání, aged 15, who was bound hand and foot, and stoned and beaten to death, in April 1986, and his body abandoned in a field near his home in Saráván, in the Province of Balúchistán and Sístán. His story is detailed under 'Survey of Events' which opens this section of the international record relating to the persecution of the Bahá'í community of Írán.*

Iran's Baha'is face poverty, arrests, death
IRAN Le long calvaire des baha'is
Le génocide des Bahaïs en Iran
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Nye krenkelser av menneskerettighetene i Iran
Bahá'ier ig[illegible] henrettet
Baha'ier i Iran må underskrive sin dødsdom
Khomeiny-regimet i Iran har siste uke gjennomført en ny lovregel som tvinger baha'ier til å underskrive sin egen dødsdom eller
eg sin religion
Bahai's
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Iran
LES BAHAIS, «NON-PERSONNES» EN BUTTE A LA PERSÉCUTION
State Department Report
Baha'is Persecuted in Iran
religion has never been recognized under any Ira-
Dossier
Les Baha'is : Des persécutions à l'élimination
Le martyre des apôtres de la non-violence en Iran
Exécutions et assassinats se multiplient; la menace d'ouverture de camps de concentration se précise:
le pouvoir islamique organise le massacre d'une communauté religieuse pacifique.
os Bahá'is de Irán, un
olocausto silencio
Bahá'is perseguidos no Irão
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Khomeinis Henker jagen die Baha'i
Blutiger Terror im Iran gegen nichtislamische Minderheit
Allgemeine Zeitung
bloody war on Iran's Bahais
Bahai-Verfolgung in Iran auf dem Höhepunkt
Märtyrer für die Würde und Gleichberechtigung der Frau
何梅尼迫害異己、巴哈伊教徒悲歌
廿一人離鄉背井、在寶島望洋興嘆
什葉派掀起血腥革命、孔雀王朝頓時被瓦解
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A CAMPANHA CONTRA OS BAHA'I NO IRÃO
VIOLA PRINCÍPIOS DOS DIREITOS HUMANOS
Iranian Baha'is facing genocide
ENCARCELAN A NIÑOS
Congresleden komen op voor Irans Baha'is
En Iran
VINGT-SIX BAHAIS CONDAMNÉS A MORT
Ripresa la persecuzione contro la comunità religiosa: nove fucilati
Iran, nuovo calvario per i Baha'i
Family mourns execution of relative who died for faith
TORTURA Y EJECUCION EN LAS PRISIONES DE IRAN
Religious Genocide in Iran
STOP BUTCHERY OF BAHAIS
Parlament über schwierige Situatio
der Baha'i im Iran unterrichtet
SOUTH CHINA MORNING PO
Recant, or die
Worden 5 Bahá'ís ook in het geheim geëxecuteerd?
Varför är Baha'ierna i Iran förföljda?
Congress condemns Iran's repression of Baha'i faith
By George Archibald
Iran
PLUSIEURS DIZAINES DE BAHAIS SERAIENT SOUMIS A LA TORTURE
大同教徒痛心指控伊朗迫害宗教信仰

# F. THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHA'Í FAITH IN ÍRÁN: A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF REFERENCES FROM BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS, JOURNALS, NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS IN SOME EUROPEAN LANGUAGES 1983–1986

THIS bibliography attempts to bring together a representative sampling of works published by non-Bahá'í agencies, in western languages, that make reference to the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán during the period Riḍván (21 April) 1983 to Riḍván (21 April) 1986. The bibliographers make no claim that the bibliography is exhaustive, the entries being taken exclusively from the collections of materials held in the Bahá'í World Centre Library. In addition, the vast numbers of newspaper articles forced the compilers to select only the most significant articles from a number of countries.

The entries are arranged in broad categories by type of publication, and sub-arranged by language in sections 1 and 2. Within language categories, the entries are alphabetical by the entry—by author or, in the absence of an author, by title. Section 3 is arranged alphabetically. Section 4, Newspaper clippings, is arranged by continent, then by country within the continents, and then chronologically. Titles are shown as they were printed in the publication, and misspellings of the word Bahá'í have not been corrected.

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# 3. THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF EGYPT 1985–1986

## A. SURVEY OF EVENTS FEBRUARY 1985–20 APRIL 1986

FOR over three decades, the small but firmly established Bahá'í community in Egypt has been increasingly subjected to restrictions dictated by two forces sweeping the Middle East and threatening many other parts of the world; nationalism, which had been slowly but steadily growing since World War I, has now been joined by an excessively zealous Islamic fundamentalism which rejects the least 'deviation' from the ancestral way of Muslim life. These two forces have given birth to a fierce fanaticism which has led to prohibitions affecting not only the normal local community life of the Bahá'ís in Egypt but also, internationally, their participation in the world-wide Bahá'í activities.

The Egyptian Bahá'ís, though unfailingly faithful to their nation and ever loyal to their country, have gradually seen their religious institutions dissolved, their meetings and Feasts banned, the teaching of their Faith outlawed, their social activities halted, their community properties confiscated, their religion publicly denounced, their beliefs ridiculed, their Bahá'í literature seized and destroyed, their private correspondence censored, their movements put under close surveillance, the registration of their civil marriages denied and their fundamental rights trampled upon. They were periodically put under police arrest, detained before trial and later harassed with calumnious criminal charges.

The most recent and by far the most important episode of this persecution began in Cairo in early 1985. Its opening note was struck at one hour after midnight on 23 February when a host of policemen entered the houses of more than forty believers. After a thorough search, all books, writings, notes, tapes, video cassettes and other objects suspected of containing any of the Writings or teachings of the Bahá'í Faith were taken away and forty-one believers, including some young women, were arrested. Over the next several days, those believers were subjected to lengthy questioning by the Prosecution Office for State Security, an office specializing in investigating felonies affecting the security of the State. There the Bahá'ís had to answer, again and again, detailed questions about their religious beliefs and practices, the structure and functions of the institutions of their Faith, the principles and laws of their religion, the history of the Faith and its Central Figures, about the Universal House of Justice and their Holy Places located in Israel, the small gatherings they privately held in their own homes for the study of the Faith or for visiting with other members of the community, the names, activities and whereabouts of their co-religionists, and their attitudes and feelings towards other religions. At the closing of the initial questioning, as they were taken to their place of confinement, they were informed of the charges made against them. Ironic as it may sound, they were, this time, accused of membership in an organization whose aim is to counter the fundamental principles on which the system of government in Egypt is based and to spread extreme views which despise and belittle the divinely revealed religions. There followed a widespread press campaign in which these allegations were made against them.

The arrested friends were gradually released over the next three weeks on their own recognizance, but the questioning continued until finally it was established beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Bahá'ís had not violated any law related to State security or committed any act harmful to the principles on which the system of government in Egypt is based. The matter should have ended there. Instead, new charges were laid against the Bahá'ís and their case was then transferred to the District Prosecution Office for South Cairo which pursued them for allegedly acting in defiance of the dispositions of a Decree signed by President Nasser in 1960. That decree, which dissolved the Bahá'í Assemblies, con-

fiscated their belongings and banned their activities in Egypt, also provided for the punishment of any organization or individual who performed any of the activities of the said Assemblies, by a minimum sentence of six months' imprisonment or a fine not exceeding [Egyptian] £100.00.

The truth of the matter is that the Egyptian Bahá'ís carefully obeyed the provisions of that Decree regardless of their feeling about its unconstitutionality and unfairness. Nevertheless, they understood, and rightfully so, that Bahá'í families could still legally continue to exchange private and social visits. They also considered that by leaving out the administrative part of the Nineteen Day Feasts, they could legally be celebrated within the framework of such small private gatherings. These Feasts to which small numbers of Bahá'ís were invited to private homes among close friends and relatives were misconstrued and magnified to the level of an illegal activity performed by a prohibited organization in defiance of the aforementioned Decree No. 263 of 1960. In addition, the Prosecution Office laid the same charges against nine former members of the Egyptian Bahá'í community who no longer resided in Egypt. Despite the fact that some of these additional accused had not been back to Egypt since they legally left thirty years previously, they were described by the police and the press as 'fugitives'. The others were either absent from Egypt because of their work or on account of their having married foreigners and moved to the country of their spouses.

Simultaneously with the questioning of the Bahá'ís, the Egyptian newspapers published front-page articles quoting extensively from selected extracts from the Preliminary Hearings, putting much emphasis on the fact that Bahá'ís believe in a new messenger from God who claims to have revealed a new Holy Book superseding the Qur'án. It was soon obvious that the publishing of the Preliminary Hearings was only a means to an end, as these articles turned out to be merely a prelude to what was to become a vast press campaign, the true target of which was the Bahá'í Faith itself. The overall tone of this widespread campaign, which gradually attracted the media in the entire Arab world was so filled with hostility and partisanship as to become a vehicle to misinform the public and justify the arrest of the Bahá'ís, purporting that this was an achievement by the authorities which uncovered a suspicious underground movement.

A review of the press campaign, mainly orchestrated by two fanatical Arabic newspapers based in London, a campaign regularly supplied by a fresh flow of heinous articles, some of which carried the names of generally well-known, respected personalities and famous writers, leads to the conclusion that a number of groups had been involved, but in pursuance of differing objectives.

The generally acclaimed twofold purpose of the press campaign was to put the population on its guard against what was called 'Bahá'í sedition' and to bring the misguided members back to their senses. However, none of the two hundred and twenty-four lengthy articles published during the period from 22 February 1985 to 21 April 1986, made a single objective study of the Bahá'í teachings. Besides the frequent misquotations of the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, hostile literature written either by Covenant-breakers or notorious opponents of the Faith were used for reference. On the few rare occasions where Bahá'í books were named, it was obvious that the writer either had not read them or had read excerpts for the sole purpose of selecting incomplete passages whose meaning could be distorted in an effort to ridicule or misrepresent the Bahá'í teachings.

The journalists, writers and clergy who joined forces to sustain this campaign during the following two years caused many to misconstrue the underlying principles of the Bahá'í Faith and misjudge the motives of its persecuted followers. Amongst the Bahá'ís were outstanding individuals who, as victims of a wave of terrorizing prejudice, suffered material losses and experienced considerable moral damage and mental torture because of the cruel attempts made to force them to denounce their Faith. The press campaign portrayed the Bahá'ís as being damned souls sold to the devil. They were called heretics, atheists, renegades, apostates and infidels whose ultimate aim was the destruction of Islám. The fundamentalists presented the Faith as a fierce enemy whose goal was to destroy all that was holy and sacred in their religion. The principle of the unity of religions was misinterpreted as an artificial amalgamation of the teachings of various religions. The unity of the prophets was made out to

mean their physical reincarnation. The Bahá'í laws were presented as unlawful changes and abrogations of the Islamic laws. The removing of the veil and the Bahá'í principle of the equality of the sexes were denounced as immoral and licentious. The call raised for world peace by the Bahá'ís was condemned as an unpatriotic slogan intended to weaken the Islamic determination to strive to free Palestine from Zionism and to free countries like Egypt from the grasp of imperialism.

The advocates of Arab nationalism, on the other hand, focused on history in order to establish some connection between the Faith and those regarded as the twin enemies of the Arab nations—Zionism and imperialism. Inaccurate accounts, innovative interpretations and reports of events that disregarded their chronological sequence were used to distort not only the glorious events of the Heroic Age of the Faith but also its aims. Suspicions were cast on the appreciation expressed by some of the officials under the British Mandate for the humanitarian work carried out by the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, for the poor population of 'Akká and environs. Ignoring the fact that the Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and 'Akká had preceded the establishment of the State of Israel, many writers seized upon their location as clear evidence of a Bahá'í/Zionist coalition, supporting the charge that the Egyptian Bahá'ís were disloyal to their people and nation.

Among the religious and secular journalists and writers, one or two, in the early days of the campaign, voiced their respect and admiration for the Bahá'ís, but alas were very quickly silenced by severe denunciations. Thus, the large majority of these writers ignored, or preferred to ignore, the truth about the Bahá'í Faith.

When the conclusions of the Prosecution Office for State Security exonerating the Bahá'ís from interference with the security of the state were announced and new charges were laid under Decree No. 263 of 1960, a wave of indignation rose among the Islamists who strongly expressed their dissatisfaction. They realized that crimes against State security were felonies, classified only as misdemeanours, and carrying less substantial punishments. 'Is it logical that an act against the State be considered a felony but one against God and His Religion be regarded as a minor offence?' was a question raised in one of their articles.[1] Many others took advantage of this decision and the emotions it raised amongst the fanatics to renew their call to replace the statutory laws by the Islamic law (*Shárí'ah*) which punishes acts such as heresy and apostasy by death. A group of members of parliament known to have been members of the now banned Muslim Brotherhood prepared the draft of a bill proposing the imposition of harsh penalties on any person claiming to be a prophet, believing in such a claim or supporting it. The Committee for Religious Affairs in the Egyptian parliament, in studying this proposal, decided to hold a public hearing in which men of religion and scholars would be invited to participate, with the discussion devoted to the most effective means of combating the 'phenomena of new religions' and prescribing penalties best calculated to suppress them. The hearings were held throughout the first two weeks of April 1986. The purpose of these meetings, unprecedented in the parliamentary life of Egypt, was to recommend a draft for a new bill to eradicate any new religion such as the Bahá'í Faith from Egypt.

In the midst of this agitated atmosphere the court hearings opened on 7 May 1985 before the Qaṣra'n-Níl Misdemeanour Court. The lawyer conducting the defence on behalf of the accused requested postponement of the hearings in order to allow him sufficient time to complete his study of the voluminous file. The record of the preliminary hearing alone took up approximately 1,000 foolscap pages. The court fixed 7 October 1985 for the hearing. In the meantime, the press campaign against the Bahá'í Faith and the Bahá'ís continued. The deleterious influence it inevitably would have on the course of justice could not have escaped the professional journalists who pursued their biased campaign with increasing enthusiasm. Often, articles and news items gave a strong impression that they were being published for the sole purpose of influencing the opinion of the court. For example, on 5 October 1985, two days before the court hearings, the text of a speech given by the Egyptian Minister of Islamic Endowments (*Awqáf*) in a meeting held in the Islamic Centre of Kowloon while he was on a tour in Hong Kong, was published. The minister described the Bahá'í Faith as a 'sect of apostasy and

[1] *Al-Ahram*, 1 November 1985.

profanity alien to Islám'. He linked it with colonialism and declared that its Founder [Bahá'u'lláh] had 'a fascination for theological matters and a love of controversy about them'. The Minister also mentioned that 'Abdu'l-Bahá travelled to the West where He criticized the religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islám, claiming them to be 'fanciful and superstitious'. He then concluded by saying: 'This erroneous and misguided sect stands on the pillars of blasphemy, slander, atheism, heresy and apostasy' and the Bahá'ís are 'enemies of Islám'.[1]

On the morning of the scheduled trial hearings, 7 October 1985, press reports were published covering the Fourth International Conference on the Prophet's Life and the Islamic Traditions Derived from His Words and Practices. The condemnation of the Bahá'í Faith which was pronounced by the participants in that conference was given a predominant place in the press: 'the sect [the Bahá'í Faith] owes its origin to imperialists ... it is a political movement lurking behind heretical and scurrilous religious crazes ... it gives its support to the continued presence of colonialists and infidels [in the Muslim community] to the detriment of the Islamic States ... it is the stooge of world Zionism'. The reports went on to say that the Bahá'í Faith was further held 'to allow its followers to indulge in every vicious and forbidden act to the extent that they would not be acting correctly if they were to withhold their wives from their friends, for they claim that woman is the flower of this mortal life and that a flower should be plucked and smelled and embraced without stint'. Reportedly, the conference called for a publicity campaign to be launched against the Bahá'ís. Due to this unfair and biased campaign during which the press persistently refused to publish any comment or reponse in favour of the Faith or clearing the Bahá'ís, the defending lawyer again requested and obtained a postponement of the hearing until 3 February 1986.

The Islamic Research Academy at the Azhar University issued a lengthy formal announcement stating its opinion about the Bahá'í Faith and the Bahá'ís which was published in almost all of the Egyptian newspapers on 21 January 1986 and the following day. Considering the prestigious position and great respect which this institution enjoys, the Bahá'í International Community believed it was its duty to comment on and refute the accusations of this document. The Commentary, which was communicated to the major Egyptian newspapers, was neither referred to nor published. The Bahá'í International Community then translated it into English and made it available, with the translation of the said Academy's announcement, to all concerned outside Egypt.[2]

Another provocative and uncalled for denunciation was made in the press by the Al-Azhar which spread religious hatred against the entire Bahá'í community and pushed intolerance to its extreme.[3] This highly placed Islamic institution, in strong and undignified terms, called on the Muslim population, i.e. the great majority of Egyptians, to boycott the Bahá'ís.

In the meantime, Bahá'ís in the free world, who had learned about the plight of their Egyptian brethren, were moved to take action to alleviate these persecutions. They appealed to their own governments and international organizations, including the United Nations, to appeal to the Egyptian Government for protection of the rights of the Bahá'ís. The stand adopted by the high-ranking Egyptian officials seemed unclear and evasive to say the least. The numerous queries addressed to them by international organizations devoted to the protection of human rights remained without any answer. Requests for explanation made by friendly governments of the European and North American continents met with vague answers empty of any firm commitment. A number of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís in Europe, North America and including Australia, in co-operation with the offices of the Bahá'í International Community in New York, Geneva and London, pointed out that Egypt had an international obligation to grant and protect religious freedom for all on its territory, an obligation outlined in at least the following five international instruments:

1. The United Nations Charter, Article 1, Paragraph 3 which lists among the purposes of the organization '... to achieve international co-operation ... in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental

[1] *Al-Muslimoon*, 5 October 1985.

[2] The entire text of the commentary, from which the allegations set forth in the Azhar's announcement may be easily inferred, appears on page 288.

[3] *Al-Muslimoon*, 15 March 1986. *Al-Akhbar*, 15 March 1986.

freedoms for all...' The same Charter in Articles 55 and 56 records the pledge of the United Nations member states to take joint and separate action to achieve '(c) Universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all...'

2. The Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, contained in the Annex to Resolution 2625 (XXV) of the United Nations General Assembly adopted on 24 October 1970. The said resolution provided in sub-paragraph (b) that 'States shall co-operate in the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and in the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and all forms of religious intolerance...'

3. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights that provides in Article 18 that 'Every one has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.'

4. The Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief Proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 25 November 1981—Resolution No. 36/55, Declaration Article 4 of which provides that '1. All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life. All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.'

5. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which provides in its Article 18 that '1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching. 2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice...'

The aforementioned Bahá'í institutions further explained on a number of occasions to government officials in their respective countries that Egypt's obligation to respect and enforce such provisions of international law is prescribed by its own municipal law beginning with its Constitution which, in Article 151,[1] provides that 'treaties will have the force of law after their conclusion, ratification and publication in accordance with the prescribed procedures'. Therefore, the said International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was ratified by that country on 14 January 1982 and officially published on 15 April 1982, had acquired force of law in Egypt at that date and consequently had abrogated any legislation conflicting with its provisions. Thus, the Decree of 1960, which banned the activities of the Bahá'í Assemblies in Egypt, became void at that date by the entry into force of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on the Egyptian territory, and no enforcement of that decree could take place without dishonouring Egypt's obligations. Similarly, the proposed bill providing for harsh punishments for the Bahá'ís, pending before the Parliament, was against the spirit and the word of the said International Covenant. Such legislation could not be passed by the Parliament without discrediting the Egyptian Government as a reliable partner in international agreements.

In turning to their respective governments for help, the Bahá'ís of Europe and North America were seeking a preventive solution of the problem. They were careful not to cause any unnecessary embarrassment to the Egyptian Government, an inevitable situation if the proposed bill were to become law or the aforesaid decree were to be enforced by its courts. It was clear to these governments that all signatories of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had the right and duty to see that other States which are parties to it were respecting its dispositions and implementing them in good faith.

[1] The Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 11 September 1971.

## B. A COMMENTARY ON THE AZHAR'S STATEMENT REGARDING 'BAHÁ'ÍS AND BAHÁ'ÍSM'

*This commentary is a refutation of a statement on 'Bahá'ís and Bahá'ísm' issued by the Islamic Research Academy at the Azhar, Egypt, and published on 21 January 1986 in a number of newspapers in that and other Arab countries. The original Arabic document was sent on 19 June 1986 to religious and civil authorities as well as to the press in Egypt. No response was ever received from the authorities, and the article was never published. This translation was prepared for the information of officials in the West and for the Bahá'í community. (Quotations from the Qur'án not otherwise ascribed are those of the translator of the commentary.)*

The Islamic Research Academy at the Azhar University recently issued a statement about 'Bahá'ís and Bahá'ísm' which was published in a number of newspapers in Egypt and other Arab countries on 21 January 1986. The statement was, in effect, a denunciation of the Bahá'í Faith, which it described as a 'false creed'.

The reasoning followed by the Research Academy in arriving at its conclusion of the 'falsity' of the Bahá'í Faith may be resolved into two basic trains of argument. The first line of argument is that it must be false since it is at variance with Islám in denying the Day of Judgement, the Resurrection, Heaven and Hell; in repudiating the Prophet Muḥammad's station as Seal of the Prophets; in claiming that God became incarnate in the person of Bahá'u'lláh; and in altering the forms of worship ordained by Islám. The second line of argument seeks to demonstrate the falsity of the Bahá'í Faith by showing the opposition that it has encountered from Islamic society, whether this has taken the form of condemnatory religious and judicial pronouncements, of legal decisions adjudicating it to be a form of 'apostasy', or of the persecution of its followers through campaigns of execution and torture as has been happening in Írán. The Research Academy winds up its case by urging the legislative, judicial, and executive powers of government in Egypt to 'extirpate' from the country a small and disadvantaged group of peaceable citizens, and for no other reason than that they call themselves Bahá'ís.

It was obvious from the profuse amount of erroneous information contained in the Research Academy's statement that it has placed its reliance on sources hostile to the Bahá'ís, sources that purvey to the public scurrilous misrepresentations of the Faith of the Bahá'ís that are as offensive to them as they must be to any Muslim. In consequence, the findings arrived at by the Research Academy stand in striking contrast to the true facts of the case, which could quite easily have been ascertained by the Academy had it referred either to the standard Bahá'í source books or to the beliefs actually held by the Bahá'ís. Our concern to make available to students of religion some basic information about the Bahá'í Faith, and an outline of its principles and teachings, was the chief consideration prompting the writing of this commentary, and our hope is that it may go some way towards dispelling the accumulated falsehoods and fictions that have obscured the true face of this Faith—a Faith which has been extolled by many eminent thinkers from both East and West, who have familiarized themselves with its beliefs, for the spirituality of its teachings and the loftiness of its vision.

### *The belief of the Bahá'ís in the Qur'án*

The Bahá'ís believe in all the divine verses contained in the Book of the 'Wise Remembrance',[1] whether these relate to the question of the 'Seal of the Prophets' or to such matters as the Day of Judgement, the Resurrection, the Afterlife, Heaven and Hell. The Bahá'ís, however, do not regard themselves as bound to follow the interpretations assigned to these verses by the scholars of former ages (particularly where the meaning is not clearly apparent), except in cases where such interpretations are fully in accordance with reason. The distinction between Text and interpretation is so clear that it would be superfluous for us to elaborate upon it here in detail: the one is the revealed Word of God, while the other is the

[1] The Wise Remembrance: i.e. the Qur'án (from the Súrah of the family of Imrán, v. 58).

production of His fallible creatures. The reason why we believe that our forefathers' interpretations of the holy text cannot be accepted *en masse* without any discrimination on our part is that they suffer from certain limitations. Broadly speaking there have been two main schools of exegesis: the vast majority of Quranic exegetes placed exclusive reliance on the linguistic signification and outward meaning of the verses they were engaged in expounding, and their interpretative efforts are therefore marked by strict adherence to a literalistic understanding of the text. (Needless to say, were the meanings of the Qur'án really to be confined to these outward significations, it could hardly be said to contain those 'figurative' verses, of which, together with the 'perspicuous' verses, it is, by its own testimony, composed.)[1] The other school of exegesis overlooked the outward sense of the words and placed such store on their inner meanings that they sometimes assigned to the scripture interpretations which it could not, under any construction, be made to bear. The Bahá'ís regard these two different approaches as each, in its own way, unbalanced. The Bahá'í approach to the interpretation of the Qur'án is marked by its moderation, and by its blending of elements from both schools of exegesis, without accepting unreservedly the premisses of either. On this basis the Bahá'ís have been able to develop an understanding of the holy text which they consider to be at once deeper and more balanced than that expounded by the exegetes, and more in harmony with the exigencies of sound logic and the findings of modern science; and that takes full account of the rich profusion of hidden meanings contained in the metaphors, similes and allusions with which the verses of all the holy Books abound.

The truth of the matter is, that the Bahá'ís are proponents neither of the 'inward' nor the 'outward' exegesis of the Qur'án; or, put another way, they are proponents of both these schools together. Bahá'u'lláh has expressed this idea in the following words: 'Truly wise is he who understandeth the inward meaning in the light of its outward form.'[2] To illustrate the sort of area in which the Bahá'í approach to the interpretation of scripture provides the student with an appreciation of its deeper levels of meaning, let us look briefly at the two terms 'life' and 'death', which occur quite frequently in the Qur'án, and see how the Bahá'í approach affects our understanding of them. The Bahá'ís do not restrict the meanings of these words to their immediately obvious denotations of physical existence and non-existence, but add to them the further senses of spiritual life and death (always providing that they are not, by so doing, 'straining the context'): they are thus afforded fresh insight into such verses as 'Shall he who hath been dead, and whom we have restored unto life, and unto whom we have ordained a light, whereby he may walk among men, be as he whose similitude is darkness, from whence he shall not come forth?'[3] where it is the spiritual connotations of 'life' and 'death' that appear to accord more nearly with the logical flow of the passage than the exclusively literal senses of these words. The same observations hold true for the interpretation of the holy verse 'Thou shalt in no wise reckon those who have been slain at Ohod in the Cause of God, dead; nay, they are sustained alive with their Lord.'[4] In this manner, and with this same moderate, reasonable approach, the Bahá'ís also arrive at their interpretations of Resurrection, the Afterlife, the Day of Judgement, and Heaven and Hell.

Unfortunately, objectors to this method of studying the Qur'án, instead of explaining the reasons they have for being opposed to it, have taken the easier course of branding its followers as 'infidels' and 'unbelievers' and flinging at them other similarly opprobrious terms that one associates more with the extreme language of demagoguery than the measured and dispassionate reasoning of a scientific discourse.

*The Seal of the Prophets*

As regards the 'Seal of the Prophets', the difference between the Bahá'í and the Muslim stances on this matter goes beyond questions of interpretation and the validity of one school of exegesis as against another; for the Bahá'ís

[1] See Qur'án, Súrah of the Family of Imrán, v. 7: 'It is he who hath sent down unto thee the book, wherein are some verses *clear to the understood* [i.e. 'perspicuous'], they are the foundation of the book; and others are *parabolical* [i.e. 'figurative'].' (George Sale's translation; our italics.)

[2] *Majmú'iy-i-Alváh-i-Mubárakih*, edited by Muḥyi'd-Dín Kurdiy-i-Sanandajiy-i-Kánimishkání, Cairo, 1920, p. 11.

[3] Qur'án, Súrah of the Cattle, v. 122 (Sale's translation).

[4] Qur'án, Súrah of the Family of Imrán, v. 169. (Sale's translation).

hold that Muḥammad was indubitably the Seal of the Prophets, for such was the explicit designation given him in the fortieth verse of the Súrah of the Confederates in a manner that precludes any further debate: 'Mohammed is not the father of any man among you; but the apostle of God, and the seal of the prophets...' The Prophetic Traditions further make it unmistakably clear that there will be no prophet after Muḥammad, and the truth of this assertion is likewise not open to question. Nowhere in his writings did Bahá'u'lláh attribute to himself the station of prophethood; on the contrary, he declared on numerous occasions that prophethood had been sealed with the advent of 'him who cast his radiance over Yathrib[1] and Al-Baṭḥá'[2] and all the denizens of the world of creation.[3] The son of Bahá'u'lláh assumed the title of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—'the servant of Bahá'—at once to dispel all doubt as to the nature of his position and to proclaim to the world that, in his inward and outward reality, he was no more than the selfless servant of his father's Cause: this was his true mission; this was the rôle to which he aspired; and he made no pretence, nor laid any claim, to a station beyond this. It is in these terms that every Bahá'í forms his or her conception of the station of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

From the foregoing it is clear that the Muslims and Bahá'ís are at one in regarding Muḥammad as uniquely entitled to the style 'Seal of the Prophets'. The respect in which the two Faiths differ is the contrasting sets of conclusions they derive from the initial shared premiss that Muḥammad is the Seal of the Prophets; for while the preponderating majority of Muslim divines take the view that Muḥammad's stations as Seal of the Prophets necessarily implies the end of revelation—that there should be no further dispensation of divine inspiration to mankind thereafter—and so exclude the possibility that another messenger[4] should be sent by God after Muḥammad, or a new religion appear amongst men after Islám—the Bahá'ís do not infer the same consequences. In their view, it has been God's way in the past to provide His creatures, through His revealed word, with dispensations of divine guidance, and 'Thou shalt not find any change in the way of God; neither shalt thou find any variation in the way of God.'[5] They believe, moreover, that the verse 'O children of Adam, verily apostles from among you shall come unto you, who shall expound my signs unto you: whosoever therefore shall fear God and amend, there shall come no fear on them, neither shall they be grieved'[6] leaves the door open for the advent of further bearers of religious messages from God in the future.

The Bahá'ís have a number of theories to reconcile the idea of Muḥammad as the Seal of the Prophets with the concept of progressive divine revelation. Of these, one will be sufficient to our purposes, namely that of religious cycles. According to this theory, just as there are natural cycles in the physical world, so too in the spiritual world there are cycles, each of which is initiated by the coming of a new religion, and continues for the duration of the civilization to which it gives rise. Is it conceivable, the Bahá'ís say, that the spiritual side of man's life, which is after all the core and basis of his existence, should be subject to a less consummate and precise ordering than the material, non-essential side of his life? Each of these cycles has its own aims, its own distinctive features; taken together they are like courses of academic instruction in which the student progresses from the preparatory, through the intermediary to the university stage, all the while expanding his knowledge. The cycle initiated by Adam—the aim of which was to inculcate into man belief in God's unity, and one of the hallmarks of which was the prominence accorded during it to parables and prophecies—was brought to an end by Muḥammad the son of 'Abdu'lláh. In the light of this understanding, then, 'Seal of the Prophets' means no more than that with the Prophet Muḥammad came to a close one great phase in the spiritual develop-

[1] Yathrib: Medinah.
[2] Al-Baṭḥá: a designation of Mecca (lit.: 'the level plain').
[3] *Majmú'íy-i-Alváh-i-Mubárakih*, p. 407.
[4] The Arabic language makes a clear distinction between the word for 'prophet' (*nabí*, an active derivative of the root/*naba'a*/ which, in other of its patterns, provides the Arabic equivalents for 'prophecy'/*nubá'ah*/ and 'to prophesy'/*tanabba'a*/) and 'messenger' (*rasúl*, a passive derivative of the root/*rasala*/ whose senses revolve in large part around the idea of 'to send'. Both the terms *nabí* and *rasúl* are used in the Qur'án to refer to Muḥammad, but the quoted verse 40 from the Súrah of the Confederates states only that Muḥammad was the 'seal of the prophets', using the plural of the word *nabí*.
[5] Qur'án, Súrah of the Creator, v. 43.
[6] Qur'án, Súrah of Al Aráf, v. 35 (Sale's translation).

ment of humanity. The coming of Bahá'u'lláh signals that humanity has entered upon the next great phase in its development, a phase which, although differing from its predecessor in its distinguishing features, aims and approach, yet remains connected to it by the closest of ties. If the Bahá'í Faith does not appear to address itself to long and detailed vindications of the principle that God is One, the reason is that it regards this as an established fact, and one that was fully demonstrated and proven in the previous cycle. The Bahá'í Faith does not deviate to the extent of a needle's breadth from the principle of the oneness of God, and from a recognition that it lies at the heart—and is one of the fundamental verities—of every religion. To believe otherwise would be to turn back the clock and oppose the tide of man's spiritual progress.

*God is Exalted above Incarnation*

According to the Bahá'í belief in the oneness of God, God, in His essence, is exalted above all outward appearance, ascent or descent, egress or regress. There is nothing in the Bahá'í teachings to indicate that God became incarnate in the person of Bahá'u'lláh; on the contrary, Bahá'u'lláh himself has said: 'No tie of direct intercourse can possibly bind Him to His creatures. He standeth exalted beyond and above all separation and union, all proximity and remoteness. No sign can indicate His presence or His absence; inasmuch as by a word of His command all that are in heaven and on earth have come to exist, and by His wish, which is the Primal Will itself, all have stepped out of utter nothingness into the realm of being, the world of the visible.[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá further elaborates: 'Ascent, descent, egress, regress, and incarnation are properties of physical bodies, not immaterial spirits. How then must be the case with the Divine Reality, the Everlasting Being? Vastly exalted is He above all such ascriptions!'[2] It is true that readers who are not familiar with the style of the Bahá'í writings may be confused to find them phrased in such a way as to have the appearance in some cases of emanating from God Himself. The Bahá'ís, however, do not interpret such passages as indicating that God became incarnate in Bahá'u'lláh, or as inferring a claim to Godhood on the part of Bahá'u'lláh. In fact they understand the tenor and spirit of these utterances no differently from those of similar statements made by the Prophet Muḥammad, whether in the Qur'án: 'Verily they who swear fealty unto thee, swear fealty unto God',[3] and again: 'Neither didst thou, O Mohammed, cast gravel into their eyes, when thou didst seem to cast it; but God cast it'[4] or in the Traditions: 'Manifold and mysterious is my relationship with God: I am He, Himself, and He is I, myself, except that I am that I am and He is that He is.'[5]

Just as the Bahá'ís do not claim that God became incarnate in the person of Bahá'u'lláh, they similarly do not claim that Bahá'u'lláh was 'more excellent' than Muḥammad: both are, in their estimation, exponents of the will of God, precisely as were all the other divine messengers. Bahá'u'lláh himself has said in this regard: 'Beware ... lest ye be tempted to make any distinction between any of the Manifestations of His Cause, or to discriminate against the signs that have accompanied and proclaimed their Revelation. This indeed is the true meaning of Divine Unity ...'[6] The differences that are to be observed between the laws and teachings of different religions are not attributable to any inherent disagreement between the messages of those Prophets of God who enunciated them, but rather to the differing needs of the ages in which they taught, and the varying levels of capacity and preparedness of the people amongst whom they lived—the greater was their level of preparedness, the larger was their allotted portion of divine grace. In the view of the Bahá'ís, the Manifestations of God, one and all, derive their inspiration from one heavenly source, speak the will of one celestial Father, and shine upon all men with one divine light.

[1] *Kitábu'l-Íqán*, translated into Arabic under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Egypt, Cairo, 1934, p. 75. (The English wording is taken from the translation made by Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith from 1921 to 1957.)

[2] *Khutabu 'Abdu'l-Bahá fí Urubbá wa Amriká*, published under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North-East Africa, Addis Ababa, n.d., p. 62.

[3] Qur'án, Súrah of the Victory, v. 10 (Sale's translation).

[4] Qur'án, Súrah of the Spoils, v. 17 (Sale's translation).

[5] Quoted in *Majmú'iy-i-Alváh-i-Mubárakih*, p. 340. (The English wording is taken from the translation made by Shoghi Effendi.)

[6] *Muntakhabátí az Áthár-i-Hadrat-i-Bahá'u'lláh*, Bahá'í Verlag GmbH, Hofheim-Langenhain, 1984, p. 46. (The English wording is taken from the translation mady by Shoghi Effendi.)

It is incorrect to assert, then, that the Bahá'ís 'make distinctions' between any of God's messengers.

*The Bahá'í Faith Does Not 'Change' the Laws of Islám*

Nothing could be further away from the true purpose of the Bahá'í Faith than to wish to interfere with Islám (or any other religion for that matter) by changing its laws or altering its forms of worship. The Bahá'í Faith—as an independent religion existing in its own right—does indeed possess those same features that characterize any other religion: to wit, its own scriptures, code of laws and forms of worship. However, it would be quite unwarranted to assume from this that it is thereby 'changing' or 'altering' the laws of the other religions in the sense that the Bahá'ís are calling on Muslims not to follow the laws of their own Faith. The Muslims are free and indeed obliged to follow the laws of their Faith, as are the Christians to follow their own practices. The Bahá'ís are merely claiming for themselves the same right. The Bahá'í laws concern none but the Bahá'ís; they obligate none save those who, of their own volition, wish to follow them and to subject themselves to their prescriptions; and as such they involve no encroachment on the domain of any other religion. Has not every individual who has attained the age of maturity the right to determine for himself the course he will pursue in worshipping God? Did not every religion initially depend for its growth on the exercise of that personal freedom that some would have us replace by coercion and force? Heaven forfend that religion should ever be inculcated into people through intimidation and threats, and that their hearts should remain empty of genuine faith or commitment!

*Opposition to the Bahá'í Faith*

The second train of argument followed by the Research Academy in its statement was that the Bahá'í Faith must be false on account of the resistance and opposition that it has encountered from Islamic society. This line of reasoning is basically unsound because it relies on a false premiss: namely, that the truth must unfailingly meet with the unhesitating acceptance of the general public, and that the mass of the people will eschew only falsehood. This premiss is one that is consistent with neither logic, history nor reason. On the contrary, there is in man a strong tendency to preserve his inherited culture, and to resist any new set of ideas that appear to impinge too drastically on the beliefs with which he is familiar. The same phenomenon may be predicated of man's corporate activity as a society; for society will always tend to oppose any behaviour which is perceived as being widely at variance with the accepted norms. It is a matter of common knowledge that most important scientific breakthroughs and discoveries were greeted with deprecation and ridicule at the time they were made by none other than the scientific establishment itself, and only later were they vindicated—and their benefit to mankind demonstrated—by the efforts of impartial investigators. It is, likewise, a historical fact that all the divine religions met with the people's scorn and enmity when first they appeared amongst them, and only after their followers had been subjected to divers kinds of persecution and torture did their teachings gain currency, their laws come into effect, and their holy reality shine forth. Time and time again the stories contained in the 'Wise Remembrance' bear witness to this historical fact and present to us their salutary testimony for our improvement and admonishment: 'The people of Noah, and the tribe of Ad, and Pharoah the contriver of the stakes, and the tribe of Thamud, and the people of Lot, and the inhabitants of the wood near Madian, accused the prophets of imposture before them: these were the confederates against the messengers of God. All of them did no other than accuse their apostles of falsehood: wherefore my vengeance hath been justly executed upon them.'[1] Any analytical survey of the period of transition through which our modern world is passing, and the concomitant vast flood of baleful trends that have swept across it, shaking its established systems of values to their very core—the upsurge in materialistic ideologies, the breakdown in morals that is approaching crisis proportions, the resurgence of patterns of behaviour reminiscent of the pagan 'Time of Ignorance' preceding the advent of Muḥammad—a dispassionate survey of this period and its attendant phenomena cannot but demonstrate the failure both of clerical authority and of religious belief to stem

[1] Qur'án, Súrah of S [Ṣád], vv. 12–14 (Sale's translation).

the high tide of decay. Pre-eminent among the reasons for this impotence is that many of the heads and leaders of religion—we do not say all of them—have been overwhelmed by the sheer enormity of the task of countering these adverse trends and have submitted to accommodating themselves to existing conditions. Few indeed are those who are prepared to face up to the truth, to confess their subservience to the spirit of the age, and to admit their efforts to bring religious principle into line with temporal interest and to compromise the former for the sake of the latter. It is times like these that occasion the growth of movements of reform and give rise to the birth of religions; but how few again are those who are prepared to surrender positions of influence, to sacrifice wealth and rank, to relinquish stations of eminence and respect—all for no other reason than to devote themselves to the championing of principles which are diametrically opposed to the natural inclinations of the vast majority of the people, and, as such, can hardly avoid coming up against the obdurate hostility of all those who, for one reason or another, have an interest in preserving the *status quo*! It is against the background of reflections such as these that we may appreciate in its correct perspective the opposition that the Bahá'í Faith has so far encountered: these are what lie at the heart of the adversities it has sustained; these are what constitute the mainspring of the accusations and threats with which it has been assailed; these are what provide the true explanation of the harrowing persecutions it has been, and is still, undergoing.

*Some Bahá'í Principles*

There is no doubt at all that much of the so-called 'opposition' to the Faith has sprung from ignorance of the fundamental verities of the Bahá'í Faith and of the true nature and essence of its teachings. The Bahá'í Faith is *not*—as the Islamic Research Academy's statement seems to imply—a mere movement founded by a group of reformers with the object of working towards religious rapprochement and reconciliation. Rather, the Bahá'í Faith is (and this is the steadfast conviction of every one of the several million Bahá'ís residing throughout this planet who stem from every race, colour and creed) a new divine summons to mankind, a heavenly God-inspired Faith. Its books, its laws, its teachings, they hold, have been revealed to man from the exalted heaven of God's will and good-pleasure. Its founder, Bahá'u'lláh, is, they believe, the bearer of His holy mission in this day, chosen by the All-Merciful—as He chose His messengers aforetime—to be the trustee of His message and the repository of His revelation.

The Bahá'í Faith does not harbour enmity—far less a hostile intent!—towards any of the other religions. Its holy writings forbid the Bahá'ís to entertain other than feelings of goodwill for the followers of different faiths or to deal with them other than with sincerity and kindness. They explicitly state that the relationship between the Bahá'ís and the followers of other religions is one of fellowship, amity and respect. Bahá'u'lláh says, for example:

> *O people of Bahá! Ye are the dawning-places of the love of God and the daysprings of His loving-kindness. Defile not your tongues with the cursing and reviling of any soul, and guard your eyes against that which is not seemly. Be not the cause of grief, much less of discord and strife. The hope is cherished that ye may obtain true education in the shelter of the tree of His tender mercies and act in accordance with that which God desireth. Ye are all the leaves of one tree and the drops of one ocean.*[1]

The Bahá'í Faith believes that all the religions enshrine one truth. In fact, the whole purpose of the Bahá'í Faith is to explain their teachings, reassert their truths, and revive their messages; to unite their followers and demonstrate the essential harmony of their objectives; and to encourage people to cleave to them, to deepen in their understanding of them, and to work towards fulfilling their highest aspirations. The Bahá'í Faith has no other wish than to uproot the tares of hatred and animosity from amongst mankind, and in their place to sow the seeds of harmony and good will.

The Bahá'í Faith is most certainly not a movement that countenances licentiousness and immorality. Its teachings on the rôle of women

[1] *Majmú'atun min Alwáhi Hadrati Bahá'u'lláh Nuzzilat ba'da 'Kitábu'l-Aqdas'*, Maison d'Editions Bahá'ies, Brussels, 1980, p. 28. (The English wording is taken from *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the 'Kitáb-i-Aqdas'*, translated by Habib Taherzadeh [Habib Ṭáhirzádih] with the assistance of a committee at the Bahá'í World Centre, Haifa, 1978, p. 128.)

are concerned to place her on an equal footing with men in such areas as educational opportunity and to grant her full participation in the task of mapping out the future course of society. If these teachings were implemented, the latent potential of one half of the world's population could be harnessed to the service and betterment of mankind. Bahá'ís believe that it is God's will that, in this age, women should achieve equality with men and receive the heavenly recompense for undertaking those great works that previously fell exclusively in the preserve of men.

The Bahá'í Faith is opposed to the idea that religion should be passed down from father to son—without any heart-searching or investigation on the part of the recipient—as though it were a chattel to be disposed of through inheritance. The Faith requires of every mature and rational person to examine the truth for himself and to found his belief on firm conviction and accurate understanding, not on the flimsy basis of blind fanaticism and downright ignorance. In this way, according to the teachings of the Faith, will men be enabled to view things with their own eyes, not through the eyes of others, and to be guided in their affairs by their own judgement, not by the judgement of any other party.

The Bahá'í Faith regards religion as the staunchest foundation for ensuring the lasting peace and stability of society. Religion is far more than a mere auxiliary of the law: it is its champion protector; for the sanction of the law is brought to bear only after an offence has been committed, whereas a man who has been schooled in religious values will be deterred from all nefarious behaviour, criminal or otherwise, by the workings of his conscience. Religion is, then, the true educator of mankind; it is a skilled moral preceptor, and a firm guarantor of the health and happiness of society. By 'religion', however, is to be understood the spirit and teachings that lie at the core of every religion, and whose acceptance by their followers is a matter of genuine conviction, not spineless imitation.

The Bahá'í Faith believes in the necessity of harmonizing science and religion, and of bringing the two into collaboration so that they can both serve mankind. They are, after all, both ways leading to a greater understanding of the truth; and the truth is one, and, as such, not susceptible of division. Science and religion are like twins between whom no disagreement should exist and whom it would be quite inadmissible to part. Research and investigation are the means that will demonstrate the full extent of their correspondence, Bahá'ís believe. The Bahá'í writings compare science and religion to the two wings of a bird, by which the world of humanity may be enabled to soar ever higher in the realms of material and spiritual attainment: unless these two wings be commensurate with each other, man will inevitably either fall a victim to materialism—stifling alike to his moral endowment and true inner nature—or he will become a prey to superstitious and fanciful beliefs that stultify his intellect and becloud his vision.

The Bahá'í Faith affirms that all the religions that have been divinely revealed to mankind throughout successive ages have had as their object to teach men to be kind, loving and compassionate with one another, and to be governed in all their mutual dealings—whether these be at an individual or community level—by amity, concord and unity. That the light of religion should turn into darkness and gloom, that it should become a source of rancour and dissension, a cause of enmity and hatred—this, in the eyes of the Bahá'ís, is a negation of all that religion stands for.

The Bahá'í Faith is not a political party or organization, and consequently does not favour one nation above another, champion one particular group, or promote the interests of one party against the general good. It is a movement neither of the East nor of the West. It is, in the belief of the Bahá'ís, nothing less than the fulfilment of God's promises to man since ancient times, promises that have been reiterated across the ages by all His prophets and messengers. It is the 'great news of the resurrection about which they disagree'.[1] It is the 'true call'[2] of God, exalted be His glory, by which He is summoning his faithful servants—in whichsoever country they may reside, and to whatsoever race or religion they may belong—to come together and join forces in the great work of rescuing humanity from the slough of corruption and decay into which it has foundered, and of preserving it from the fearful hazards and dangers that surround it on every

[1] Qur'án, Súrah of the News, vv. 2–3 (Sale's translation).
[2] Qur'án, Súrah of the Thunder, v. 14.

side, from the fanatically intolerant partisan spirit that besets every phase of its life, and from the impending ruin and devastation that momently threaten it with extinction. Among the nations the Bahá'í Faith raises its call to all peoples: 'Hasten ye to peace and reconciliation! Hasten ye to virtue and prosperity!' 'Set your reliance on the army of justice, put on the armour of wisdom, let your adorning be forgiveness and mercy and that which cheereth the hearts of the well-favoured of God.'[1]

Our purpose in writing the foregoing summary account of the Bahá'í Faith (which can hardly provide more than the most general outline of the subject) has been to place at the disposal of the public the truth about this religion. The Bahá'í Faith is, to its followers, a fresh outpouring of divine guidance to men, that all are free to accept or reject according to their own free will. It is a reaffirmation of all previous revelations and an assertion of the oneness of their origins, spirit and aims. It does not detract from the sacred verities of any of the other religions, and only desires to bring together their followers so that, unitedly and harmoniously, they can set about remedying the grave problems that confront humanity and work towards building the world of the future.

There has been a Bahá'í presence in Egypt for more than one hundred and ten years. The Egyptian press has reported at length on the principles and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith ever since the close of the last century; Bahá'í books have been published in Egypt from the early years of the present century; and 'Abdu'l-Bahá was himself acclaimed and fêted by the country's leading lights and religious dignitaries during the second decade of this century. Among these figures were such illustrious names as Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhít, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, the Imám Muḥammad 'Abduh, and others, all of whom lavished praise on him, and treated him with a quite unexampled degree of veneration and respect. These facts are amply testified by the record of the publications and journals of the period, and we hope to be able to explore this theme in greater detail in a future study. What concerns us here is to note that the Bahá'í presence in Egypt is of long standing, and that there has never been any conflict between this presence and the maintenance of public order and the rule of law.

Those who presume to denounce the Bahá'í Faith without obtaining from its adherents an accurate account of their beliefs should know that their pronouncements are made in ignorance of the true nature of this religion and are unsupported by any clear proof. The teachings of the Bahá'í Faith are new, and it may be that their very newness causes them to appear—when viewed superficially—alien to the tenets of other religions, standing out as they do in contrast to the generally accepted understanding of these tenets. Be that as it may, ever since the inception of this Divine Cause its followers have had to suffer hearing it condemned, as did its founder himself, without their testimony being solicited. Bahá'u'lláh alluded to this trend in a letter that he wrote from Turkey, where he was living in exile, to Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh, king of Persia, in which he exhorted him to judge fair-mindedly:

> *Look upon this Youth, O King, with the eyes of justice; judge thou, then, with truth concerning what hath befallen Him. Of a verity, God hath made thee His shadow amongst men, and the sign of His power unto all that dwell on earth. Judge thou between Us and them that have wronged Us without proof and without an enlightening Book. They that surround thee love thee for their own sakes, whereas this Youth loveth thee for thine own sake, and hath had no desire except to draw thee nigh unto the seat of grace, and to turn thee toward the right-hand of justice. Thy Lord beareth witness unto that which I declare.*[2]

Bahá'u'lláh pursues this theme in the same Tablet, though in the Persian language (here translated into Arabic [i.e. in the Arabic original of the present document]), saying:

> *O would that the world-ordering judgement of the King might decide that this servant should meet those doctors, and, in the presence*

[1] Quoted from Bahá'u'lláh's *Lawhu'l-Hikmah* [Tablet of Wisdom], included in *Majmú'atun min Alwáhi Hadrati Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 118–19.

[2] *Athár-i-Qalam-i-A'lá: Kitáb-i-Mubín*, reprinted from a manuscript copy written by Mullá Zaynu'l-'Abidín-i-Najaf-Ábádi ('Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín'), Mu'assisiy-i-Milliy-i-Maṭbú'át-i-Amrí, Tihrán, 120 B.E. (Bahá'í Era), [1963], p. 68, l. 14. (The English wording is taken from the translation mady by Shoghi Effendi.)

*of His Majesty the King, adduce arguments and proofs! This servant is ready, and hopeth of God that such a conference may be brought about, so that the truth of the matter may become evident and apparent before His Majesty the King. And afterwards the decision is in thy hand, and I am ready to confront the throne of thy sovereignty: then give judgement for me or against me.*[1]

This simple request of Bahá'u'lláh's, so self-evidently indispensable to the formation of a just verdict, was refused by the divines of the age, who, in ignorance of His Cause, and lacking the support of any clear proof, nevertheless chose to condemn it—'and how like is tonight to yesternight!'[2]

At this critical juncture in the fortunes of our great nation, we address ourselves to all the powers of government—executive, legislative, and judicial—and call upon them to uphold the individual rights of the populace, and to guarantee to every citizen in this country the freedom to think and investigate of his own accord, and to decide—by himself and for himself—on those matters of conscience that are, before all else, his own private concern, whether these affect his personal or his spiritual life. In this way, we believe, will the Egyptian people retain their hard-won position amongst those countries whose names have become, by common consent, bywords for intellectual freedom, religious tolerance and political maturity. Nations do not attain to greatness and political leadership on the international scene through extirpating and repressing groups of minorities: prestige, standing and respect in the world community are rather the portion of those nations whose territories are the preserve of freedom; whose air is instinct with the spirit of tolerance; in which the rule of law has been firmly established, and equality granted to all citizens; and in which final authority in any disagreement is always accorded to considerations of principle, to humane and enlightened values, and to the highest standards of moral sensibility and awareness.

[1] *Áthár-i-Qalam-i-A'lá: Kitáb-i-Mubín*, p. 79, l. 6. (The English translation is taken from *A Traveller's Narrative Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Báb*, Edward G. Browne, M.A., M.B., F.B.A., F.R.C.P. (Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930, p. 121.)

[2] A well-known Arabic proverb signifying 'how little have circumstances changed despite the passage of time!'

# 4. BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS' INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR 1985

## A. WE CANNOT FAIL THEM

During 1979, the winds of revolution swept across Írán unleashing a fury of persecution upon the Bahá'í community and lifting up individual Bahá'ís to the heights of martydom. As that tempest raged, sparks of the heroism of the Persian Bahá'ís were carried around the world. Their light touched the hearts and minds of Bahá'ís of every background, who had to re-examine their faith in view of the sacrifices made by their co-religionists.

For many Bahá'í youth, the smouldering fire of their Faith was fanned into flame by the martyrdoms of ten Bahá'ís in Shíraz in June 1983. These ten were women, six of whom were between the ages of 18 and 25 years. In response to the tragedy, the Universal House of Justice sent the following cable on 24 June 1983 to 'Bahá'í Youth Throughout the World':

RECENT MARTYRDOMS COURAGEOUS STEADFAST YOUTH IN SHÍRÁZ, SCENE INAUGURATION MISSION MARTYR-PROPHET, REMINISCENT ACTS VALOUR YOUTHFUL IMMORTALS HEROIC AGE. CONFIDENT BAHÁ'Í YOUTH THIS GENERATION WILL NOT ALLOW THIS FRESH BLOOD SHED ON VERY SOIL WHERE FIRST WAVE PERSECUTION FAITH TOOK PLACE REMAIN UNVINDICATED OR THIS SUBLIME SACRIFICE UNAVAILING.[1]

It was also in 1979 that the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1985 as International Youth Year (IYY). Against the background of the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, the Bahá'í International Community welcomed the opportunity to support young people in their quest for 'Participation, Development, Peace' worldwide. Accordingly, the Bahá'í International Community took part in the sessions of the International Youth Year Advisory Committee, and established a close relationship with the United Nations Secretariat for International Youth Year at the Vienna International Centre. Further, it played an active role as an executive member of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee in both New York and Vienna.

### 1. Youth Can Move the World

On 3 January 1984, the Universal House of Justice sent a letter to the Bahá'í Youth of the World:

> 'The designation of 1985 by the United Nations as International Youth Year opens new vistas for the activities in which the youth members of our community are engaged. The hope of the United Nations in thus focusing on youth is to encourage their conscious participation in the affairs of the world through their involvement in international development and such other undertakings and relationships as may aid the realization of their aspirations for a world without war.
>
> 'These expectations reinforce the immediate, vast opportunities begging our attention. To visualize, however imperfectly, the challenges that engage us now, we have only to reflect, in the light of our sacred Writings, upon the confluence of favourable circumstances brought about by the accelerated unfolding of the Divine Plan over nearly five decades, by the untold potencies of the spiritual drama being played out in Iran, and by the creative energy stimulated by awareness of the approaching end of the twentieth century. Undoubtedly, it is within your power to contribute significantly to shaping the societies of the coming century; youth can move the world. . . .

[1] For the full text of this cable see pp. 187–88 of this volume.

'May you all persevere in your individual efforts to teach the Faith, but with added zest, to study the Writings, but with greater earnestness. May you pursue your education and training for future service to mankind, offering as much of your free time as possible to activities on behalf of the Cause. May those of you already bent on your life's work and who may have already founded families, strive toward becoming the living embodiments of Bahá'í ideals, both in the spiritual nurturing of your families and in your active involvement in the efforts on the home front or abroad in the pioneering field. May all respond to the current demands upon the Faith by displaying a fresh measure of dedication to the tasks in hand.

'Further to these aspirations is the need for a mighty mobilization of teaching activities reflecting regularity in the patterns of service rendered by young Bahá'ís. The native urge of youth to move from place to place, combined with their abounding zeal, indicates that you can become more deliberately and numerously involved in these activities as traveling teachers. One pattern of this mobilization could be short-term projects, carried out at home or in other lands, dedicated to both teaching the Faith and improving the living conditions of people. Another could be that, while still young and unburdened by family responsibilities, you give attention to the idea of volunteering a set period, say, one or two years, to some Bahá'í service, on the home front or abroad, in the teaching or development field. . . .'[1]

## 2. Let It Be This Generation

The electrifying effects of this letter from the Universal House of Justice were extensive. Specific actions by Bahá'í youth vary from continent to continent, from culture to culture, from individual to individual. But two reactions have repeated themselves in young Bahá'ís all over the world.

First, this letter reminded youth that the Bahá'í Faith is not a passive organization which one watches from the sidelines, but rather that it is the Will of God for this Day in which one participates fully and wholeheartedly. It helped young people to understand that while only relatively few people are called upon to give their physical lives as martyrs, all are called upon to give their lives in service to humanity in one way or another.

Second, this letter showed youth that they could start their service to humanity immediately—that a young age, in and of itself, is an asset for some forms of service. The young people felt empowered by the Universal House of Justice to rise and dedicate one year, or more, for their Faith: they didn't have to wait until they had attained high levels of education, or had reached high levels in the Bahá'í administration. They could serve now. And they did.

The most important actions taken by Bahá'í youth in response to the call from the Universal House of Justice to 'move the world' cannot be fully documented, for there is no way to quantify an increase in spiritual discipline nourished by daily prayer and study of the Sacred Writings. However, this discipline manifests itself in energetic, audacious and self-sacrificing deeds, and these individual achievements became part of the Bahá'í support for the United Nations' International Youth Year.

## 3. Youth Year of Service

One new movement sparked by the letter from the Universal House of Justice is the Youth Year of Service, which is helping to galvanize the sacrificial actions of Bahá'í youth worldwide.

'In the past', the Department of the Secretariat of the Universal House of Justice had written to 23 National Spiritual Assemblies in a letter dated 13 December 1983, 'the policy adopted by some National Assemblies was to discourage young Bahá'ís from enrolling to serve in activities sponsored by non-Bahá'í volunteer organizations, as the Assemblies were under the impression that these young people would not be able to engage in direct teaching, nor participate, for the most part, in Bahá'í activities while serving abroad in such programs . . .

'In the light of experience, however, it is now clear that we should have no misgivings in encouraging young Bahá'ís to enroll in such voluntary service organization pro-

[1] For the full text of this letter see below, pp. 312–13.

grammes as the United Nations Volunteers, United States Peace Corps, Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) and similar Canadian agencies, the British Volunteer Programme (BVP) of the United Kingdom, and other voluntary service organizations...

'Some of the advantages of such service to the Faith are worth mentioning. Volunteers will receive thorough orientation and sometimes will be taught basic skills which will enable them to help the Bahá'í community in projects undertaken in developing countries. Wherever they serve, these volunteers should be able to participate in Bahá'í activities, and contribute to the consolidation of the Bahá'í community .... And finally, the period of overseas service often produces a taste for such service, and volunteers may well offer to directly promote the pioneer work either in the same country or in another developing country.'[1]

This letter of 13 December 1983 offered the youth helpful clarification of their services to humanity which was reinforced by the dynamism derived from the letter of 3 January 1984. They were particularly moved by the thought twice repeated: Bahá'í youth, 'while still young and unburdened by family responsibilities ... give attention to the idea of volunteering a set period, say, one or two years, to some Bahá'í services, on the home front or abroad, in the teaching or development field.'

Response from Bahá'í youth was instant and dramatic.

One early reaction to the call for the Youth Year of Service came from the United States where the National Bahá'í Youth Committee had begun to recruit and place Youth Year of Service volunteers by April of 1984. Working with the International Pioneering Committee and others, the Committee began gathering information about Bahá'í projects which youth could join for one year, and data about young people who were volunteering to serve. Over time this processing became quite sophisticated so that it included details about 'host projects' such as the location, skills required, housing available, and expenses to be covered, and data about the volunteers such as special needs for medical care, dietary requirements, interests, and skills.

A very different approach was taken by Bahá'ís in Colombia, who responded to the call from the Universal House of Justice by setting up a training program for Bahá'í youth volunteers at the Ruhi Institute. Their instruction emphasized the spiritual side of development, with prayer and meditation, study of the Writings, and a sound knowledge of the history of the Faith shown to be as important as knowledge of how to help material development in a community. The first trainees were local Bahá'ís who arose to serve the Faith they love. By September 1985, however, Bahá'í youth from abroad were joining the Colombian youth for this unique and important training program.

All over the world individual Bahá'í youth rose to the challenge. Some volunteered to teach in Bahá'í schools for one year, while others did volunteer work as guides at Bahá'í Houses of Worship. Some youth volunteered to drive the mobile Bahá'í institutes, while others spent their year of service as full-time Bahá'í teachers. Most of the youth served in their home country, while others were willing and able to travel and serve abroad. One frequent recipient of Bahá'í youth volunteers is the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel, where young people serve the Universal House of Justice as gardeners and computer programmers, as secretaries and carpenters, as security guards and janitors, and in many other areas of service.

Dynamic participants in the development of the Youth Year of Service program have been the Counsellors and their Auxiliary Board members. As early as May 1983, in response to a letter from an individual, the House of Justice had asked the International Teaching Centre to consult with the Counsellors about the idea of a 'Bahá'í Youth Exchange'. This was accomplished by letter in July 1983, and the Counsellors replied with enthusiastic ideas about development projects to which youth could be sent and ways in which volunteers could be recruited. As the concept has progressed, the Counsellors have continued to serve as advisors to the myriad Youth Year of Service activities, working with National Spiritual Assemblies, Local Spiritual Assemblies, Bahá'í agencies, and social and economic development projects as needed.

[1] For the full text of this letter see below, pp. 311.

However, it is the Bahá'í youth who shine as the brilliant stars of the Year of Service program. 'At all times, in all climes and under all conditions' they have participated 'in the affairs of the world through their involvement in international development and such other undertakings and relationships as may aid the realization of their aspirations for a world without war'—as called upon by the Universal House of Justice in its letter of 3 January 1984. Thus, the Bahá'í Youth Year of Service was one formal program which greatly supported the International Youth Year.

## B. PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

The accelerating momentum of Bahá'í youth activities during the 1980s—reignited by the heroism of the martyrs, transported by a tradition of development, and uplifted by the promise of world peace—carried the international Bahá'í community into a wide field of activities in support of the United Nations' International Youth Year.

### 1. International Youth Conferences

One way Bahá'ís supported the United Nations' International Youth Year was through a series of International Bahá'í Youth Conferences held on each continent.

*Africa*

A week-long International Youth Conference was held in Molepolole, Botswana, in August 1985. The Conference was opened by the Vice-President of Botswana, with national radio and newspaper coverage as a result. A total of 119 youth representing six countries participated. Organization of the conference was done by youth, and three-quarters of the speakers were youth. Conference participants sent a cable to the Bahá'í World Centre on 19 August which read, in part, 'Loving atmosphere Conference produced four enrolments. Preparations Year Peace under way. Youth are moving the world.'

Another International Youth Conference was held in Bophuthatswana from 5 to 8 April 1985, with 198 people attending.

*North America*

An International Youth Conference was held in Columbus, Ohio, USA, from 3 to 7 July 1985, attended by more than 3,200 young people from 42 nations. On 5 July the Persian Service of the Voice of America radio broadcast news of the gathering, singling out for special mention the candlelight service on the shore of Lake Erie at which Bahá'í youth gathered for prayers and meditation. 'With one hand holding a candle and the other raised toward God, they prayed for the peace and tranquility of the human race', said the announcer.

*South America*

'Five hundred enlightened youth' from 18 countries and representing four native tribes were present at the International Youth Conference held in Lima, Peru, from 2 to 5 August 1985. The Conference was opened by the acting Mayor of Lima. Participants expressed gratitude for the presence of the Hand of the Cause of God Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, and the participation of members of the Continental Board of Counsellors, Dr. Hidáyatu'llah Aḥmadíyyih, Dr. Farzám Arbáb, and Mrs. Isabel P. de Calderón. Three evening events were successful, with more than 800 people attending each night.

*Asia*

An Asian Bahá'í Youth Conference was held in August in New Delhi, India, with more than 550 participants from 24 countries. Keynote speakers included four Counsellors, and Bahá'í author John Huddleston. A cable to the Bahá'í World Centre from the Conference read, in part,

'CONFERENCE GATHERED FOR FIRST TIME LARGE NUMBERS OF DIVERSE ASIAN BAHÁ'Í YOUTH, GENERATED GREAT ENTHUSIASM FELLOWSHIP AMONG PARTICIPANTS. HOPEFUL JOINT PROJECTS INVOLV-

ING ASIAN YOUTH COMMITTES. POST-CONFERENCE TEACHING GROUPS PRECEEDING CHANDIGARH, SIMLA, NAGPUR, JAMSHEDPUR, AND COCHIN IMMEDIATELY.'

Another International Youth Conference was held in Port Dickson, Malaysia, from 1 to 4 August 1985. It was the largest gathering of Bahá'ís ever held in Malaysia, with 1,300 participants from 15 countries. Four members of the Continental Board of Counsellors attended the Conference, sharing the news that the Universal House of Justice was preparing a peace statement for the peoples of the world. The youth launched a 100-day 'campaign of personal transformation' as preparation for the challenges that lay ahead. Wide press coverage was given to the Conference.

*Australasia*

Representatives of the Governor of Hawaii and the Mayor of Kauai attended the opening session of the International Youth Conference held in Hawaii from 8 to 11 August 1985. The Conference offered 'a rare opportunity for youth across the vast Pacific region to draw close to one another'. Three hundred young people attended from Australia, the Marianas, the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, and Tonga. The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone was the featured speaker for the event, and Counsellor Ben Ayala was a key participant.

*Europe*

The European Bahá'í Youth Conference was held in Antwerp, Belgium, in July 1985, and was attended by some 1,450 youth from 45 nations. The youth addressed the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in letters which told of their resolve to put into action the International Youth Year themes of 'Participation, Development and Peace'. The youth spoke of programs in which Bahá'ís were supporting the themes, including human rights education and social and economic development projects.

The Universal House of Justice wrote to participants of these conferences in a letter dated 8 May 1985. It was addressed to the Bahá'í Youth of the World:

> 'We extend our loving greeting and best wishes to all who will meet in youth conferences yet to be held during International Youth Year. So eager and resourceful have been the responses of the Bahá'í youth in many countries to the challenges of this special year that we are moved to expressions of delight and high hope.
>
> 'We applaud those youth who, in respect of this period, have already engaged in some activity within their national and local communities or in collaboration with their peers in other countries, and call upon them to persevere in their unyielding efforts to acquire spiritual qualities and useful qualifications. For if they do so, the influence of their high-minded motivations will exert itself upon world developments conducive to a productive, progressive and peaceful future. . . .'[1]

**2. Other Activities**

Other reports from Bahá'í national communities reveal an enthusiastic response by Bahá'í youth to International Youth Year. Activities on five continents show a wide variety of actions by Bahá'ís, ranging from humanitarian service and social work projects to educational campaigns, ecological efforts, and production of literature and special materials.

## AFRICA

***Benin***

■ Bahá'í youth collaborated with Ministers of Culture, Youth, Sport, Public Health, Labour, Social Affairs, and Justice, and the Red Cross, to organize two seminars and five public lectures on problems of youth.

■ Bahá'í youth collaborated with the Ministry of Culture in planting trees and other work for youth sponsored by this Ministry.

***Botswana***

■ Bahá'í youth tutored children in Bahá'í tutorial schools.

***Burkina***

■ The National Spiritual Assembly launched a tree-planting program in connection with International Youth Year, asking Local Spiri-

[1] For the full text of this letter see below, pp. 313–14.

tual Assemblies to plant trees around local Bahá'í Centres and the roads leading to them. Over 200 trees were planted as part of this program.

■ An inter-regional youth institute was held on 28 and 29 December 1985 with 40 participants, who took part in 'La Bataille du Rail'—voluntary work on the railway.

***Cameroon Republic***

■ A National Youth Conference was held in the Regional Bahá'í Centre in Garoua Boulai on 20 and 21 July 1985 with over 200 participants. The Conference was honoured with the visit of the traditional ruler of Garoua Boulai.

***Chad***

■ Various humanitarian service projects were undertaken by Bahá'í youth to help alleviate the suffering of thousands afflicted by drought, hunger and illness. Bahá'í youth visited and cared for the sick and elderly, prepared and provided food, and collected and distributed clothing throughout 1985.

■ A special issue of *Badi* (the Bahá'í youth journal) was published and devoted to International Youth Year.

■ A regional youth conference was organized in Sarh with attendance of 200 youth from surrounding localities.

■ Hundreds of young Bahá'ís planted three hectares of trees in Makiling in support of International Youth Year.

■ The National Spiritual Assembly printed copies of the official Youth Year emblem and distributed them to all local communities to encourage all youth clubs and their sponsoring Bahá'í Youth Assemblies to undertake activities for International Youth Year.

■ Two deepening booklets were produced and distributed by the National Youth Committee. These were on the life of the Báb, and the life of Bahá'u'lláh.

***Gambia***

■ More than 1,200 youth were involved in two weeks of seminars entitled, 'Youth—Developing the Potential', which were jointly sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Gambia and the International Youth Year Commission.

■ A young Bahá'í woman represented the Gambian Government at the International Youth Year International Youth Conference, held in Kingston, Jamaica.

***Ivory Coast***

■ Bahá'í youth participated in the activities of the Conference of the Ministries of Youth and Sports in French-speaking Countries—CONFEJES—held from 22 to 28 July 1985. The Bahá'ís helped with the work of the colloquium, and also organized a stand which was visited by some 1,500 people. A visit by Government representatives to the Bahá'í stand was shown on national television during a news program.

***Kenya***

■ In May 1985, Nairobi youth planted hundreds of trees in the Ngong Hills, a spot where the Government had asked for reforestation.

■ A National Youth Conference was held in August 1985 with over 100 Kenyan youth present.

■ As a follow-up to International Youth Year, two youth conferences were held in December 1985.

***Malawi***

■ Bahá'í youth planted fuel-wood and fruit trees throughout Malawi to benefit entire villages.

■ A Bahá'í delegation met regularly with the Ministry of Youth regarding Bahá'í involvement in the Year's celebrations.

■ The Government of Malawi included Bahá'í representation in its International Youth Year Committee.

***Mozambique***

■ In December 1984, youth helped the Matola-Rio community to cultivate the land around the Bahá'í Center.

***Transkei***

■ A youth conference was held in Umtata in June 1985 with 27 in attendance.

***Uganda***

■ A youth conference was held to conclude International Youth Year and to prepare for

International Year of Peace. About 75 youth participated in the conference, which was held from 7 to 10 December 1985.

***Zaire***

■ Bahá'í youth in three regions offered stage performances called 'Peace or Sword', and lectures on 'Participation, Development and Peace'.

■ In August 1985, the Bahá'í youth of Lukibu, in Kasai Occidental, bought land which they have used to cultivate a variety of fruit and vegetables.

***Zambia***

■ Bahá'í youth cooperated with their government's International Youth Year activities, assisted in teaching children's classes for their Local Spiritual Assemblies, and sponsored a tutorial school.

***Zimbabwe***

■ The Bahá'í youth from Mizpah Farm in Nyabira built a small, sturdy hut to keep books and pamphlets to initiate International Youth Year. They chose a librarian to hold the key and supervise the material.

■ Youth were active in tree planting activities conducted at the site of the Regional Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Mhondoro. Five carloads of youth from Harare and the surrounding area participated during two consecutive weekends.

## THE AMERICAS

***Argentina***

■ The Local Spiritual Assembly of Buenos Aires held an International Youth Year Conference and Exhibition from 4 to 6 October 1985. A large IYY logo was painted and installed in the centre of the Plaza de la República, and United Nations literature was distributed at a booth set up in the Plaza and staffed by Bahá'í youth. Invitations were sent to 250 prominent citizens of Buenos Aires. The event received extensive media coverage from both radio and television stations.

***Belize***

■ Bahá'í youth worked with their Government's Ministry of Youth to put on the largest youth conference in their nation's history, held from 1 to 3 March 1985 with approximately 6,000 youth attending. Bahá'í youth marched in the Congress parade holding a banner proclaiming 'Youth Can Move the World', and were active in workshops, four of which were conducted by Bahá'ís. As a result of the Congress, Bahá'ís are represented Belize National Youth Council.

***Bermuda***

■ Bahá'í youth of Bermuda won an island-wide competition sponsored by the Government in April and May 1985 which tested their powers of observation and deduction as well as their special knowledge in four categories: vegetation, sports, history, and religion.

***Brazil***

■ A wide range of International Youth Year activities in Brazil included an essay contest open to all youth, special publications, conferences, and a youth deepening institute held during Carnival.

***Canada***

■ Hundreds of Bahá'í youth participated in a well-planned campaign to plant 123,000 trees throughout the country.

■ An International Bahá'í Youth Conference was held in London, Ontario, from 25 to 27 August 1984 in preparation for International Youth Year. Approximately 2,000 youth from 52 countries attended the gathering.

■ A Bahá'í youth conference entitled 'Two Wings', officially opened by the Governor of Ontario, was held in Toronto in February 1985 with approximately 500 youth attending from Canada and the United States. Through speeches, workshops, panels, films, and open discussions, the youth examined patterns of male-female relationships and explored the concept of equality as a prerequisite for peace.

■ The production of the video 'Mona' involved the participation of 150 youth in Toronto. 'Mona', depicting the true story of a seventeen-year-old girl's commitment and courage to stand up for her beliefs even when facing death, serves as an example of the nobility of youth. A series of school presentations,

conferences, and concerts organized by youth, were held across the country throughout the International Youth Year as part of the 'Mona' project.

■ An intensive Social and Economic Development Institute was held in the Yukon for nine days during June 1985, attended by 124 youth from across Canada. During the second week, the youth scattered to various village areas and carried out service projects: cleaning recreation grounds, making costumes for a native drama presentation, and caring for the needs of elderly people.

■ The National Spiritual Assembly of Canada published and distributed two youth guidance booklets—'Career/Study Services for International Service', and 'Youth and Development'—to all Bahá'í local communities.

***Chile***

■ Twenty-five Bahá'í youth participated in a commemoration of the thirty-ninth anniversary of the United Nations, an event which officially launched International Youth Year.

■ Bahá'í youth participated in a special United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America dedicated to International Youth Year.

***Colombia***

■ Bahá'í youth worked to strengthen rural schools in Colombia, Panama, and Paraguay after having had a period of intensive training at the Ruhi Institute, near Cali.

■ The Bahá'ís of Bucaramanga worked with other organizations to hold a forum on 'Participation, Development and Peace'. The forum was held on 21 November 1985 with 100 participants.

***Costa Rica***

■ Six Bahá'í youth from the Bahá'í Youth Institute of Costa Rica engaged in a four-nation tour of Central America in an effort to mobilize support for International Youth Year. The group called 'Ya' performed music and folk dances in six cities in Honduras, Belize, Mexico, and Panama. They also dedicated their time and talents throughout the year working for altruistic and charitable groups such as the Red Cross and various nursing homes.

***Ecuador***

■ The Bahá'ís of Cuenca held courses based on the themes of International Youth Year.

***El Salvador***

■ The three Bahá'í Youth Committees of El Salvador—the Bahá'í University, International Youth Year, and Arts and Graphics Committee—combined efforts to hold a well-attended National Youth Conference held from 3 to 5 August 1985.

■ Other varied activities included aid to refugees, and an arts festival.

***Jamaica***

■ The International Youth Conference in Kingston from 6 to 9 April 1985 included a delegation from the Bahá'í International Community, who distributed a statement they had prepared entitled, 'A Contribution of Youth to Peace'. The statement addressed the three International Youth Year themes of participation, development, and peace, and described the motivation of Bahá'í youth from 2,000 ethnic backgrounds, working in 160 countries, to resolve some of the crucial problems of the world.

***Panama***

■ A speech contest organized by the National Youth Committee as an activity of International Youth Year was held on 30 September 1985. Announcements of the contest were published in the local press.

***Peru***

■ The National Spiritual Assembly was accepted as a member of the National Commission for International Youth Year, and participated in the Commission's activities for youth. Bahá'ís were also invited to join the National Youth Council in Peru.

■ Bahá'í youth in Puno organized a theatre troupe called 'Pan y Paz Teatro' ('Bread and Peace Theater'). They produced plays emphasizing social and spiritual issues, demonstrating one way to use the arts to address issues related to development.

***St. Lucia***

■ The National Youth Committee visited secondary schools on the island and presented a half-hour program to inform students about International Youth Year.

■ A national youth exhibition prepared by the Bahá'ís toured the island.

***Trinidad and Tobago***

■ The Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem attended the National Bahá'í youth conference, held on 27 and 28 April 1985.

■ The President of the Republic, His Excellency Ellis Clarke, signed a book for two Bahá'í students and stated that he hoped during this International Youth Year the Bahá'í youth in other lands would be given freedom of worship.

■ During Bahá'í Week, held from 17 to 23 March 1985, youth were interviewed on radio and television, cleaned up the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, and organized a large Naw-Rúz program which was attended by representatives from the national Government. Poster displays about the Faith were set up in school and public libraries.

■ Bahá'í youth participated in a nation-wide inter-faith observance held in celebration of International Youth Year at the Anglican Church in San Fernando on 17 March 1985. Bahá'í youth also took part in inter-religious meetings in Port of Spain, and in Arouca, by reading from Bahá'í scriptures and reciting Bahá'í prayers.

***United States***

■ The National Youth Committee began its involvement in International Youth Year with major tree plantings during the annual Youth Conference at Disney World, Florida, in December 1984. The goal of 20,000 trees, in honour of the early martyrs of the Faith, was surpassed during the Year.

■ A Bahá'í youth group was commended by the Mayor of Atlanta for 'outstanding contributions to the vitality and spirit of the City'.

■ A class of 12-to-15-year-olds at the Louhelen Bahá'í School conducted a survey on the subject of world peace. Four key questions, inspired by the Peace Statement of the Universal House of Justice, were asked of the public in downtown Davison: Do you think world peace is possible? (52% answered yes); Could it be established by the year 2000? (48% thought so); What problems need to be solved first?; and, What can you do to create a peaceful world? The project was reported in the *Davison Flagstaff* newspaper.

■ Over a dozen Bahá'í youth from the Central States travelled throughout nine states planting trees, picking up litter, and visiting the elderly in support of International Youth Year.

***Venezuela***

■ Five Bahá'í youth participated in a two-week training program in May 1985 in preparation for a six-month service project in rural communities to promote local consolidation, as well as community development.

***Virgin Islands***

■ The Islands' International Youth Year Task Force, made up of Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í youth, held a conference on 19 January 1985 with 100 youth attending. In the morning Bahá'ís led a number of workshops, and in the afternoon talks were given by the Attorney General of the Virgin Islands and by a Bahá'í. The conference was supported by local businessmen.

■ The International Youth Year Task Force, with the Virgin Islands' Youth Commission, organized a booth at the Agricultural Fair in February 1985 where International Youth Year T-shirts were sold.

## ASIA

***Andaman & Nicobar Islands***

■ A Bahá'í youth was interviewed on radio about International Youth Year.

***Bangladesh***

■ The Local Spiritual Assembly of Mymensingh held a public meeting on 18 April 1985 to celebrate International Youth Year. The guest speaker was the editor of the *Daily Jahan*, and a good article about the meeting was published in that newspaper the next day.

■ A seminar in support of International Youth Year was held by the Bahá'ís of Rajshahi in July 1985, and was well attended by youth professionals and dignitaries.

***Hong Kong***

■ The National Bahá'í Youth Committee created a 'Tree Adopted Certificate' to encourage youth people to care for the environment during International Youth Year.

***India***

■ The Youth Committee of the Baroda Local Spiritual Assembly held an essay and painting competition in which several hundred students from 16 schools participated.

■ The Bahá'í Youth Committee of Nagapur organized a highly successful Eye Camp in Maharashtra in January 1985, treating 220 villagers. Youth distributed 11,000 handbills to publicize the camp and posted 50 handmade posters.

■ The youth of Indore conducted a Medical Camp in Yeshwat in August 1985 during which three Bahá'í doctors and eight Bahá'í youth volunteered their services. One hundred and sixty patients were examined and issued free medicines.

■ About 130 adult literacy classes were conducted in 65 villages during 1985, in a scheme sponsored by the Central Government Ministry of Education and Culture. Many classes were conducted by Bahá'í youth from Panchgani, who made weekly or fortnightly trips to the surrounding villages. Students' ages ranged from 15 to 45.

***Korea***

■ A two-day youth conference was held in Osan. The keynote speaker was a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, who explained the broad implications of International Youth Year to the participants.

***Malaysia***

■ A youth conference and three youth camps were held in East Malaysia with a total of 198 participants during International Youth Year.

■ Bahá'í youth musicians went on a tour of 19 towns in Malaysia and Singapore. The tour was dedicated to International Youth Year.

***Pakistan***

■ A Bahá'í-sponsored seminar entitled 'Youth Can Move the World' was held on 22 February 1985, with 200 people attending. Speakers represented a number of religious organizations.

■ Bahá'í youth in Karachi visited sick children in the Civil Hospital. The program was held on 28 February 1985, during Ayyám-i-Há, with 75 children and 9 doctors attending. The Bahá'ís gave presents to the children, and a framed Bahá'í healing prayer to the Hospital administration to hang in the ward.

■ The National Youth Committee held a free medical camp in the village of Deh Jokio, Malir, in cooperation with the Social Welfare Association of the Government of Sind Province. Five young Bahá'í physicians carried out nightly visits to the villages between July and August. More than 350 patients were given medical aid.

■ The local Bahá'í Youth Committee of Quetta organized a speech competition in observance of International Youth Year. The competition was held in the Bahá'í Hall in Quetta on 9 September 1985, with the Dean of the Science Faculty of Baluchistan University as a special guest. News of the competition was published in the local newspapers.

■ Bahá'í youth arranged a conference in the city of Peshawar on 13 September 1985, and sent 150 invitations to doctors, professors, lecturers, and university students. Over 90 people attended, including the Vice Chancellor of Peshawar University. An announcement of the event was publicized in the media.

■ The National Youth Committee organized a free Medical Camp in the small town of Jangh-Shani in March 1986. A team of Bahá'í youth assisted local doctors to provide free medicine for about 400 patients from the surrounding villages.

***Singapore***

■ The Bahá'í community participated in a National Book Fair where they displayed Bahá'í books on subjects related to the United Nations' International Youth Year, International Year of Peace, and the Decade of Women.

■ A youth camp organized by the National Bahá'í Youth Committee was held from 14 to 17 June 1985, and was attended by 30 people.

■ A Bahá'í Musical Night was held on 25 June 1985 at Singapore's Ngee Ann Polytechnic. About 60 people attended.

■ The Bahá'í Women's Committee worked with Singapore's Council of Women's Organizations to hold a seminar for International Youth Year. The Minister for Social and Youth Development opened the seminar, which was held on 31 August 1985 with over 200 attending.

***Sri Lanka***

■ A youth seminar was held on 15 December 1985 in Colombo with 200 participants. Over 35 non-governmental organizations were represented. The meeting was opened by the resident representative of the United Nations.

***Taiwan***

■ Bahá'ís sponsored an island-wide high school essay and photo contest on the themes of the International Youth Year.

***Thailand***

■ A Bahá'í youth conference was held in support of International Youth Year.

## AUSTRALASIA

***Australia***

■ Two youth conferences were held: one in December 1984, and one in September 1985.

■ A Bahá'í youth was a representative on the National International Youth Year Committee.

■ Corio and West Geelong Bahá'ís organized a seminar in Geelong on youth and peace which involved 150 participants. Subjects included world order, the integration of migrant children, a new morality as the foundation of peace, and hope for the future. A nineteen-year-old Bahá'í presented a paper on the creative contribution that youth can make to world order.

■ Bahá'í youth of Rockhampton produced a poster for International Youth Year with the theme 'Youth Can Move the World' and displayed it in local commercial and service centres.

***Cook Islands***

■ The first National Youth Conference was held from 31 May to 3 June 1985, with 14 people attending.

***Fiji***

■ Bahá'í youth held a large rally over the weekend of 5 to 7 October 1985 to celebrate International Youth Year. Speakers focused on the role of youth for the future.

***Guam***

■ Bahá'ís coordinated a program called 'Unity Day' as part of International Youth Year activities under the auspices of the Government of Guam's Department of Youth Affairs.

***Hawaii***

■ 'Youth Can Move the World' was the theme of the Hawaiian Bahá'í community's award-winning float in September 1985 in the annual Aloha Week parade in Honolulu. The float received the Mayor's Award.

■ The International Youth Year was the theme of the 1985 Hawaiian Bahá'í calendar.

***New Caledonia***

■ A youth conference was held on 15 and 16 August 1985 with 40 people attending.

***New Zealand***

■ Bahá'í youth in Christchurch and Waimairi participated in International Youth Year activities by creating a display which focused on peace. Video presentations about the Faith were shown as part of the display.

■ Bahá'í youth in Whangarei took part in the International Youth Year Festival through a 20-minute performance of Persian and Tongan dancing, and Spanish music.

■ The Bahá'í Group at Dunedin University had a stall on campus to promote International Youth Year and to support activities to be held in the city.

■ The Bahá'í Club of Auckland University held a 40-minute dramatic program on 12 September 1985 with the theme being persecution and martyrdom of Iranian Bahá'í youth.

■ Youth of Christchurch and Whangarei met with their respective Mayors to talk about the Faith, youth activities, and peace.

***Samoa***

■ Three youth represented the Bahá'ís of Samoa at a National Youth Seminar sponsored by the International Labour Organization of the United Nations and the National Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Organization of Western Samoa.

***Other***

■ Youth conferences were held in ***Kiribati***, ***New Zealand***, and ***Tuvalu***.

■ Bahá'ís in ***Fiji***, ***Samoa***, ***Tonga***, and ***Tuvalu***, served on public or governmental committees to plan and carry out International Youth Year activities.

■ Links between ***Tonga*** and ***Japan*** were forged through joint Bahá'í participation in Youth Year activities involving the two countries.

## EUROPE

***Austria***

■ In the autumn of 1984, the Austrian Bahá'í youth held an International Youth Year preparatory conference featuring a representative of the United Nations IYY Secretariat.

■ Austrian Bahá'í youth produced a slide show called 'Die Zukunft Laesst Gruessen' ('The Future Says Hello') which was shown in Austria and Germany throughout 1985.

■ The Austrian Bahá'í Winter School at Harbach was organized by the Bahá'í National Youth Committee in honour of International Youth Year. One hundred and ten youth representing four countries attended and consulted on the nature of future society.

■ Bahá'í youth participated in three regional youth festivals during International Youth Year.

■ A Youth Year theme song, 'One Heart and a Million Hands', was written by an Austrian Bahá'í youth at the request of the United Nations International Youth Year Secretary. The song was performed at the Celebration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Vienna International Centre, and its lyrics were distributed at the Celebration and published in the journal *Channels*.

***Denmark***

■ A Bahá'í youth conference was held near Viborg with 50 friends attending, and a youth seminar was held in Hillerod.

■ A five-day study conference took place in Helsingor from 13 to 18 October 1985.

■ An International Youth Year exhibition produced by Bahá'í youth toured the country throughout 1985.

***Finland***

■ Finnish Bahá'í youth participated in a national event called 'Festa' in September 1985. The youth provided an International Youth Year exhibition and participated in two public consultations: 'What are the Possibilities of Youth to Help', and 'The World of Values and Development as a Human Being'.

■ A special pamphlet for International Youth Year was published by the Bahá'ís of Finland.

***France***

■ The National Youth Committee held a conference at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Paris on 13 and 14 April 1985 for the purpose of studying the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. One hundred and thirty youth participated.

■ The Bordeaux Local Spiritual Assembly raised money to be sent to an African village, while Bahá'í youth in other cities collected used eye-glasses for Third World countries, helped with harvesting of corn for Africans, and collaborated with a project concerning agricultural schools in Benin and Ghana.

■ French Bahá'í youth assisted aged persons and isolated invalids, visited women in prison, and organized literacy classes for children.

■ Bahá'í youth in Nantes produced a poster for International Youth Year and distributed it to local Bahá'í communities and interested groups throughout the country.

■ The National Youth Committee organized a brushwood clearing project which lasted for one month with 19 Bahá'ís participating. The youth cleared brush, tended young trees, and performed other services.

***Germany***

■ A Bahá'í youth conference was held in Berlin from 31 October to 3 November 1985.

About 160 young people from many countries attended.

***Greece***

■ The first National IYY Youth Conference was sponsored by the Bahá'ís in Athens from 28 to 30 December 1984.

■ The National Bahá'í Youth Committee initiated visits to orphanages, homes for the elderly, and institutions for the disabled.

■ A tree campaign was held in Ioannina in February where Bahá'í youth planted 49 trees donated by the Mayor.

■ Bahá'í youth initiated a service project in Salonika to clean a section of forest.

■ Bahá'í youth actively participated in various International Youth Year activities sponsored by the Ministry of Youth.

***Iceland***

■ The Bahá'í Youth Committee of Iceland initiated a youth magazine for International Youth Year entitled *Badi.*

■ An international youth camp was held on the national endowment land with 27 youth participating.

***Ireland***

■ The Bahá'ís of Ireland submitted a float on the theme 'Youth Working Toward a Better World' for Dublin's annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

■ All 800 secondary schools in the nation received Human Rights information packets from the Bahá'ís in 1985.

■ Bahá'ís sponsored an essay competition for students on the subject 'Blueprint for Peace'.

■ Tree plantings were carried out by Bahá'í youth in Bray, Dublin, Dun Laoghaire, and in County Wicklow.

***Italy***

■ In March 1985, over 600 youth from local high schools participated in an International Youth Year event organized by the Bahá'ís of Albano Laziale. The program was opened by the Mayor, followed by a presentation by a United Nations Information Officer who spoke on the meaning of International Youth Year. A series of four seminars on the theme 'Education for International Cooperation' followed throughout the year, in cooperation with the municipality.

■ A national Bahá'í youth convention was held with 250 participants from 14 different countries.

■ Bahá'í youth from Italy travelled to say special prayers at the European House of Worship for International Youth Year and International Year of Peace.

***Luxembourg***

■ Two Bahá'í representatives were invited to the opening ceremonies of International Youth Year by the Luxembourg Government. Bahá'í youth prepared two panels about their own International Youth Year activities.

■ Youth participated in Ecology Day, during which trees were planted.

■ A Festival of Peace and Development was held in Diekirch in October by the official governmental agency in charge of the Youth Year.

■ Bahá'í youth ran a tea-room and donated proceeds to a primary school in Brazil. Other projects sponsored by Bahá'í youth raised money for books and supplies for schools in Togo, Benin and Burkina Faso.

***Netherlands***

■ Bahá'í youth collaborated with other youth in a project for the Choco region of northwest Colombia, South America. They raised money to help equip and provide operating expenses for a medical boat which will service one of the poorest areas of the country.

***Norway***

■ Norwegian youth produced pamphlets on topics relevant to the United Nations International Youth Year themes.

■ A member of the National Bahá'í Youth Committee appeared at a Youth Year Conference in Tromsø.

■ Regional Bahá'í youth conferences were held in August and September 1985.

■ An informational map on International Youth Year was produced by the Norwegian Bahá'í Youth Committee and was used as study

material in weekend youth seminars held in five localities.

■ Youth from Trondheim participated in an International Youth Year seminar arranged by a United Nations office in Trondelag, and a radio program initiated by the Bahá'ís was aired after the seminar on the topic of International Youth Year and the Bahá'í principle of the unity of mankind.

***Portugal***

■ The Local Spiritual Assembly of Setubal organized a conference for International Youth Year which was attended by about 150 people. The local radio station covered the conference, and an article about it was published in the local newspaper.

***San Marino***

■ The Bahá'í community was represented at the International Library Conference in May 1985, in response to a request by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Cultural Affairs. Christine Hakim, an author and member of the Bahá'í community of Switzerland, made a presentation on 'The Effects of Literature on Youth', stating that 'literature for young people can make a vital contribution toward the achievement of peace and justice in the world by exalting spiritual and ethical values such as compassion, tolerance, honesty, altruism, and love, and by protecting young people from hatred, prejudice, greed, oppression, and violence...'

***Spain***

■ A Bahá'í youth conference was held in Bilboa from 18 to 20 July 1985, attended by young Bahá'ís from 32 localities in Spain as well as by friends from abroad. The conference received a large amount of media coverage.

***Sweden***

■ International Youth Year material was translated and produced by the Bahá'ís of Sweden, including a statement written by scientists on peace research and sociology. A pamphlet on youth was published, and two issues of *Varldsmedborgaren* (*World Citizen*) had youth as their theme.

***Switzerland***

■ A seminar on consultation was held at the Bahá'í Conference Center in Landegg in which representatives of many non-governmental organizations on the Swiss National International Youth Year Committee participated.

■ A delegation of Swiss Bahá'í youth actively participated in the work of the Swiss National Coordinating Committee for International Youth Year.

■ Bahá'í representatives were among the youth invited by the Swiss Federal Councillor A. Egli, Minister of the Interior, to discuss special youth problems.

■ A Swiss Bahá'í was chosen as a member of the Swiss delegation to the International Youth Conference in Japan.

■ Other regional activities included: a day of youth conceived by the Bahá'ís of Ticino; a public forum on youth with participation of local dignitaries in Pully; a two-day event with discussions, slides and music by the Bahá'ís of Lucerne; and the collaboration with the local authorities of Romanshorn for a new Youth Centre.

***United Kingdom***

■ A member of the Bahá'í IYY Committee was invited to attend the official launching of International Youth Year in October, 1984.

■ A member of the Bahá'í IYY Committee also served on the British Youth Council's Working Party for International Youth Year.

■ Bahá'í youth contacted the heads of 8,075 secondary schools in the United Kingdom and through them distributed copies of the Declaration of Human Rights to 1,500,000 students.

■ An essay competition, 'Blueprint for Peace', was sponsored by Bahá'ís and attracted widespread attention.

■ Bahá'ís served on Local IYY Committees and participated in activities in local areas throughout the year.

■ Bahá'í youth participated in International Youth Year festivals and gatherings, such as the Chester International Youth Year Festival in April 1985, the Edinburgh Gathering in June 1985, and the London Youth Festival in July 1985.

■ Bahá'í youth planted trees throughout the country in November and December 1985.

# C. LETTERS FROM THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

**13 December 1983**

To the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of Alaska, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Hawaiian Islands, Iceland, the Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Universal House of Justice has been consulting upon aspects of youth service in pioneering throughout the Bahá'í world, and has requested that we convey its views on service in other lands undertaken by Bahá'í youth with voluntary non-sectarian organizations.

In the past, the policy adopted by some National Assemblies was to discourage young Bahá'ís from enrolling to serve in activities sponsored by non-Bahá'í volunteer organizations, as the Assemblies were under the impression that these young people would not be able to engage in direct teaching, nor participate, for the most part, in Bahá'í activities while serving abroad in such programmes. Perhaps in some instances the Bahá'ís involved were not sure how to function as members of the Bahá'í community in order to give each aspect of their lives its proper due.

In the light of experience, however, it is now clear that we should have no misgivings in encouraging young Bahá'ís to enrol in such voluntary service organization programmes as the United Nations Volunteers, United States Peace Corps, Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) and similar Canadian agencies, the British Volunteer Programme (BVP) of the United Kingdom, and other voluntary service organizations. Other countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian lands are understood to have similar service organizations which are compatible with Bahá'í development goals as now tentatively envisaged.

Some of the advantages of such service to the Faith are worth mentioning. Volunteers will receive thorough orientation and sometimes will be taught basic skills which will enable them to help the Bahá'í community in projects undertaken in developing countries. Wherever they serve, these volunteers should be able to participate in Bahá'í activities, and contribute to the consolidation of the Bahá'í community. The freedom to teach is to a large extent dependent upon the local interpretation of the group leader, but even if volunteers do not engage in direct teaching, being known as Bahá'ís and showing the Bahá'í spirit and attitude towards work and service should attract favourable attention and may, in many instances, be instrumental in attracting individuals to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. And finally, the period of overseas service often produces a taste for such service, and volunteers may well offer to directly promote the pioneer work either in the same country or in another developing country.

It is well known that a considerable number of Bahá'ís have already gone abroad to serve with these agencies and that others have espoused the Faith while serving in foreign lands with voluntary service organizations. A recent letter from a former Peace Corps worker, Miss Frances Pollitt, is enclosed as a confirmation of the merit of such service toward the furtherance of the Faith.

National Spiritual Assemblies which hold orientation courses for pioneers may benefit from including, the subject of rural development in their programmes and, as in the past, from inviting people who have served in voluntary service organizations to participate in the planning of orientation programmes and in having them share their experiences as volunteer workers in developing countries.

The House of Justice expresses the hope that the information contained in this letter will dispel the misunderstandings that have in the past surrounded the question of participation of Bahá'í youth in projects sponsored by non-Bahá'í voluntary organizations.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

**3 January 1984**

To the Bahá'í Youth of the World

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The designation of 1985 by the United Nations as International Youth Year opens new

vistas for the activities in which the youth members of our community are engaged. The hope of the United Nations in thus focusing on youth is to encourage their conscious participation in the affairs of the world through their involvement in international development and such other undertakings and relationships as may aid the realization of their aspirations for a world without war.

These expectations reinforce the immediate, vast opportunities begging our attention. To visualize, however imperfectly, the challenges that engage us now, we have only to reflect, in the light of our sacred Writings, upon the confluence of favourable circumstances brought about by the accelerated unfolding of the Divine Plan over nearly five decades, by the untold potencies of the spiritual drama being played out in Írán, and by the creative energy stimulated by awareness of the approaching end of the twentieth century. Undoubtedly, it is within your power to contribute significantly to shaping the societies of the coming century; youth can move the world.

How apt, indeed how exciting, that so portentous an occasion should be presented to you, the young, eager followers of the Blessed Beauty, to enlarge the scope of your endeavours in precisely that area of action in which you strive so conscientiously to distinguish yourselves! For in the theme proposed by the United Nations—'Participation, Development, Peace'—can be perceived an affirmation that the goals pursued by you, as Bahá'ís, are at heart the very object of the frenetic searchings of your despairing contemporaries.

You are already engaged in the thrust of the Seven Year Plan, which provides the framework for any further course of action you may now be moved by this new opportunity to adopt. International Youth Year will fall within the Plan's next phase; thus the activities you will undertake, and for which you will wish to prepare even now, cannot but enhance your contributions to the vitality of the Plan, while at the same time aiding the proceedings for the Youth Year. Let there be no delay, then, in the vigour of your response.

A highlight of this period of the Seven Year Plan has been the phenomenal proclamation accorded the Faith in the wake of the unabating persecutions in Írán; a new interest in its Teachings has been aroused on a wide scale. Simultaneously, more and more people from all strata of society frantically seek their true identity, which is to say, although they would not so plainly admit it, the spiritual meaning of their lives; prominent among these seekers are the young. Not only does this knowledge open fruitful avenues for Bahá'í initiative, it also indicates to young Bahá'ís a particular responsibility so to teach the Cause and live the life as to give vivid expression to those virtues that would fulfil the spiritual yearning of their peers.

For the sake of preserving such virtues much innocent blood has been shed in the past, and much, even today, is being sacrificed in Írán by young and old alike. Consider, for example, the instances in Shíráz last summer of the six young women, their ages ranging from 18 to 25 years, whose lives were snuffed out by the hangman's noose. All faced attempted inducements to recant their Faith; all refused to deny their Beloved. Look also at the accounts of the astounding fortitude shown over and over again by the children and youth who were subjected to the interrogations and abuses of teachers and mullahs and were expelled from school for upholding their beliefs. It, moreover, bears noting that under the restrictions so cruelly imposed on their community, the youth rendered signal services, placing their energies at the disposal of Bahá'í institutions throughout the country. No splendour of speech could give more fitting testimony to their spiritual commitment and fidelity than these pure acts of selflessness and devotion. In virtually no other place on earth is so great a price for faith required of the Bahá'ís. Nor could there be found more willing, more radiant bearers of the cup of sacrifice than the valiant Bahá'í youth of Írán. Might it, then, not be reasonably expected that you, the youth and young adults living at such an extraordinary time, witnessing such stirring examples of the valour of your Iranian fellows, and exercising such freedom of movement, would sally forth, 'unrestrained as the wind', into the field of Bahá'í action?

May you all persevere in your individiual efforts to teach the Faith, but with added zest, to study the Writings, but with greater earnestness. May you pursue your education and training for future service to mankind, offering as much of your free time as possible to activities on behalf of the Cause. May those of you already bent on your life's work and who may have

already founded families, strive toward becoming the living embodiments of Bahá'í ideals, both in the spiritual nurturing of your families and in your active involvement in the efforts on the home front or abroad in the pioneering field. May all respond to the current demands upon the Faith by displaying a fresh measure of dedication to the tasks in hand.

Further to these aspirations is the need for a mighty mobilization of teaching activities reflecting regularity in the patterns of service rendered by young Bahá'ís. The native urge of youth to move from place to place, combined with their abounding zeal, indicates that you can become more deliberately and numerously involved in these activities as travelling teachers. One pattern of this mobilization could be short-term projects, carried out at home or in other lands, dedicated to both teaching the Faith and improving the living conditions of people. Another could be that, while still young and unburdened by family responsibilities, you give attention to the idea of volunteering a set period, say, one or two years, to some Bahá'í service, on the home front or abroad, in the teaching or development field. It would accrue to the strength and stability of the community if such patterns could be followed by succeeding generations of youth. Regardless of the modes of service, however, youth must be understood to be fully engaged, at all times, in all climes and under all conditions. In your varied pursuits you may rest assured at the loving support and guidance of the Bahá'í institutions operating at every level.

Our ardent prayers, our unshakable confidence in your ability to succeed, our imperishable love surround you in all you endeavour to do in the path of service of the Blessed Perfection.

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

**8 May 1985**

To the Bahá'í Youth of the World

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We extend our loving greetings and best wishes to all who will meet in youth conferences yet to be held during International Youth Year. So eager and resourceful have been the responses of the Bahá'í youth in many countries to the challenges of this special year that we are moved to expressions of delight and high hope.

We applaud those youth who, in respect of this period, have already engaged in some activity within their national and local communities or in collaboration with their peers in other countries, and call upon them to persevere in their unyielding efforts to acquire spiritual qualities and useful qualifications. For if they do so, the influence of their high-minded motivations will exert itself upon world developments conducive to a productive, progressive and peaceful future.

May the youth activities begun this year be a fitting prelude to and an ongoing, significant feature throughout the International Year of Peace, 1986.

The present requirements of a Faith whose responsibilities rapidly increase in relation to its rise from obscurity impose an inescapable duty on the youth to ensure that their lives reflect to a marked degree the transforming power of the new Revelation they have embraced. Otherwise, by what example are the claims of Bahá'u'lláh to be judged? How is His healing Message to be acknowledged by a skeptical humanity if it produces no noticeable effect upon the young, who are seen to be among the most energetic, the most pliable and promising elements in any society?

The dark horizon faced by a world which has failed to recognize the Promised One, the Source of its salvation, acutely affects the outlook of the younger generations; their distressing lack of hope and their indulgence in desperate but futile and even dangerous solutions make a direct claim on the remedial attention of Bahá'í youth, who, through their knowledge of that Source and the bright vision with which they have thus been endowed, cannot hesitate to impart to their despairing fellow youth the restorative joy, the constructive hope, the radiant assurances of Bahá'u'lláh's stupendous Revelation.

The words, the deeds, the attitudes, the lack of prejudice, the nobility of character, the high sense of service to others—in a word, those qualities and actions which distinguish a Bahá'í must unfailingly characterize their inner life and outer behaviour, and their interactions with friend or foe.

Rejecting the low sights of mediocrity, let them scale the ascending heights of excellence

in all they aspire to do. May they resolve to elevate the very atmosphere in which they move, whether it be in the school rooms or halls of higher learning, in their work, their recreation, their Bahá'í activity or social service.

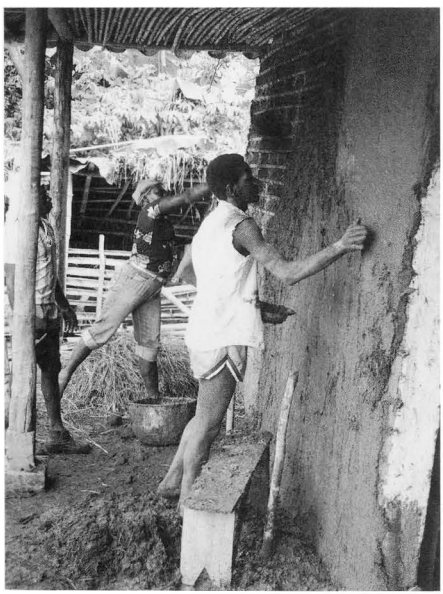
Indeed, let them welcome with confidence the challenges awaiting them. Imbued with this excellence and a corresponding humanity, with tenacity and a loving servitude, today's youth must move towards the front ranks of the professions, trades, arts and crafts which are necessary to the further progress of humankind—this to ensure that the spirit of the Cause will cast its illumination on all these important areas of human endeavour. Moreover, while aiming at mastering the unifying concepts and swiftly advancing technologies of this era of communications, they can, indeed they must also guarantee the transmittal to the future of those skills which will preserve the marvellous, indispensable achievements of the past. The transformation which is to occur in the functioning of society will certainly depend to a greater extent on the effectiveness of the preparations the youth make for the world they will inherit.

We commend these thoughts to your private contemplation and to the consultations you conduct about your future.

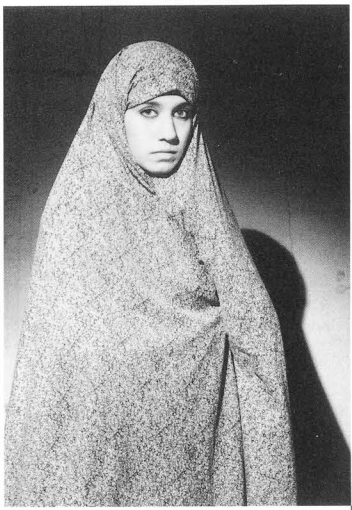
And we offer the assurance of our prayerful remembrances of you, our trust and confidence.

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

*In Belgium, above, the European Bahá'í Youth Conference was held from 26–29 July 1985 with 1,450 participants.*

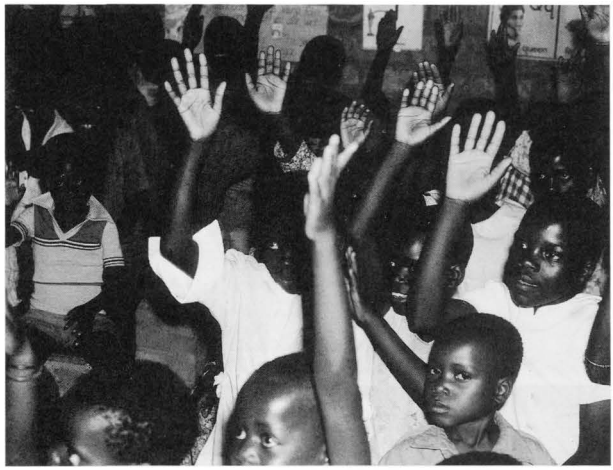


*Bahá'í youth from the Ruhi Institute at Cali, Colombia, worked to help repair a house as part of a youth service project in 1986.*



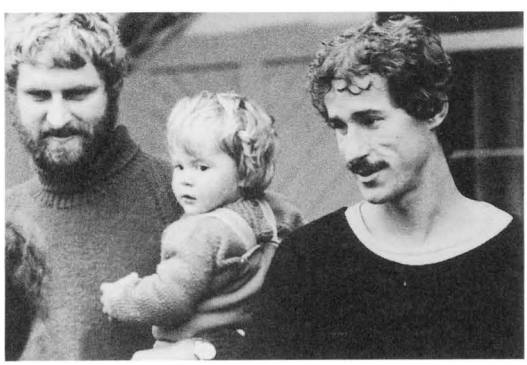
*In Toronto, Canada, some 150 Bahá'ís and friends of the Faith worked with musician Doug Cameron and producer Jack Lenz in April 1985 to create a videotape called 'Mona with the Children', based on the story of martyr Muná Maḥmúdnizhád. At left, Roya Mahmoudi is shown as Muná. Above, filming the scene of Muná's arrest. Below, Ruhi Jahanpur in the bus scene.*

*At right, actor Alex Rocco goes over the script for the video-tape 'Mona with the Children'. Below, two jail scenes filmed in Toronto, Canada, during April 1985.*



*In Zimbabwe, right, youth and children attend the Bahá'í school on the Lothian Farm, in 1984.*

*A team of Bahá'í youth helped local doctors to provide free medicine for about 400 villagers in Jangh-Shani, Pakistan, in 1986.*



*Bahá'í youth attend a 'Hui' (traditional gathering) held in Taumarunui, New Zealand, 30 April–1 May 1983.*

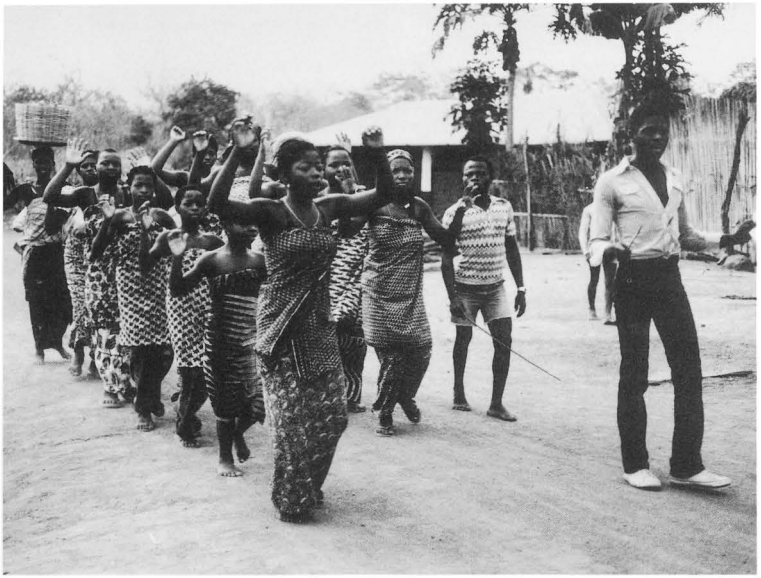
*In Belize, Bahá'í youth parade during the National Youth Congress held in Belize City in March 1985.*

*In Greece, the first National Bahá'í Youth Conference was held in Athens from 28–30 December 1984.*

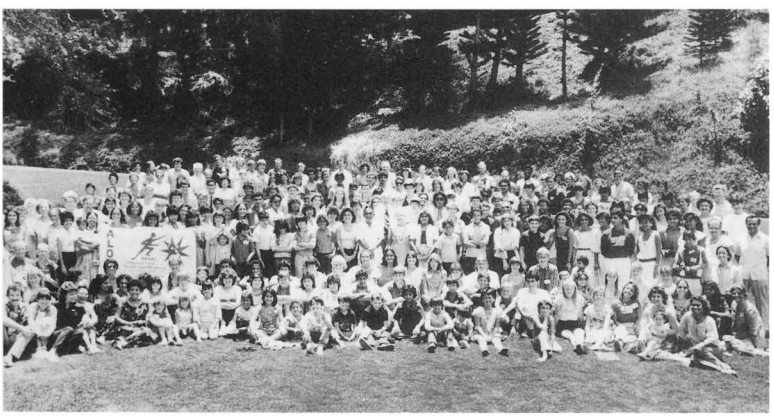
*In Bangladesh, the third National Bahá'í Youth Conference was held in Mymensingh from 14–16 February 1985.*

*Bahá'í youth created a fish farm as a development project in Lomaivuna, Fiji, in 1984.*

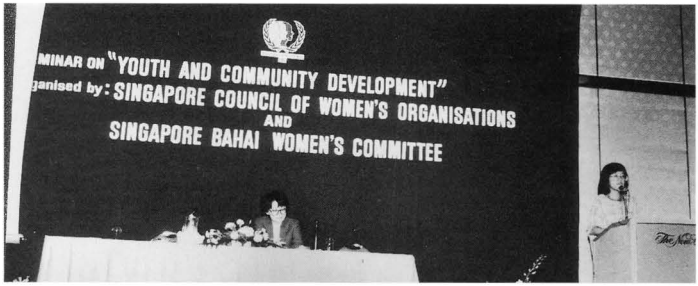
*Vice President Peter Mmusi of Botswana opened the Bahá'í International Youth Conference on 13 August 1985.*



*The Doloumé Folklore Dancers lead the way to the Bahá'í Institute in Kpodondji, Benin, for a programme held circa 1984.*



*More than 300 Bahá'ís from 20 Pacific-area countries gathered for the International Youth Conference for Australasia held from 8–11 August 1985 on the Island of Kauai in Hawaii.*

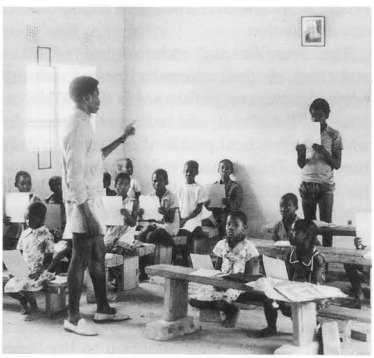



*The Singapore Bahá'í Women's Council co-sponsored a Seminar on Youth and Community Development in 1985.*

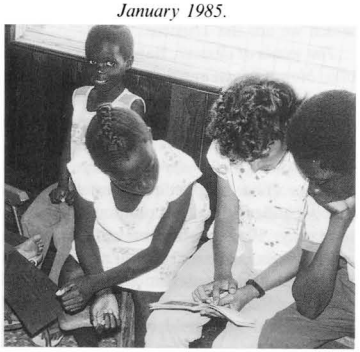
*Four Bahá'í youth during Summer School in Norway in July 1985.*

*Colombian Bahá'í youth sing during an International Youth Conference held in Lima, Peru, 2–5 August 1985.*

*The National Bahá'í Youth Conference held in Marburg, Germany, in 1984.*



*Bahá'í youth serving as a teacher in the Bahá'í tutorial school in Machipisa, Zambia, in January 1985.*



*Bahá'í youth pioneer to Grenada deepens children registered as Bahá'ís during the Mona Teaching Project in August 1985.*

*Two Bahá'í youth in the United States planting trees for the International Youth Year in 1985.*

# 5. THE PROMISE OF WORLD PEACE

## A. TEXT OF A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

OCTOBER 1985

TO the Peoples of the World:

The Great Peace towards which people of good will throughout the centuries have inclined their hearts, of which seers and poets for countless generations have expressed their vision, and for which from age to age the sacred scriptures of mankind have constantly held the promise, is now at long last within the reach of the nations. For the first time in history it is possible for everyone to view the entire planet, with all its myriad diversified peoples, in one perspective. World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet—in the words of one great thinker, 'the planetization of mankind'.

Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horrors precipitated by humanity's stubborn clinging to old patterns of behaviour, or is to be embraced now by an act of consultative will, is the choice before all who inhabit the earth. At this critical juncture when the intractable problems confronting nations have been fused into one common concern for the whole world, failure to stem the tide of conflict and disorder would be unconscionably irresponsible.

Among the favourable signs are the steadily growing strength of the steps towards world order taken initially near the beginning of this century in the creation of the League of Nations, succeeded by the more broadly based United Nations Organization; the achievement since the Second World War of independence by the majority of all the nations on earth, indicating the completion of the process of nation building, and the involvement of these fledgling nations with older ones in matters of mutual concern; the consequent vast increase in co-operation among hitherto isolated and antagonistic peoples and groups in international undertakings in the scientific, educational, legal, economic and cultural fields; the rise in recent decades of an unprecedented number of international humanitarian organizations; the spread of women's and youth movements calling for an end to war; and the spontaneous spawning of widening networks of ordinary people seeking understanding through personal communication.

The scientific and technological advances occurring in this unusually blessed century portend a great surge forward in the social evolution of the planet, and indicate the means by which the practical problems of humanity may be solved. They provide, indeed, the very means for the administration of the complex life of a united world. Yet barriers persist. Doubts, misconceptions, prejudices, suspicions and narrow self-interest beset nations and peoples in their relations one to another.

It is out of a deep sense of spiritual and moral duty that we are impelled at this opportune moment to invite your attention to the penetrating insights first communicated to the rulers of mankind more than a century ago by Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, of which we are the Trustees.

*The winds of despair*, Bahá'u'lláh wrote, *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.* This prophetic judgement has been amply confirmed by the common experience of humanity. Flaws in the prevailing order are conspicuous in the inability of sovereign states organized as United Nations to exorcize the spectre of war, the threatened collapse of the international economic order, the spread of anarchy and terrorism, and the intense suffering which these and other afflictions are causing to increasing millions. Indeed, so much have aggression and conflict come to characterize

our social, economic and religious systems, that many have succumbed to the view that such behaviour is intrinsic to human nature and therefore ineradicable.

With the entrenchment of this view, a paralyzing contradiction has developed in human affairs. On the one hand, people of all nations proclaim not only their readiness but their longing for peace and harmony, for an end to the harrowing apprehensions tormenting their daily lives. On the other, uncritical assent is given to the proposition that human beings are incorrigibly selfish and aggressive and thus incapable of erecting a social system at once progressive and peaceful, dynamic and harmonious, a system giving free play to individual creativity and intiative but based on co-operation and reciprocity.

As the need for peace becomes more urgent, this fundamental contradiction, which hinders its realization, demands a reassessment of the assumptions upon which the commonly held view of mankind's historical predicament is based. Dispassionately examined, the evidence reveals that such conduct, far from expressing man's true self, represents a distortion of the human spirit. Satisfaction on this point will enable all people to set in motion constructive social forces which, because they are consistent with human nature, will encourage harmony and co-operation instead of war and conflict.

To choose such a course is not to deny humanity's past but to understand it. The Bahá'í Faith regards the current world confusion and calamitous condition in human affairs as a natural phase in an organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet. The human race, as a distinct, organic unit, has passed through evolutionary stages analogous to the stages of infancy and childhood in the lives of its individual members, and is now in the culminating period of its turbulent adolescence approaching its long-awaited coming of age.

A candid acknowledgement that prejudice, war and exploitation have been the expression of immature stages in a vast historical process and that the human race is today experiencing the unavoidable tumult which marks its collective coming of age is not a reason for despair but a prerequisite to undertaking the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world. That such an enterprise is possible, that the necessary constructive forces do exist, that unifying social structures can be erected, is the theme we urge you to examine.

Whatever suffering and turmoil the years immediately ahead may hold, however dark the immediate circumstances, the Bahá'í community believes that humanity can confront this supreme trial with confidence in its ultimate outcome. Far from signalizing the end of civilization, the convulsive changes towards which humanity is being ever more rapidly impelled will serve to release 'the potentialities inherent in the station of man' and reveal 'the full measure of his destiny on earth, the innate excellence of his reality'.

## I

THE endowments which distinguish the human race from all other forms of life are summed up in what is known as the human spirit; the mind is its essential quality. These endowments have enabled humanity to build civilizations and to prosper materially. But such accomplishments alone have never satisfied the human spirit, whose mysterious nature inclines it towards transcendence, a reaching towards an invisible realm, towards the ultimate reality, that unknowable essence of essences called God. The religions brought to mankind by a succession of spiritual luminaries have been the primary link between humanity and that ultimate reality, and have galvanized and refined mankind's capacity to achieve spiritual success together with social progress.

No serious attempt to set human affairs aright, to achieve world peace, can ignore religion. Man's perception and practice of it are largely the stuff of history. An eminent historian described religion as a 'faculty of human nature'. That the perversion of this faculty has contributed to much of the confusion in society and the conflicts in and between individuals can hardly be denied. But neither can any fair-minded observer discount the preponderating influence exerted by religion on the vital expressions of civilization. Furthermore, its indispensability to social order has repeatedly

been demonstrated by its direct effect on laws and morality.

Writing of religion as a social force, Bahá'u'lláh said: *Religion is the greatest of all means for the establishment of order in the world and for the peaceful contentment of all that dwell therein.* Referring to the eclipse or corruption of religion, he wrote: *Should the lamp of religion be obscured, chaos and confusion will ensue, and the lights of fairness, of justice, of tranquillity and peace cease to shine.* In an enumeration of such consequences the Bahá'í writings point out that the 'perversion of human nature, the degradation of human conduct, the corruption and dissolution of human institutions, reveal themselves, under such circumstances, in their worst and most revolting aspects. Human character is debased, confidence is shaken, the nerves of discipline are relaxed, the voice of human conscience is stilled, the sense of decency and shame is obscured, conceptions of duty, of solidarity, of reciprocity and loyalty are distorted, and the very feeling of peacefulness, of joy and of hope is gradually extinguished'.

If, therefore, humanity has come to a point of paralyzing conflict it must look to itself, to its own negligence, to the siren voices to which it has listened, for the source of the misunderstandings and confusion perpetrated in the name of religion. Those who have held blindly and selfishly to their particular orthodoxies, who have imposed on their votaries erroneous and conflicting interpretations of the pronouncements of the Prophets of God, bear heavy responsibility for this confusion—a confusion compounded by the artificial barriers erected between faith and reason, science and religion. For from a fair-minded examination of the actual utterances of the Founders of the great religions, and of the social milieus in which they were obliged to carry out their missions, there is nothing to support the contentions and prejudices deranging the religious communities of mankind and therefore all human affairs.

The teaching that we should treat others as we ourselves would wish to be treated, an ethic variously repeated in all the great religions, lends force to this latter observation in two particular respects: it sums up the moral attitude, the peace-inducing aspect, extending through these religions irrespective of their place or time of origin; it also signifies an aspect of unity which is their essential virtue, a virtue mankind in its disjointed view of history has failed to appreciate.

Had humanity seen the Educators of its collective childhood in their true character, as agents of one civilizing process, it would no doubt have reaped incalculably greater benefits from the cumulative effects of their successive missions. This, alas, it failed to do.

The resurgence of fanatical religious fervour occurring in many lands cannot be regarded as more than a dying convulsion. The very nature of the violent and disruptive phenomena associated with it testifies to the spiritual bankruptcy it represents. Indeed, one of the strangest and saddest features of the current outbreak of religious fanaticism is the extent to which, in each case, it is undermining not only the spiritual values which are conducive to the unity of mankind but also those unique moral victories won by the particular religion it purports to serve.

However vital a force religion has been in the history of mankind, and however dramatic the current resurgence of militant religious fanaticism, religion and religious institutions have, for many decades, been viewed by increasing numbers of people as irrelevant to the major concerns of the modern world. In its place they have turned either to the hedonistic pursuit of material satisfactions or to the following of man-made ideologies designed to rescue society from the evident evils under which it groans. All too many of these ideologies, alas, instead of embracing the concept of the oneness of mankind and promoting the increase of concord among different peoples, have tended to deify the state, to subordinate the rest of mankind to one nation, race or class, to attempt to suppress all discussion and interchange of ideas, or to callously abandon starving millions to the operations of a market system that all too clearly is aggravating the plight of the majority of mankind, while enabling small sections to live in a condition of affluence scarcely dreamed of by our forebears.

How tragic is the record of the substitute faiths that the worldly-wise of our age have created. In the massive disillusionment of entire populations who have been taught to worship at their altars can be read history's irreversible verdict on their value. The fruits these doctrines have produced, after decades of an increasingly unrestrained exercise of power by those who

owe their ascendancy in human affairs to them, are the social and economic ills that blight every region of our world in the closing years of the twentieth century. Underlying all these outward afflictions is the spiritual damage reflected in the apathy that has gripped the mass of the peoples of all nations and by the extinction of hope in the hearts of deprived and anguished millions.

The time has come when those who preach the dogmas of materialism, whether of the east or the west, whether of capitalism or socialism, must give account of the moral stewardship they have presumed to exercise. Where is the 'new world' promised by these ideologies? Where is the international peace to whose ideals they proclaim their devotion? Where are the breakthroughs into new realms of cultural achievement produced by the aggrandizement of this race, of that nation or of a particular class? Why is the vast majority of the world's peoples sinking ever deeper into hunger and wretchedness when wealth on a scale undreamed of by the Pharaohs, the Caesars, or even the imperialist powers of the nineteenth century is at the disposal of the present arbiters of human affairs?

Most particularly, it is in the glorification of material pursuits, at once the progenitor and common feature of all such ideologies, that we find the roots which nourish the falsehood that human beings are incorrigibly selfish and aggressive. It is here that the ground must be cleared for the building of a new world fit for our descendants.

That materialistic ideals have, in the light of experience, failed to satisfy the needs of mankind calls for an honest acknowledgement that a fresh effort must now be made to find the solutions to the agonizing problems of the planet. The intolerable conditions pervading society bespeak a common failure of all, a circumstance which tends to incite rather than relieve the entrenchment on every side. Clearly, a common remedial effort is urgently required. It is primarily a matter of attitude. Will humanity continue in its waywardness, holding to outworn concepts and unworkable assumptions? Or will its leaders, regardless of ideology, step forth and, with a resolute will, consult together in a united search for appropriate solutions?

Those who care for the future of the human race may well ponder this advice. 'If long-cherished ideals and time-honoured institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.'

## II

BANNING nuclear weapons, prohibiting the use of poison gases, or outlawing germ warfare will not remove the root causes of war. However important such practical measures obviously are as elements of the peace process, they are in themselves too superficial to exert enduring influence. Peoples are ingenious enough to invent yet other forms of warfare, and to use food, raw materials, finance, industrial power, ideology, and terrorism to subvert one another in an endless quest for supremacy and dominion. Nor can the present massive dislocation in the affairs of humanity be resolved through the settlement of specific conflicts or disagreements among nations. A genuine universal framework must be adopted.

Certainly, there is no lack of recognition by national leaders of the world-wide character of the problem, which is self-evident in the mounting issues that confront them daily. And there are the accumulating studies and solutions proposed by many concerned and enlightened groups as well as by agencies of the United Nations, to remove any possibility of ignorance as to the challenging requirements to be met. There is, however, a paralysis of will; and it is this that must be carefully examined and resolutely dealt with. This paralysis is rooted, as we have stated, in a deep-seated conviction of the inevitable quarrelsomeness of mankind,

which has led to the reluctance to entertain the possibility of subordinating national self-interest to the requirements of world order, and in an unwillingness to face courageously the far-reaching implications of establishing a united world authority. It is also traceable to the incapacity of largely ignorant and subjugated masses to articulate their desire for a new order in which they can live in peace, harmony and prosperity with all humanity.

The tentative steps towards world order, especially since World War II, give hopeful signs. The increasing tendency of groups of nations to formalize relationships which enable them to co-operate in matters of mutual interest suggests that eventually all nations could overcome this paralysis. The Association of South East Asian Nations, the Caribbean Community and Common Market, the Central American Common Market, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the European Communities, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the South Pacific Forum—all the joint endeavours represented by such organizations prepare the path to world order.

The increasing attention being focused on some of the most deep-rooted problems of the planet is yet another hopeful sign. Despite the obvious shortcomings of the United Nations, the more than two score declarations and conventions adopted by that organization, even where governments have not been enthusiastic in their commitment, have given ordinary people a sense of a new lease of life. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and the similar measures concerned with eliminating all forms of discrimination based on race, sex or religious belief; upholding the rights of the child; protecting all persons against being subjected to torture; eradicating hunger and malnutrition; using scientific and technological progress in the interest of peace and the benefit of mankind—all such measures, if courageously enforced and expanded, will advance the day when the spectre of war will have lost its power to dominate international relations. There is no need to stress the significance of the issues addressed by these declarations and conventions. However, a few such issues, because of their immediate relevance to establishing world peace, deserve additional comment.

Racism, one of the most baneful and persistent evils, is a major barrier to peace. Its practice perpetrates too outrageous a violation of the dignity of human beings to be countenanced under any pretext. Racism retards the unfoldment of the boundless potentialities of its victims, corrupts its perpetrators, and blights human progress. Recognition of the oneness of mankind, implemented by appropriate legal measures, must be universally upheld if this problem is to be overcome.

The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war. Few societies have dealt effectively with this situation. The solution calls for the combined application of spiritual, moral and practical approaches. A fresh look at the problem is required, entailing consultation with experts from a wide spectrum of disciplines, devoid of economic and ideological polemics, and involving the people directly affected in the decisions that must urgently be made. It is an issue that is bound up not only with the necessity for eliminating extremes of wealth and poverty but also with those spiritual verities the understanding of which can produce a new universal attitude. Fostering such an attitude is itself a major part of the solution.

Unbridled nationalism, as distinguished from a sane and legitimate patriotism, must give way to a wide loyalty, to the love of humanity as a whole. Bahá'u'lláh's statement is: *The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.* The concept of world citizenship is a direct result of the contraction of the world into a single neighbourhood through scientific advances and of the indisputable interdependence of nations. Love of all the world's peoples does not exclude love of one's country. The advantage of the part in a world society is best served by promoting the advantage of the whole. Current international activities in various fields which nurture mutual affection and a sense of solidarity among peoples need greatly to be increased.

Religious strife, throughout history, has been the cause of innumerable wars and conflicts, a major blight to progress, and is increasingly abhorrent to the people of all faiths and no faith. Followers of all religions must be willing to face the basic questions which this strife

raises, and to arrive at clear answers. How are the differences between them to be resolved, both in theory and in practice? The challenge facing the religious leaders of mankind is to contemplate, with hearts filled with the spirit of compassion and a desire for truth, the plight of humanity, and to ask themselves whether they cannot, in humility before their Almighty Creator, submerge their theological differences in a great spirit of mutual forbearance that will enable them to work together for the advancement of human understanding and peace.

The emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged prerequisites of peace. The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified. Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge.

The cause of universal education, which has already enlisted in its service an army of dedicated people from every faith and nation, deserves the utmost support that the governments of the world can lend it. For ignorance is indisputably the principal reason for the decline and fall of peoples and the perpetuation of prejudice. No nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens. Lack of resources limits the ability of many nations to fulfil this necessity, imposing a certain ordering of priorities. The decision-making agencies involved would do well to consider giving first priority to the education of women and girls, since it is through educated mothers that the benefits of knowledge can be most effectively and rapidly diffused throughout society. In keeping with the requirements of the times, consideration should also be given to teaching the concept of world citizenship as part of the standard education of every child.

A fundamental lack of communication between peoples seriously undermines efforts towards world peace. Adopting an international auxiliary language would go far to resolve this problem and necessitates the most urgent attention.

Two points bear emphasizing in all these issues. One is that the abolition of war is not simply a matter of signing treaties and protocols; it is a complex task requiring a new level of commitment to resolving issues not customarily associated with the pursuit of peace. Based on political agreements alone, the idea of collective security is a chimera. The other point is that the primary challenge in dealing with issues of peace is to raise the context to the level of principle, as distinct from pure pragmatism. For, in essence, peace stems from an inner state supported by a spiritual or moral attitude, and it is chiefly in evoking this attitude that the possibility of enduring solutions can be found.

There are spiritual principles, or what some call human values, by which solutions can be found for every social problem. Any well-intentioned group can in a general sense devise practical solutions to its problems, but good intentions and practical knowledge are usually not enough. The essential merit of spiritual principle is that it not only presents a perspective which harmonizes with that which is immanent in human nature, it also induces an attitude, a dynamic, a will, an aspiration, which facilitate the discovery and implementation of practical measures. Leaders of governments and all in authority would be well served in their efforts to solve problems if they would first seek to identify the principles involved and then be guided by them.

## III

THE primary question to be resolved is how the present world, with its entrenched pattern of conflict, can change to a world in which harmony and co-operation will prevail.

World order can be founded only on an unshakeable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species, albeit infinitely varied in the secondary aspects

of life. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment of prejudice—prejudice of every kind—race, class, colour, creed, nation, sex, degree of material civilization, everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others.

Acceptance of the oneness of mankind is the first fundamental prerequisite for reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind. Universal acceptance of this spiritual principle is essential to any successful attempt to establish world peace. It should therefore be universally proclaimed, taught in schools, and constantly asserted in every nation as preparation for the organic change in the structure of society which it implies.

In the Bahá'í view, recognition of the oneness of mankind 'calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world—a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units'.

Elaborating the implications of this pivotal principle, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, commented in 1931 that: 'Far from aiming at the subversion of the existing foundations of society, it seeks to broaden its basis, to remold its institutions in a manner consonant with the needs of an ever-changing world. It can conflict with no legitimate allegiances, nor can it undermine essential loyalties. Its purpose is neither to stifle the flame of a sane and intelligent patriotism in men's hearts, nor to abolish the system of national autonomy so essential if the evils of excessive centralization are to be avoided. It does not ignore, nor does it attempt to suppress, the diversity of ethnical origins, of climate, of history, of language and tradition, of thought and habit, that differentiate the peoples and nations of the world. It calls for a wider loyalty, for a larger aspiration than any that has animated the human race. It insists upon the subordination of national impulses and interests to the imperative claims of a unified world. It repudiates excessive centralization on one hand, and disclaims all attempts at uniformity on the other. Its watchword is unity in diversity.'

The achievement of such ends requires several stages in the adjustment of national political attitudes, which now verge on anarchy in the absence of clearly defined laws or universally accepted and enforceable principles regulating the relationships between nations. The League of Nations, the United Nations, and the many organizations and agreements produced by them have unquestionably been helpful in attenuating some of the negative effects of international conflicts, but they have shown themselves incapable of preventing war. Indeed, there have been scores of wars since the end of the Second World War; many are yet raging.

The predominant aspects of this problem had already emerged in the nineteenth century when Bahá'u'lláh first advanced his proposals for the establishment of world peace. The principle of collective security was propounded by him in statements addressed to the rulers of the world. Shoghi Effendi commented on his meaning: 'What else could these weighty words signify,' he wrote, 'if they did not point to the inevitable curtailment of unfettered national sovereignty as an indispensable preliminary to the formation of the future Commonwealth of all the nations of the world? Some form of a world super-state must needs be evolved, in whose favour all the nations of the world will have willingly ceded every claim to make war, certain rights to impose taxation and all rights to maintain armaments, except for purposes of maintaining internal order within their respective dominions. Such a state will have to include within its orbit an International Executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the commonwealth; a World Parliament whose members shall be elected by the people in their respective countries and whose election shall be confirmed by their respective governments; and a Supreme Tribunal whose judgement will have a binding effect even, in such cases where the parties concerned did not voluntarily agree to submit their case to its consideration.

'A world community in which all economic barriers will have been permanently demolished and the interdependence of capital and labour definitely recognized; in which the clamour of religious fanaticism and strife will have been forever stilled; in which the flame of racial animosity will have been finally extinguished; in which a single code of international law—the product of the considered judgement of the

world's federated representatives—shall have as its sanction the instant and coercive intervention of the combined forces of the federated units; and finally a world community in which the fury of a capricious and militant nationalism will have been transmuted into an abiding consciousness of world citizenship—such indeed, appears, in its broadest outline, the Order anticipated by Bahá'u'lláh, an Order that shall come to be regarded as the fairest fruit of a slowly maturing age.'

The implementation of these far-reaching measures was indicated by Bahá'u'lláh: *The time must come when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all-embracing assemblage of men will be universally realized. The rulers and kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will lay the foundations of the world's Great Peace amongst men.*

The courage, the resolution, the pure motive, the selfless love of one people for another—all the spiritual and moral qualities required for effecting this momentous step towards peace are focused on the will to act. And it is towards arousing the necessary volition that earnest consideration must be given to the reality of man, namely, his thought. To understand the relevance of this potent reality is also to appreciate the social necessity of actualizing its unique value through candid, dispassionate and cordial consultation, and of acting upon the results of this process. Bahá'u'lláh insistently drew attention to the virtues and indispensability of consultation for ordering human affairs. He said: *Consultation bestows greater awareness and transmutes conjecture into certitude. It is a shining light which, in a dark world, leads the way and guides. For everything there is and will continue to be a station of perfection and maturity. The maturity of the gift of understanding is made manifest through consultation.* The very attempt to achieve peace through the consultative action he proposed can release such a salutary spirit among the peoples of the earth that no power could resist the final, triumphal outcome.

Concerning the proceedings for this world gathering, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh and authorized interpreter of his teachings, offered these insights: *They must make the Cause of Peace the object of general consultation, and seek by every means in their power to establish a Union of the nations of the world. They must conclude a binding treaty and establish a covenant, the provisions of which shall be sound, inviolable and definite. They must proclaim it to all the world and obtain for it the sanction of all the human race. This supreme and noble undertaking—the real source of the peace and well-being of all the world—should be regarded as sacred by all that dwell on earth. All the forces of humanity must be mobilized to ensure the stability and permanence of this Most Great Covenant. In this all-embracing Pact the limits and frontiers of each and every nation should be clearly fixed, the principles underlying the relations of governments towards one another definitely laid down, and all international agreements and obligations ascertained. In like manner, the size of the armaments of every government should be strictly limited, for if the preparations for war and the military forces of any nation should be allowed to increase, they will arouse the suspicion of others. The fundamental principal underlying this solemn Pact should be so fixed that if any government later violate any one of its provisions, all the governments on earth should arise to reduce it to utter submission, nay the human race as a whole should resolve, with every power at its disposal, to destroy that government. Should this greatest of all remedies be applied to the sick body of the world, it will assuredly recover from its ills and will remain eternally safe and secure.*

The holding of this mighty convocation is long overdue.

With all the ardour of our hearts, we appeal to the leaders of all nations to seize this opportune moment and take irreversible steps to convoke this world meeting. All the forces of history impel the human race towards this act which will mark for all time the dawn of its long-awaited maturity.

Will not the United Nations, with the full support of its membership, rise to the high purposes of such a crowning event?

Let men and women, youth and children everywhere recognize the eternal merit of this imperative action for all peoples and lift up their voices in willing assent. Indeed, let it be this generation that inaugurates this glorious stage in the evolution of social life on the planet.

## IV

THE source of the optimism we feel is a vision transcending the cessation of war and the creation of agencies of international co-operation. Permanent peace among nations is an essential stage, but not, Bahá'u'lláh asserts, the ultimate goal of the social development of humanity. Beyond the initial armistice forced upon the world by the fear of nuclear holocaust, beyond the political peace reluctantly entered into by suspicious rival nations, beyond pragmatic arrangements for security and coexistence, beyond even the many experiments in co-operation which these steps will make possible lies the crowning goal: the unification of all the peoples of the world in one universal family.

Disunity is a danger that the nations and peoples of the earth can no longer endure; the consequences are too terrible to contemplate, too obvious to require any demonstration. *The well-being of mankind*, Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, *its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.* In observing that 'mankind is groaning, is dying to be led to unity, and to terminate its age-long martyrdom', Shoghi Effendi further commented that: 'Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. 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.'

All contemporary forces of change validate this view. The proofs can be discerned in the many examples already cited of the favourable signs towards world peace in current international movements and developments. The army of men and women, drawn from virtually every culture, race and nation on earth, who serve the multifarious agencies of the United Nations, represent a planetary 'civil service' whose impressive accomplishments are indicative of the degree of co-operation that can be attained even under discouraging conditions. An urge towards unity, like a spiritual springtime, struggles to express itself through countless international congresses that bring together people from a vast array of disciplines. It motivates appeals for international projects involving children and youth. Indeed, it is the real source of the remarkable movement towards ecumenism by which members of historically antagonistic religions and sects seem irresistibly drawn towards one another. Together with the opposing tendency to warfare and self-aggrandizement against which it ceaselessly struggles, the drive towards world unity is one of the dominant, pervasive features of life on the planet during the closing years of the twentieth century.

The experience of the Bahá'í community may be seen as an example of this enlarging unity. It is a community of some three to four million people drawn from many nations, cultures, classes and creeds, engaged in a wide range of activities serving the spiritual, social and economic needs of the peoples of many lands. It is a single social organism, representative of the diversity of the human family, conducting its affairs through a system of commonly accepted consultative principles, and cherishing equally all the great outpourings of divine guidance in human history. Its existence is yet another convincing proof of the practicality of its Founder's vision of a united world, another evidence that humanity can live as one global society, equal to whatever challenges its coming of age may entail. If the Bahá'í experience can contribute in whatever measure to reinforcing hope in the unity of the human race, we are happy to offer it as a model for study.

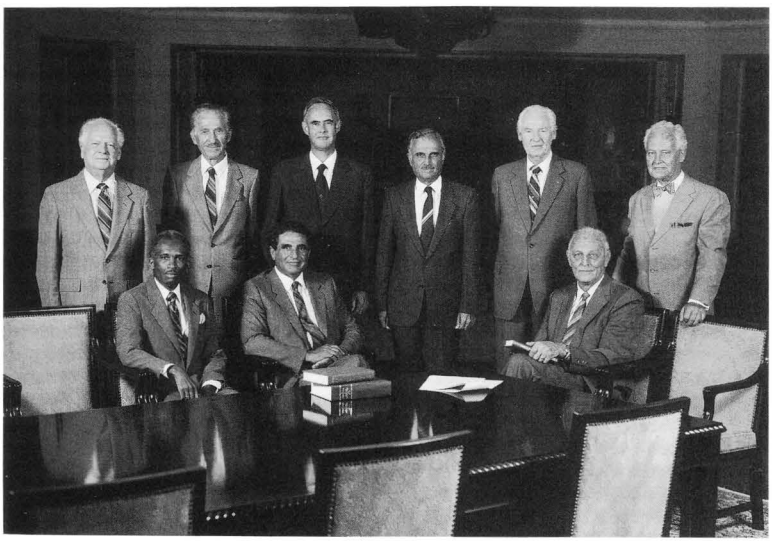
In contemplating the supreme importance of the task now challenging the entire world, we bow our heads in humility before the awesome majesty of the divine Creator, who out of His infinite love has created all humanity from the same stock; exalted the gem-like reality of man; honoured it with intellect and wisdom, nobility and immortality; and conferred upon man the *unique distinction and capacity to know Him and to love Him*, a capacity that *must needs be regarded as the generating impulse and the primary purpose underlying the whole of creation.*

We hold firmly the conviction that all human beings have been created *to carry foward an ever-advancing civilization*; that *to act like the beasts of the field is unworthy of man*; that the virtues that befit human dignity are trustworthiness, forbearance, mercy, compassion and loving kindness towards all peoples. We reaffirm the belief that the *potentialities inherent in the station of man, the full measure of his destiny on earth, the innate excellence of his reality, must all be manifested in this promised Day of God*. These are the motivations for our unshakeable faith that unity and peace are the attainable goal towards which humanity is striving.

At this writing, the expectant voices of Bahá'ís can be heard despite the persecution they still endure in the land in which their Faith was born. By their example of steadfast hope, they bear witness to the belief that the imminent realization of this age-old dream of peace is now, by virtue of the transforming effects of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation, invested with the force of divine authority. Thus we convey to you not only a vision in words: we summon the power of deeds of faith and sacrifice; we convey the anxious plea of our co-religionists everywhere for peace and unity. We join with all who are the victims of aggression, all who yearn for an end to conflict and contention, all whose devotion to principles of peace and world order promotes the ennobling purposes for which humanity was called into being by an all-loving Creator.

In the earnestness of our desire to impart to you the fervour of our hope and the depth of our confidence, we cite the emphatic promise of Bahá'u'lláh: *These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come.*

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE



*Photograph of members of the Universal House of Justice taken in September 1985 to be sent to Heads of State with copies of* The Promise of World Peace. *Standing from left to right: Mr. Charles Wolcott, Mr. H. Borrah Kavelin, Mr. Ian Semple, Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání, Mr. Hugh Chance, Mr. David Hofman. Seated, left to right: Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam, Dr. David Ruhe.*

# B. DISSEMINATION OF *THE PROMISE OF WORLD PEACE* OCTOBER 1985 TO 20 APRIL 1986

WITH the launching of the Peace Statement in October 1985, the proclamation of the Cause entered a new phase. On an earlier occasion, in the Fall of 1967, the Universal House of Justice had written formally to Heads of State throughout the world when it distributed to them a special edition of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets to Kings and Rulers.[1] In two important respects the Peace Statement moved dramatically beyond this first step. For the first time, the House of Justice addressed itself directly to the mass of humankind, the 'Peoples of the World'. In doing so it took up the central issue facing the human race in the closing years of the twentieth century, the problem of global peace, and vigorously analysed the great social and spiritual questions involved.

In bold strokes the Statement charts the one course that can lead humanity through the 'shades of night' that, in words the beloved Guardian wrote several decades ago, are now enveloping the planet. Bahá'u'lláh's definition of the nature of man, fundamentally different from that contained in any prevailing theology or philosophy, is set forth. The explanation that unity is the basic prerequisite of peace and social transformation is clearly enunciated. After reviewing the central role that revealed religion has played in the civilizing process the Statement exposes the failure of contemporary moral leadership. A few trenchant sentences trace the intimate connection between the cause of peace and the great issues of social justice that preoccupy our age. Holding up to the world's gaze Shoghi Effendi's vision of a future Commonwealth embracing the whole planet, the Statement challenges particularly the membership of the present United Nations organizations to convoke the 'world gathering' that the Bahá'í writings indicate is needed for the realization of this great goal.

Finally, the people of the world are invited to consider the countless evidences that global peace is within our grasp, not the least of them the unity and cohesion that have produced the Bahá'í community itself. The Statement concludes with a poignant reference to the 'deeds of faith and sacrifice' in Írán by which this community has given convincing proof of the confidence in humanity's future that inspires it.

As soon as this thrilling message had received the signature of the Universal House of Justice, presentation copies were sent by courier to the waiting National Assemblies throughout the world, who had already been asked to seek audiences with the Heads of State of their respective nations and territories. The presentation copies were bound in dark red moroccan leather, embossed with a nineteen-petalled floral design and lined in grey silk. Each bore the handwritten signature of the Supreme Body. This formal approach to the leaders of the world would be the first stage in a programme designed eventually to enlist the participation of every follower of Bahá'u'lláh and to reach millions of human beings.

The House of Justice had indicated that presentations should begin on 24 October, United Nations Day. It was a measure of the eagerness with which the Bahá'í world responded to this new initiative that National Assemblies succeeded in arranging no fewer than thirty-two of the audiences for 24 October itself. The Heads of State receiving the Statement on that date were those of Alaska, the Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Chile, Denmark, Fiji, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Hawaii, Macau, Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Martinique, Monaco, Norway, Panama, San Marino, Singapore, South Africa, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Vanuatu and Venda. Because of special circumstances, four other National Assemblies—Australia, Austria, Guyana and Jamaica—had found it necessary to make their presentations a day or two earlier. Within the week presentations had also occurred in Belize, Cape Verde Islands, Iceland, India, Ireland, Japan, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Nigeria, and Switzerland.

On 22 November, in New York City, the

[1] *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1967. See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, pp. 195–206.

global scope of the Statement came most clearly into focus when Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum was received by Dr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations. Accompanied by representatives of the Bahá'í International Community, Amatu'l-Bahá presented a specially inscribed copy of the Statement to Dr. Perez de Cuellar and discussed briefly with him some of the central issues with which it deals. The original intent had been to secure this interview on United Nations Day, but circumstances of illness and work on the part of the Secretary-General had intervened. To the friends serving in the offices of the Bahá'í International Community in New York it seemed a befitting coincidence that the presentation occurred instead during the week in which the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the historic Resolution calling on the Government of Írán to observe the human rights of its citizens, including those of the Bahá'í community. It was the first occasion in which a persecuted minority had been specified by name in such a decision by the world's highest tribunal.

During the month that followed most of the governments of the world, including those responsible for the administration of significant territories and islands, had received the Statement. The presence in the Haifa/'Akká area of the World Centre of the Faith made it possible for two members of the Universal House of Justice to join officers of the Bahá'í International Community in calling on Mr. Chaim Herzog, President of Israel for the presentation that took place on 4 December. By Riḍván 1986 a total of 138 such presentations had occurred. Of these, 62 had been made in meetings between Bahá'í delegations and the responsible Head of State, 42 through meetings with representatives of a Head of State, and 21 through the United Nations missions of the countries concerned through the intermediary of the Bahá'í International Community. Through force of circumstance 13 were dispatched by mail.

For those participating in the delegations, the experience was a moving demonstration of the power of the Cause. In Swaziland, the presentation was made to Prince Khuzulwandle, representative of the Queen Regent, at a gathering of 5,000 persons in the National Stadium, held to commemorate United Nations Day. The Bahá'í prayer for all mankind was read in both English and Siswati. Then, with the nine members of the National Assembly seated in the grandstand beside the Acting Prime Minister, the entire audience were asked by the presiding official to rise to their feet out of respect for the solemnity of a presentation of this character.

In Brazil, the major media networks were invited to be present when the President of the Republic, Mr. Jose Sarney, received the Peace Statement from a delegation representing the National Assembly. The Ugandan believers were deeply touched by the appeal of General Okello, Head of State and Chairman of the Military Council, that they should pray for the unity of that country which has suffered so greatly. An especially warm reception was given to the delegation of the German National Assembly by the President of the Federal Republic, Dr. Richard von Weizsacker, who on other occasions has expressed his respect for the Cause and his deep concern about the well-being of the friends in Írán.

One of the most memorable meetings was that held on United Nations Day between the National Spiritual Assembly of the Marshall Islands and President Amata Kabua of that country. A four-member delegation accompanied by eight other Bahá'ís entered the room singing the traditional song *Ien Emonmon Jouj Lo Dron* ('This is the best time for us to get together'). Following this the group sang *Alláh-u-Abhá*, after which the traditional gifts of leis and baskets of food were made to the President. At the dinner which he gave for his Bahá'í guests, President Kabua paid the Faith the generous tribute of sitting with the visitors on the floor rather than on the platform which he customarily occupies on such occasions.

It was apparent from the discussions that delegations held with Heads of State that the meetings succeeded in their primary purpose which was to begin the process of introducing the Bahá'í prescription for world peace to the leaders of mankind. The responses that many of the latter made during the interviews showed not only a deep concern about the issues raised by the Peace Statement but, in a number of cases, a keen sympathy for the emphasis that the Statement places on the spiritual principles involved. Among the noteworthy examples was the reaction of Mr. Belisario Betancur, President of Colombia, whose subsequent letter to

the Universal House of Justice reflected a profound understanding of the Statement's intent and an appreciation of the efforts that the Bahá'í community is making.

As the task of placing the Peace Statement in the hands of the world's leaders proceeded, a parallel distribution was taking place throughout the Bahá'í community. Translation into a steadily widening range of languages, reproduction in news organs and other publications, presentation at Bahá'í gatherings, and a detailed examination at study groups around the world all attested to the impact the Statement was making on the minds and hearts of the believers. Study of the document was facilitated by the World Centre's distribution of a carefully prepared synopsis of the Statement, using only the original language, and an accompanying analysis. Within a short time the World Centre was receiving copies of beautifully prepared editions of the Statement in many languages, enabling the World Centre Library to create a constantly changing display for the stream of diplomats, journalists, and other prominent persons who visit the Centre as special guests of the Universal House of Justice.

As believers everywhere became aware of the contents of the Statement a host of new proclamation ideas emerged. Finding themselves possessed of a document that speaks directly to the most urgent issues of our time, the friends set out to make certain that the message reached as broad an audience as possible. 'Peace expos', concerts, conferences, and similar ventures were conceived and the necessary planning undertaken. One of the striking features of this response was the opportunities the peace initiative has opened up for the collaboration between Bahá'í communities and a wide range of citizens' groups and other organizations. The prevailing note in reports from Counsellors and National Assemblies was the surge of confidence that the message had evoked in the rank and file of the believers, including many who had been on the periphery of the community's activities.

Among the events of this kind, the peace exposition in Australia was perhaps the most ambitious in its planning and the most dramatic in its success. The ten-day event included a media dinner, a Bahá'í Studies Conference, a 'Youth for Peace' conference, a Peace Concert given to a crowd of 2,500, a festival of ethnic music and dancing, arts and crafts displays, children's activities, and conflict resolution workshops. The fact that over 7,300 people attended was an indication of the capacity of the peace initiative to arouse public interest. Those fortunate enough to be present took part in unfolding a 'Peace Ribbon', a continuous line of peace banners representing the work of some 25,000 people from 40 different countries, that linked Australia's House of Worship to the sea, six kilometres away. Best of all, however, the national event inspired a series of similar projects by Local Spiritual Assemblies around the country.

In the perspective of history, it is likely that the impact of the Peace Statement on the Bahá'í community itself will prove to be the most important aspect of the opening phase of the promulgation of this history-making document. For the Peace Statement is addressed not to kings and presidents, but to the whole of humanity. It is befitting that those into whose hands Providence has entrusted the immediate destinies of the human race should have been the first to receive copies from the Supreme Body of the Cause, and it was clear by Riḍván 1986 that the Bahá'í world had discharged its responsibility in this respect. Now comes the greater challenge. The individual Bahá'í has been called upon by the House of Justice to internalize the message of the Peace Statement, to grasp the revolutionary vision of humanity's future it contains, and to consider its application to the questions that preoccupy the generality of mankind in these closing years of the century. Only in this way will the message of *The Promise of World Peace* reach those for whom it is intended, our family, our friends, our coworkers, and all those whose lives touch ours.

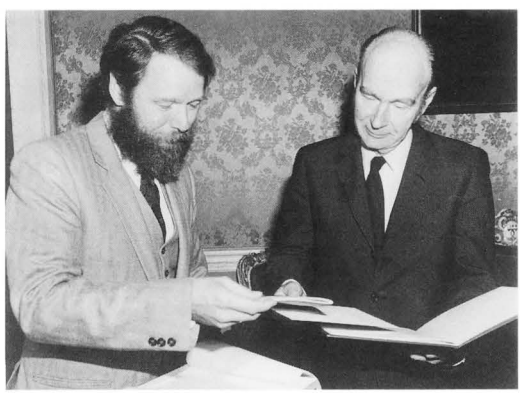
*Australia*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Governor-General of Australia (second from right) by a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and including Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone (far right) and Counsellor Joy Stevenson.*
*(24 October 1985)*

*Bahamas*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Governor-General of the Bahamas (second from right) by a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahamas.*
*(24 October 1985)*

*Costa Rica*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace to the President of Costa Rica *(left) by Counsellor Rodrigo Tomas, a member of the Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Costa Rica.*
*(6 November 1985).*

*Germany*
*The President of the Federal Republic of Germany (second from left) receiving a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany (5 December 1985). A cordial one-hour interview ensued.* The Promise of World Peace *had been sent to the President a few weeks earlier.*

*India*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of India (right) by Counsellor Zena Sorabjee, a member of the Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of India (28 October 1985).*



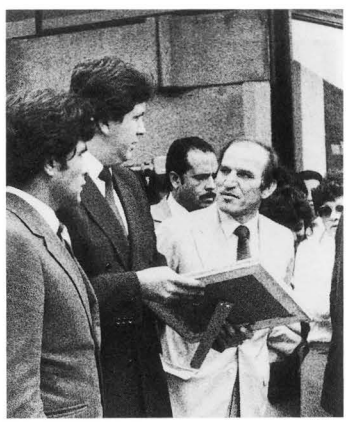
*Ireland*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of Ireland (right) by a member of a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland. (3 October 1985)*

*Israel*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of Israel by a Bahá'í delegation from the World Centre, including members of the Universal House of Justice Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání (centre) and Mr. Ian Semple (right). (4 December 1985).*

*Marshall Islands*
*The President of the Marshall Islands holding* The Promise of World Peace *after receiving it from a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the Marshall Islands. (24 October 1985).*

*Mauritius*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Acting Governor-General by a member of a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Mauritius.*
*(24 October 1985).*

*Papua New Guinea*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Governor-General of Papua New Guinea (right) by a member of a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Papua New Guinea.*
*(24 October 1985).*



*Peru*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of Peru (centre) by a representative (right) of the National Spiritual Assembly of Peru.*
*(7 March 1986)*

*American Samoa*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Governor of American Samoa (centre) by a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly and including Counsellor Suhayl 'Alá'í (second from right).*
*(16 December 1985)*

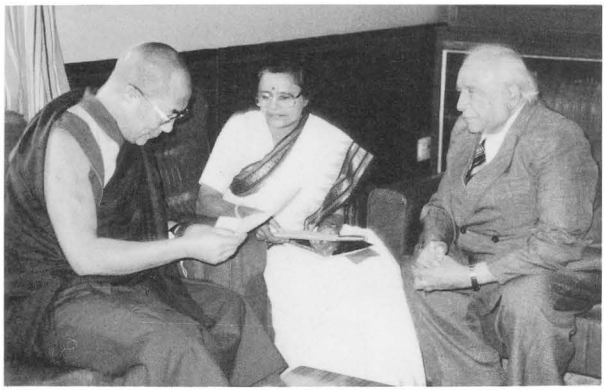
*San Marino*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Captains Regent of San Marino by a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy.*
*(24 October 1985)*

*Sri Lanka*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of Sri Lanka (left) by a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Sri Lanka.*
*(29 November 1985)*

*Suriname*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of Suriname* (*right*) *by a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Suriname.*
(*24 October 1985*)

*Swaziland*
*On behalf of the Queen Regent of Swaziland, Prince Khuzulwande* (*centre, facing camera*) *accepts* The Promise of World Peace *from a member of a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland, before an audience of 5,000 during the national celebration of United Nations Day.*
(*24 October 1985*)

*Taiwan*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Mayor of Taipei* (*right*) *by a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Taiwan.*
(*25 January 1986*)



*Tibet*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Dalai Lama of Tibet (left) by representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly of India. (March 1986)*

*Tonga*
*The Crown Prince of Tonga received* The Promise of World Peace *at his office. The presentation was made by Counsellor Lisiate Maka, and his wife, as representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly of Tonga. (20 March 1986)*

*Uganda*
*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the Head of State of Uganda (right)* by a member of a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda. *(24 October 1985)*

*United Nations*

*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to Dr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the United Nations, by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. (22 November 1985)*

*United States of America*

*Presentation of* The Promise of World Peace *to the President of the United States of America (right) by a member of a Bahá'í delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States of America. (10 December 1985)*

*Australian Peace Exposition*

*White doves, symbolizing peace, are released against the background of the Bahá'í House of Worship near Sydney, Australia, during the Bahá'í Peace Exposition, 29 March to 6 April, 1986.*

# 6. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## A. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES: A NEW STAGE IN THE EVOLUTION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S WORLD ORDER

HOLLY HANSON VICK

FROM the beginning of His stupendous mission, Bahá'u'lláh urged upon the attention of nations the necessity of ordering human affairs in such a way as to bring into being a world unified in all the essential aspects of its life. In unnumbered verses and tablets He repeated and variously declared the *progress of the world* and the *development of nations* as being among the ordinances of God for this day. The oneness of mankind, which is at once the operating principle and ultimate goal of His Revelation, implies the achievement of a dynamic coherence between the spiritual and practical requirements of life on earth...

Now, after all the years of constant teaching activity, the Community of the Greatest Name has grown to the stage at which the processes of this development must be incorporated into its regular pursuits; particularly is action compelled by the expansion of the Faith in Third World countries where the vast majority of its adherents reside...

The International Teaching Centre and, through it, the Continental Boards of Counsellors are poised for the special responsibilities which devolve upon them to be alert to possibilities for extending the development of social and economic life both within and outside the Bahá'í Community, and to advise and encourage the Assemblies and friends in their strivings.

We call now upon National Spiritual Assemblies to consider the implications of this emerging trend for their respective communities, and to take well-conceived measures to involve the thought and actions of Local Spiritual Assemblies and individuals in the devising and implementing of plans, within the constraints of existing circumstances and available resources...

We go forward confident that the wholehearted involvement of the friends in these activities will ensure a deeper consolidation of the community at all levels. Our engagement in the technical aspects of development should, however, not be allowed to supplant the essentials of teaching, which remains the primary duty of every follower of Bahá'u'lláh. Rather should our increased activities in the development field be viewed as a reinforcement of the teaching work, as a greater manifestation of faith in action. For, if expansion of the teaching work does not continue, there can be no hope of success for this enlarged dimension of the consolidation process...

Excerpts from a letter dated 20 October 1983 from the
Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the World

The Bahá'í world is embarking on a new and thrilling stage of its evolution as a result of the message of the Universal House of Justice, cited above, calling Bahá'ís to greater involvement in the development of the social and economic life of peoples. In order to respond to this critical challenge, implying as it does both the growing maturity of Bahá'í institutions and the responsibility borne by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh to ameliorate the condition of mankind, Bahá'ís must prepare themselves with a clear understanding of the relevant teachings of our Faith. What is Bahá'í development? What is its relationship to other Bahá'í activity? What is the role of our institutions in carrying it out? As the inherent potentialities of the Cause to order human affairs become more manifest, the familiar elements of Bahá'í belief reveal new aspects and greater significances. The unique and vital power of the Faith to improve the lot of mankind is demonstrated in the development activities already under way around the Bahá'í world.

Development activities are a natural and essential part of Bahá'í life, for Bahá'u'lláh has clearly stated that the material well-being of the world, as well as its spiritual salvation, are in the hands of the Manifestations of God. *The religion of God and His divine law are the most potent instruments and the surest of all means for the dawning of the light of unity amongst men. The progress of the world, the development of nations, the tranquillity of peoples, and the peace of all who dwell on earth are among the principles and ordinances of God.*[1] All Bahá'í development activities are an effort to obey the laws and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'ís establish schools and training programs because education is compulsory and indispensable to human progress; they organize literacy classes because daily reading of the Word of God is an obligation; they promote indigenous culture because unity in diversity is an important Bahá'í teaching. Although the laws of the Bahá'í Faith provide for the establishment of educational institutions and community storehouses, the promotion of agriculture and technology and other means of material progress, Bahá'ís recognize these to be only one aspect of development.

The goal towards which we are striving, the focus of all Bahá'í activity of whatever kind, is the establishment of a world civilization in which mankind achieves the station of spiritual maturity which Bahá'u'lláh has ordained for us. Development, for Bahá'ís, is a divinely guided process which must *effect a transformation in the whole character of mankind, a transformation that shall manifest itself, both outwardly and inwardly, that shall affect both its inner life and external conditions.*[2] Material development is not sufficient; people must also learn to be united, to prefer their neighbour to themselves, to acquire moral virtues. The inner transformation of a community is the ultimate objective of any Bahá'í development project, for *until the heavenly civilization is founded, no result will be forthcoming from material civilization*[3] When a Bahá'í community builds a school, we ask 'Has this effort caused the community to work together? Has it created a desire to serve others? Has it given the community a sense of accomplishment? Has it been conducive to the

*'When East and West Embrace'. Two Bahá'í youth – one from Írán and one from Norway – in 1984.*

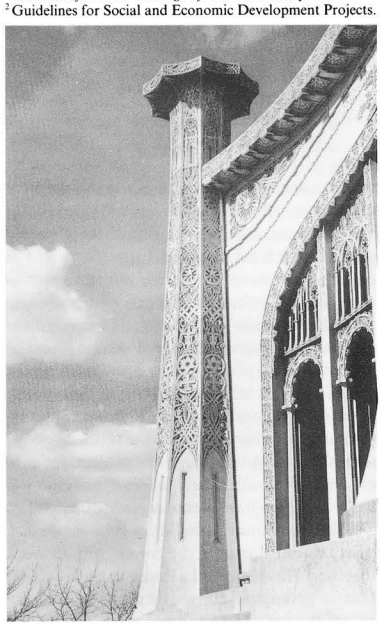
[1] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 129–130.

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 25, or *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pp. 240–241.

[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 257.

preservation of human honour? If a Bahá'í project causes disagreement in a community, creates a sense of dependence or inferiority, or engenders greed and materialism, that project has been a failure. 'Abdu'l Baha has stated this principle, *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.*[1] The Universal House of Justice has written that the primary consideration in planning a project must be 'what it may bring in the form of strength, hope and spiritual upliftment of the Bahá'ís, as well as the beneficial influence its implementation and final accomplishment might exert.[2] Bahá'ís believe that material progress and spiritual growth must be part of the same process; the laws which Bahá'u'lláh has revealed that relate development activities to the individual and the community are evidence that this is possible.

[1] *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 88.
[2] Guidelines for Social and Economic Development Projects.



*A 45-foot-high pylon stands by one of the entrances to the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois.*

**The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár**

According to the Bahá'í teachings, worship of God and service to humanity are complementary activities, and neither is satisfactory without the other. At the heart of every Bahá'í community will stand a House of Worship, surrounded by dependencies dedicated to the social, humanitarian, educational and scientific advancement of mankind. This new institution is the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár—The Dawning Place of the Mention of God. Shoghi Effendi has written that the dynamic interaction of the component of worship and the component of service are essential to the creative power of the House of Worship.[3] The spiritual impulse of the worshiper is transformed into action through service in the schools, clinics, and other institutions; and the work of these social services is purified and vitalized by the spiritual forces emanating from the Temple. A process of continual human advancement is set in motion as each believer, while striving to perfect himself, devotes his energy to the good of the community under the direction of the Local Spiritual Assembly. The House of Worship will provide the daily and practical means for carrying forward an ever-advancing civilization in Bahá'í communities of the future; for the present it provides an example of the integration of spiritual and material development which Bahá'ís must strive to understand and apply in their lives and their development plans.

**The Pattern for Future Society**

The Bahá'í Administrative Order is the structure created by Bahá'u'lláh for the process of transforming humanity. It is the indispensable foundation of Bahá'í development activity, as Shoghi Effendi has clearly stated: 'the Spirit breathed by Bahá'u'lláh upon the world, which is manifesting itself with varying degrees of intensity through the efforts consciously displayed by His avowed supporters and indirectly through certain humanitarian organizations, can never permeate and exercise an abiding influence upon mankind unless and until it incarnates itself in a visible Order, which would bear His name, wholly identify itself with his principles, and function in conformity with His Laws.'[4]

[3] *Bahá'í Administration*, pp. 184–186.
[4] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 19.

*A meeting of a Local Spiritual Assembly in Cagayan de Oro, Philippines.*

*The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Ponta Delgada, in the Azores; 1984.*

As they have laboured over the past sixty years to erect a network of approximately 35,000 Local Spiritual Assemblies and 148 National Spiritual Assemblies supporting the Universal House of Justice,[1] Bahá'ís have been motivated by the belief that these institutions were 'the pattern for future society'[2] and 'the potent sources of the progress of man'.[3] Development, in both the material and transcendent sense, is the responsibility of the Spiritual Assembly, and the emergence of development as a focus of Bahá'í activity illuminates, for the first time, the concrete and practical way in which Local Spiritual Assemblies can begin to achieve their exalted destiny. The laws and principles which govern the Local Spiritual Assembly are, we now recognize, the essential elements of successful Bahá'í development. The right of every individual to express his opinion, the spiritual law of individual initiative and the principle of organic growth, and the reliance of Bahá'í institutions on spiritual teachings and divine bestowals are all aspects of Bahá'í administrative functioning which equip the Local Spiritual Assembly for development activities. 'It is the ideal instrument to make spiritual laws function properly in the material affairs of the world.'[4].

The Local Spiritual Assembly is an effective community organization which operates at the first level of human society. The participation of all members of the community is guaranteed by the annual election in which all adult members vote for the Local Assembly by secret ballot, through the principle of consultation, which upholds the right and obligation of free expression, and through the institution of the Nineteen Day Feast, which provides a forum for frank and open discussion by the whole community. There is a great emphasis placed upon co-operation and equality of opportunity in Bahá'í community life. It is because this community organization has been established and is developing all over the world that Bahá'ís are able to insist that the initiative and driving force for our development projects must come from the grassroots.

This essential requirement, that Bahá'í development projects 'grow from the grassroots, and not be imposed from the top'[5] is one which distinguishes our efforts from most development work. While many development specialists try to involve community members in order to ensure the success of their development activities, the roles are reversed in the Bahá'í context. Local Bahá'í communities decide that they want to do something for their village, plan how to do it, and seek the help of experts when they decide it is necessary. It is a principle of Bahá'í belief that true progress for a community, as well as for an individual, must come from within: '*All that* which ye potentially possess, however, can be manifested only as a result of your own volition.'[6] Although this principle might seem to limit the tangible results of our efforts and to narrow the role of believers from developed countries, it places Bahá'í development activities on a firm spiritual foundation. It means our development projects take shape as an expression of the faith of the local Bahá'ís; they are initiated by believers who are

[1] Totals as of 20 April 1986.
[2] Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 19.
[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in *God Passes By*, p. 322.
[4] A letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 16 June 1945, in *Lights of Guidance*, pp. 1–2.
[5] Guidelines for Social and Economic Development Projects.
[6] *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 149.

motivated by their love for Bahá'u'lláh to apply His teachings to the daily life of their communities, and are carried out as an act of devotion by the same people they are intended to serve.

Local Spiritual Assemblies have attained the capacity for self-initiated development activities, or are evolving towards it, through a process of organic growth which is a characteristic of the Bahá'í Cause. The Universal House of Justice described this process in 1968: 'The Bahá'í World Community, growing like a healthy new body, develops new cells, new organs, new functions and powers as it presses on to its maturity'.[1] In this critical period of growth, National Spiritual Assemblies are to foster the emergence of the new function of development activity by making Local Assemblies aware of the needs and possibilities, offering encouragement, and guiding and co-ordinating their activities. Many National Spiritual Assemblies have devoted great energies during the current Seven Year Plan to the encouragement of self-sufficient Local Assemblies. These Assemblies, which have successfully built active and united Bahá'í communities, are prepared to turn their attention to the needs of their villages and towns. The development activities which are now being undertaken by the Bahá'í community are simple and small in scale because they 'are a natural stage in the growth of the community'.[2] As Bahá'í Assemblies grow in capacity and in understanding of their mission, the scope of Bahá'í endeavours in the field of social and economic development will expand.

The Bahá'í Assemblies poised to carry out development work around the world bring to their task not only their skills in community organization, but also a strength and power which is given to them by God. *The glances of God are directed towards this Assembly.*[3] *From them the spirit of life streameth in every direction.*[4] This spiritual power, which comes to Assemblies through their obedience to Bahá'í law, is a necessary ingredient of a development project. To improve a water supply or begin a programme of health education are straightforward tasks, but how can these be done in such a way that the beneficiaries gain confidence, self-respect, and dignity? The ultimate intention of Bahá'í development is to set an example of service to humanity, purity of motive, moral virtue and co-operation that will influence the whole social order. Bahá'ís are confident of success not because we are spiritually vain, but because we rely on Bahá'u'lláh. The transforming power of the Cause of God ennobles and uplifts the Bahá'ís, inspires and confirms our institutions, and will, we believe, work through us to rehabilitate the life of mankind.

Bahá'í development, it is clear, is a new creation, something quite different from most activities which are called development. The agents of Bahá'í development are for the most part simple and sincere believers, not specialists from abroad; the resources we employ are primarily devotion and self-sacrifice, not international money and manpower; and we are striving not just to build schools, clinics, or

*A Bahá'í using a very simple machine to make adobe bricks for the Guaymi Cultural Centre, built by Bahá'ís in 1985; Boca del Monte, Panama.*

[1] *Wellspring of Guidance*, pp. 37–38.
[2] The Universal House of Justice, letter to a National Spiritual Assembly, dated 8 May 1984.
[3] Bahá'u'lláh, *Local Spiritual Assembly Compilation* (U.S.), p. 6.
[4] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in *God Passes By*, p. 322.

rural schemes, but to light *the lamp* of *material development* with the light *of divine virtues and susceptibilities*.[1] Bahá'ís must 'avoid the danger of indiscriminate imitation' by striving to understand and implement the clear definition of Bahá'í development given by the Universal House of Justice:

'The steps to be taken must necessarily begin in the Bahá'í community itself, with the friends endeavouring, through their application of spiritual principles, their rectitude of conduct and the practice of the art of consultation, to uplift themselves and thus become self-sufficient and self-reliant. Moreover, these exertions will conduce to the preservation of human honour, so desired by Bahá'u'lláh. In the process and as a consequence, the friends will undoubtedly extend the benefits of their efforts to society as a whole, until all mankind achieves the progress intended by the Lord of the Age.'[2]

The proof that this ambitious prescription is truly workable lies in the record of Bahá'í development, spanning almost one hundred years, first in Írán[3] and now all over the world.

*Author's note*: The author wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Dr. David Ruhe and Mr. Hassan Sabri, who shared with her their vision of Bahá'í development as an *entity of a new creation*.

## B. A SUMMARY OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES April 1983–April 1986

THE growing maturity of a world-wide religious community ... is further evidenced in the reaching out, by a number of national communities, to the social and economic life of their countries, exemplified by the founding of tutorial schools, the inception of radio stations, the pursuit of rural development programmes and the operation of medical and agricultural schemes ... A wider horizon is opening before us, illumined by a growing and universal manifestation of the inherent potentialities of the Cause for ordering human affairs. In this light can be discerned not only our immediate tasks but, more dimly, new pursuits and undertakings upon which we must shortly become engaged ... The powers released by Bahá'u'lláh match the needs of the times. We may therefore be utterly confident that the new throb of energy now vibrating throughout the Cause will empower it to meet the oncoming challenges of assisting, as maturity and resources allow, the development of the social and economic life of peoples, of collaborating with the forces leading towards the establishment of order in the world, of influencing the exploitation and constructive uses of modern technology, and in all these ways enhancing the prestige and progress of the Faith and uplifting the conditions of the generality of mankind...

Excerpts from letter dated Riḍván 140 B.E. (21 April 1983) from the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the World

Most of the Bahá'í communities of the world have only recently entered the field of social and economic development. The number of Bahá'í development activities reported to the Bahá'í World Centre increased by approximately 400 per cent during the period under review, and totalled 1,030 by Riḍván 140. By that date there were 87 health and social service projects in operation, 70 agriculture and forestry projects, 144 community development efforts, and 599 schools. These efforts are just the beginning of a long and gradual process which must unfold as Bahá'í communities grow and mature.

Bahá'í development activity is the natural

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 288–289.

[2] Letter of 20 October 1983 'To the Bahá'ís of the World'.

[3] See 'Social and Economic Development in the Bahá'í Community of Írán'.

expression of the Bahá'í belief that spiritual and material life interact in a positive way. Development is inherent in every activity of a growing Bahá'í community in rural areas. It begins in the spiritual life of each individual believer, for as Bahá'ís grow in understanding and awareness of their Faith, they are motivated to change their own lives to bring them into conformity with its teachings.

When Bahá'í villagers strive to educate their children, to be clean and to use pure water, to uplift themselves and manifest divine virtues, they initiate a development process that has a foundation in their inner beings. The Bahá'í teaching that service to humanity is an essential aspect of worship extends the Bahá'í impulse towards development to the whole community. The regular community meetings provide a forum for interchange and community decision-making; and the organized activities for children, women, and youth promote self-improvement and community service. The impact of the Bahá'í Revelation on material life has always been most evident in rural areas with mature Bahá'í communities: the homes of Bahá'ís are built to let in light; their children are clean; their daughters are sent to school.

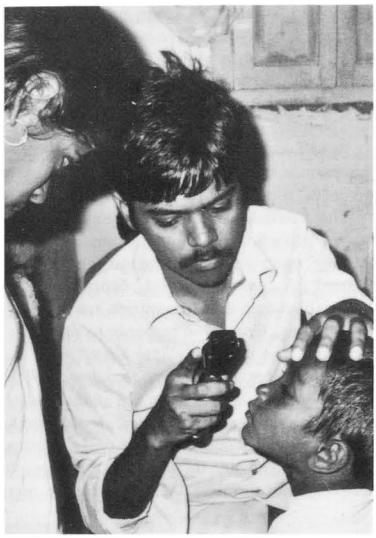
However, Bahá'í development activities are not confined to parts of the world where material needs are great. The Universal House of Justice has emphasized that every society is in need of the healing remedy of Bahá'u'lláh's principles; that Bahá'í development begins when each community considers its own problems and attempts to overcome them. The Bahá'í communities in developed countries are attempting to respond to the social problems of racism, sexism, the dissolution of the family unit, which they perceive in their societies. Bahá'ís are sharing with other people engaged in social or environmental work the principle of consultation, their ability to foster unity, their enthusiasm and confidence about the future.

Bahá'í consultation is an essential tool for rural development in Bahá'í communities. A decision-making discipline based on spiritual principles that Bahá'ís are trying to utilize in their individual and group activities, consultation encourages people to articulate their hopes and their goals, to recognize their own capacity, and to formulate practical plans. Through its emphasis on humility, loving-kindness, candor, and co-operation, consultation gives people a way to work together successfully, avoiding the problems of selfishness and personality that can so often hinder group structures. This is especially important in rural development, for the commonly accepted framework of Bahá'í consultation enables Bahá'í villagers and outside experts to work together as equals. The unity and understanding that characterize the relationships among all the participants in Bahá'í development work are a proof of the efficacy of consultation, even though no Bahá'í would claim to have fully understood or perfected his application of this teaching.

The simple, ordinary, efforts of Bahá'í Assemblies are the first fruits of new institutions striving to absorb and apply new principles. They are evidence of the capacity of faith to direct and channel energy for the betterment of society. In Zimbabwe, a Local Spiritual Assembly whose members are illiterate women determine to learn to read and find themselves a teacher, then they organize a crafts class, then a nursery school. On an Indian Reservation in the United States, opening an adult education centre is one of the first actions of a new Bahá'í Assembly. In French Guiana, the Bahá'í community builds a bridge to reach their village. In South Madhya Pradesh, India, an Assembly promotes reforestation by setting the example; each member plants and nurtures seven trees.

Some Bahá'í Assemblies have community farms which provide income for group projects and demonstrate innovative agricultural techniques. Some Assemblies sponsor village health centres and pharmacies, which provide health care and sell medicines at cost. Buying co-operatives in Africa and South America enable Local Assemblies to provide scarce goods at a fair price. Local Spiritual Assemblies often collaborate with development agencies: the Mombasa, Kenya, Bahá'í Centre donates space for a fuel-efficient stove workshop; in Aragip, Papua New Guinea, the Assembly operates a nursery to grow and sell seedlings suitable for high altitudes. Other Assemblies in other parts of the world have assisted in projects to distribute child health information, plant trees, promote literacy, and train young people in development activities.

National and regional programmes which provide services to or co-ordinate the efforts of



*A child receives an eye examination at the Eye Camp held under Bahá'í auspices near Bangalore, India, in September 1983.*

a number of Local Spiritual Assemblies are also under way. Medical and dental camps which offer health care in areas without medical facilities are organized by groups of volunteer health professionals in the tribal areas of India. Bahá'í Schools reach out to the surrounding communities in India, Haiti, and Chile, and an integrated plan for service in the Amazon basin in Brazil has been started.

In North East Zaire, a Social and Economic Development Committee co-ordinates the efforts of the large and active Bahá'í community. Approximately 2,000 students, Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, attend functional literacy classes at the 86 Bahá'í Educational Centres. Development seminars organized by the committee and taught by Government specialists have been very popular; 50 Local Spiritual Assemblies have begun to use improved seeds and crops. Twelve women have been trained to serve as volunteer midwives. The Bahá'í communities around Walungu have rebuilt an abandoned Government health centre and built public latrines in the 12 markets in the region. All of these activities are voluntary services offered by the Bahá'ís to their towns and villages; only one person is paid by the Development Committee, a co-ordinator who receives a subsistence allowance.

In Bolivia, the Quechua and Aymara Bahá'í communities operate 56 educational centres which combine spiritual education, literacy training, and instruction in health, child care, veterinary science, and agriculture. The teachers are volunteers and the communities build the centres using their own resources.

Nurturing an attitude of service to the community is the beginning of Bahá'í development education. The goal of the Ruhi Institute in Cali, Colombia, is to guide youth on a path of service. Each course involves not only training in practical skills, but also study of spiritual topics that will develop the necessary spiritual qualities to endow their deeds of service with excellence and purity. Each person who completes the training becomes a trainer, and shares his or her training with other people. The Ruhi method is now being adopted in other Bahá'í communities. In Panama, Guaymi Bahá'ís have travelled widely to encourage other Indian people to have faith in their own capacity to improve their lives and influence non-Indian society. The Guaymi Cultural Centre in Boca de Soloy, built partly by the Guaymis themselves, is the focus of the Guaymi Bahá'í efforts to preserve their language, oral traditions, crafts, and music, and to improve living standards.

Bahá'í training for development emphasizes the coherence of spiritual and material life. The William Masehla Bahá'í Institute in Zambia combines practical education in agriculture, health, literacy and village technology with service projects and intensive study of Bahá'í subjects; after two to four months, the trainees return to serve their communities with increased spiritual maturity and new practical skills. The Shíráz and Sogeri Institutes in Papua New Guinea offer courses following the same pattern. Bahá'í Institutes and summer schools in rural areas often provide a much-needed extension service, providing an opportunity for development specialists to interact with village people. The Bahá'í tutorial schools seek to extend their services to the whole community, adding literacy, agriculture, animal husbandry and community development to their basic education function whenever possible.

The Rabbani School has always offered pro-

grammes in health services and education to the villages in its vicinity. A new programme to serve the more than 300,000 in Madhya Pradesh State is beginning in 20 villages with large Bahá'í populations. Tutorial school teachers for the villages are trained at Rabbani.

**Bahá'í Radio**

The small but growing network of Bahá'í radio stations is developing a unique and very successful form of community-based participatory media. Centred in rural areas where there are large indigenous Bahá'í populations, the Bahá'í radio stations are a service offered by the local Bahá'ís to the large community around them. The Radio Bahá'í staff are for the most part local people: farmers, students, mothers and grandmothers, literate and illiterate, volunteers who view their work as an expression of their Faith. Their programmes speak to their people: the news programmes report local events; the agricultural and community life programmes are usually taped in villages; and only indigenous music is broadcast. Radio Bahá'í gives a voice to the community it serves, a tool which the people can use to express and validate their culture, to discuss and solve their problems, and to uplift themselves through their own efforts and the inspiration of the Bahá'í teachings. By April 1986, there were five stations on the air, in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, the United States and Panama, and new stations were under construction in Chile and Liberia.

Four of these stations are associated with teaching institutes that extend the concept of participatory media. It is hoped that eventually the listeners will come to the institute, receive further guidance, and make their own radio programmes. The Amoz Gibson Institute for Training of Media Personnel, based in Puerto Rico, has assisted the Bahá'í radio effort by offering training courses in various aspects of media.

**Education**

Over 4,000 Bahá'í Assemblies hold classes for their children inculcating love of God, service to humanity, and appreciation of the world's diversity.

Bahá'í education of youth focuses upon nobility of character, lack of prejudices and a high sense of service to others, and Bahá'í youth are at the forefront of Bahá'í development activities. School-leavers conduct tutorial schools in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific. Bahá'í youth have undertaken nationwide tree-planting projects in Kenya and the United States. In Samoa, teams of youth visit rural areas every week. In India, medical camps are planned and conducted by young people.

Bahá'í communities in developing countries have, since 1979, organized more than 300 conferences to promote the progress of women.

The fundamental Bahá'í principal of universal education also finds expression in the rapidly evolving tutorial schools now being started all over the world. More than 500 tutorial schools in 43 countries are currently functioning. Created in response to the Bahá'í teaching that *in every village where there is a certain number of believers, a school will be founded where the children can study reading, writing, and basic knowledge*, these simple schools are organized by Local Spiritual Assemblies, using their own resources, to provide education for their children. In most

*Counsellor Zekrollah Kazemi breaking ground for the first Bahá'í radio station in Africa, station ELRB at Monrovia, Liberia, in a ceremony held 14 December 1985.*

parts of the world Bahá'í communities are materially poor; the 'tools' that build Bahá'í tutorial schools come from true religious faith: the desire to serve the community and the confidence in one's own capacity.

The Bahá'í tutorial schools, simple, modest, and unpretentious, illustrate the principles of Bahá'í development.

**Primary and Secondary Schools**

The primary and secondary schools established by the Bahá'ís in Írán[1] were the first formal Bahá'í development projects. Beginning in 1897, Bahá'í communities throughout Írán organized schools according to their own abilities. Some of these, such as the Tarbíyat schools in Ṭihrán, were highly regarded and trained a generation of Iranian leaders; others were the simple efforts of Bahá'í villagers who were themselves illiterate. Approximately 40 Bahá'í schools were operating in 1934 when the Government forced the Bahá'ís to close them. These have been succeeded by a new generation of Bahá'í schools that are founded wherever Bahá'í communities have the resources to meet the needs they perceive. Bahá'í schools strive to maintain high standards of excellence and moral character; spiritual and moral training are considered to be the foundation of all education. There are currently 593 pre-primary and primary schools and 6 secondary schools. In addition, a Bahá'í college programme is under development and one university—Núr University in Santa Cruz, Bolivia—established by individual believers as a private venture, operates according to Bahá'í principles.

**Conclusion**

Bahá'í development activities—the simple schools, the radio stations, the health projects, tree-planting efforts and development training institutes—are distinguished by the conviction that underlies them. Bahá'í development begins with faith: Bahá'ís discover in their religion a belief in human capacity and a vision of how it can be used; a motivation to serve humanity and a willingness to sacrifice for the good of the community; and the means to become united and work together. These qualities are, Bahá'ís believe, both the prerequisites and the tools of successful development. A community must believe in itself in order to progress; purity of motive is essential for the functioning of a co-operative; and schools and other institutions cannot be maintained without dedication and a spirit of service. The real worth of the Bahá'í development effort is not so much what the Bahá'ís are doing, but how they are doing it. For every activity intended to improve material life has spiritual or moral prerequisites, and all our efforts to grow spiritually create the necessary foundation for a truly prosperous community.

As they struggle against the inevitable problems and disappointments of development work, Bahá'ís place their confidence in the power of united action, the efficacy of moral and spiritual strengths, and the promise of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of their Faith, that *the betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds, through commendable and seemly conduct*.[2] They cling to the conviction that peace and well-being will be established in the world through the spiritually-motivated actions of selfless individuals; that dignity and honour are the qualities that most truly characterize mankind; and that service to humanity is the true purpose of life and the source of human happiness.

Although Bahá'ís are keenly aware of the fact that, as yet, their development initiatives represent only a very small fraction of the host of projects under way throughout the world, and that there are important elements of the Bahá'í programme of community building, particularly the systems of belief and administration underlying it, whose range of operation is necessarily limited to their own community, nevertheless, they believe that there is much in the community model they have painstakingly constructed that will reward careful study by others in the development field. The most important successes of the approach are systematic and qualitative, rather than those of size and number: the integration of the moral and the practical, a unity of conception that allows for great flexibility of application, above all the ability to arouse and maintain motivation. It is these features that encourage Bahá'ís to share their experience with others.

[1] See 'Social and Economic Development in the Bahá'í Community of Írán'.

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 20.

# 7. BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP 1983–1986
# A. ASSOCIATIONS FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES

## Introduction

THE original Association for Bahá'í Studies was founded as the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith in 1974[1] by the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly in response to a goal of the Five Year Plan (1974–79) 'to cultivate opportunities for formal presentations, courses and lectureships on the Bahá'í Faith in Canadian universities and other institutions of higher learning.' Among the purposes of the Association were the provision of a suitable means of approach to intellectuals and universities, and the bringing to these circles of an awareness of the Bahá'í Faith and an acquaintance with the academic resources which are available to facilitate formal study of it. From 1974 to 1979, four annual meetings were held, the Association grew in membership, published a series of monographs of high quality, initiated work on a textbook on the Faith of university calibre, and stimulated formal presentations at universities and colleges throughout Canada.

As time went on, the Association played an increasingly important role in the affairs of the international Bahá'í community and through its conferences and publications provided an exciting forum for intellectual exchange and the exploration of spiritual concepts.

In 1979, with the opening of the Seven Year Plan (1979–86), the House of Justice called upon the Canadian Bahá'í community to 'expand the opportunities for teaching in Canadian institutions of higher learning and further develop the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith.' When the second phase of the Seven Year Plan was launched in 1981, the Universal House of Justice restated this goal, urging the Canadian community to both 'foster the development' of the Association and 'intensify the teaching of the Faith in Canadian institutions of higher learning.' The Association increasingly was recognized as a significant feature of the intellectual, social and spiritual life of the Bahá'í community.

In 1981, the name of the Association was changed to the Association for Bahá'í Studies. The change of name, which was recommended by the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly and approved by the Universal House of Justice, reflected the emerging nature of the Association's membership and activities with national fraternal Associations for Bahá'í Studies which, as circumstances permitted, had been established in a number of countries.

Although comprehensive reports of the activities of all Associations for Bahá'í Studies for the period 140, 141 and 142 of the Bahá'í Era, (21 April 1983 to 20 April 1986) are not available, set out below are selected excerpts from accounts which have been received at the World Centre.

## Australia

The Association for Bahá'í Studies, Australia, was first established in June 1984. Its operating secretariat is located in Perth, Western Australia. The organization committee has, since its formation, continuously attempted to set up policies, encourage membership, establish correspondence, and review Bahá'í Studies conferences and plans. The Association now has over 200 members, publishes a newsletter three times a year, holds national and regional conferences and distributes their annual proceedings. The Association also co-ordinates and stimulates the activities of Bahá'í Societies at universities and other tertiary institutions and has developed a uniform constitution for these organizations. The present plans of the Association call for the establishment of local Bahá'í Studies groups in all States of Australia; the publishing of selected papers; the production of kits for religious education; submission of papers for publication in suitable journals; the holding of seminars on various issues at colleges

[1] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, pp. 197–200. Reports of the first Association's subsequent activities appear in the relevant volumes.

and universities; inviting non-Bahá'í scholars and notably scientists, historians and psychologists to present papers; encouraging Iranian youth to pursue Persian and Arabic studies so that they may eventually secure teaching positions; and the holding of forums at universities during the International Year of Peace. Fostering the arts is also an objective of the Association. At the second annual Bahá'í Studies conference held from 1 to 4 April 1983, for instance, a festival featuring Bahá'ís in the arts was offered with musician Cliff Stevens performing his own compositions and a spellbinding presentation of the spoken word by Phillip Hinton.

The third annual Bahá'í Studies conference was organized by the University of Tasmania Bahá'í Society under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and held at Yerrinbool, New South Wales, from 30 August to 2 September, 1984. The invited speaker, Dr. J. A. Davidson, spoke on 'The Bahá'í Faith and World Peace'. Among the other papers presented were: 'Teachings and Principles Unique to the Bahá'í Faith' (F. M. Fozdar); 'World Federalism and the Bahá'í Faith' (J. Salter); 'Man is the Supreme Talisman—However...' (N. Hall); 'The Teaching of Morality and the Morality of Teaching' (A. Salter); 'Women and Christianity: Analysis of Problems and a Comparison with the Bahá'í Faith' (N. Vaḥdat); 'Domestic-Public Theory and the Bahá'í Writings of Women's Roles and Status' (T. Scrine); 'Philosophy of the Australian Children's Curriculum' (I. Mann); 'Knowing God and Thyself: A Spiritual Basis for Education' (S. Mann); 'The Fund' (S. Stafford); 'Fathers are parents, too: Some Thoughts on the Changing Role of Fatherhood' (A. M. Stark); 'The Effect of Utility Maximising Competition on the Aggregate Welfare of Mankind' (A. Perkins); 'Economic or Social Development?—A Twentieth Century Dilemma' (J. Angus); 'The Origins of Shi'ite Antagonism towards the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions' (M. Rowshan [Rawshan]); 'Metereo-Economic Implications of Spiritual Phenomena' (R. Markham); and 'Twenty-First Century Schizoid Man: A Consideration of some aspects of Mysticism and Acute Schizophrenia' (J. Angus).

More than 130 persons attended some part of the fourth annual Bahá'í Studies conference at Yerrinbool in April 1985, held this year under the auspices of the Association for Bahá'í Studies, Australia. The three previous conferences had been conducted by the University of Tasmania Bahá'í Society. Papers included one by Mrs. Joy Stevenson, member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, on the subject 'The Destiny of Women'. Other presentations ranged through philosophical, historical and social issues relevant to the Faith. Workshops on peace gave primary attention to the letter from the Universal House of Justice about the International Year of Peace.

## Austria

The Association for Bahá'í Studies for German-speaking Europe (i.e., Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg) was established in 1983, under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Austria. The Association's Executive Committee is located in Austria.

The inaugural meeting of this Association was held at the Swiss National Spiritual Assembly's Landegg Conference Centre on 23 and 24 October 1984. The participants discussed Bahá'í studies in general, the purpose and organization of the German-language Association, the relevance of the Bahá'í Faith to the 'classical sciences', which themes from the Bahá'í Writings are particularly important for humanity today, and Europe's possible contribution to the development of the Bahá'í world community.

Subsequently, the Association for Bahá'í Studies for German-speaking Europe held its first annual conference from 25 through 27 April 1985 in Landegg on the topic of Bahá'í scholarship. Dr. Peter Khan attended this conference as the representative of the International Teaching Centre, while Dr. Hartmut Grossmann represented the Continental Board of Counsellors for Europe. The talks were as follows: 'The Importance of Bahá'í Scholarship' (Dr. Peter Khan); 'Bahá'í Scholarship' (Stephan Pernau); 'The Spiritual Group Dynamic of the Bahá'í Religion' (Dr. Nosrat

Peseschkian [Nuṣrat Pizishkíyán]); 'Love and Justice' (Roland Philipp); and 'The Role of German-speaking Europe in Bahá'í Scholarship' (Dr. Hartmut Grossmann). A discussion period followed each talk. The annual conference also included a meeting of the Association's members.

The second annual conference was planned for 8 to 11 May 1986 on the theme 'Peace', Peace will not only be the topic of the scholarly papers presented during the event, but also of supporting seminars, workshops, musical recitals, concerts and an art exhibition, all of which are intended to broaden the conference's scope.

The Executive Committee publishes a semi-annual bulletin for the members of the Association for Bahá'í Studies for German-speaking Europe, and plans to collect and publish the proceedings of the annual conferences.

## Brazil

The first annual conference of this affiliate was held from 30 April to 1 May 1985 at the Soltanich Educational Institute, Mogi-Mirim, São Paulo. Counsellor Farzám Arbáb welcomed the participants and spoke of the vital importance of scholarship. Papers were read on the following subjects: 'Science and Religion' (Farhang Sifidvash); 'The Anisa Model' (Ingeborg Grunwaldt); 'Human Powers in Face of the Truth' (Rangvald Taetz), 'The Bible—a book of texts from the 1st century for the world of the 21st century' (James Walker); 'The Art and Science of Medicine' (Farhád Sháyání); and a biography of Edmund John Miessler—1902–1977 (Margot Miessler Malkim). The proceedings of this gathering have now been published in Portuguese.

## Chile

The formal creation of the fraternal affiliate *Asociacion de Estudios Bahá'ís*, Chile, took place on 19 October 1985 at the National Bahá'í Centre in Santiago on the occasion of an inaugural meeting of its founding members. Twenty-five Bahá'ís attended this event which was organized by a *pro tem* committee and chaired by Dr. Alejandro Reid. The program included an address by Mr. Robert Siegel, secretary of the National Assembly, welcoming the formation of the Association in Chile; a brief talk by Katharine Meyer on the importance of Bahá'í scholarship; and an explanation by Dr. Reid of the aims and purposes of the Association. The principal address, delivered by Jaime Duhart, an economist, centred on 'The Challenge and Promise of Bahá'í Scholarship'[1] and drew upon a letter on scholarship, dated 9 August 1984, from the International Teaching Centre to the Continental Boards of Counsellors.

The inaugural session also introduced the members of the Executive Committee named by the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile: Kate Sundby de Aparicio, chairman; Stephen W. Pulley, secretary; Faráz Ma'ání, treasurer; Roberto Gary Peña y Lillo; and Dánúsh Yúsifí-Khalgatábádí. Although the initial membership was 40, this figure grew considerably even during the first year.

In March 1989, the first newsletter of the Association was issued with the purpose of informing members and subscribers about Bahá'í Studies activities in Chile and abroad. The *Boletín* is to be published three times a year.

The first annual essay contest of the Association took place in 1986, and included categories open to youth, university students, and adults, on themes related to the Bahá'í Faith. The Executive Committee published a magazine containing the principal essays contributed. Also published were Spanish translations of 'The Challenge and Promise of Bahá'í Scholarship'; the letter dated 9 August 1984 on Bahá'í scholarship addressed to the Continental Boards of Counsellors by the International Teaching Centre; and the first issue of the Association's magazine, *Estudios Bahá'ís*, which contained Dr. Farzám Arbáb's essay, 'El Desarrollo, Un Desafío para Eruditos Bahá'ís' (Development—A Challenge for Bahá'í Scholars).

[1] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, pp. 195–6.

In 1986 the Association established its library for Bahá'í Studies and is gathering books and periodicals in English, Spanish and Persian. The Library's reading room is open to all, while Association members are permitted to borrow books for their studies.

Plans call for the holding of the first annual meeting and the first annual conference in August 1986 on the theme, 'Peace and the New World Order'.

## Colombia

The first international conference to be sponsored by this affiliate was held in Cali, Colombia, from 24 to 26 August 1984, on the theme, 'Analysis of and Answers to the Crisis of Moral Education'. Seven speakers with a wide experience in the general field of teaching, and with particular expertise in ethical and moral education, were invited to address the gathering. Two new books were presented, both of which were proposed as aids in the teaching of moral education: *La Fe, el Amor y la Unidad nos Iluminan* (We are illuminated by Faith, Love and Unity), by Silvia San Cristobal, of Chile, and *El poder de las Acciones Puras* (The Power of Pure Actions), by Gustavo Correa L. and Jairo Roldan Ch. The former book is intended to be used in religion courses at primary level and has already been employed with success in the Colegio Núr in Santiago; the latter work, the first publication of the Colombia Association, is designed to serve as a text for religion courses at high school level.

In addition to local participants, the conference drew guests from several countries including Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela. The speaker's addresses and the lively consultation which followed have been recorded and edited and will be published.

Following are the addresses delivered: 'General Concepts about Moral Education' (Donald R. Witzel); 'True Morality and Today's Man' (Gustavo Correa L.); Núr University (Eloy Anello); 'The Dimension of Pure Deeds' (Dr. Jairo Roldan Ch.); 'The Family and Education' (Habíb Riḍváni); and 'The Tutorial School's Experience in Colombia' (Allan Fryback).

*Participants in the first International Conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies of Colombia held in Cali from 24–26 August 1984.*

## Finland

A conference on new religious movements in Finland, arranged by the Finnish Society for the Study of Comparative Religion, was held in Tvärminne from 9 to 10 November 1979. In 1984 Peter Smith reviewed for Stephen Lambden's *Bahá'í Studies* newsletter Susan Sundback's 1980 article 'New Religious Movements in Finland' which appeared in *Temenos*, vol. 16 and which noted the presence in Finland of the Bahá'í Faith. A paper on the Bahá'í religion was presented by Harri Peltola who described the international developments of the religion since 1921, noted its expansion of membership in and around 1970, and attributed this growth to a natural interest stemming from the youth culture of the 1960s and to massive educational campaigns in the Third World.

## Hawaiian Islands

The first Bahá'í Studies conference in Hawaii was held in September 1985 at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. Consultation was held on the formation of a permanent group in Hawaii for regular presentations of Bahá'í research. Participants in the September meeting devoted time to discussion of reports of the North American Association's tenth annual meeting held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, in August 1985.

## India

The Association for Bahá'í Studies in India began in 1983. The first annual conference of this affiliate was held in Panchgani at the New Era High School from 22 to 23 December 1984. Some sixty participants heard papers on and discussed themes related to the history of the Bahá'í Faith in India, with emphasis on social and economic development. The Association has devoted much energy to educating the community as to the need for intellectual presentation of the Faith in India, in particular to the presentation of the Faith to institutions connected with academics.

In 1985, the Indian Association co-published a pamphlet entitled *Without Peace There Can Be No Joy*. The next publication being considered is a study on events and individuals connected with the early years of the Faith in the Indian subcontinent. It has been noted with interest that to date three non-Bahá'í academics have approached the Association for research assistance concerning the Bahá'í Faith.

## Ireland

On 8 December 1984 a small group of Bahá'ís met in the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, Dublin, to discuss the future activities of the Association for Bahá'í Studies, Ireland (English-speaking). Though the group was small, there were representatives from all over Ireland, and guests from England, Iceland and the United States. Counsellor Adíb Taherzadeh (Ṭahirzádih) addressed the conference on the true meaning of Bahá'í scholarship and provided a visual presentation of the type of work that could be undertaken by the Association. Discussion was held about the possibility of holding a similar 'policy conference' in England.

Annual conferences have been held in Ireland by the Association and beginning in November 1986 an annual newsletter has been published.

## North America

The home territory of this Association is North America—Alaska, Canada, and the United States. There are now regional committees of the Association in Fairbanks, Alaska; the Pacific Southwest; the Pacific Northwest; the Midwest; New England; and Québec. These regional bodies serve to promote interest in Bahá'í Studies through area conferences and seminars, and through increasing membership in the Association. It is expected that additional regional committees will be formed.

Professional interest sections have been established in the fields of health, the arts, environmental design, education, marriage and family studies, American Indian and Inuit studies, and religious studies. The Association has established a speakers' bureau to provide presentations on the Bahá'í Faith through invited

lecturers for university and scholarly audiences, and a collection of curricula to be used as a resource for the development of credit and non-credit courses on the Bahá'í Faith at institutions of higher learning.

The Association also serves as an international co-ordinating centre for all fraternal Associations for Bahá'í Studies in the world. Rights and privileges of membership in any Association for Bahá'í Studies confer rights in all other Associations for Bahá'í Studies. Currently, eight such Associations are functioning in: Australia; Austria (for German-speaking Europe); Brazil; Chile; Colombia; India; Ireland (for English-speaking Europe); and Switzerland (for French-speaking Europe).

The North American Association's offices are housed in the Centre for Bahá'í Studies adjacent to the campus of the University of Ottawa. Within the Centre for Bahá'í Studies, the Association maintains a reference library comprising Bahá'í literature and studies on the Bahá'í Faith, including books, articles, theses, and dissertations.

The Association publishes *Bahá'í Studies*, a series of scholarly monographs; *Bahá'í Studies Notebook*, collected shorter works; and the *Bulletin*, a newsletter which is distributed three times each year.

Publications in the period being surveyed were:

*Bahá'í Studies*

Vol. 12/13. *The Persecution of the Bahá'ís of Iran: 1844–1984*, by Douglas Martin (1984).

Vol. 14. *To the Peoples of the World: A Bahá'í Statement on Peace*, by the Universal House of Justice (February 1986).

*Bahá'í Studies Notebook*

Vol. III, nos. 1 & 2. *The Divine Institution of Marriage* (March 1983).

Vol. III, nos. 3 & 4. *Toward an Ever-Advancing Civilization*[Development](February 1984).

Vol. IV, no. 1. *Selected Proceedings from Bahá'í International Health Agency Conferences 1982–1984* (August 1985).

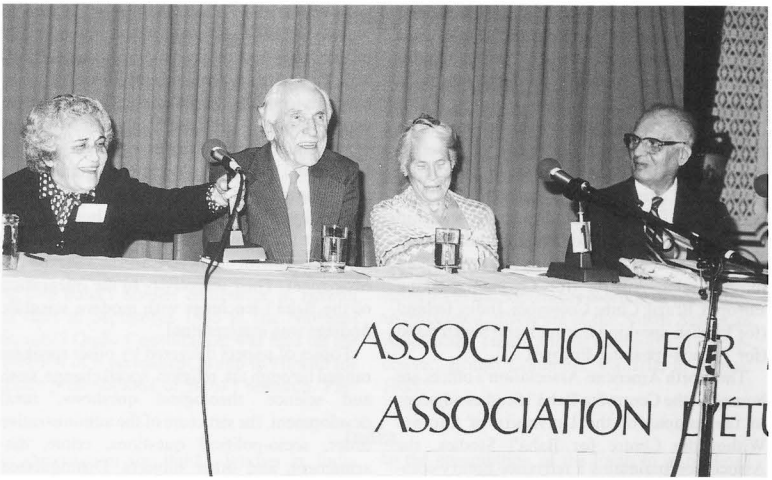
Vol. V, o. 1. *L'Avenir des peuples minoritaires* (April/May 1986).

As well, the Association has begun to publish special editions in a paperback format, the first title to appear being *To the Peoples of the World: A Bahá'í Statement on Peace* mentioned above.

The Association's eighth annual conference was held at the Palmer House in Chicago in November 1983 and was attended by over 500 people from thirteen countries. The Association was fortunate to receive many excellent submissions from all over the world. The conference was also greatly enriched by the contributions of two eminent non-Bahá'í speakers, Dr. Ervin Laszlo of UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research) and the Club of Rome, and Dr. Joanna Macy, author and professor at the University of California at Berkeley, a proponent of Dr. Ariyaratne's Sarvodaya Movement. Their receptivity to the integration of the Bahá'í teachings with modern scientific findings was inspirational.

Topics of papers delivered by other speakers ranged through art, religion, social change, faith and science, theological questions, rural development, the structure of the administrative order, socio-political questions, crime, disarmament, and other subjects. Distinguished participants from abroad included Dr. Udo Schaefer, author and Senior Public Prosecutor of Heidelberg, West Germany, whose topic was '*Justitia Fundamentum Regnorum*: On the Future of Penal Law'; Dr. May Hofman Ballerio of Geneva, who presented a paper by Dr. John Paul Vader on 'Professor Auguste Forel in Defense of the Persecuted Persian Bahá'ís: 1925–27'; and Dr. Christine Hakim, sociologist and author of *Les Bahá'ís ou victoire sur la violence*. Dr. Amín Banání, professor of Islamic Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles, spoke on 'Religion or Foreign Intrigue: The Case of the Bábí-Bahá'í Movement in Írán'. The annual Ḥasan M. Bályúzí lecture, named to honour the late Hand of the Cause whose scholarly works on the history of the Faith are known to Bahá'ís the world over, was presented by Dr. Fírúz Kazemzadeh (Káẓimzádih). His topic was 'The Soviet Official Interpretation of Bábí-Bahá'í History'.

Three of the Hands of the Cause of God were among the 1,150 people present in Ottawa from 2 to 4 November 1984 for the ninth annual conference which was dedicated to the memory of Shoghi Effendi. The three Hands of the Cause, each of whom spoke at the gathering, were Zikrullah Khadem (Dhikru'lláh Khádim), John A. Robarts and Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá. Another Hand of the Cause, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, presented a paper on 'Shoghi Effendi and the Countries of the East', which was read




*A panel of people who had met the Guardian speaking during the ninth annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies held in Ottawa, Canada, from 2–4 November 1984. Shown from left to right: Mrs. Samíḥíh Banání, the Hand of the Cause of God John Robarts, Mrs. Audrey Robarts, and the Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem.*

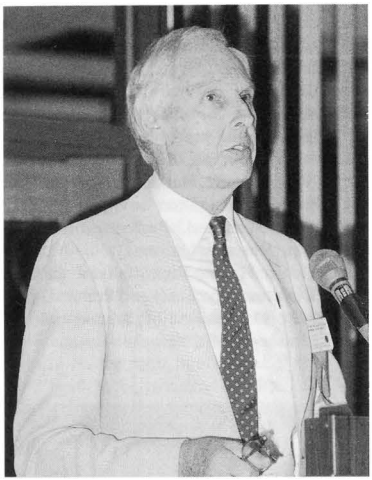
on Mr. Furútan's behalf by Dr. A. M. Ghadirian (Qadíríyán).

Among the other distinguished conference participants were Dr. Farzám Arbáb, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas; Dr. Victor de Araujo, chief representative of the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations in New York; and Rodrigo Carazo, president of the United Nations University for Peace in Escazu, Costa Rica.

At each annual meeting of the Association a distinguished guest is invited to deliver the Ḥasan M. Bályúzí memorial lecture. For 1984, Mr. David Hofman, a member of the Universal House of Justice, was asked to do so. His paper entitled 'Shoghi Effendi: Expounder of the Bahá'í Faith' was presented by his daughter, Dr. May Hofman Ballerio, of Geneva.

The tenth annual conference, held from 15 to 18 August 1985, at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, provided an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas and insights on children, peace, and a range of other thought-provoking subjects. 'From the eloquence of four children speaking on comparative religion, to a journalist born in Sri Lanka talking about his work with UNICEF, to the moving address of a native Bahá'í sharing her thoughts on peace—the conference was an intellectual and spirit-lifting experience,' it was reported. Subjects of papers included, 'Youth and Service to Mankind' (Jack E. Matthews, Director for International Programs, Trent University, and founding Director of Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific); 'Women and Peace' (Dorothy MacKinnon, former National President of UNICEF Canada); 'The Bahá'í Commitment to Unity and Peace' (Dr. Victor de Araujo); 'UNICEF: Children in Trouble' (Varindra Vittachi, Executive Director of External Affairs for UNICEF); 'An Indigenous Perspective on Education for Peace' (Louise LeBlanc); 'The Human Brain as a Model for Decision Making' (Dr. William Maxwell); 'Creative Principle and Propagation' (Otto Donald Rogers); 'Evolving Perspectives on Bahá'í Studies' (Hossain Danesh [Ḥusayn Dánish]); 'Spiritual Dimensions of Suffering and Martyrdom' (workshop co-ordinator Firishtih Bethel assisted by facilitators Dr. A-M. Ghadirian [Qadíríyán] and Dr. Ann Schoonmaker);

'Socio-economic Development: A Bahá'í Perspective' (workshop co-ordinator Michael Bopp assisted by facilitators Phil Lane, Jr., and Earl McCauley); 'Youth: Being and Becoming' (workshop co-ordinator Mehrdad A. Bagha'i [Mihrdád A. Baqá'í] assisted by facilitators Dr. Sharon Hatcher and Rocco Rossi); and 'Preparing a Scholarly or Scientific Paper for Publication' (Dr. Peter P. Morgan). Submitted papers included: 'Ṭáhirih: A Religious Paradigm of Womanhood' (Susan Stiles); 'General Jack: The Immortal Heroine and Artist' (Gol Aidun); 'Bringing in the Dawn: Women and Peace' (Susan Brill); Roger White's 'Poetry and Self-Transformation' (read by Jan Tye-Chew); 'Doukhobors and the Bahá'í Faith' (A-M. Ghadirian); 'Sacred Metaphor' (Keith Blanding); 'The Bahá'í Faith: Evolving Understandings of its Basic Teachings' (Robert Stockman); 'The Hermeneutic Circle and the Abhá Horizon' (Paul McKibben); 'Alcohol Education: A Challenge for the Bahá'í Community' (Elizabeth Ritter); 'An Examination of the Bahá'í Writings Concerning the Universal House of Justice Functioning Without a Guardian' (Brent Poirier). In addition there were workshops on: 'Bahá'í Historians Look at History' (Nossratollah Rassekh [Nuṣratu'lláh Rásikh]); 'Promoting Unity in a Multi-Racial Society' (Richard Thomas); and 'Women's Issues—Towards Equality' (Jane Goldstone, Leanna Wolfear, Nancy Ackerman). The annual Ḥasan M. Bályúzí lecture was presented by Dorothy Freeman on 'From Copper to Gold—the Life of Dorothy Baker'. The conference was chaired by Dr. Glen Eyford and the closing remarks were delivered by Dr. Ḥusayn Danesh. Five professional interest sections which have sprung from the parent organization (health and healing, human habitat, the arts, marriage and the family, and education) held simultaneous meetings in advance of the general meeting.



*Dr. Victor de Araujo speaking during the tenth annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies held in Vancouver, Canada, 15–18 August 1985.*

*Mrs. Dorothy Freeman speaking during the tenth annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies held in Vancouver, Canada, 15–18 August 1985.*

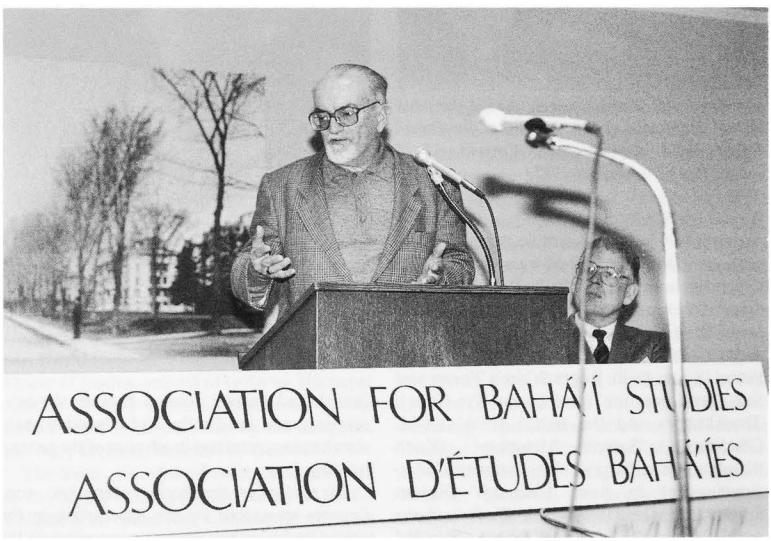
Of particular significance were two conferences sponsored by the Association in the period under review: the first symposium on the Bahá'í Faith and Islám held at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, in March 1984, and a 'Marxist-Bahá'í Dialogue' held at Louhelen

Bahá'í School, Davison, Michigan, U.S.A., in January 1986.

A report of the symposium on the Bahá'í Faith and Islám reads:

'In establishing the credentials of the Bahá'í Faith in the eyes of the academic community around the world, a thorough exploration of its relationship to its parent religion, Islám, will be critical. A major advance was made in this field at McGill University's prestigious Institute of Islamic Studies, the weekend of 23–25 March 1984. With the collaboration of the faculty members of the Institute, the Association for Bahá'í Studies held its first Symposium on the Relationship between the two religions.

'Chaired jointly by Professor Issa Boullata, Director of the Institute, and Douglas Martin, of the Association's executive committee, the Symposium attracted contributions from an impressive array of scholarly experts from three continents: "The Language of Revelation in Islám and the Bahá'í Faith" (Amín Banání, Professor of Islamic Studies, University of California at Los Angeles); "The Bahá'í Perspective on the History of Religion" (Professor Alessandro Bausani, Professor of Persian Literature and Islamitics, University of Rome); "The Bahá'í Attitude Towards Peace and its Christian and Islamic Background" (J. C. Burgel, Professor, Islamwissenschaftliches Seminar, Universität Bern); "The Bahá'ís of Yazd: An Anthropological Perspective" (Michael M. J. Fischer, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Rice University, Houston); "Islám and the Bahá'í Faith: Historical Interrelationship" (Heshmat Moayyad [Ḥishmat Mu'ayyad], Professor, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago); "The Development of Shaykhí Thought in Shí'ih Islám" (Vaḥíd Ra'fatí, Research Department, Bahá'í World Centre, Haifa, Israel); "The Role of Bábism and Bahá'ísm in Iqbál's Work" (Annemarie Schimmel, Professor of Islamic Mysticism, Harvard University); and "Interpreting Islám: Human Rights in Írán" (Marvin Zonis, Director, Personality and Political Ideology Study, Department of Behavioural Sciences, University of Chicago).




*Prof. Alessandro Bausani, professor of Persian Literature and Islamitics at the University of Rome, speaking during the first Symposium on the Bahá'í Faith and Islám, held in Montreal, Canada from 23–25 March 1984.*

'Professor Bausani's paper on the Bahá'í view of religious history was particularly interesting for its use of the perspective which Bahá'u'lláh's own Writings, particularly the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, give to the interpretation of the Qur'án. Professor Schimmel's discussion of the influence of the Bábí Faith on the work of Mohammed (Muḥammad) Iqbál, the leading poet of modern Indo-Muslim culture, included an examination of Iqbál's fascination with the Bábí poetess, Ṭáhirih. One of the most challenging of the papers was Professor Moayyad's very frank analysis of the reasons for Shí'ih Muslim hostility to the Bahá'í Faith, which included not only a theological examination of the subject, but also a survey of some of the events of modern Iranian history.

'Lack of space prevents an adequate treatment of the range of subjects covered by the contributions, but the result was to endow the Association with a unique collection of scholarly resources in this important field. Recognizing the value of the material, the Association is in consultation with a North American university on the joint publication of the papers in a book to be tentatively entitled *Studies on the Bahá'í Faith and Islám: Vol. I.*

'Particularly gratifying was the warm welcome given to the Symposium by McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies. Professor Boullata was generous in his praise of the venture. He encouraged the Association to regard this year's symposium as the first in a series designed to fully explore the relationship between the Bahá'í Faith and the religious milieu out of which it arose. Professor Charles Adams, another member of the Institute's faculty, also chaired one of the sessions, and contributed valuable insights to the discussion. The Symposium attracted an audience of 140 members of the Association, drawn from both Canada and the United States.'

A clear indication of the intellectual force and respect which the Bahá'í teachings command, even when perceived by those who operate within the confines of other views of reality, was offered by the Marxist/Bahá'í dialogue sponsored by the Association for Bahá'í Studies at Louhelen Bahá'í School, Davison, Michigan, from 24 to 26 January 1986. Reporting on the seminar for *Bahá'í Canada*, Gerald Filson stated that 'Two of Canada's leading Marxist scholars, much-published and highly-respected, participated in the Dialogue. These were Professor Colin Leys, graduate of Oxford and Princeton now teaching at Queen's University, and Professor Howard Buchbinder, another Marxist scholar of significant renown. When faced by a clearly-reasoned and well-articulated expression of the Bahá'í teachings, both acknowledged in their various remarks their awareness of the intellectual challenge of the Bahá'í claims, and the views of the Faith on such subjects as the nature of human beings and society, historical development and progress of the human race, the current historical situation, and other issues.'

Professor Buchbinder offered a clear and straightforward summary of the Marxist position following which Professor Leys delivered an eloquent and informative historical summary. Professor Meg Luxton of York having taken suddenly ill, a presentation of the Marxist view of the nature of human beings and society was made by an able graduate student, Laurie Adkin, who is one of Canada's leading Marxist experts on Central American political events as well as a feminist advocate. The audience deeply appreciated the clarity of these presentations, and the evident care that was devoted to their preparation.

The report continues, 'Each session began with a major presentation by a Marxist scholar along with additional comments provided by two other Marxists. The Bahá'í position was presented with comments, and discussion followed. Professor William Hatcher of Laval University presented the Bahá'í view on the spiritual nature of the human being. Counsellor Farzam Arbab (Farzám Arbáb) of Colombia's FUNDAEC Rural University (*Fundación para la Aplicación y la Enseñanza de las Ciencias*), and Professor Glen Eyford of the University of Alberta, commented. Dr. Arbáb gave an important presentation on the Bahá'í approach to social and economic development.

'Dr. John Huddleston, Budget Director of the World Bank, outlined the Administrative Order of the international Bahá'í community in another session, and Mrs. Sheila Banání and Dr. Eyford made additional comments on some of the practical and spiritual aspects of the Bahá'í community.

'The dialogue was conducted in a wonderful spirit of courtesy, humour and dignity under extremely able chairing by Dr. Glen Eyford ...

From beginning to close, the seminar moved on a very high and spirited plane. In offering gratitude to the guests, Dr. Jane Faily drew attention to their essentially spiritual qualities, which had attracted the love of the Bahá'ís during the brief weekend gathering.

'The dialogue gave ample proof of the potency of the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, even when understood in secular terms. It also galvanized the Bahá'í participants to labour more diligently in the field of Bahá'í scholarship, relying on consultation and collaboration in order to generate further conceptual tools for applying the Bahá'í teachings to the affairs of humankind. They also left with an increased motivation to study the current philosophies of the day, as a means of understanding the impact of world-views and assumptions about reality on the work of organizing human life and contributing to the progress of civilization.'

At the close of the seminar, it was reported, the executive of the Association for Bahá'í Studies expressed satisfaction and felt confirmed in their efforts to invite scholars to study and give expression to the Bahá'í teachings, and to develop challenging, creative and fresh insights which respond directly to contemporary needs and issues.

## Switzerland

The committee for the Association of Bahá'í Studies of Francophone Europe, whose centre is in Switzerland, held its first informational meeting on 28 January 1984 at the Hotel de la Paix, Geneva, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed in 1911. Mr. Louis Hénuzet represented the Continental Board of Counsellors. The tasks of the newly created Association include: making contact with universities, production of research works on the Bahá'í Faith and their publication in periodicals, organizing public lectures, and encouraging Bahá'ís to become members of the Association.

The Association for Bahá'í Studies for French-speaking Europe held a conference on the theme, *'Approche pluridisciplinaire des processus de la paix'* (Multidisciplinary Approach to the Processes of Peace), at the Hotel Hilton in Strasbourg, France, from 2 to 3 November 1985. Speakers included Dr. William Hatcher, Dr. Shápúr Rásikh, Dr. Agnès Ghaznaví, Dr. Mihrí Rásikh, Philippe Fanise, Louis Hénuzet, Amín Khamsí, Simon van Pamel, and Roland Bernair.

The second annual conference of this affiliate will be held in Luxembourg towards the end of 1986 and will address itself to the subject 'Les minorités'.

# B. THE WEST AFRICAN CENTRE FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES LAGOS, NIGERIA

Since its establishment in November 1982 under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of Nigeria with the approval of the Universal House of Justice, the major objective of the Centre has been to initiate activities in universities in the region, and to increase awareness of the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings. A series of international lecture tours sponsored by the West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies is being considered, and scholars and academics are invited to come to West Africa, travel to universities, and deliver papers on the Bahá'í Faith or on their area of research or interest. Lecturers may also be involved in public relations or proclamation activities with the press and media on behalf of the Centre.

The West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies was created, in part, for the express purpose of 'attracting non-Bahá'í professionals to investigate the Bahá'í Faith'. The Centre hopes to achieve and maintain the status of a learned society. It is open to affiliation by practising academics, holders of graduate degrees, postgraduate students and others of recognized scholarly interests, ability and experience. Student affiliation is open to undergraduates.

The Universal House of Justice has urged the Nigerian Assembly to consider increased

teaching and proclamation in the universities of Nigeria as the top priority for the new Centre.

Five members of the Board of Directors have been named in Nigeria. They are: Mr. Akin Adeyemo, Dr. Loni Bramson-Lerche, Professor Jeffrey S. Gruber, Dr. Farhang Tahzib (Tahdhíb), and Dr. Charles O. Lerche. It was subsequently reported that the appointments of Professor Asare (Ghana) and Mr. Ekerendu (Côte d'Ivoire) had been approved by their respective National Spiritual Assemblies. Messrs. M. Forchu and Don Addison replaced two of the temporary members.

The constitution of the Centre, which came into effect on 20 November 1982, states that the aim of the body 'shall be to contribute to the establishment of world unity and international co-operation through the fostering, in the light of the Bahá'í teachings, of paradigms appropriate for world civilization.' Seen as immediate objectives are: preparation of a directory of affiliates; establishment and administration of a lecture bureau and programme; publication of a newsletter and journal; the encouragement and co-ordination of research and its publication; the organization of conferences, study groups, seminars, and workshops; the encouragement and co-ordination of the development of curricula and educational material; and the creation of consultative and co-operative association with institutions of related interest.

The University of Nigeria at Nsukka, in Anambra State, it was announced in April 1983, now has a course on the Bahá'í Faith in the Department of Religion. This significant accomplishment means, according to Professor Don Addison, a Bahá'í faculty member at Nsukka, 'open, public recognition of the independent nature of the Bahá'í Faith by yet another academic institution in Nigeria'. He points out that the Faith has become much more widely known recently by the general public, and will become even more widely recognized now that religion and philosophy students will have an opportunity to take an introductory course on the Faith. The first lecture in the series was held on 18 February 1983 with 80 students in attendance. The class meets twice weekly and is, by one account, 'proceeding at an inspiring pace, the presentations being given an exceptionally positive response by the students'.

A seminar entitled 'The Goals of a New World Order' was held under the auspices of the Centre on 12 November 1984 at the University of Ife. Three papers were presented: 'The Global Agenda' (Dr. C. O. Lerche of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Benin); 'Law, Ethics and Society' (Mr. Kiser Barnes, Faculty of Law, Ife); and 'Economic Interdependence and Potentiality for Growth in West Africa' (Mr. Edet Ekerendu, African Development Bank, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire).

Professor Jeffrey Gruber was chairman of the first seminar of the Bahá'í Studies group which brought together 32 participants and generated lively discussion on each paper. Much effort had been given to publicity through the media and on the campus, and individual invitations had been sent to University officers and members of the academic community. After the seminar, Mr. Ekerendu was interviewed for half an hour on 'Saturday Magazine' of Radio Oyo and by NTA Ibadan.

On 25 March 1984 at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria the West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies sponsored a public lecture entitled 'Health for all by the year 2,000—a case for world unity'. The address was given by Dr. Farhang Tazib (Tahdhíb) of the faculty of medicine, University of Sokoto. In his presentation he outlined the current urgent global health crisis, particularly in developing countries, reflecting the maladjustment of society to the new problems of the age. The greatest impediments to implementation of programmes to achieve health for all, the speaker said, are disunity, conflict and strife that divert and dissipate the limited resources and energies of mankind. The event was publicized by posters, invitations and the media. Thirty participants came from the university, engaging in lively discussion following the lecture.

Publication of the first issue of the newsletter of the West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies took place in March 1985. In the first issue it was noted that the exact nature of the relationship between the West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies, and the Canadian-based Association for Bahá'í Studies and its affiliate Associations, is being worked out. Though slightly different in conception from the other groups, the West African Centre is considering becoming part of the affiliated network.

# C. BAHÁ'Í AND BÁBÍ-BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP SEMINARS UNITED KINGDOM

An informal seminar, loosely oriented around Bahá'í scholarship, was held at the home of Drs. Wendi and Moojan Momen (Múzhán Mu'mín), Biggleswade, Beds., England, over the weekend of 26–27 January 1983. The participants, in addition to the Drs. Momen, were: Harry Docherty, Stephen Lambden, Todd Lawson, Robert Parry, James Taylor, and Viva Tomlin. After discussing Dr. Denis MacEoin's paper 'Problems of Scholarship in a Bahá'í Context', a paper by Dr. Moojan Momen entitled 'Scholarship and the Bahá'í Community' was summarized and reviewed. The third session was devoted to general issues relating to Bahá'í scholarship including the question of 'Bahá'í bias' in scholarly work; the appropriate Bahá'í approach to scholarship; what constitutes the field of Bahá'í scholarship; and proposed subjects of study. The concluding session dealt with the relationship between the Bahá'í scholar and the Bahá'í community, and illustrated the value of a healthy relationship in which the Bahá'í community accepts the responsibility of allowing the scholar the freedom to undertake research while providing him with an environment of spiritual encouragement. 'As a safeguard against scholarly introversion and loss of faith,' the participants agreed, 'the Bahá'í scholar should lead a balanced Bahá'í life, maintaining contact with his community and actively participating in its affairs; the Bahá'í engaged in academic research should be both a scholar and a Bahá'í.'

A Bábí-Bahá'í Studies Seminar took place over the weekend of 10–12 September 1983 at the Catholic Chaplaincy of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. The programme centred around the presentation and discussion of the following papers: 'The Bahá'í Influence on the Reform Movements of the Islamic World in the 1860s and 1870s' (Dr. Moojan Momen [Múzhán Mu'mín]); 'Talismanic Knowledge in Late Babism' (Dr. Denis MacEoin); 'Emergence From the Cultic Milieu: The Bahá'í Movement in America 1894–1936' (Dr. Peter Smith); 'The Islamo-Bahá'í Interpretation of Deuteronomy 33:2' (Stephen Lambden); and 'More Problems—Scientific Method or a Total Hermeneutic' (Steven Scholl). 'From Babism to Bahaism: Militancy and Conflation in the Creation of a New Religion', a paper by Dr. Denis MacEoin, was also read and discussed. 'Unfortunately, no detailed report was made of the discussion which followed the presentation of papers,' a spokesman stated.

As several would-be participants were unable to attend, it was a small group that gathered for the Bahá'í Studies seminar held in Berwick from 31 March to 2 April 1984. Nevertheless, a constructive meeting was held. Todd Lawson read from his annotated translation of the Báb's *Tafsír Súrat al-Baqara*, and two papers were presented. The first, Richard Hollinger's 'Ibrahim George Kheiralla and the Bahá'í Movement in America', which was read on the author's behalf, utilized family archives to provide a detailed account of Kheiralla's life and Bahá'í activities. The second paper, Peter Smith's 'The Pattern of Bahá'í Expansion and Distribution in Europe' (which represented part of a larger work in progress) sought to explain—primarily by means of the quotient of Local Assembly numbers per million population—the variations in European Bahá'í distribution. Although at present necessarily speculative, some attempt was also made to identify such major factors as might account for the variations in distribution. In the smaller national communities endogenous factors—the movement of pioneers; the presence of consensus or initiative within the Bahá'í community—were held likely to predominate, whilst in the larger communities, exogenous factors—religions and ethnic divisions; the influence of 'cultural' secularization—were held to be increasingly important.

There was also some discussion of the desirability of greater contact between academic Bahá'í scholars and the British Bahá'í community, resulting in a resolution being formulated to suggest to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom that they might wish to arrange for annual conferences to encourage academic scholarship within the Bahá'í community.

In the period under survey (April 1983–April 1986), Stephen Lambden published and circulated a Bahá'í Studies newsletter from which most of the above information has been taken.

# D. BAHÁ'Í HISTORY CONFERENCES LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

The Los Angeles Bahá'í History Conferences, a series of academically oriented conferences on the history of the Bahá'í Faith, were inaugurated by a conference at the University of California at Los Angeles, 5–7 August 1983. Jointly sponsored by the UCLA Bahá'í Club and the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Los Angeles, the conference attracted some 80 participants from various parts of the United States and one from England.

The conference consisted of panels on three broad areas of historical enquiry, the 'Middle East', 'Bahá'ís of the West', and the 'Third World'; and concluded with a session devoted to historical methodology. Participants were welcomed to the conference by Dr. Amín Banání, who described the purposes of the gathering as an attempt to foster an atmosphere of informality and exchange, and to offer a programme of works of a standard that would both advance the intellectual horizons of the participants as well as deepen their understanding of some facets of Bahá'í history.

The Middle East panel was chaired by Dr. Amín Banání, and included the following papers: ''Abdu'l-Bahá and Iranian reform movements' by Dr. Moojan Momen (Múzhán Mu'mín) who was unable to attend the conference in person; 'Minority conversions to the Bahá'í Faith in Írán' by Susan Stiles; 'Attack on Karbilá, 1843' by Juan Ricardo Cole; and a biographical presentation on the Greatest Holy Leaf by Diane Taherzadeh (Ṭáhirzádih).

Papers presented during the panel on Bahá'ís of the West, chaired by Anthony A. Lee, included 'Observations on the Early American Bahá'í Community' by Dr. Peter Smith; 'Ibrahim Khayr'u'lláh and the American Bahá'í Community' by Richard Hollinger; and ''Abdu'l-Bahá in the Writings of Shoghi Effendi' by Don Ewalt.

The Third World panel, chaired by David Langness, consisted of three presentations: 'The Bahá'ís of India' by Dr. William Garlington; 'The Establishment of the Bahá'í Faith in West Africa' by Anthony Lee; and an informal discussion of some aspects of Bahá'í expansion into the Third World by Peter Smith.

The methodology panel was chaired by Richard Hollinger, and included two presentations, an informal discussion of Bahá'í historiography by David Piff, and 'Bahá'í values and historical inquiry' by Anthony Lee.

The format of the conference offered ample opportunities for comments and discussion of the presentations.

Bahá'ís from eight countries and several states attended the second Los Angeles Bahá'í History Conference held from 1 to 4 September 1984. The conference, co-sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of Los Angeles, the Bahá'í Club at UCLA, Kalimát Press and the Victory Foundation, drew nearly 200 serious students of the Faith to its various sessions. William Collins, of the Bahá'í World Centre library, and Dr. Vaḥíd Ra'fatí, of the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, each contributed to a discussion on sources of Bahá'í history in archives and libraries.

Roger Dahl, chief archivist at the National Bahá'í Archives in Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A., also attended and presented a paper, as did David Piff, chief archivist of the Northwest Regional Branch of the U.S. National Archives.

Dr. Ra'fatí also presented a paper on the relationship of Shaykhí doctrines to the religious thought of the Báb. The presentation was part of the Middle East panel among whose other members was Dr. Margaret Caton who discussed Bahá'í influences on Mírzá 'Abdu'lláh, an Iranian Bahá'í who is perhaps the most influential Persian musician of modern times.

Dr. Denis MacEoin of the University of Newcastle, England, sent a paper to be read. In it, he discussed authority claims in the Bábí community during the most obscure period of its history, 1850 to 1866.

Dr. Peter Smith of the University of Lancaster, England, made two presentations—one, a sociological analysis of the development of the Bahá'í Faith in the western world, and the other a discussion of liberal and fundamentalist attitudes as found in other religions and in the Bahá'í community.

Dr. Nader Saeidi (Nádir Sa''ídí), a professor of sociology at UCLA, discussed the role of faith and reason within the Bahá'í community,

while Anthony A. Lee drew attention to the need for Bahá'ís to transcend limited attitudes toward other religions and cultures in a quest for the unity of mankind.

Viva Tomlin, who graduated from Oxford University with a degree in theology and is now pioneering in Honduras, gave a provocative presentation on the concept of knowledge in the Bahá'í Writings.

Steven Scholl of Seattle, Washington, made a presentation on the studies of the Shaykhí school made by Henri Corbin, the French orientalist. Mr. Scholl is writing a thesis on that topic at McGill University.

Graham Hassall travelled from Australia to present his research into the history of the Bahá'ís in that country. His efforts represent the first systematic attempt to recover the history of the Australian Bahá'í community.

Papers were presented on the history of the Faith in West Africa by Don Addison and Anthony A. Lee, and in the United States by Richard Hollinger. All three of these presenters are doctoral candidates at UCLA.

Dr. Jalíl Mahmoudi (Jalíl Maḥmúdí), an Auxiliary Board member, addressed the conference on sociology and history. Olinga Ta'eed (Ta'íd) of Leeds, England, sent a paper analyzing the question of belief by using general systems theory.

Turning to Bahá'í literature, Farzad Nakhai (Farzád Nakha'í) discussed the work of the famous Bahá'í poet, Na'ím, while Diana Malouf, a doctoral candidate at the State University of New York, sent a paper on Shoghi Effendi's translation of the *Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh which was presented on her behalf.

Among the non-Bahá'ís who attended the conference was Dr. William Royce, a professor of Oriental Studies at the University of Arizona, who chaired one of the conference sessions.

In addition to the intensive day sessions there were informal discussions in the evening. A concert and demonstration of classical Persian music and dance provided entertainment Saturday night.

The third Bahá'í history conference was held in Los Angeles from 21 to 24 November 1985. The event was held in conjunction with the annual convention of the American Academy of Religion, held in Anaheim, which for the first time had scheduled a special workshop on the Bahá'í Faith.

The Bahá'í conference included two sessions on American Bahá'í history that sought to break new ground.

Mark Perry, a graduate student in the history of cultures at the University of Chicago, presented a paper that explored tensions in the relationship between the National Spiritual Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly of Chicago in the period from 1920 to 1940.

Jackson Armstrong-Ingram who is writing his doctoral dissertation on American Bahá'í history for Queen's University in Northern Ireland discussed the development of art, music and other kinds of aesthetic expression in the early American Bahá'í community.

Duane Herrmann presented the fruits of his research on the history of the Faith in Kansas, remarking that Enterprise, Kansas, was one of the early large Bahá'í communities.

American history was also the topic of a paper presented by Robert Stockman, a graduate student at Harvard University, and author of the recent book *The Bahá'í Faith in America: Origins, 1892–1900*.

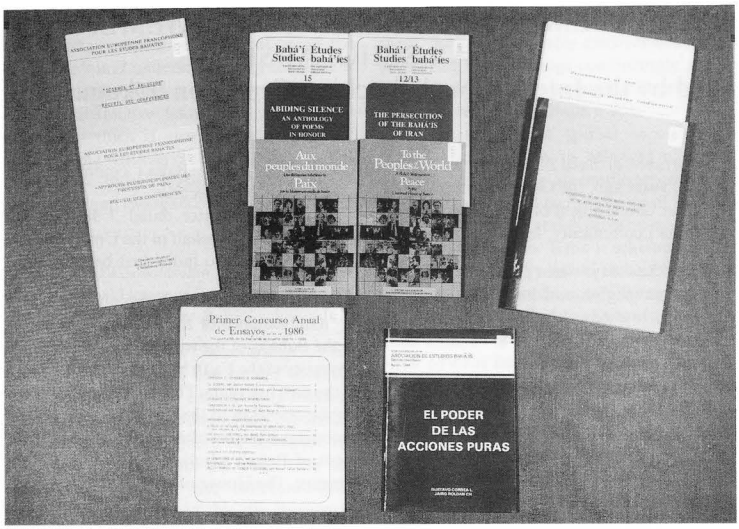
One session, devoted to Bábí history, included the presentation of a paper sent to the conference by Dr. Denis MacEoin, a non-Bahá'í at the University of Newcastle in England, which touched upon some of the issues in Bábí history between 1850 and 1870.

Dr. Peter Smith, a professor at Mahidol University, Thailand, also offered a paper on the Bábí movement. His paper sought to dispel some of the mystery surrounding the physical resources the Bábís had at their disposal, such as communications, money and manpower.

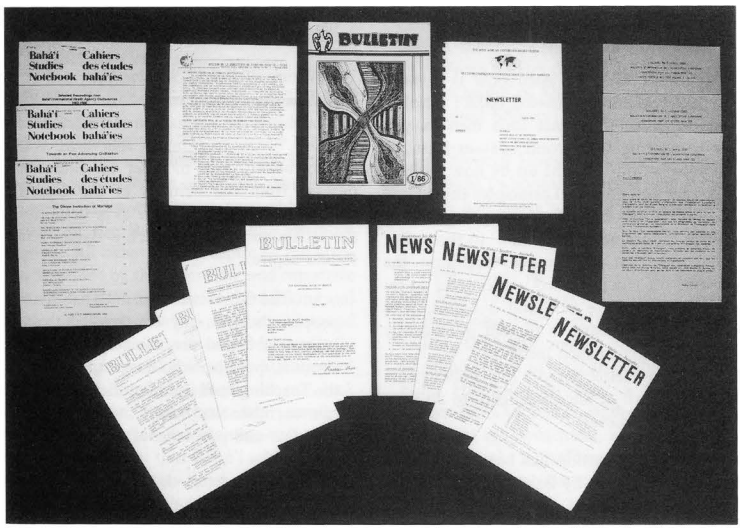
Frank Lewis, a graduate student in Arabic literature at the University of Chicago, sent a paper on the *Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh, in which he demonstrated how Bahá'u'lláh made use of pre-existing literary patterns to create this work.

Other papers sent by Bahá'ís unable to attend the conference covered such topics as Hawaiian Bahá'í history, Bahá'í divorce, the Navajo religion, and women in religious history.

On Saturday afternoon, the conference adjourned to the American Academy of Religion convention whose Bahá'í workshop session surveyed the academic work that has been done in the areas of theology and doctrine, American Bahá'í history, Middle Eastern Bahá'í history, and Bahá'ís in the Third World.




*Examples of monographs published by the Association for Bahá'í Studies and affiliates in the period Riḍván 1983–1986 from (top row): French-speaking Europe (Switzerland), Canada and Australia; (bottom) Chile and Colombia.*




*Examples of newsletters published by the Association for Bahá'í Studies and affiliates in the period Riḍván 1983–1986 from (top) Canada, Chile, German-speaking Europe (Austria), West Africa (Nigeria) and French-speaking Europe (Switzerland); (bottom) German-speaking Europe and Australia.*

# 8. A STATEMENT ON THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP
## Issued by the International Teaching Centre on 9 August 1984

*The Importance of Bahá'í Scholarship*

Over 50 years ago, the Guardian emphasised the need for development of the intellectual life of the Bahá'í community, in the statement:

> '... In these days when people are so sceptical about religion and look with so much contempt towards religious organizations and movements, there seems to be more need than ever for our young Bahá'ís to be well-equipped intellectually, so that they may be in a position to present the Message in a befitting way, and in a manner that would convince every unbiased observer of the effectiveness and power of the Teachings.'
>
> (From a letter dated 5 May 1934 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

Some years later, he described Bahá'í scholarship as being an important aid to teaching the Faith to those who do not find the Bahá'í principles novel in the light of modern thought:

> 'It seems what we need now is a more profound and co-ordinated Bahá'í scholarship in order to attract such men as you are contacting. The world has—at least the thinking world—caught up by now with all the great and universal principles enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh over 70 years ago, and so of course it does not sound 'new' to them. But we know that the deeper teachings, the capacity of His projected world order to re-create society, are new and dynamic. It is these we must learn to present intelligently and enticingly to such men!'
>
> (From a letter dated 3 July 1949 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

More recently, attention has been directed to the role to be played by Bahá'í scholarship, in the statement:

> 'The Universal House of Justice ... regards Bahá'í scholarship as of great potential importance for the development and consolidation of the Bahá'í community as it emerges from obscurity....'
>
> (From a letter dated 3 January 1979 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to individual believers)

As the Supreme Body pointed out in the opening sentence of the Riḍván 1984 message to the Bahá'ís of the world, the emergence from obscurity of the Faith has been a marked feature of the past five years. This directs unprecedented public attention to the Cause of God, and also necessitates increased emphasis on the development of Bahá'í scholarship, since in the same message, the House of Justice says:

> '... Persistently greater and greater efforts must be made to acquaint the leaders of the world, in all departments of life, with the true nature of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation as the sole hope for the pacification and unification of the world....'

*The Nature of Bahá'í Scholarship*

A vital prerequisite to the fostering of Bahá'í scholarship is the acquisition of a clearer understanding of the meaning of this term. We can do no better than to offer an illuminating passage from the writings of the Guardian, which might well be taken as a definition of the attributes towards which a Bahá'í scholar should aspire:

> '... The Cause needs more Bahá'í scholars, people who not only are devoted to it and believe in it and are anxious to tell others about it, but also who have a deep grasp of the Teachings and their significance, and who can correlate its beliefs with the current thoughts and problems of the people of the world.'
>
> (From a letter dated 21 October 1943 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

This passage calls for distinctive qualities. The description of the kind of Bahá'í scholar of

which the Faith stands in such need at this time places emphasis upon belief, devotion to the Faith, a profound understanding of the Teachings and a strong desire to share them with others. A distinctive feature of such Bahá'í scholarship, which is also reiterated in other passages of the writings of the Guardian, is that of relating the Bahá'í teachings to the present-day concerns and thoughts of the people around us.

*Fostering Bahá'í Scholarship*

The Universal House of Justice specified how the Counsellors can foster Bahá'í scholarship:

> 'In the field of Bahá'í scholarship ... the Boards of Counsellors can render valuable services in this area by encouraging budding scholars and by promoting within the Bahá'í community an atmosphere of tolerance for the views of others. At the same time the fundamental core of the believers' faith should be strengthened by an increasing awareness of the cardinal truth and vital importance of the Covenant, and an ever-growing love for Bahá'u'lláh.'
>
> (From a communication dated 10 February 1981 written by the Universal House of Justice to the International Teaching Centre)

We consider first the matter of 'encouraging budding scholars'.

From the passage of the Guardian's writings dealing with the attributes to which a Bahá'í scholar should aspire, it is evident that Bahá'í scholarship is an endeavour accessible to all members of the Bahá'í community, without exception. All believers can aspire to the attributes described by the Guardian, and can strive to relate the Bahá'í teachings to the thinking and concerns of the non-Bahá'í population around them. You can perform a valuable service in bringing this potential role to the attention of all the believers—including those who may lack formal education, and those who dwell in remote areas, villages and islands—and to discourage any thought that Bahá'í scholarship is an activity open only to those who are highly educated or who are pursuing an academic career.

As the followers of the Blessed Beauty make efforts to correlate the Bahá'í teachings, which impinge upon every aspect of human life, with the thoughts and problems of the people around them, they will inevitably discover new ways of presenting the teachings convincingly and will also acquire an ever-increasing understanding of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

At the same time special encouragement should also be given to believers of unusual capacity, training or accomplishment to consecrate their abilities to the service of the Cause through the unique and distinctive contribution they can make to Bahá'í scholarship. The Guardian repeatedly linked the work of Bahá'í scholars to the expansion and consolidation of the Faith, as stated in the following:

> '... If the Bahá'ís want to be really effective in teaching the Cause they need to be much better informed and able to discuss intelligently, intellectually, the present condition of the world and its problems. We need Bahá'í scholars, not only people far, far more deeply aware of what our teachings really are, but also well read and well educated people, capable of correlating our teachings to the current thoughts of the leaders of society.
>
> 'We Bahá'ís should in other words, arm our minds with knowledge in order to better demonstrate to, especially, the educated classes, the truths enshrined in our Faith....'
>
> (From a letter dated 5 July 1949 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

The Universal House of Justice, in responding to a Bahá'í who wanted to use logical means to convey and prove spiritual principles, wrote that:

> '... the House of Justice understands that you desire to find ways of conveying spiritual truths in logical ways and demonstrating their validity through scientific proofs. There can be no objection to such an attitude. 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself used such a method. The danger Bahá'í scholars must avoid is the distortion of religious truth, almost forcibly at times, to make it conform to understandings and perceptions current in the scientific world. True Bahá'í scholars should guard against this...'
>
> (From a letter dated 7 June 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

The Supreme Body has also referred to the distinctive role to be played by Bahá'ís who acquire expertise in various fields of endeavour, in affirming that:

> 'As the Bahá'í community grows it will acquire experts in numerous fields—both by Bahá'ís becoming experts and by experts becoming Bahá'ís. As these experts bring their knowledge and skill to the service of the community and, even more, as they transform their various disciplines by bringing to bear upon them the light of the Divine Teachings, problem after problem now disrupting society will be answered....'
>
> (From a letter dated 21 August 1977 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

Closely allied to this role is the call of the House of Justice for 'the promotion of Bahá'í scholarship, so that an increasing number of believers will be able to analyse the problems of mankind in every field and to show how the Teachings solve them....'

> (From a letter dated 19 January 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

The Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members can do much to assist in the response to this call by their stimulation and encouragement of Bahá'ís of distinctive capacity and promise, especially young Bahá'ís who are choosing their life work. Since the Bahá'í Teachings relate to every dimension of human thought and activity, believers who become eminent in any legitimate field of knowledge are in an enviable position to make a significant and far-reaching contribution by presenting the Teachings in a way that demonstrates the profundity and efficacy of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Bahá'í community can already point to the example of several believers who have become recognized widely for their scholarship, and whose intellectual pursuits were enriched by their abiding devotion to the Faith, and their compelling desire to teach the Cause. Within this company is to be found Mírzá Abu'l Faḍl, who was described by the Guardian as 'very excellent and erudite', as well as the Hands of the Cause of God George Townshend, whose scholarship was praised by the Guardian, and Hasan Bályúzí, who was eulogized by the Universal House of Justice for 'his outstanding scholarly pursuits', as well as others who are presently engaged in like service.

*Promoting an Atmosphere of Tolerance*

We now consider 'promoting within the Bahá'í community an atmosphere of tolerance for the views of others' and strengthening 'the fundamental core of the believers' faith'. The Universal House of Justice has stated that:

> 'The combination of absolute loyalty to the Manifestation of God and His Teachings, with the searching and intelligent study of the Teachings and history of the Faith which those Teachings themselves enjoin, is a particular strength of this Dispensation. In past Dispensations the believers have tended to divide into two mutually antagonistic groups: those who held blindly to the letter of the Revelation, and those who questioned and doubted everything. Like all extremes, both these can lead into error. The beloved Guardian has written that "The Bahá'í Faith ... enjoins upon its followers the primary duty of an unfettered search after truth...". Bahá'ís are called upon to follow the Faith with intelligence and understanding. Inevitably believers will commit errors as they strive to rise to this degree of maturity, and this calls for forbearance and humility on the part of all concerned, so that such matters do not cause disunity or discord among the friends.'
>
> (From a letter dated 7 October 1980 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

The challenge to all believers is to develop the balanced combination prescribed by the House of Justice to such an extent that they do not fall into one of the mutually antagonistic groups of which the Supreme Body warns.

On the need for tolerance the Universal House of Justice wrote:

> 'The House of Justice agrees that it is most important for the believers, and especially those who hold positions of responsibility in the Administrative Order, to react calmly and with tolerant and enquiring minds to views which differ from their own, remembering that all Bahá'ís are but students of the Faith,

ever striving to understand the Teachings more clearly and to apply them more faithfully, and none can claim to have a perfect understanding of this Revelation. At the same time all believers, and scholars in particular, should remember the many warnings in the Writings against the fomenting of discord among the friends. It is the duty of the institutions of the Faith to guard the community against such dangers....'

(From a letter dated 18 July 1979 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

Promotion of an atmosphere of tolerance thus requires that those holding positions of administrative authority not over-react, and that those setting forth their understanding of the Teachings not foster discord and dissension, deliberately or unwittingly. The warning against the fomenting of discord highlights one of the hazards facing believers who embark upon the practice of Bahá'í scholarship. On one occasion the Universal House of Justice felt moved to comment that:

'... There have, however, been cases of believers who look upon themselves as scholars, and may even be such in an academic sense, who have considerable expertise in certain aspects of the Faith but are lamentably ignorant or misinformed about other aspects of the Cause and the Teachings. Others have expressed bitingly critical views with a quite unscholarly intemperance.'

(From a letter dated 8 October 1980 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

By striving to express themselves with courtesy, moderation, tact and wisdom, Bahá'í scholars will contribute to the maintenance within the Bahá'í community of an atmosphere of tolerance which facilitates their limitless exploration of the meaning and implications of the Bahá'í Revelation.

*Strengthening the Core of the Believers' Faith*

This need for Bahá'í scholars to become thoroughly deepened in the spirit of the Cause, and well versed in its Teachings is emphasized in the following passage:

'In the application of the social laws of the Faith, most of the difficulties can be seen to arise not only from outright disobedience, but also from the actions of those who, while careful to observe the letter of the law, try to go as far as it will permit them away from the spirit which lies at its heart. A similar tendency can be noted among some Bahá'í scholars. The great advances in knowledge and understanding in the vital field of Bahá'í scholarship will be made by those who, while well versed in their subjects and adhering to the principles of research, are also thoroughly imbued with love for the Faith and the determination to grow in the comprehension of its teachings.'

(From a letter dated 23 March 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

In the same letter the Supreme Body calls attention to the danger of intellectual pride, which a Bahá'í scholar must combat within himself, in these words:

'The House of Justice feels that Bahá'í scholars must beware of the temptations of intellectual pride. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has warned the friends in the West that they would be subjected to intellectual tests, and the Guardian reminded them of this warning. There are many aspects of western thinking which have been exalted to a status of unassailable principle in the general mind, that time may well show to have been erroneous or, at least, only partially true. Any Bahá'í who rises to eminence in academic circles will be exposed to the powerful influence of such thinking...'

(From a letter dated 23 March 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

The provisions of the Covenant stand as our inviolable protection against distortion of the Teachings and against the subtle temptations of intellectual pride. Central to the Covenant is the authority of the Manifestation of God and of the infallible institutions that the Holy Writings ordained. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has specified that:

'Unto the Most Holy Book everyone must turn and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice. That which this body, whether unanimously or by a majority doth

carry, that is verily the Truth and Purpose of God Himself.'

(From *Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, Part Two)

The Universal House of Justice has clarified that:

'In the Bahá'í Faith there are two authoritative centres appointed to which the believers must turn, for in reality the Interpreter of the Word is an extension of that centre which is the Word itself. The Book is the record of the utterance of Bahá'u'lláh, while the divinely inspired Interpreter is the living Mouth of that Book—it is he and he alone who can authoritatively state what the Book means. Thus one centre is the Book with its Interpreter, and the other is the Universal House of Justice guided by God to decide on whatever is not explicitly revealed in the Book....'

(From a letter dated 7 December 1969 written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

and it has pointed out that:

'While it may often be the part of wisdom to approach individuals or an audience from a standpoint of current knowledge, it should never be overlooked that the Revelation of the Manifestation of God is the standard for all knowledge, and scientific statements and theories, no matter how close they may come to the eternal principles proclaimed by God's Messenger, are in their very nature ephemeral and limited. Likewise, attempting to make the Bahá'í Faith relevant to modern society is to incur the grave risk of compromising the fundamental verities of our Faith in an effort to make it conform to current theories and practices.'

(From a letter dated 21 July 1968 written by the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly)

A vital element of Bahá'í scholarship is humility in recognizing the limitations of the human mind in its attempts to encompass the Divine Message. Bahá'u'lláh addresses the Creator in a prayer, using these terms:

*'Exalted, immeasurably exalted art Thou, O my Beloved, above the strivings of any of Thy creatures, however learned, to know Thee; exalted, immensely exalted art Thou above every human attempt, no matter how searching, to describe Thee! For the highest thought of men, however deep their contemplation, can never hope to outsoar the limitations imposed upon Thy creation, nor ascend beyond the state of the contingent world, nor break the bounds irrevocably set for it by Thee.'*

(From *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh*, No. CLXXXIV)

Another vital provision of the Covenant is that concerning interpretation. The Universal House of Justice states:

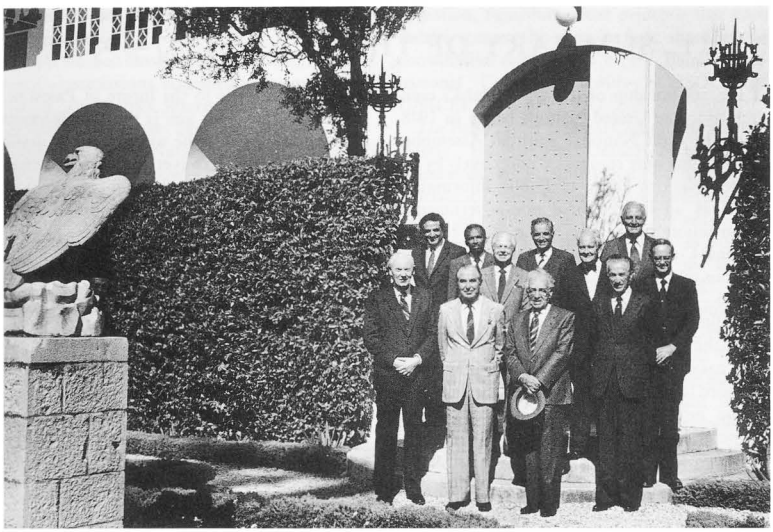
'... individual interpretation is considered the fruit of man's rational power and conducive to a better understanding of the teachings, provided that no disputes or arguments arise among the friends and the individual himself understands and makes it clear that his views are merely his own. Individual interpretations continually change as one grows in comprehension of the teachings.... although individual insights can be enlightening and helpful, they can also be misleading. The friends must therefore learn to listen to the views of others without being over-awed or allowing their faith to be shaken, and to express their own views without pressing them on their fellow Bahá'ís.'

(From a letter dated 27 May 1966 written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh gives rise to a Bahá'í community which will increasingly become known for its fostering of creative development and for its encouragement of individual expression. The Covenant also provides guiding principles by which a Bahá'í scholar can exemplify that harmony of faith and reason which is a hallmark of the Bahá'í Dispensation.

With the Seven Year Plan calling for the fostering of the intellectual life of the Bahá'í community, and with the closely-associated development of Bahá'í scholarship, the worldwide community of the followers of the Greatest Name embarks upon an exciting phase in its development, which will widen the range of people attracted to its truths, greatly enhance its prestige and influence, and broaden the foundation of the world civilization to which the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh will ultimately give rise.

# 9. THE VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY CHAIM HERZOG, PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL, TO THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE
## 21 October 1984



HIS Excellency Chaim Herzog, President of the State of Israel, paid an official visit to the Bahá'í World Centre on 21 October 1984 at the invitation of the Universal House of Justice.

At 9:40 a.m. the President was formally received in Bahjí, at the Collins Gate, by the nine members of the Universal House of Justice and escorted to the Mansion where Bahá'u'lláh spent His final years. There the President was greeted by the Hand of the Cause of God 'Alí-Akbar Furútan who conducted him to the room of Bahá'u'lláh and showed originals of some of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets. Leaving the Mansion, the President paid his respects at the Sacred Tomb.

Proceeding to Haifa by official motorcade, the party alighted at the Mount Carmel gardens and visited the Shrine of the Báb. This was followed by a visit to the Seat of the Universal House of Justice which concluded with a formal luncheon in the banquet hall, in the President's honour. The visit of the first Head of State to call on the House of Justice in its permanent Seat was the occasion for the inaugural use of the splendid dining room, readied for the occasion by the dedicated efforts of dozens of skilled and devoted Bahá'ís serving at the World Centre.

Among those attending the historic event, in addition to the members of the Universal House of Justice and their wives, were the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and the Mayor of Haifa, His Worship Arye Gurel, and Mrs. Gurel. An album of colour photographs of the major Bahá'í Holy Places in Israel was presented to President Herzog by Mr. Ḥushmand Fatheazam (Húshmand Fatḥi-A'ẓam), on behalf of the Universal House of Justice. The President responded with expressions of sympathy for the suffering Bahá'ís of Írán and pride in the Bahá'í community and its world-famed Holy Places.

The beauty of the Bahá'í Holy Places, the splendour of the Faith's administrative centre, and the warmth of the welcome extended were the subjects of enthusiastic comment on the part of the President, his aide-de-camp and the Mayor of Haifa.

# III
# THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH AND THE UNITED NATIONS

## 1. SUMMARY OF THE YEARS 1947–1983

THE relationship of the world Bahá'í community to the United Nations began in 1948, when the eight National Spiritual Assemblies then existing were recognized collectively by the United Nations Office of Public Information (OPI) as an international non-governmental organization under the name Bahá'í International Community. An official Bahá'í-United Nations relationship had actually started a year before—in the spring of 1947—when OPI accredited the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada as a national non-governmental organization, qualified to be represented through an observer.

The next step in Bahá'í-United Nations cooperation—and a major one—took place in 1970, when the Bahá'í International Community was granted consultative status, category II, with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). A few years later, in 1974, as an extension of this relationship in the economic and social fields, the Bahá'í International Community established an association with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Then, in 1976 it was welcomed into consultative status with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

*The First Period: 1947–1970*

Although limited to activities educating the public about the aims and programs of the United Nations, the first stage of Bahá'í-United Nations cooperation allowed many opportunities for sharing the Bahá'í perspective, both through participation in numerous non-governmental conferences, and through the presentation of several important statements.

One of the most important contributions took place in 1947, when the United Nations Special Palestine Committee addressed a letter to Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian 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. Explaining 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,' Shoghi Effendi enclosed with his reply a summary of the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

Other presentations of note were: A 'Bahá'í Declaration on Human Obligations and Rights' (1947); a study entitled 'Proposals for Charter Revision', circulated at a United Nations Conference for Revision of the United Nations Charter (1955); a statement endorsing the Genocide Convention, presented to the President of the Commission on Human Rights (1959); and a comprehensive statement to a meeting of the United Nations Office of Public Information to discuss problems of cooperation 'with the United Nations family insofar as its program affects the new nations', noting the 'vigorous assistance of Bahá'í communities' through the implementation of Bahá'í teachings and principles, to help the less developed peoples become integrated into the more developed society surrounding them (1960).

The Bahá'í International Community was also able, even in the early years of its relationship with the United Nations, to assist in the protection and recognition of the Bahá'í world community. Such were the cases of Bahá'í persecutions in Írán and Morocco, in 1955 and 1962, respectively, when appeals were lodged with the United Nations, and in 1967, the presentation, on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, of a special edition of *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* to fifty-six Heads of States, through their Permanent Representatives to the United Nations.

*The Second Period: 1970–1979*

These years witnessed a noticeable increase in the range and depth of Bahá'í-United Nations

cooperation, as the Bahá'í International Community began the steady growth of its consultative relationship with ECOSOC and with UNICEF, and its association with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), while continuing its close cooperation with the United Nations Office—later Department—of Public Information.

As it worked closely with ECOSOC, its functional commissions, committees and associated bodies, the Bahá'í International Community gradually explored new avenues of participation in United Nations social and economic programs. Not only was it represented at sessions of United Nations bodies concerned with issues of aging, children, crime prevention, disabled persons, disarmament, energy—new and renewable sources—environment, exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, the family, human rights, human settlements, law of the sea, narcotic drugs, population, science and technology, social development, status of women, the United Nations University, world food, and youth, 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 preparation and follow-up activities.

When the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, in charge of fostering the United Nations relationship with NGOs in the social and economic field, reviewed the work of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC during the years 1973–77, 1978–81, the Bahá'í International Community report, showing an impressive number of activities recording warm cooperation with the United Nations, were approved without questions.

Most gratifying during this period was the increased participation of national Bahá'í communities, through their National Spiritual Assemblies, United Nations representatives and committees, in fostering the ties of the Bahá'í world with the United Nations. They not only organized national and local Bahá'í-United Nations activities, but also provided the service of knowledgeable Bahá'ís in preparing statements and brochures examining the application of Bahá'í teachings to the solution of specific world issues, and in representing the Bahá'í International Community at conferences. In addition, National Spiritual Assemblies in countries where United Nations conferences or meetings took place, made a valuable contribution to successful Bahá'í participation, furnishing clear evidence that each Bahá'í community did, in fact, share in the consultative relationship of the Bahá'í International Community with ECOSOC and UNICEF.

The Bahá'í International Community worked closely, through its United Nations representative, with United Nations offices and officials at United Nations headquarters in New York, as well as in Geneva, Vienna, and Nairobi; and, through representatives from its member Bahá'í communities with United Nations field offices around the world.

In addition, under the direction and guidance of the Universal House of Justice, contacts were made on many occasions during this period with Missions to the United Nations and the United Nations Secretariat, to assist in the recognition of the Faith and the protection of Bahá'í communities. Here again, a growing understanding of the Bahá'í International Community, its non-partisan political nature, as well as its constructive contributions to the work of the United Nations resulting from its consultative status, made access to key United Nations officials easier when a clear presentation of the Bahá'í position was needed. This became especially important from 1981 on, since access to the United Nations human rights organs—the Human Rights Commission and the Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities—became crucial in bringing the persecution of the Bahá'í community of Írán to the attention of the governments of the world, and curbing, to some extent, this flagrant case of religious discrimination.

It became clear during these years that, as government delegates and United Nations personnel increasingly witnessed the Bahá'í presence, through extensive Bahá'í representation and a variety of written and oral statements—many of the written ones circulated as United Nations documents—they were becoming aware of a worldwide Bahá'í community committed to the spiritual and moral vision of the unity of mankind.

# 2. THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1983–1986

VICTOR DE ARAUJO

## I. OVERVIEW

BAHÁ'Í cooperation with the United Nations continued to expand in the period 1983 to 1986 in all major areas of United Nations work, as the Bahá'í International Community found frequent and rich opportunities to share the Bahá'í perspective on world peace, universal human rights, and the full social and economic development of all people—goals sought by the United Nations in its Charter.

This greater breadth and intensity of Bahá'í collaboration, which further strengthened the ties between the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations, was made possible through three developments in the Bahá'í world: the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán; the emergence of the Faith from obscurity as a result of that persecution and of the worldwide expansion of Bahá'í communities; and the beginning of social and economic development projects as an integral part of Bahá'í activity.

The Bahá'í International Community continued to broaden its relationship with the United Nations beyond New York, Geneva, and Vienna. In 1985 it formalized its representation with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), both headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. It also was completing arrangements to include representations at the United Nations regional headquarters (the Regional Economic Commissions) in Africa (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, Chile). In addition, it increased contacts with several of the UN specialized bodies and agencies, including the World Food Council (WFC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

As for international bodies outside of the United Nations system, the Bahá'í International Community further strengthened its already close working relationship with the South Pacific Commission (SPC), an inter-governmental organization promoting the social and economic development of the countries of the Pacific region, with which it has a representation. It was also involved during this period in sessions of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, regarding the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

An important ongoing facet of Bahá'í-United Nations work was the Bahá'í participation in United Nations and United Nations-related conferences, seminars, and meetings covering issues in the broad areas of international peace and disarmament, social and economic development, and human rights. The Bahá'í International Community provided, as usual, appropriate Bahá'í representation, preparing and presenting pertinent written and/or oral statements contributing the Bahá'í view on the subject under discussion. Personal contacts with government and United Nations officials were, in this way, further extended.

The Bahá'í International Community continued during this period to associate and cooperate with non-governmental organizations at the United Nations, mainly through active membership in many NGO/United Nations committees in New York, Geneva, Vienna, and Santiago, participation in numerous NGO conferences and meetings, and in the co-sponsorship of statements for various United Nations conferences and meetings.

In 1985, the Bahá'í International Community was elected Vice-President of the Executive Board of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO), an umbrella organization representing, as the title indicates, those organizations granted consultative privilege in accordance with article 71 of the United Nations Charter. It was also

represented on the Board of the NGO Committee on Development (New York). During this period, representatives of the Bahá'í International Community served, as NGO committee officers, in the following capacities: *At the United Nations in New York*: Chairman of the Human Rights Committee, Chairman of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for the United Nations Decade for Women, Vice-Chairman and Secretary of the Youth Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Department of Public Information/NGO Executive Committee, and Treasurer of the committee on Human Settlements; *At the United Nations in Geneva*: Secretary of the Sub-Committee on Women; *At the United Nations in Vienna (Vienna International Centre)*; Chairman of the Youth Committee.

The Bahá'í-United Nations operations have always relied on wide and growing contacts with Continental Boards of Counsellors, National Spiritual Assemblies, and individual Bahá'ís with relevant professional backgrounds. In its participation in United Nations conferences, the Bahá'í International Community depended even more during this period on the goodwill and knowledge of these institutions and individuals in providing the assistance needed in drafting statements, lending expertise, and representing the Bahá'í International Community. In this process, closer links were also established with the Association for Bahá'í Studies, to locate Bahá'í professionals in various fields of specialization.

The Bahá'í International Community continued to encourage National Spiritual Assemblies, through exchange of information by correspondence and through personal visits and consultations, to establish and foster relationships with United Nations offices in their countries, sponsoring or co-sponsoring activities in observance of United Nations days, years, and other events, both to make better known United Nations aims and programs, as well as to share Bahá'í belief and action towards solving world issues and bringing about global peace and world order. The resulting reports of such constantly increasing Bahá'í-United Nations activities, at national and local levels, were, as in the past, brought to the attention of the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI), the ECOSOC NGO Liaison

*Bahá'í International Community representatives to the United Nations in New York in 1985. Left to right: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Dr. Paul Öjermark, Mr. Gerald Knight.*

office, and other appropriate United Nations sections.

The growth and diversification of the United Nations operations of the Bahá'í International Community from 1983 to 1986 brought about structural changes and increase in personnel to meet the new challenges and opportunities. The activities of the Geneva office, for instance, initially focussed on the area of human rights, expanded to include the other major areas of United Nations work. Particularly important during this period was the collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), regarding assistance for the Iranian Bahá'í refugees. The New York office, in turn, established a new section on social and economic development, to strengthen the Bahá'í relationship to the United Nations in tune with the widening scope of Bahá'í individual and community activity. By Riḍván of 1986, the number of persons engaged in the work of the Bahá'í International Community United Nations offices in New York and Geneva had grown to about 20 full-time staff. In addition, an increasing number of volunteers, on an ongoing or temporary basis, played a valuable role worldwide in this expanding relationship of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations.

## II. PEACE AND DISARMAMENT

When the United Nations proclaimed 1986 as International Year of Peace (IYP), as an occasion for rededication by member states to the goals of the United Nations Charter, the Bahá'í International Community provided the IYP Secretariat with detailed information on the Bahá'í teachings and principles regarding peace, as well as the efforts of the Bahá'í world community for over one hundred years to achieve this goal. It further assured the United Nations office of the wholehearted Bahá'í participation in IYP, an extensive and enthusiastic cooperation already quite evident in the activities planned by Bahá'í communities worldwide—several already begun or undertaken by Riḍván 1986. The Bahá'í International Community had already participated in all four United Nations regional seminars held during 1985 in preparation for IYP, presenting comprehensive statements on the three seminar topics of 'Preparation for Life in Peace', 'Peace and Disarmament', and 'Peace and Development'.

Shortly after the launching of IYP—which occurred on United Nations Day, 24 October 1985, the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations—the Bahá'í International Community was able to present *The Promise of World Peace* to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. On 22 November this major Bahá'í document in the cause of peace was presented on behalf of the Universal House of Justice by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum accompanied by Dr. Victor de Araujo and Mr. Gerald Knight, two of the Bahá'í International Community representatives.

During her visit to the United Nations, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum hosted a number of luncheons for United Nations diplomats and United Nations Secretariat officials. A special luncheon for the press was very well attended and resulted in extensive press coverage of the General Assembly's consideration of the situation in Írán and, in particular, of the persecution of the Bahá'ís.

Following the meeting with the Secretary-General, the Bahá'í International Community began presentation of *The Promise of World Peace* to the highest level of officials working with the United Nations, such as Permanent Representatives of United Nations member nations, United Nations Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant-Secretaries-General, Heads of Departments within the United Nations Secretariat and Directors or Principal officers of United Nations specialized agencies, as well as to NGO United Nations representatives. The Bahá'í International Community United Nations office in New York also undertook the presentation, through United Nations Missions, of copies of *The Promise of World Peace* to Heads of State of fifty-six countries where it was not appropriate or possible to make the presentation directly.

## III. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

*Social and Economic Development*

Since most of the work and financial resources of the United Nations system are devoted to supporting development in Third World countries, the growing involvement of

*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum hosting a luncheon in New York in November 1985 attended by Ambassador D.H. Alleyne of Trinidad and Tobago, left, and Ambassador H.S. Moseley of Barbados.*

Bahá'í communities during this period in social and economic development as a regular part of their activities made it possible for the Bahá'í International Community to develop existing relationships—and create new ones—with the many United Nations organizations active in development. The Bahá'í United Nations representation was able, therefore, to share Bahá'í development concepts, inform about the rapidly growing Bahá'í activities, and achieve concrete collaboration. To this end, the Bahá'í International Community began, as mentioned earlier, to appoint representatives with the United Nations Regional Commissions and other United Nations organizations, at the geographically scattered headquarters of those United Nations bodies.

The Bahá'í International Community participated in an increasing number of conferences, dealing with such subjects as international economic relations, general and rural development, community and social development, food and agriculture, health and nutrition, the environment, human settlements, science and technology, forestry, and population. The Bahá'í statements presented have included references to the Bahá'í perspective on development, Bahá'í experiences in the field, and specific projects. The Bahá'í International Community was also invited to contribute its views to the formulation of development policy of United Nations and related organizations. Statements of this kind were provided to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UNEP, and the World Commission on Environment and Development.

The Bahá'í International Community gave guidance and support to National Spiritual Assemblies, Bahá'í communities, and individual Bahá'ís—through direct consultation, participation in conferences and through correspondence—regarding social and economic development, in particular relating to contacts and collaboration with United Nations agencies and projects. It made proposals for Bahá'í collaboration with United Nations and other international development organizations and provided assistance in drafting project documents. In some cases such collaboration commenced, as in the case of the nutrition program of the South Pacific Commission, for which the Bahá'í International Community arranged for

training support from Bahá'í volunteer experts, and co-sponsored a nutrition poster used throughout the Pacific region.

The Bahá'í International Community provided emergency and disaster relief assistance to several countries—Swaziland, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Ghana, and Colombia—either directly to their governments or through United Nations organizations.

The Bahá'í International Community participated in the work of the NGO development committees, particularly in the efforts to strengthen the contribution of NGOs to United Nations development strategies, and in facilitating concrete development collaboration with such United Nations organizations as UNICEF and UNDP. In the efforts to foster Bahá'í collaboration with the United Nations system in social and economic development activities, priority has been given to projects that are designed to especially benefit disadvantaged women, children and youth.

Contacts with UNICEF in this regard have been particularly fruitful. Collaboration has taken place in several instances as UNICEF has become aware of the extent of Bahá'í activities on behalf of children. One example was the drafting of the brochure *Working Together for Children*, which was a cooperative effort between UNICEF and the Bahá'í International Community, under the sponsorship of the NGO Field Level Relations Committee. The brochure was initially distributed at the UNICEF Board session in 1986, and at parallel NGO activities. It was subsequently disseminated through UNICEF offices and NGOs in developing countries in the three major United Nations languages.

In the work with UNICEF it was also possible to refer to the increasing Bahá'í cooperation at the national and local levels. Conspicuous examples of this have occurred in Bolivia where Radio Bahá'í Caracollo is assisting UNICEF in carrying out its child health revolution program, and in Uganda, where there have been several cooperative ventures, including the production of educational materials, immunization activities, and village development.

*Bahá'ís welcomed by the Deputy Secretary-General of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to a meeting, held in Tokyo, Japan, March 1984, in preparation for the World Women's Conference. Left to right: Mrs. Kimiko Schwerin, Representative; Mrs. Chiyo Suzuki, Observer; Mrs. Mahin Moghbel, Deputy Representative; Mrs. Marife Yazdani and Miss Yoko Ishihara, Observers.*

*Women*

A significant expansion has taken place during this period in the Bahá'í involvement in the advancement of women. In July 1985, the Bahá'í International Community sent a delegation of ten to the World Conference on the Decade for Women in Nairobi, Kenya, where it presented a report on the advancement of the status of women in the Bahá'í world community during the Decade (1976–1985). This report was based on the responses of 77 National Spiritual Assemblies to a questionnaire on women's activities and progress during this period, and the obstacles still to be overcome. This document became part of the official background documentation for the Conference. Forum '85, the parallel NGO meeting held in Nairobi, attracted over fifty Bahá'í women from different parts of the world. Bahá'í International Community participation in the Forum activities was planned with the assistance of the Continental Office of the Board of Counsellors for Africa, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya. An outstanding Bahá'í exhibit on women and development was shown at the Forum, and a Bahá'í participant conducted a workshop on managerial skills for women. Individual Bahá'ís attending the Forum engaged in dialogue with women from every part of the world, sharing with them Bahá'í views on issues related to the development of women.

In addition, the Bahá'í International Community was represented at numerous United Nations and United Nations-related meetings on women. These included preparatory meetings for the World Conference, sponsored by the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions; regular and special sessions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women; meetings of expert groups, and seminars and conferences sponsored by NGOs. Many Bahá'ís—in particular Bahá'í women—were given an opportunity to represent the Bahá'í International Community at these meetings, establishing, in the process, cordial relationships with individuals distinguished for their work to advance women.

*Youth*

In preparation for the International Youth Year (1985), proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1979, the Bahá'í International Community took part in the sessions of the IYY Advisory Committee, created to formulate a specific programme of measures and activities prior to and during IYY, established a close relationship with the United Nations Secretariat for IYY at the Vienna International Centre. It also played an active role as a member of the NGO Committees on Youth, in New York and in Vienna; and participated in the deliberations of the Sub-Committees on IYY, the IYY Tree Project, Street Youth, and the NGO Intergenerational Committee on Aging and Youth, all in New York.

In 1985 the Bahá'í International Community sent a delegation to the IYY International Youth Conference in Kingston, Jamaica, where it stressed, through a statement widely circulated, the major contribution that youth can make towards achieving world peace. It also took part in a Latin American/Caribbean regional meeting for IYY. Finally, in November 1985, Bahá'í International Community United Nations representatives made a major contribution to the planning and success of an IYY NGO Conference held at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Both prior to and during IYY, the Bahá'í International Community provided information and materials for IYY activities to Bahá'í communities around the world. It encouraged the participation of Bahá'í communities on National IYY Commissions, and provided guidance and suggestions to assist Bahá'í youth in undertakings that would contribute to the goals of IYY. When the Year was over, the Bahá'í United Nations office prepared a comprehensive report, for the United Nations and the Bahá'í world, on the outstanding creative activities carried out by Bahá'í youth worldwide.

*Children*

In addition to its activities with UNICEF in the area of social and economic development (see earlier section), the Bahá'í International Community continued to take part in the annual sessions of the UNICEF Executive Board, submitting statements on pertinent issues in 1984 and 1985—the first offering the Bahá'í perspective on the education of children, the second on the education and general development of women.

The Bahá'í International Community also participated in the 1986 UNICEF Executive

*Bahá'í International Community representative Miss Alma Alzola speaking during the Latin American/Caribbean Regional Meeting for International Year of Youth held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in August 1985.*

Board session, during which a Bahá'í exhibit on 'Educating Children for Peace' was displayed in the lobby of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, as part of a UNICEF/NGO display of cooperation entitled 'Working Together for Children'.

During this period the Bahá'í International Community joined with other non-governmental organizations in taking part in activities concerning the disabled child, NGO/UNICEF field level relations, and the development of women. A Bahá'í International Community representative also served on the Executive Board of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, as well as on the Editorial Board of the UNICEF/NGO publication *NGO Forum* and its successor *Action for Children*.

*Other Social Affairs*

During this period the Bahá'í International Community continued its involvement in United Nations activities dealing with problems of crime prevention and drug abuse. It took part in the 1985 Congress on Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders, conveying the Bahá'í view, while continuing its collaboration with the United Nations Branch on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Likewise, while working closely with the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, and contributing its suggestions to a report on an international campaign against traffic in drugs, it took part in the yearly sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, expressing whenever possible the Bahá'í perspective on the spiritual impetus needed to prevent drug abuse.

The Bahá'í International Community continued to monitor developments relating to implementation of the Plan of Action on Aging, approved by the World Assembly on Aging (1982), in which it had taken part. Likewise, it continued to express its commitment to the program of action to improve the conditions of the disabled, and welcomed further opportunities for Bahá'í cooperation worldwide during the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons (1983–1992). In addition, as the United Nations began to express its concern for the well-being of the family in contemporary society, the Bahá'í International Community established a close relationship with the responsible United Nations unit, and took part in a United Nations Inter-regional Seminar in Moscow on 'Changing Families'.

## IV. HUMAN RIGHTS

*Persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán*

The Bahá'í International Community continued its efforts, and coordinated the efforts of National Spiritual Assemblies worldwide, to alleviate the plight of the persecuted Bahá'í community in Írán. The member states of the United Nations and the European Economic Community, as well as the expert members of specialist United Nations bodies, responded to these efforts in a number of positive ways.

On 7 July 1983, the European Parliament adopted a resolution 'repudiating the claim by the Government of Írán that the Bahá'ís are a political party', expressing 'consternation' at the executions of six Bahá'í men and ten Bahá'í women in Shíráz the previous month, and describing these executions as 'the product of unspeakable fanaticism'. (This was the European Parliament's fourth resolution concerning the plight of the Bahá'í community in Írán.) In November 1985, the European Parliament conducted public hearings on the human rights situation in Írán, at which Bahá'í witnesses gave moving testimony concerning the persecutions they themselves had suffered.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted resolutions concerning the situation in Írán at each of their annual meetings. All these resolutions contained specific references to the situation of the Bahá'í minority.

At its 1984 session, the Commission on Human Rights decided to appoint a special representative to study and report on the human rights situation in Írán. The following year, the Commission adopted a resolution which called for its special representative to present a report on the human rights situation in Írán, 'including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís', to the United Nations General Assembly at its next session. Following the presentation of this report and the debate which followed it, the General Assembly, on 13 December 1985, adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Írán which contained specific references to the Bahá'ís. This was an historic development in the recognition of the Faith and in the defence of the long-persecuted Bahá'í community in Írán—and an historic moment, too, in the annals of the United Nations, since it was the first occasion on which any minority group suffering human rights violations had been specifically named in a General Assembly resolution.

At its 1986 session, the Commission on Human Rights took up the matter once again when it conducted its annual review of situations representing gross violations of human rights. It decided to renew the mandate of its special representative on Írán and again asked him to present a report to the General Assembly which, on 4 December 1986, adopted a resolution very similar to the one it had adopted the previous year.

In addition to the adoption of the above resolutions, the efforts of the Bahá'í International Community, in collaboration with National Spiritual Asemblies resulted in, or contributed to: (1) démarches by Governments to the Iranian authorities in Írán; (2) debates in national parliaments; (3) debates at the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities concerning the plight of the Iranian Bahá'í community; and (4) numerous media reports of the persecutions in Írán.

The Bahá'í International Community provided information and made a formal representation to the Commission on Human Rights Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances concerning Bahá'ís who had disappeared in Írán, invoked the intervention of the Commission's Special Rapporteur on Summary or Arbitrary Executions in cases of Bahá'ís under sentence of death, and submitted evidence to the International Labour Office (ILO) concerning the discriminatory employment practices of the Iranian Government in relation to Bahá'ís. The Bahá'í International Community also made appropriate representations to the members of the Human Rights Committee (the body of experts responsible for monitoring compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) in connection with the banning of Bahá'í administrative institutions in Írán and the torture of Bahá'ís in Iranian prisons.

The Bahá'í International Community published various materials concerning the persecutions in Írán which were distributed at United Nations meetings and to National Spiri-

tual Assemblies. These included a July 1983 update to *The Bahá'ís in Iran: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious Minority*, and a booklet entitled *Persecution of the Bahá'ís in Iran, 1979–1985: A 6-Year Campaign to Eliminate a Religious Minority*, which was published in September 1985 for use at the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

*Refugee activities*

The steady flow of Iranian Bahá'í refugees seeking asylum in other countries necessitated the development of contacts and effective relationships with international organs responsible for the resettlement of refugees. Accordingly, in 1984, a Refugee Desk was established at the European Branch Office of the Bahá'í International Community in Geneva. The Refugee Desk worked closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Intergovernmental Committee on Migration, and also liaised with the National Spiritual Assemblies of countries which had indicated their willingness to accept Bahá'í refugees. Following the establishment of the International Bahá'í Refugee Office (IBRO) in Toronto, the role of the Bahá'í International Community in refugee activities consisted primarly of liaising with UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva on matters of general refugee policy and dealing with cases specifically referred to it by IBRO.

*Problem situations in countries other than Írán*

As in previous years, the Bahá'í International Community was active in situations where Bahá'í communities were experiencing problems in countries other than Írán. Two major problem situations were those which arose in Egypt and Morocco. United Nations representatives of the Bahá'í International Community met with the United Nations Ambassadors of those countries to discuss the situation and to request them to convey to their governments the Bahá'í International Community's concerns. Some National Spiritual Assemblies were called upon to approach the Ambassadors of the same countries in their capitals. When these actions failed to produce the necessary results, the Bahá'í International Community coordinated the efforts of a number of National Spiritual Assemblies to enlist the support of their governments and seek their intervention with the Egyptian and Moroccan authorities.

The Bahá'í International Community was also involved in efforts to resolve less severe problem situations which arose in a number of other countries.

*Contribution to human rights issues*

Since 1970, when it obtained consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Bahá'í International Community has regularly participated in meetings of the Commission on Human Rights (one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council) and of the Commission's subsidiary organ, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. During the Seven Year Plan, the Bahá'í International Community delivered statements at the annual meetings of these bodies on a wide range of human rights issues, including racism; religious intolerance; the right to development; rights of the child, of minorities, of the mentally ill, of indigenous populations and of the disabled; genocide; torture; and the status of the individual in contemporary international law. In addition, the major concerns of the Bahá'í International Community—the elimination of racism and religious intolerance—found expression respectively in the United Nations Second World Conference to Eliminate Racism and Racial Discrimination, held in 1983, and in the United Nations Seminar on the Encouragement of Understanding, Tolerance and Respect in Matters Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief, held in 1984. The Bahá'í International Community also participated actively in five other seminars on human rights topics.

*Recognition of the Faith*

The activities of the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations have contributed directly to efforts to gain recognition for the Faith in a number of countries. These activities have included contacts with Ambassadors of the relevant countries as well as visits by Bahá'í International Community representatives to some of these countries for meetings with high level government officials. It is often through such interventions—made possible by the respect in which the Bahá'í Inter-

national Community is held at the United Nations, because of its constructive contribution to the issues on the United Nations agenda—that the true nature of the Faith can be conveyed to government officials, thus contributing to its recognition and protection.

*Bahá'í International Community representative Mr. Giovanni Ballerio speaking during the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders held in Milan, Italy in August/September 1985.*

## ANNEX I

# UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES, CONGRESSES, SESSIONS AND SEMINARS IN WHICH THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATED
## 1983–1986

1. 39th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Bangkok, 19–29 April 1983.
   Rep.: Mr. Mark Starrs.
2. First Regular Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), New York, 3–27 May 1983.
   Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki.
3. 11th session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi, 11–29 May 1983.
   Reps.: Mrs. Catherine M'boya, Mr. George Olinga, Mr. Anthony J. Vodraska, Mr. Charles Mung'onye, Dr. Tim Rost, Mrs. Forough Olinga, Dr. Donald Peden, Mr. Bonaventure Wafula.
4. 6th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UNCHS), Espoo, Helsinki, Finland, 25 April–6 May 1983.
   Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Laura Jansson, Mr. Henrik Jansson, Mr. Harri Peltola, Mr. Harri Saajanlehto, Dr. Habib'u'llah Zabihian, Mr. Matti Vesamaa.
5. Sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VI); Belgrade, 6 June–3 July 1983.
   Rep.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.
6. 9th Ministerial Session of the World Food Council, New York, 27–30 June 1983.
   Rep.: Dr. Victor de Araujo.
7. Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, Geneva, 1–12 August 1983.
   Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mr. Rebbi Teclemariam, Mrs. Machid Fatio, Miss Agnes Do Thi Nuang Tam, Mr. Jagdissa Appado, Mrs. Jorun Hagen, Miss Micheline Belmont.
8. 36th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva, August 1983.
   Reps.: Mr. Gerald Knight, Mrs. Margaret Knight, Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Machid Fatio.
9. European Regional Meeting dedicated to the International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace, Costinesti, Romania, 5–9 September 1983.
   Rep.: Mrs. Machid Fatio.
10. United Nations Department of Public Information Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, New York, 13–15 September 1983.
    Reps.: Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mr. Gerald Knight, Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Betty de Araujo.
11. Preparatory Conference for 1984 UN International Population Conference, Geneva, 13–15 September 1983.
    Rep.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.
12. Latin America Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, San Jose, Costa Rica, 10–14 October 1983.
    Rep.: Lic. Rachell Constante.
13. International Seminar on 'Violence in the Family', sponsored by the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice together with the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch); Vienna, 21 November 1983.
    Rep.: Dr. Agnes Ghaznavi-Fischer.
14. African Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Addis Ababa, 28 November–2 December 1983.
    Reps.: Mr. Gila Bahra, Mr. Belete Worku.
15. Expert Group Meeting Women Promoting Peace, Organized by the UN Commission for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA), Vienna, 5–9 December 1983.
    Reps.: Mrs. Joyce Booman, Mrs. Otti Käfer.
16. One Day Open Discussion on Channels of Communication between the United Nations and Youth, Vienna, 11 January 1984.
    Rep.: Mr. Klaus Lintschinger.
17. 22nd session of the UN Population Commission, New York, 18–20 January and 23–27 January 1984.
    Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki.
18. UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 8th special session, Vienna, 6–10 February 1984.
    Reps.: Mr. Klaus Lintschinger, Mrs. Joyce Booman, Mrs. Otti Käfer.
19. 30th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Vienna, 15–24 February 1984.
    Reps.: Mrs. Otti Käfer, Mr. Roland Philipp, Mrs. Joyce Booman, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger, Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Machid Fatio.
20. UN Commission on the Status of Women acting as Preparatory Body for 1985 World Conference, Vienna, 27 February–7 March 1984.
    Reps.: Mrs. Otti Käfer, Mrs. Joyce Booman, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger.
21. 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, February–March 1984.
    Reps.: Mr. Gerald Knight, Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Machid Fatio.
22. UN Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, 8th session, Vienna, 21–30 March 1984.
    Reps.: Mr. Roland Philipp, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger.
23. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievement of the UN Decade for Women, Tokyo, 26–30 March 1984.
    Reps.: Mrs. Kimiko Schwerin, Mrs. Mahin Moghbel, Mrs. Marie Yazdani, Mrs. Chiyo Suzuki, Mrs. Yoko Ishihara.
24. 20th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Lima, Peru, 29 March–6 April 1984.
    Reps.: Mr. César A. Loayza, Mr. Enrique L. Sanchez.
25. Advisory Committee for the United Nations International Youth Year (IYY), 3rd session, Vienna, 2–11 April 1984.
    Rep.: Mr. Klaus Lintschinger.
26. 40th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Tokyo, 17–27 April 1984.
    Rep.: Mrs. Kimiko Schwerin, Dr. Toshio Suzuki.
27. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board Session, Rome, 24 April–4 May 1984.
    Rep.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.
28. First Regular Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), 1–25 May 1984.
    Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki.

29. 7th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UNCHS), Libreville, Gabon, 30 April–11 May 1984.
Reps.: Mr. George Allen, Mr. Alexandre Mayombo.
30. 12th session on the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi, 16–29 May 1984.
Reps.: Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Dr. Tim Rost, Mr. Bonaventure Wafula, Dr. Donald Peden, Mrs. Deborah Christensen, Mrs. Catherine M'boya, Mr. Mehraz Ehasni.
31. 37th World Health Assembly, Geneva, 7–18 May 1984.
Rep.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.
32. 10th Ministerial Session of the World Food Council, Addis Ababa, 11–15 June 1984.
Rep.: Mr. Belete Worku.
33. Non-Governmental Organizations Consultative Meeting on the International Year of Peace, Bucharest, Romania, 3–5 July 1984.
Rep.: Mrs. Hermine Mayer (Berdjis).
34. Informal Meeting of Organizations Concerned with Family Issues sponsored by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; Vienna, 12 July 1984.
Reps.: Mr. Roland Philipp, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger.
35. 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva, July–August 1984.
Reps.: Mr. Gerald Knight, Mrs. Machid Fatio.
36. UN International Conference on Population, Mexico City, 6–14 August 1984.
Reps.: ENG. Frank Shessy, Dr. Robert Michael Porter, Dr. Siegfried Grouppe.
37. United Nations Department of Public Information Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, New York, 5–7 September 1984.
Reps.: Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mr. Gerald Knight, Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Betty de Araujo.
38. United Nations Inter-Regional Seminar on Rural Women, Vienna, 17–18 September 1984.
Reps.: Mrs. Otti Käfer, Mrs. Joyce Booman.
39. Inter-regional Seminar on 'Changing Families: Relevant Social Welfare Strategies', Moscow, 1–13 October 1984.
Rep.: Dr. Agnes Ghaznavi Fischer.
40. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Regional Intergovernmental Meeting for Africa in Preparation for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women, Arusha, Tanzania, 8–12 October 1984.
Reps.: Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, Mrs. Catherine M'boya, Mrs. Deborah Christensen.
41. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Regional Preparatory meeting for 1985 World Conference, Vienna, 15–19 October 1984.
Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Otti Käfer.
42. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean in Preparation for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Havana, 19–23 November 1984.
Reps.: Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mrs. Theresa MacGregor.
43. United Nations Seminar on the Encouragement of Understanding, Tolerance and Respect in Matters Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief, Geneva, 3–14 December 1984.
Rep.: Mr. Brian Lepard.
44. UN Regional Seminar in Preparation for the International Year of Peace, Addis Ababa, 8–11 January 1985.
Rep.: Mrs. Alasebu Gebre Selassie.
45. United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) Board of Trustees Meeting, 5th session, Havana, Cuba, 28 January–1 February 1985.
Rep.: Mrs. Mary Sawicki.
46. Global Meeting on Environment and Development for Non-Governmental Organizations, Nairobi, 4–8 February 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Donald Peden, Mr. Richard Mandara, Mrs. Deborah Christensen, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mrs. Margaret Ogembo.
47. 31st session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 31st Session, Vienna, 11–20 February 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Roland Philipp, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger, Mrs. Otti Käfer.
48. UN Informal Meeting of Organizations concerned with Family Issues, Vienna, 15 February 1985.
Rep.: Mr. Klaus Lintschinger.
49. 23rd session of the UN Population Commission, New York, 19–28 February 1985.
Rep.: Mr. Mark Wentzel.
50. 41st session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, February–March 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Gerald Knight, Mrs. Machid Fatio, Mr. Eric Fienieg.
51. Regional Seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Preparation for the International Year of Peace, New York, 25–28 February 1985.
Rep.: Dr. Victor de Araujo.
52. Third Session of the Preparatory Body for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, Vienna, 4–13 March 1985.
Reps.: Mrs. Otti Käfer, Mrs. Neda Forghani.
53. 41st Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Bangkok, 19–29 March 1985.
Reps.: Dr. John Fozdar, Mrs. Shirley Govindasamy, Dr. Thavil Panalaks, Dr. Mark Starrs.
54. Advisory Committee for the UN International Youth Year (IYY), 4th session, Vienna, 25 March–4 April 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Klaus Lintschinger, Mrs. Neda Forghani.
55. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board Session, New York, 15–26 April 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mr. Paul Öjermark, Mrs. Betty de Araujo.
56. 9th session of the UN Committee on Natural Resources, New York, 8–17 April 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Paul Öjermark, Mr. Mark Wentzel.
57. 40th session of the Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva, 16–27 April 1985.
Rep.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.
58. 20th session of the Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, 25–29 April 1985.
Reps.: Mrs. Alasebu Gebre Selassie, Mr. Berhane Gila, Mr. Abaineh Merhatsion.
59. Eighth Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, (UNCHS), Kingston, Jamaica, 29 April–10 May 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Charles Carnegie, Mrs. Irene Hollar.
60. European Regional Seminar for the International Year of Peace, Vienna, 6–10 May 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Neda Forghani.
61. First Regular Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), 7 May–20 June 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mr. Paul Öjermark.
62. 38th World Health Assembly, Geneva, 10–11 May 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Dr. Mehry Rassekh, Dr. John-Paul Vader, Dr. Manoutchere Bahy.
63. 13th session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi, 14–24 May 1985.
Rep.: Dr. Donald Peden.
64. International Year of Peace Seminar for the Asia and

Pacific and Western Asia Regions, Bangkok, 20–24 May 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Mark Starrs, Mr. Thavil Panalaks, Mrs. Shirley Govindasamy.

65. 4th session of the UN High Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, New York, 28–31 May 1985.
Rep.: Miss Shiva Tavana.

66. 7th session of the UN Inter-governmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development, New York, 28 May–7 June 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Paul Öjermark, Miss Shiva Tavana.

67. 11th Ministerial Session of the World Food Council, Paris, 10–13 June 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Françoise Teclemariam.

68. World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, Nairobi, 13–26 July 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Magdalene Carney, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mrs. Catherine M'boya, Dr. Ethel Martens, Mrs. Shomais Afnan, Mr. Richard Mandara, Dr. Jane Faily.

69. Sub-Commission: Working Group on Indigenous Population, Geneva, 29 July–2 August 1985.
Rep.: Mrs. Machid Fatio.

70. 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva, July–August 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Gerald Knight, Mrs. Machid Fatio.

71. 2nd Latin American/Caribbean Regional Meeting for International Youth Year (IYY), Montevideo, Uruguay, 26–30 August 1985.
Reps.: Miss Alma Alzola, Mr. Hushidar Ettehadolhagh, Miss Raquel Bessonart, Miss Sima Baher.

72. Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August–6 September 1985.
Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Dr. Udo Schaefer.

73. United Nations Department of Public Information Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, New York, 4–6 September 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Betty de Araujo, Mr. Gerald Knight, Mrs. Margaret Knight, Mr. Paul Öjermark, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mr. Mark Wentzel, Mr. Brian Lepard, Mrs. Kate Weisman, Mrs. Mary Hardy, Mr. Hugh Locke.

74. Seminar on Community Relations Commission and Their Functions, Geneva, 9–20 September 1985.
Reps.: Mr. James Taylor.

75. Non-Governmental Committee on Family Issues, Vienna, 4 October 1985.
Rep.: Mrs. Neda Forghani.

76. Third Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Welfare and Social Development, Bangkok, 9–15 October 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Thavil Panalaks, Mrs. Shirley Govindasamy, Dr. Peter Smith.

77. Inter-governmental Group on the Least Developed Countries, 6th session, Geneva, 30 September–11 October 1985.
Rep.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.

78. International Conference on Families in the Face of Urbanization (Sponsored by the Ministry of Works and Housing, the Government of India; International Union of Family Organisations (IUFO), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), New Delhi, India, 2–5 December 1985.
Reps.: Dr. Pattabi Raman, Mrs. Hanju Kim-Farley, Dr. Jagdish Gandhi.

79. Reconvened Special Session of the Commission on Transnational Corporations, New York, 20–31 January 1986.
Reps.: Mr. Paul Öjermark, Mr. Mark Wentzel.

80. UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 9th Special Session, Vienna, 10–14 February 1986.
Reps.: Mr. Roland Philipp, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger, Mrs. Otti Käfer.

81. UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Acting as a Preparatory Body for 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, 1st session, Vienna, 17–21 February 1986.
Reps.: Mr. Roland Philipp, Mr. Klaus Lintschinger, Mrs. Otti Käfer.

82. 42nd Session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, February–March 1986.
Reps.: Mr. Gerald Knight, Mrs Machid Fatio, Miss Diane Ala'i.

83. United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, 31st session, Vienna, 24 February–5 March 1986.
Rep.: Mrs. Neda Forghani.

84. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board Session, New York, 14–16 April 1986.
Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Betty de Araujo, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mr. Paul Öjermark, Mrs. Melinda Öjermark.

85. Twenty-First session of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Twelfth meeting of the Conference of Ministers, Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon, 17–21 April, 1986.
Reps.: Mrs. Henriette Epee, Dr. Albert Lincoln, Dr. Dion Ngute, Mr. Eyong Tata.

86. Twenty-first session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico City, Mexico, 17–25 April 1986.
Reps.: Mr. Siegfried Grouppe, Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Dr. Michal Porter, Mrs. Maria Jimenez de Porter.

## ANNEX II

## OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, CONGRESSES, SEMINARS AND MEETINGS IN WHICH THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATED 1983–1986

1. Planning and Evaluation Committee of the South Pacific Commission, Noumea, New Caledonia, 25–27 May 1983.
Rep.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock.

2. 23rd South Pacific Conference, Saipan, 1–7 October 1983.
Rep.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock.

3. General Congress of the International Catholic Child Bureau, Geneva, 23–25 November 1983.
Rep.: Mrs. Machid Fatio.

4. Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations of the South Pacific Commission (CRGA) (Formerly the Planning and Evalu-

ation Committee), Noumea, New Caledonia, 23–25 May 1984.
Rep.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock.

5. 22nd International Conference on Social Welfare—Social Welfare in a World Crisis—Perceptions and Responsibilities, Montreal, Canada, 5–11 August 1984.
Rep.: Dr. Ethel Martens.
6. 24th South Pacific Conference, Noumea, New Caledonia, 15–19 October 1984.
Rep.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock.
7. 34th International Congress on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (Sponsored by the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions, hosted by the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission), Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 4–10 August 1985.
Rep.: Dr. A. Ghadirian.
8. South Pacific Commission Regional Seminar on Women in Development, Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 18–33 March 1985.
Reps.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mrs. Nga Makirere.
9. International Youth Conference for the United Nations International Youth Year (IYY), sponsored by the Government of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica, 6–9 April 1985.
Reps.: Miss Shiva Tavana, Mr. Dalton Nelson, Mrs. Helen Mirkovich de Sanchez.
10. Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations of the South Pacific Commission (CRGA), Noumea, New Caledonia, 20–24 May 1985.
Reps.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mr. Timcoi Serevi.
11. 18th World Conference of the Society for International Development, Rome, 1–4 July 1985.
Rep.: Mr. Paul Öjermark.
12. IX World Forestry Congress, Mexico City, 1–11 July 1985.
Reps.: Mrs. Maria Jiminez, Mr. Farshid Hakimi, Dr. Michael Porter.
13. South Pacific Regional Conference on Effects of Alcohol, sponsored by the South Pacific Commission, Noumea, New Caledonia, 9–13 September 1985.
Rep.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock.
14. 25th South Pacific Conference, Honiara, Solomon Islands, 30 September–4 October 1985.
Reps.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mr. Timoci Serevi.
15. University of the South Pacific's First International Conference on Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies, Suva, Fiji, 30 December 1985.
Rep.: Mr. Jameson Bond.

## ANNEX III

## STATEMENTS, REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS PRESENTED BY THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY 1983–1986

1. 'Bahá'í Activities in Rural Development in the South Pacific Region', paper presented at the South Pacific Commission's Planning and Evaluation Committee meeting in Noumea, New Caledonia, 25–27 May 1983, and at the 23rd South Pacific Conference in Saipan, 1–7 October 1983.
2. Statement to the Sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VI); Belgrade, 6 June–3 July 1983. (E/F/S).
3. Oral statement to the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination under agenda item 12 (b): Action in the field of education, culture, research and information ... etc.; Geneva, 5 August 1983.
4. Oral statement to the plenary meeting of the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (Summary of Bahá'í International Community activities undertaken in fulfillment of the goals enumerated in the 1973 Program for the Decade for Action ... and the Programme for Action adopted at the 1978 World Conference); Geneva, 4 August 1983.
5. Oral statement to the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination under agenda item 11: Main obstacles to the full eradication of racism, racial discrimination and *apartheid*; Geneva, 5 August 1983.
6. Written statement to the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (Efforts to promote racial unity, the role of education and proposal for a model curriculum on the Oneness of Mankind); Geneva, 1–12 August 1983. (E/F/S).
7. Oral statement to the 36th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities under agenda item 6: Question of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; Geneva, 19 August 1983.
8. Oral statement to the 36th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on racism, under agenda item 5 (a): Measures to combat racism and racial discrimination and the role of the Sub-Commission; Geneva, 17 August 1983.
9. Oral statement to the 36th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 15: Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance; Geneva, 24 August 1983.
10. 'The Situation of the Family in a Changing Socio-Economic and Cultural Context', working paper presented to the International Seminar on 'Violence in the Family', sponsored by the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice together with the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch); Vienna, 21 November 1983.
11. Written statement to the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 13: Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child (E/CN.4/1984/NGO/2); Geneva, 31 January 1984.
12. Oral statement to the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 8: Question of the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Geneva, 17 February 1984.
13. Oral statement to the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 17 (b): Implementation of the Program for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination; Geneva, 15 February 1984. (E/F/S).
14. Written statement to the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights submitted under agenda item 20: Rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious

and linguistic minorities (E/CN.4/1984/ NGO/39); Geneva, 24 February 1984. (E/F/S).

15. Written statement to the 30th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, under agenda item 6: Participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of International Peace and Security (UN document E/CN.6/1984/NGO/1); Vienna, 15 February 1984.
16. Oral statement to the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 12: Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world...; Geneva, 8 March 1984.
17. Oral statement to the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 23: Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief; Geneva, 15 March 1984. (E/F/S).
18. Statement to the ESCAP Regional Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievement of the UN Decade for Women (Bahá'í view on the regional progress made in the advancement of women's role and status; the obstacles yet to be overcome toward attainment of the goal of the Decade; and, regional issues, priorities, and action strategies looking to the year 2000); Tokyo, 26–30 March 1984.
19. Written statement to the 1984 Session of the Executive Board of The United Nations Children's Fund, under agenda item 3: Policy Review: UNICEF Response to Women's Concerns; Rome, 24 April–4 May 1984.
20. Written statement submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1984, under agenda item 10: Human Rights (E/1984/NGO/5); New York, 15 May 1984. (E/F/S).
21. Submission to the UN Centre for Human Rights, in response to the questionnaire prepared by the Special Rapporteur, Mrs. Erica-Irene Daes, in connection with her study on 'The status of the individual and contemporary international law'; May 1984.
22. A summary of information submitted pursuant to United Nations Centre for Human Rights letter of 16 December 1983, on activities undertaken or contemplated by the Bahá'í International Community in connection with the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination: April 1984; contained in document E/1984/56/Add.1 of the Economic and Social Council, entitled: 'Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination: Report of the Secretary-General'; 3 May 1984.
23. 'Environmental Action at the Grassroots', statement to the 12th session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Program; Nairobi, Kenya; 16–29 May 1984. (E/F).
24. Oral statement to the 7th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, under agenda item 6: Activities of IYSH; Libreville, Gabon, 4 May 1984.
25. Statement presented to the United Nations World Food Council, Tenth Ministerial Session; Addis Ababa, 15 June 1984.
26. 'Bahá'í International Community Contributions to the International Year of Peace', statement submitted to the NGO Consultative Meeting on the International Year of Peace, Bucharest, 3–5 July 1984.
27. Oral 'Statement on Family' given at the Informal Meeting of Organizations Concerned with Family Issues sponsored by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; Vienna, 12 July 1984.
28. 'Prevention of Drug Abuse: A Bahá'í Perspective', by A.M. Ghadirian, M.D., presented at the 34th International Congress on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 4–10 August 1985.
29. Oral statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities under agenda item 15(a): The status of the individual and contemporary international law; Geneva, 10 August 1984. (E/F/S).
30. Oral statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 5(a): Measures to combat racism and racial discrimination and the role of the Sub-Commission; Geneva, 14 August 1984. (E/F/S).
31. Written statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities submitted under agenda item 9: Human rights and scientific and technological developments (UN Document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1984/NGO/4); Geneva, 14 August 1984. (E/F/S).
32. Oral statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities rights, under agenda item 11: The New International Economic Order and the promotion of human rights; Geneva, 20 August 1984. (E/F/S).
33. Oral statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 6: Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms...; Geneva, 21 August 1984.
34. Oral statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 14: Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief; Geneva, 28 August 1984. (E/F/S).
35. Written statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities submitted under agenda item 10: Study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1984/NGO/8); Geneva, 29 August 1984. (E/F/S).
36. Written statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities submitted under agenda item 14: Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1984/NGO/7); Geneva, 29 August 1984. (E/F/S).
37. Written statement to the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 4: Review of further developments in fields with which the Sub-Commission has been concerned (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1984/NGO/9); Geneva, 31 August 1984. (E/F/S).
38. Paper presented at the Inter-regional Seminar on National Experience Relating to the Improvement in the Situation of Women in Rural Areas; Vienna, Austria, September, 1984.
39. 'Social and Economic Development: The Bahá'í Contribution', paper prepared for the United Nations Department of Public Information Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations ('New Approaches to Development: Building a Just World'); New York, New York, U.S.A., 5–7 September 1984. (E/F).
40. Statement prepared for the Inter-regional Seminar on 'Changing Families: Relevant Social Welfare Strategies'; Moscow, 1–13 October 1984.
41. Statement to the ECA Regional Intergovernmental Meeting for Africa in preparation for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women; Arusha, Tanzania, 6–12 October 1984. (E/F/S).
42. Statement submitted to the ECLAC Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean in preparation for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace; Havana, 19–23 November 1984. (E/F/S).
43. 'Towards Universal Tolerance in matters relating to Religion or belief', working paper submitted to the

UN Seminar on the Encouragement of Understanding, Tolerance and Respect in Matters Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief (HR/GENEVA/1984/WP.9); Geneva, 3–14 December 1984.

44. Written proposal for revised article 17 of the draft Convention on the Rights of the Child, submitted to the Working Group on the Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child at the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 13: Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child (E/CN.4/1985/WG.1/WP.2); Geneva, 23 January 1985.
45. Oral statement to the Working Group on the Question of a Convention of the Rights of the Child at the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 13: Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child; Geneva, 31 January 1985.
46. Statement to the Global Conference on Environment and Development for Non-Governmental Organizations; Nairobi, 4–8 February 1985.
47. Working paper on the question of a definition of the term 'minority,' submitted to the Working Group on Minorities of the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 20: Rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (E/CN.4/1985/WG.5/WP.1); Geneva, 11 February 1985.
48. Oral statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 17(b): Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination; Geneva, 12 February 1985.
49. Written statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, submitted under agenda item 20: Rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (E/CN.4/1985/NGO/22); Geneva, 18 February 1985.
50. Oral statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 15: Role of youth in the promotion and protection of human rights; Geneva, 21 February 1985.
51. Oral statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 10(a): Torture and other cruel, inhuman degrading treatment or punishment; Geneva, 25 February 1985.
52. Oral statement on 'Preparation for Life in Peace' presented to the Regional Seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Preparation for the International Year of Peace (Agenda Item 2); New York, 26 February 1985. (E/F/S).
53. Oral statement on 'Peace and Disarmament' presented to the Regional Seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Preparation for the International Year of Peace (Agenda Item 3); New York, 27 February 1985. (E/F/S).
54. Written statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, submitted under agenda item 23: Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (E/CN.4/1985/NGO/47); Geneva, 27 February 1985.
55. Oral statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 8: Question of the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights...; Geneva, 6 March 1985.
56. Oral statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 12: Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world...; Geneva, 7 March 1985.
57. Oral statement to the 41st session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 23: Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief; Geneva, 13 March 1985.
58. Paper presented to the Pacific NGO's Women's Regional Meeting to Formulate Strategies for Women and Development in the Pacific; Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 19–22 March 1985.
59. Statement delivered to the 41st Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Bahá'í view on community participation at the local level); Bangkok, 19–29 March 1985.
60. Comments and Views Submitted in Response to the Letter Dated 26 November 1984 from the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, concerning the rights of indigenous populations; April 1985.
61. 'The Contribution of Youth to World Peace', statement by the Bahá'í International Community to the International Youth Conference, Kingston, Jamaica; 6–9 April 1985. (E/F/S).
62. Statement of the Bahá'í International Community to the UNICEF Executive Board (Item 3: Policy Review: UNICEF Response to Women's Concerns); New York, 16 April 1985.
63. Statement to the 20th session of the Economic Commission for Africa, under agenda item 8: Relaunching the initiative for long term growth and development in Africa; Addis Ababa, 25–29 April 1985. (E/F).
64. Statement to the Eighth Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, under agenda item 5: Planning and management of human settlements with emphasis on small and intermediate towns and local growth points; Kingston, Jamaica, 29 April–10 May 1985. (E/F/S).
65. 'Preparation for Life in Peace', statement prepared for the European Regional Seminar for the International Year of Peace; Vienna, 6–10 May 1985.
66. Statement to the Thirteenth Session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme; Nairobi, 14–24 May 1985.
67. Statement to the meeting of the South Pacific Commission's Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA), Noumea, New Caledonia, 20–24 May 1985.
68. 'Peace and Development', statement prepared for the Internationl Year of Peace Seminar for the Asia and Pacific and Western Asia Regions; Bangkok, 20–24 May 1985. (E/F).
69. 'Preparation for Life in Peace', statement prepared for the International Year of Peace Seminar for the Asia and Pacific and Western Asia Regions; Bangkok, 20–24 May 1985. (E/F/S).
70. 'Statement of the Bahá'í International Community to the World Commission on Environment Development', submitted in response to the letter of 8 March 1985 from the Secretary-General of the World Commission on Environment and Development; Geneva, June 1985.
71. Statement to the Eleventh Ministerial Session of the World Food Council; Paris, 10–13 June 1985. (E/F/S).
72. 'Values, Culture and Development: The Bahá'í Approach', by Gregory C. Dahl, paper distributed at the 18th World Conference of the Society for International Development, Rome, 1–4 July 1985.
73. Report submitted on 'Activities in the Bahá'í World Community to improve the Status of Women during the United Nations Decade for Women...' to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, under item 8 of the Provisional Agenda: Forward looking strategies of implementation for the advancement of women...; Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985. (E/F/S).
74. Working paper submitted to the Working Group on Mental Ill-Health at the 38th session of the Sub-Com-

mission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 10: Human rights and scientific and technological developments (UN document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/WG.3/NGO/1); Geneva, 25 July 1985.

75. Written statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 16(a): The status of the individual and contemporary international law (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/NGO/1); Geneva, 25 July 1985.
76. Written statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 16(c): Prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/NGO/2); Geneva, 25 July 1985.
77. Written statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 17: Human rights and disability (UN document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/NGO/3); Geneva, 25 July 1985.
78. Written statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 11: Study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/NGO/5); Geneva, 25 July 1985.
79. Written statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 15: Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/NGO/7); Geneva, 29 July 1985.
80. Oral statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 5(a): Measures to combat racism and racial discrimination and the role of the Sub-Commission: Geneva, 9 August 1985.
81. Oral statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 10: Human rights and scientific and technological developments; Geneva, 12 August 1985.
82. Oral statement to the 38th Session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 4: Review of further developments in fields with which the Sub-Commission has been concerned; Geneva, 19 August 1985.
83. Oral statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 17: Human rights and disability; Geneva, 20 August 1985.
84. Oral statement to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 16(b): Draft body of principles and guidelines on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms; Geneva, 28 August 1985.
85. Statement submitted to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 15: Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief; Geneva, August 1985.
86. Statement submitted to the 38th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, under agenda item 12: The New International Economic Order and the promotion of human rights; Geneva, August 1985.
87. Statement to the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders; Milan, 26 August–6 September 1985.
88. Oral statement presented and written statement distributed *ex post facto* at the South Pacific Regional Conference on Effects of Alcohol, Noumea, New Caledonia, 9–13 September 1985.
89. Oral statement to the Seminar on Community Relations Commissions and their Functions, delivered under agenda item 5: Review of the possibilities for future exchanges of information and experience in the struggle against racial discrimination . . .; Geneva, 18 September 1985.
90. Statement to the 25th South Pacific Conference in Honiara, Solomon Islands, 30 September–4 October 1985.
91. Working Paper by Dr. Jameson Bond presented at the University of the South Pacific's First International Conference on Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies, Suva, Fiji, 30 December 1985–5 January 1986.
92. Statement to the Third Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Welfare and Social Development, under agenda item 5: Social effects of contemporary development; Bangkok, 9–15 October 1985.
93. Written proposal for draft article 1 of the revised draft Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, submitted to the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 20: Rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (UN document E/CN.4/1986/WG.5/WP.1); Geneva, 8 January 1986.
94. Oral statement to the Working Group on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms at the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights, delivered under agenda item 12: Draft declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms; Geneva, 29 January 1986.
95. Oral statement to the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights on racism, delivered under agenda item 17(b): Implementation of the Program of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination; Geneva, 12 February 1986.
96. Oral statement to the Working Group on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities at the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights, delivered under agenda item 20: Rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities; Geneva, 17 February 1986.
97. Oral statement to the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights on human rights and scientific and technological developments, delivered under agenda item 15: Human rights and scientific and technological developments; Geneva, 18 February 1986.
98. Oral statement to the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights on the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, delivered under agenda item 8: Question of the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights . . .; Geneva, 19 February 1986.
99. Oral statement to the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of religious intolerance, delivered under agenda item 23: Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief; Geneva, 24 February 1986.
100. Oral statement to the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights on the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, delivered under agenda item 12: Question of the violation of human rights in any part of the world; Geneva, 5 March 1986.
101. Oral statement to the 42nd session of the Commission

on Human Rights on torture, delivered under agenda item 10(a): Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; Geneva, 12 March 1986.

102. 'The Bahá'i International Community and World Peace', statement presented to the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on the University for Peace, March 1986.
103. Statement distributed at the Bahá'i International Community exhibit at the joint UNICEF/Non-Governmental Organizations Exhibition at UN headquarters on 'Educating Children for Peace', New York, 16 April 1986.
104. Bahá'i International Community Statement to the Twenty-first session of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Twelfth meeting of the Conference of Ministers, Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon, 17–21 April, 1986. (E/F/S).
105. Bahá'i International Community Statement to the Twenty-first session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico City, Mexico, 17–25 April 1986. (E/S).

## STATEMENTS MADE JOINTLY WITH OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Joint-statement of NGOs presented at the International Conference on Population; Mexico City, Mexico; 6–13 August 1984.
2. Commission on the Status of Women, acting as The Preparatory Body for the World Conference To Review and Appraise the Achievements of The United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, and Peace Second Session. Vienna, 27 February–7 March 1984.
3. Statement to the Eighth Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, under agenda item 6: International Year of Shelter for the Homeless; Kingston, 29 April–10 May 1985.
4. Statements submitted to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, 31st session, 'Role of Women in Development', and 'Results of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace'; Vienna, 24 February–5 March 1986.

*Bahá'í International Community representatives to the European Regional Seminar for the International Year of Peace, held in Vienna, Austria, in May 1985; Mr. Giovanni Ballerio (second row, first from right); and Mrs. Neda Forghani (third row, first from right).*

# 3. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY IN ADVANCING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

A Report of the Bahá'í International Community for the United Nations Decade for Women, 1976–1985

ONE of the signs of the complete emancipation of women, for which Ṭáhirih sacrificed and for which generations of Bahá'í women have yearned and have prodigiously striven, will be the emergence of a universal recognition that a mature and healthy society can exist only when women are permitted to participate in its functioning, fully, freely, creatively, without male dominance or manipulation, and with total confidence and unimpaired self-esteem.

In the Bahá'í society, men are facilitators of female advancement, not power-holders who reluctantly accede to the pleas, petitions, or militant activities of women. They are full collaborators in the improvement of the condition of women in all areas of life. In the Bahá'í society, the emancipation of women is not a struggle between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', but a collaborative effort to bring the entire society to a higher spiritual and social level. This is a natural consequence of the spiritual mandate given in the Sacred Writings, binding on both men and women, and just as much a part of the ethical system of a Bahá'í as are the many other admonitions and exhortations that make up a Bahá'í's standard of behavior. This uniquely Bahá'í approach to the progress of women infuses the following report of the Bahá'í International Community.

Notwithstanding the obligation and the commitment of Bahá'ís of both sexes to advance the status of women, the Universal House of Justice has singled out the concept for special emphasis in its Riḍván messages since 1977. The result of these exhortations has been the adoption of a wide range of programs, measures, and practices, and endeavors to implement them—a massive response by the worldwide community, on many levels, from village to national capital. Efforts range from person-to-person programs for individual advancement to international conferences on the theme. By 1986, a total of 1,722 Local Spiritual Assemblies had reported the establishment of specific new programs to meet the needs of women.

When the United Nations Decade for Women was created, it seemed a perfect opportunity for Bahá'í involvement, for the diffusion of Bahá'í writings on the question, and a further spur to activity within the Bahá'í community; it proved to be, also, somewhat of a showcase for the considerable attainments of Bahá'í women as a group along the path of progress.

The following is a report submitted in June 1985 by the Bahá'í International Community to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held at Nairobi, Kenya, 15–26 July 1985. The report was received and circulated as a background document from a Non-Governmental Organization, the Bahá'í International Community, and submitted for Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda:[1]

'Forward looking strategies of implementation for the advancement of women for the period up to the year 2,000, and concrete measures to overcome the obstacles to achievements of the goals and objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, and the sub-themes: Employment, Health and Education, bearing in mind the International Strategy for the Third Development Decade and the establishment of a New International Economic Order.'

The report is entitled: 'Activities in the Bahá'í World Community to Improve the Status of Women during the United Nations Decade for Women, and Future Programs for the Development of Women.'

[1] It may be noted here that Mrs. Mary Sawicki, a Representative of the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations, served as Vice-Chairperson of the NGO Committee on the Decade for Women.

## Introduction

In October 1983, the Bahá'í International Community sent National Bahá'í Assemblies throughout the world a questionnaire inquiring about activities which their communities had organized during the United Nations Decade for Women to achieve equality of rights, privileges, and responsibilities for both sexes, as well as to report on obstacles that these communities had faced—and were still facing—in reaching this goal. The Assemblies were also asked to provide information on programs and activities for women which they were planning beyond the Decade.[2]

The present report draws on information received from 77 of the 143 National Assemblies canvassed, and comprises data from countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Australasia, and Europe. It is, therefore, quite representative of worldwide Bahá'í concern for the advancement of women, and of steps taken by Bahá'í communities to cooperate with the United Nations in its long-standing efforts to improve the status of women.

The responses received from both the 1973 and 1983 questionnaires confirm the necessity for the change in attitudes emphasized by the United Nations, as well as stressing the importance of education for the realization of the equality of men and women. They also indicate that Bahá'í communities are engaged in many innovative activities to foster the advancement of women—while maintaining unity in the family and in the community, conditions essential, in the Bahá'í view, for healthy progress in bringing about the equality of the sexes.

[Three questions were addressed in the 1984 responses: (1) During the past ten years, what have been your community's most successful activities to improve the condition of women in your country? What has made these activities effective? (2) What attitudes or traditions preventing the equality of men and women has your community found most difficult to change? (3) What are the most important ways in which your community can assist in the development of women in the years ahead? Can your Assembly share with us your plans for future programs? The present report is drawn primarily from the answers to question three, inasmuch as it treats 'forward-looking strategies' and 'concrete measures', as called for in the agenda item.]

Bahá'í communities, while realistic in their assessment of obstacles to be overcome, are dedicated to a change in attitudes, and are working systematically and in a practical way to win the goal of equality of the sexes. They are dedicated to the education of women, even in preference to that of men, since women, as mothers, have such an important bearing on the life of future generations. In addition, they see the importance of women's potential for the accomplishment of peace and world order as women increasingly participate in all areas of community life.

It should be pointed out that all individual Bahá'ís and Bahá'í institutions are committed to the belief that the teachings of their Faith are invested with divine authority and that the principles of these teachings are the guidance toward which they continually turn for new insight and understanding. It is inevitable at this time in the history of the Bahá'í world community that there are wide differences in the understanding, as well as in the application, of these principles, and that the full appreciation of their significance, and their demonstration in action, are dependent upon many factors in the life of the individual and in society. Bahá'í communities, although very different one from another, since they include a wide diversity of cultural backgrounds, are also very similar. They express a unique unity in diversity, *unity* in that all accept Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of their Faith, as the Divine Prophet for this period in human history, and are committed to the world-view, principles and laws He has brought; *diversity* in that they are an unusual blend of nationalities, races, creeds, classes, and temperaments—all welcomed and appreciated in the Bahá'í Faith and its world community.

[2] An earlier questionnaire sent to National Bahá'í Assemblies in 1972 sought information on the degree of implementation in their communities of the principle of the equality of men and women. Replies received were summarized in a report entitled 'Preliminary Enquiry into the Status of Women in the Bahá'í World Community', circulated widely during the International Women's Year (1975) and at the IWY World Conference in Mexico City.

## During the U.N. Decade for Women (1976–1985)

The activities which have been undertaken by Bahá'í communities show wide diversity both because of the specific challenges posed in each society—the various ethnic and cultural backgrounds represented—as well as the fact that national Bahá'í communities are in different stages of growth and have greater or lesser strength in numbers.

The most frequently mentioned positive influence for the integration of women in community life, according to the questionnaire replies, has been the Bahá'í administrative order. Therefore, since the way in which these communities function is part of the learning process in which Bahá'ís voluntarily participate as they become voting members, a few words about the nature of the administrative order that fosters the development of the Bahá'í community are pertinent.

The administrative structure which Bahá'ís are finding so effective—now functioning in over 140 countries and in varied cultural environments representing 2,000 ethnic backgrounds—encourages universal participation, in consultation and decision-making, in the smallest community on up. An important element of this system is an election process by secret ballot, free from the practice of nominations and electioneering. Members of the local community elect by free choice those men and women they feel are best qualified to make decisions on a whole range of human concerns. The members are asked 'to consider without the least trace of passion and prejudice, and irrespective of any material consideration, the names of only those who can best combine the necessary qualities of unquestioned loyalty, of selfless devotion, of a well-trained mind, of recognized ability and mature experience'. The elected administrative council regularly consults with all members of the community at large, drawing from the diversity of viewpoints that necessarily exists in every situation. Once decisions of the council are reached by unanimous or majority vote, everyone in the community is committed to uphold them, ensuring in this way the unified support of the community at large. This joint decision-making process eliminates the evils of political partisanship that seek to undermine a plan of action, and prevents the influence of pressure groups promoting special interests.

The importance of the role which this administrative system has had in advancing women during the Decade can be seen in several observations drawn from a wide range of geographical areas.

In an East African country,[1] for instance, where the Bahá'í community experienced a significant growth in the past ten years, primarily at the grass roots level, it was reported that the development of the administrative order of the Bahá'í Faith had been 'a key factor in the involvement and participation of women', with 'more women serving on both appointed and elected Bahá'í institutions'. In another country, in West Africa,[2] it was noted that 'the equality of women had been enhanced by wider administrative experience', and that women are both 'included in most of the national and regional committees appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly', and 'also serve on many Local Assemblies'. It was further observed by the Bahá'í community of a Central African country[3] that the main activities organized by Bahá'í institutions to improve the conditions of women had 'often been successful because of the sustained efforts of the Local Bahá'í Assemblies', and that many women served actively in Bahá'í communities 'without experiencing discrimination'.

The questionnaire replies also indicated that it is not unusual for women to serve on National Bahá'í Assemblies as well as on Local Assemblies 'often as officers',[4] and that as they begin to function actively, 'they learn to take leadership roles'[5] and to participate 'without restriction in consultation and decision-making'[6] in the local national administrative functions of the Bahá'í community: 'Women both vote and are elected'.[7]

One of the clearest explanations of the changes occurring in women through their commitment to the teachings and principles of the

[1] Kenya.
[2] Nigeria.
[3] Central African Republic.
[4] Jamaica.
[5] Jamaica.
[6] Paraguay.
[7] Paraguay.

*The Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Kiberizi, Tanzania; 1986.*

Bahá'í Faith, and their involvement in the activities of the Bahá'í community, is found in the following reply:

'The very act of becoming a Bahá'í is the first major personal decision for most women in rural areas. Then, as they are deepened in the Bahá'í teachings and the role they are expected to play in Bahá'í administrative activity, they are changed from being passive members of an existing social order into dynamic members of a new order. Because of their functions in serving on Bahá'í administrative bodies and in voting and in being voted for and elected, women have made great strides in a largely male dominated society. An increasing number of local Bahá'í assemblies have women as members and local assemblies with all women members have also been reported.'[1]

Two additional comments help further to understand the process:

'The opportunity given to women to participate in the Bahá'í administrative institutions is a contributing factor in improving their condition.'[2]

'Though traditionally women do not take a real role in decision-making, Bahá'í women are elected to local and national administrative posts. As they serve in these positions, they educate other women.'[3]

The replies to the questionnaire also indicate that as a result of this administrative system the percentage of women participating as delegates to the Bahá'í national conventions, called yearly to elect the National Bahá'í Assemblies, has increased. One country, in fact, remarked on this 'significant increase' as a 'sign of change'.[4]

Also reported was the regular participation of women in increasing numbers, through election, on the National and Local Assemblies, and through appointment, on national and local committees. One country felt that an important contribution to the United Nations Decade for Women was the fact that 'women were serving on the Local Spiritual Assemblies and national committees'.[5] One reply[6] indicated that 'over one half of the present membership of local Bahá'í administrative bodies are women', and 'over thirty per cent of the membership

[1] India.
[2] Panama.
[3] Samoa.
[4] The Netherlands.
[5] United Kingdom.
[6] Hawaii.

of the National Assembly are women'. In another country[1] 'one third of the National Bahá'í Assembly are women', and, perhaps even more important, 'the percentage is about one fourth women on the Local Assemblies, and most of these Bahá'í communities are in rural areas'. Furthermore, 'one fourth of Bahá'í national committees are made up of women'.

The overall experience of Bahá'í communities would seem to indicate, as expressed in one specific case, that women 'share equal rights and participate fully in Bahá'í activities'.[2]

In addition, illiteracy has not been seen as a deterrent in the election of women to Bahá'í institutions, as indicated by the election, in one African country,[3] to the National Assembly of an illiterate villager (1976), an illiterate market woman (1977), and an illiterate housewife (1976). In 1983, the first of these three women was re-elected to the Assembly.

One comment sums up the impact of the Bahá'í administrative system on the development of the potentialities of women:

'Women are truly exercising to the full their privileges and responsibilities in the work of the community. The success of their efforts is due to a sense of dignity, spiritual assurance, education and the recognition of the role of women in all avenues of society. Since many women are involved in all aspects of Bahá'í administration and community life, this appears to be the area where the principle of equality bears the most fruit.'[4]

The recent replies to the questionnaire also indicate that conferences, institutes, seminars, school programs and study classes have played a prominent part in the education of men as well as women in Bahá'í families and communities. The establishment of tutorial schools, literacy training projects, sustained deepening programs, the publication of pertinent information in native languages, as well as the advantages of cross-cultural exposure, have all been of great benefit in Bahá'í communities. It is also apparent that Bahá'ís not only seek out information on medical advances, but actively promote principles of good nutrition, hygiene, and other beneficial health practices. Belief in the importance of both science and religion as aspects of one reality has led Bahá'ís to this commitment.

The importance which Bahá'ís place on the acquisition of moral and spiritual qualities as they seek to strengthen human character are seen to directly affect the development of men and women who come under Bahá'í influences. Bahá'í marriage laws, concepts of family unity, and the responsibility of all family members, a spirit of loving cooperation between men and women, and encouragement, assistance and support in Bahá'í communities, are important elements in the progress that Bahá'ís are making. It will be seen that all these communities work towards the equality of men and women, the strengthening of the family unit, and for the unity, order, and stability of the community.

## Beyond the Decade

As to future programs and activities to implement the long-range goals to which Bahá'ís are committed, many National Bahá'í Assemblies not only state their aims, but outline specific ways in which they intend to accomplish them. The orientation towards the advancement and development of women is clear; and the promise for future generations even more helpful, as Bahá'ís deepen in the understanding of the principles and teaching of their Faith, and educate their children in them as well.

### AFRICA

Plans involve a project for literacy classes in villages with the Bahá'í Youth Exchange, which would include women. There would also be collaboration with women's organizations to accomplish certain projects for women and girls during and after International Youth Year. A national women's conference is planned, to which Bahá'í women speakers from the French-speaking world will be invited. It is hoped that some of these women will come early, or remain

[1] El Salvador.
[2] Australia.
[3] Benin.
[4] New Zealand.

after the conference, to visit women in local Bahá'í communities, teaching and encouraging relevant local activities. Through collaboration with the United Nations and health and welfare agencies, new ideas will reach the Bahá'í women, and help them improve the conditions of their lives. (*Benin*)

Bahá'í women will be encouraged to take an active part in all social and economic development projects. The planning of national or regional conferences for women, institutes, and contacts with different women's organizations in the country are also considered important. The sensitizing of men regarding the role which women play in society—noticeably in education, health, peace, employment, and social and economic development of a nation—is another goal. (*Burkina Faso*)

Centers for women will continue to be maintained by the Bahá'ís. These include spiritual, health, and nutritional education, as well as literacy training for women. (*Central African Republic*)

The spiritual component in human and social development seems to be our main resource in The Gambia. Individuals as well as Bahá'í administrative institutions in The Gambia are cooperating with local, national, and international development efforts, offering professional expertise and Bahá'í principles. It would appear that the rapid strengthening of local Bahá'í communities is a necessity for the expansion of future programs. (*The Gambia*)

There will be an effort to involve Bahá'í women in local Bahá'í activities, to appoint women to committees, and to educate women through the organization of women's conferences. Vocational schools will be established to train women in relevant fields and to deepen understanding of the principles of the equality of men and women. (*Ghana*)

The most important way that women can be assisted is through the continued development of the Bahá'í administrative order, in particular, the establishment and strengthening of Local Bahá'í Assemblies. The evolving maturity of the Local Assemblies assures the increased involvement of women because of the basic principles of equality and universal participation. Specific activities include the encouragement of women to actively participate in all areas of community life, to increase the number of women's groups, both those of an informal

*A tree nursery demonstration during the National Women's Conference held in Nakuru, Kenya, in February 1985.*

nature and more formal, self-help cooperatives. To assist this development, suitable materials will be developed by the National Women's and Children's Committee, including those available from government ministries. The National Women's and Children's Committee has already in process a series of booklets designed for rural, semi-literate women. Topics include: creating a spiritual home, teaching good character, using discipline effectively, learning at home and at school, and raising healthy children. Materials available from government ministries are in areas of agriforestry, literacy, appropriate technology, and water programs. Conferences at the local, regional, and national levels, have been most effective tools for the development of women.

An indispensable factor in bringing about equality of women is the understanding on the part of men of the role they play; increased emphasis will be given to the role of men in realizing the principle of equality.

*Sewing classes conducted by Bahá'ís for women on the Lothian Farm in Zimbabwe in December 1984.*

The beginning of pre-primary schools run by Local Assemblies will also contribute to the development of women. These schools will primarily employ women teachers and help provide for their training. They will have the same curriculum for boys and girls and teach the equality of men and women. (*Kenya*)

New social and economic development projects undertaken by the Bahá'í community will involve women. There will continue to be a women's committee which will sponsor specific activities for women. Increased community activities are anticipated. Women will receive scholarships enabling them to attend conferences, while encouraging the support of their husbands in managing the household in their absence. (*Nigeria*)

Future projects will include literacy training, the instruction of women in the education of children by means of booklets, and assistance to women in housekeeping, hygiene, and health responsibilities. (*Rwanda*)

Experience has shown that deepening women in the understanding of the Bahá'í Faith widens their perspective and gives them self-confidence. This can be done by holding women's conferences at local, regional, and, perhaps, national levels to both deepen them in the Bahá'í teachings and to provide a forum for discussion of women's ideas and concerns. As a follow-up, the production and circulation of a women's magazine, focusing on the same topics as the conferences, and with special emphasis on nutrition education, would be helpful. (*Tanzania*)

In the field of development, plans include the organization of literacy programs for Bahá'í women through tutorial schools and the organization of cooperatives by the women in some of the villages, for agricutural production. Women's institutes and conferences will be organized to educate women.

Since unity in the family is a goal for Bahá'ís, women can be encouraged to hold women's meetings to share and deepen themselves in the elements of family life. The committee can hold conferences to create better understanding of unity and the equality of men and women. (*Zimbabwe*)

## AMERICAS

A special meeting of Bahá'í women will take place to consult on and approve plans for a greater integration of Bahá'í women in social and economic projects in the fields of education, health, and family. Regional seminars with the same purpose will consider the specific problems of each region in the country. Other goals are to publish a special brochure with selections from the Bahá'í Writings regarding the importance of women and their role; stimulating the participation of Bahá'í women in local communities, in social activities of a humanitarian nature, providing assistance, under the initiative of Local Bahá'í Assemblies; and encouraging their participation with other institutions already acting in the social field, or working for the advancement of women. (*Brazil*)

The development of women can be encouraged by: (1) Continuing to provide activities which will upgrade management and leadership

skills in women, (2) Educating local communities regarding the status of women, (3) Increasing the understanding of the Bahá'í Writings regarding women, (4) Educating young women regarding family life, educational goals, and the development and use of their capacities.

Proposed goals include the following: (1) To foster association with Native and French Canadian Women's Organizations, (2) Organization of a Conference on Women as a part of the program of the Association for Bahá'í Studies with major women's organizations in Canada, (4) Membership of at least one Bahá'í woman in all major women's organizations, (5) Public relations activities to inform men and women of Canada on issues of equality of men and women, (6) Communication with all individual Bahá'í women on these goals, and regular communication on our progress in meeting them. (*Canada*)

The most effective way of assisting the development of women will be (1) To foster greater understanding among Bahá'ís of the Bahá'í teachings regarding the position of women, (2) To encourage a reorientation in the education of children, (3) To make provision for the publication of a Bahá'í bulletin for women, (4) To establish closer ties with women's organizations, (6) To encourage Bahá'í participation in activities organized to promote the status of women (seminars, conferences, interviews, programs, etc.), (7) To organize regional and national conferences on women with the participation of other organizations interested in the equality of men and women, (8) To initiate a program of studies on women including (a) the problems of women in technical and professional activities, (b) the problems of women at different periods of life—adolescent, youth, adult, and aging, (c) the problems concerning marriage, divorce, widowhood, second marriages, single parents, etc., (d) consideration of the responsibilities of women in relation to children, and (e) discussion of general social conditions affecting women. It is important to downplay *machismo* and change the education preference which is usually given to the male child. (*Chile*)

We feel that it is important to make known the principles of the equality and rights for both sexes, not only among men, but also among the women themselves. There is an awareness of the need for girls to receive education and to be permitted to choose careers, trades, and professions in accordance with their own desire and capacities.

While pointing out that the ignorance and the under-utilization of the capacities of women in communities is due to traditional attitudes, it must be made clear that the equality of the sexes promoted by the Bahá'í teachings does not necessarily agree with the ideas of 'sexual emancipation' which come from other countries. It is important to make clear that men themselves will delay their own development if women do not advance. It is necessary that women become true companions in all aspects of family and community life. (*El Salvador*)

Local Bahá'í Assemblies, often concentrating their attention on the participation and development of women in their communities, will help a great deal in the future. Children's classes, taught mostly by women, will strengthen the base of the community. Functioning Bahá'í

*A graduate of the Ruhi Institute in Colombia teaches a Bahá'í kindergarten in Alegrías, near Cali, in May 1986.*

*Recording a programme in Quechua for Radio Bahá'í Ecuador in the studio at Otavalo in 1983.*

Assemblies will play a vital role in the process of education, which will have a profound effect on many aspects of the condition of women in Guyana.

Although attention has been paid to family life, where the women play a major role, and to the need for women to acquire reading skills and general education, another aspect important to stress is family consultation, including the elements of mutual trust and joint problem solving. (*Guyana*)

The Bahá'í community should organize regional and national women's conferences, since in these conferences women learn of their rights and develop the courage to speak. The whole community, including the men, must also become convinced of the importance of the rights of women, so that they can be put into practice. It is very important that women feel the desire to have the same rights as men in social relationships and in education, and that they express their needs. In this way, the community will develop and express a new level of well-being. (*Panama*)

Regular bulletins designed to encourage and stimulate the participation of women will be produced, and there will be a greater diffusion of the principle of equality of men and women through the use of mass media, the organization of conferences and programs concerning the family. There must be emphasis as well on the acceptance of equality of women on the part of men. (*Paraguay*)

Simple educational programs related to development, equality, health, employment and peace will be planned to foster the advancement and participation of women. This goal will include the education of children, through whom mothers can be reached, as well as a constant effort to assist women of all social strata. (*Peru*)

Increasing the number of Local Bahá'í Assemblies, and the establishment of adult education programs should lead to the increased development of Bahá'í women, who will be gaining administrative experience and greater confidence in themselves. (*St. Lucia*)

Important ways the community can assist in the development of women are: (a) the establishment of a national women's committee whose role would be to: [1] make the subject of equality of men and women one of national importance and attention to Bahá'ís, [2] closely examine the attitudes and traditions preventing

equality of men and women and develop ways to change them within the community, [3] encourage local or regional Bahá'í women's committees whose concerns would be to organize informal study groups and local conferences to explore the needs and concerns of women, [4] encourage the non-sexist education of children, [5] encourage and support women to become persons in their own right, [6] encourage and support women to explore their role in relationship to social and economic development and world peace, [7] encourage and support men to begin to explore their changing roles in relationship to the equality of men and women; (b) development of special study materials related to: [1] equality of men and women, [2] interpersonal relationships—male/female relationships, [3] cooperation and greater equality within marriage, [4] personal growth and development, [5] exploring the development of attitudes and traditions and introducing new options to thinking and behavior; (c) communicate with Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í experts in fields relating to the issue. (*United States*)

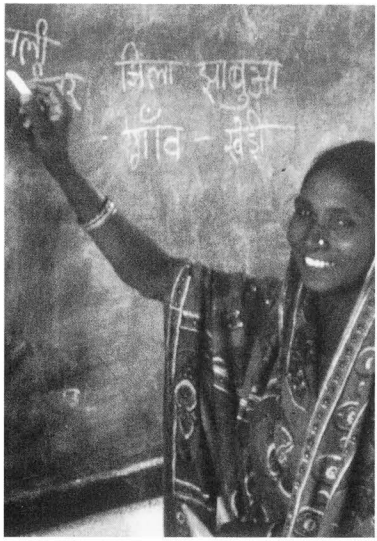
Bahá'í marriage—including laws, practices, and attitudes—will be a major theme in conferences, institutes, and other Bahá'í events, especially those involving youth. The requirements for marriage, a concern of Bahá'í assemblies as well as individual Bahá'ís, will also be addressed by a committee on Bahá'í life which has been created to identify and counsel youth who are thinking of marriage. The importance of chastity before marriage and loyalty after marriage will be emphasized. Great effort will continue to be given to marriages in difficulty, helping through consultation with the partners in marriage to solve their problems. (*Venezuela*)

## ASIA

General plans include women's conferences, study classes for women, vocational training opportunities for women, and the training of women teachers. (*Bangladesh*)

Special training courses for women are envisaged on a state level also. Another important goal will be to ensure the complete participation of women in Bahá'í administration and in the

*A Bahá'í women's class held in the home of one of the friends in Nogata City, Japan, in January 1986.*



*A student of the literary project of the Bahá'í Vocational Institute for the Training of Rural Women is learning to write in Hindi script during classes held in Madhya Pradesh, India, in 1986.*

training of children. The latter, particularly, is a very significant step in bringing up a new generation who will practise the principle of the equality of men and women because it is inculcated in them from an early age. The development of tutorial schools will also play an important role, and the publication of newsletters and magazines will continue. (*India*)

The following activities are considered to be important: (1) The spiritual influence of prayers shared in the family, (2) The education of women as mothers and child educators, (3) Service projects, such as care for the aged and handicapped, (4) Regular meetings for self-improvement, fellowship, public speaking, motivation, first-aid, and other subjects of interest, (5) Counseling to assure love and concern for people in time of need, (6) Rural development projects, including emphasis on hygiene, nutrition, pre-natal, birth, and child care assistance; and guidance on marriage problems. (*Malaysia*)

Women will be encouraged to participate in activities of women's organizations. An education program on 'Parenting' has been organized this year. Women will also be encouraged to adopt personal goals in relation to community activities. (*Singapore*)

Future plans include: (1) Vocational education such as classes on sewing, typing, and weaving; (2) Parenting; (3) Pre-school education; (4) Community participation, with greater emphasis on women's participation in the spiritual and administrative aspects of Bahá'í community life. Part of the women's activities have been classes on cooking, nutrition, and handicrafts to supplement family income. Also, special classes have been provided by one Local Assembly for women to teach literacy, nutrition and health practices. (*Thailand*)

## AUSTRALASIA

The Bahá'í community can help to strengthen the social fabric of the community at large by strengthening its families. What seems to be needed most is adjusting family relationships to preserve the family unit in a society in which women are as free as men. Local Bahá'í Assemblies and the National Community Development Committee have arranged seminars, summer school programs and workshops to this end. (*Australia*)

Bahá'í women at village level will be encouraged and assisted to attend training courses conducted by government agencies aimed at educating and expanding the vision of women. Women's conferences will be held and women will be encouraged to participate in courses which will train them to acquire skills, enabling them to earn money in their own right.

Special training courses for women and potential mothers to educate them in training their children, as well as marriage guidance study programs, will be held. A method of training women to become aware of the necessity for them to become actively involved in development is anticipated. Plans include the education of men in the principle of equality of men and

women. The passive acceptance by women of decisions made by men will be discouraged. Seminars, school programs, and teaching conferences are some of the means by which these goals can be accomplished. (*Fiji*)

Through deepening their understanding of the Bahá'í Writings, women can become stronger, less shy and fearful, and learn to express their ideas and feelings. Their abilities can then be used in community-wide meetings and activities. Men need also to be educated on the importance of each person, man and woman alike.

This year the Bahá'í community will be holding its Fourth Annual Bahá'í Women's Conference, where numerous subjects concerning women will be discussed. (*Marshall Islands*)

Recognition of the rights of women in the Melanesian and Polynesian environment, stressing the increasing participation of women in social and cultural activities, will be encouraged. Concerning the education of children, the National Bahá'í Assembly believes that in one or two generations notable progress will be realized in this area, since children are being educated in the equality of men and women in the home, in the summer and winter schools, and in projects and holiday camps. (*New Caledonia*)

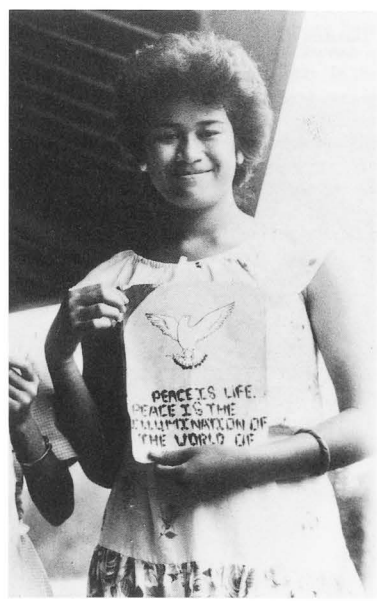
A majority of the Local Bahá'í Assemblies are making firm plans to assist in the development of women. There is universal recognition that the concept of equality must be taught in children's classes, as well as seen by example in the life of the local community. In this way, future generations will have a greater understanding of the principle. Other plans include education seminars, intercommunity gatherings, study classes—especially for new members—and full support for activities such as the United Nations Decade for Women. Women will be encouraged to take their rightful place in all aspects of community life, therefore setting an example for other women. A Bahá'í women's committee will be appointed which will investigate opportunities existing in the social and economic development area. There will also be consultation, seminars, meetings and conferences with men. (*New Zealand*)

Teaching Bahá'í principles of education, which give emphasis to the education of women; undertaking development projects that involve women and give them an income; and teaching the present generation of men regarding the status of women—are important ways to advance the position of women. (*Papua New Guinea*)

As women become more involved in teaching the Bahá'í Faith, and become deepened in understanding its principles, they will share their new 'awareness' with others. When women, especially at the village level, become knowledgeable of the role they play as mothers and educators, they will realize the important role they play in society.

Rural development programs are being considered with discussion on the education of women, child care and health. The introduction of such projects as sewing classes, weaving, handicrafts, etc. into each village is being considered. This would be done with the assistance of the local Rural Development Bureau, and with the encouragement of the Local Bahá'í Assemblies in each community. (*Samoa*)

A regional program has been planned to give opportunity for women to teach and participate in administrative activities, to hold institutes on




*One of the winners of the Bahá'í Peace Poster Contest, held in Samoa in October 1986.*

the equality of men and women, and to organize conferences for women on the role of women. A women's committee has been appointed to plan a Women's Day, in which prominent women will be invited to participate. (*Tonga*)

## EUROPE

It is important to make women and men more aware of the promise in Bahá'í teachings that 'When women participate fully and equally in the affairs of the world—war will cease'. The National Assembly of Austria calls attention to the statement[1] submitted by the Bahá'í International Community to the Commission on the Status of Women in Vienna, February, 1984: '... They [women] must make constant effort to acquire and develop peaceful virtues and attitudes, to understand the fundamental issues related to works that foster peace—including the basic causes of war—and to dedicate themselves to the greater goal of world solidarity in which all nations and people must play a part, but none shall dominate or control.' (*Austria*)

[1] Document No. E/CN.6/1984/NGO/1.

We have emphasized the principle of the equality of rights of men and women, and the importance of the woman in the education of children and her essential place in the heart of society. In our community and in our institutions we are making sure that women find their place and participate fully in the life of the Bahá'í community at all levels. (*France*)

Either because they better understand the issue, or because of the social changes in the country, the Bahá'í women in Spain are active in practically all existing Bahá'í institutions, either at the national, regional or local level. In six communities, there are specific activities for women, such as periodic meetings organized and run wholly by Bahá'í women, attended by women from the community at large. The Bahá'í women in our country are assuming ever greater responsibilities, working harmoniously

*A Bahá'í Women's Conference held in France in February 1985.*

*A Bahá'í Women's Conference held in Sweden in February 1985.*

with the men. One can notice, as is natural in Bahá'í families with small children, that care is alternately shared, permitting both spouses to participate in the activities of the local community. The theme of equality of rights has been promoted by Bahá'í communities in public conferences in many cities of the country. Also we have widely distributed the pamphlet '*The Equality of Men and Women: A Bahá'í View*' prepared by the Bahá'í International Community. We have also included this pamphlet in a general information dossier presented to the media, authorities, and personalities in general. Within the Bahá'í community, we have circulated a compilation of Bahá'í Writings on the equality of rights for men and women, and the subject has been the object of consideration in national and regional schools and in deepening classes in local communities. (*Spain*)

The matter of the equality of men and women comes up in all Bahá'í meetings. Therefore, the Bahá'í teachings on this subject have and will continue to be made known whenever possible. Furthermore, Bahá'í women have taken an active part in meetings of '*Donne per la Pace*' (Women for Peace) and have had active discussions with women in organizations such as 'Amnesty International'. In Lugano we have been aided also by the fact that a woman is the chairperson of the Local Assembly. In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, e.g. in St. Gallen, our Public Relations Committee for that region organizes a yearly symposium. The theme in 1981 was 'the rank of women in the religions'; the theme for 1982 was peace. We have noted among the female population in Eastern Switzerland a growing interest in our symposia. (*Switzerland*)

Members of the External Affairs Committee are participating in a series of seminars on 'Women and Religion', sponsored by the University of London, Goldsmith College. This committee has also been encouraging women in the entire Bahá'í community to join women's associations, and participate in their activities. It has asked the Bahá'í community to arrange special meetings for women, inviting their local women's associations, church ladies' groups, and other bodies, and individuals. (*United Kingdom*)

# 4. THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN AND 'FORUM '85'

## Nairobi, Kenya, 15–26 July 1985

From a report by

MARY SAWICKI

THE United Nations Decade for Women (1976–1985) officially came to an end in July 1985 at a conference in Nairobi, Kenya attended by more than 14,000 women, thought to be the largest gathering of women in history. The Nairobi conference was the third and final one in a series of gatherings convened in Mexico City (1975) and continued in Copenhagen (1980) to address women's issues on a global basis. At each international conference, two separate but related meetings took place. One was the meeting of official government delegates who developed resolutions for implementation by the United Nations and participating governments. The other was the unofficial getting together of individuals and organizations to share experiences, evaluate progress and achievements, explore the future, and discuss freely the means by which women could increasingly find meaningful direction and exert positive control over their lives. Bahá'í delegations were present at the conferences in Mexico City and Copenhagen.[1] Bahá'í delegates in attendance at the Nairobi conference were Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Bahá'í International Community representative at the United Nations, New York, who has also been vice-chairperson for programming of the NGO Committee for the Decade for Women since the beginning of the Decade and who also served as laision to the Bahá'ís at the Forum; Dr. Magdalene Carney, Counsellor member of the International Teaching Centre, Haifa, Israel; Mrs. Thelma Khelghati (Khilqatí) and Mr. Peter Vuyiya of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa; Mrs. Shomais Afnan (Shumays Afnán) of Canada, a health education specialist; Dr. Alberta Deas, an educator and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States; Dr. Jane Faily, a clinical psychologist and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada; Dr. Ethel Martens, public health professional and director of the Bahá'í International Health Agency; Mr. Richard Mandara, a development consultant in East Africa; and Mrs. Catherine M'boya of Kenya, who was a member of the NGO Forum Planning Committee in Nairobi and who served on the Bahá'í delegation to the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico in 1975.

### The Conference

The ten members of the Bahá'í delegation to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women in Nairobi, Kenya, 15–26 July 1985, sat as observers in the plenary session and two committees. They also participated in NGO briefings on different aspects of the work of the Conference; attended spontaneous working groups of NGOs; pursued contacts with delegates, representatives of UN agencies and NGO representatives.

The Bahá'í International Community prepared and submitted to the Conference a document describing the activities of Bahá'í com-

[1] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 340; vol. XVII, pp. 239–40; vol. XVIII, pp. 406–8.

munities throughout the world to promote the advancement of women during the Decade, as well as the kinds of programs that might be anticipated through the year 2000. The report became an official background document for the UN Conference.

Two receptions were held by the Bahá'ís during the official Conference—one at a Bahá'í home and one at the Bahá'í Center in Nairobi. Invitations went to a large number of delegations, and both were attended by a good number of delegates, despite their heavy work schedule which included evenings and weekends. Dame Nita Barrow and Ms. Virginia Hazzard, Coordinators of Forum '85, were present at the reception in the Robarts' family home, as were Ms. Virginia Saurwein and Ms. Raymonde Martineau, NGO Liaison officers for the Conference. A spirit of goodwill toward the Bahá'ís was generated by the quality of the Bahá'í receptions held during the three Conferences and the NGO Forums of the International Women's Year and the Decade for Women.

Following the Conference and Forum plans were developed for Bahá'í travelling teachers in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa and the UNICEF office in Ethiopia.

United Nations Conferences, with their tight agendas and bureaucratic proceedings, hold little attraction for NGO representatives when compared to the Forum type of meeting, where there is opportunity to take part in a wide variety of programs and activities. At gatherings of the nature and dimension of the Forum Bahá'í representatives can draw on the rich diversity of human resources in the Bahá'í world community, contributing creative representation of the broadest possible range.

United Nations Conferences, on the other hand, provide a rare and rich opportunity to make contact with United Nations professionals from all over the world and to have consultation with them on work of mutual interest. In the areas of social and economic development, as well as human rights, delegations are made up of Bahá'ís with expertise in the subject under discussion.

*The Bahá'í delegation to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in July 1985. Left to right, Mrs. Alberta Deas, Counsellor Peter Vuyiya, Dr. Jane Faily, Dr. Magdalene Carney, Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Dr. Ethel Martens, Mrs. Shomais Afnan, Counsellor Thelma Khelghati, Mr. Richard Mandara, and Mrs. Catherine M'boya.*

## The Forum

The Bahá'í International Community, through its United Nations office, took part, along with 60 other international non-governmental organizations, in planning the NGO Forum in Nairobi. Arrangements for the Forum were made by a global planning committee located in New York, Geneva, Vienna, and Nairobi. Bahá'ís participated in the work of the Committee in the four locations. They attended the plenary meetings and joined task forces in New York, Geneva, and Vienna planning the Forum workshops on the sub-themes of the Decade: education, employment, and health. They also took part in the work of the Planning Committee in Nairobi which handled mainly the physical arrangements for the Forum, including liaison with the Kenyan government. A financial contribution was made by the Bahá'í International Community toward the administrative costs of organizing the Forum.

Plans were made in the expectation that between 6,000 and 8,000 women would attend the Forum. Actually, 14,000 came to Nairobi. The Steering Committee set a tone of tolerance, goodwill, and cooperation which had a deeply positive influence on the parallel Conference on Women which overlapped and continued after the Forum. Both benefited from the Kenya venue with its warm hospitality and friendly atmosphere. Even the hotel crises over the lack of accommodation did not dampen the spirits of Forum participants. There was great generosity of spirit as Forum delegates were moved from their rooms, forcing them to double, triple and even quadruple the number staying in a single room. The experience of sharing resulted in many new friendships.

## Bahá'í Activities

The United Nations Office of the Bahá'í International Community in New York coordinated preparations for the Forum, and at the recommendation of the Universal House of Justice, appointed a Steering Committee in Nairobi to assist with preparations there. These were the four Bahá'ís of Nairobi who were appointed to the official Bahá'í delegation to the Conference. In addition, the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya appointed five task teams for hospitality/transportation; media/proclamation; receptions; printing/literature and exhibition. The Committee and the Task Teams did an outstanding job.

Fifty Bahá'ís attended the Forum as individuals. They took part in workshops, assisted at the Bahá'í exhibit, attended receptions, and took advantage of the limitless opportunities to talk about issues of interest to the women attending the Forum, relating the Bahá'í view to the topics under discussion. They appeared in radio, television and newspaper interviews.

Bahá'ís attending the Forum enjoyed the warm hospitality provided by the Nairobi Bahá'ís. The Nairobi Bahá'í Center was redecorated for the occasion of the receptions held there, which were a great success. Over 100 people enjoyed a social evening in the flower-decked Center, with Ethiopian, Kenyan and Persian food, lively conversation, and music. Bus transportation was provided for all three Bahá'í receptions.

The Bahá'ís International Community requested and was given facilities for a workshop on the topic of management skills for women, and a space to mount a display. A large conference room was assigned, and the workshop given by Dr. Jane Faily was attended by an appreciative audience of 90–100 people.

The Bahá'í exhibition was one of the most professional in appearance of all those at the Forum. It was set up in a prime location on the University campus and was maintained throughout the Forum. Literature was distributed, with particularly strong interest shown in the Mothers' Manuals.

## Comments

Forum '85 was a remarkable event, a step forward in the maturity of the global movement to advance the status of women. The quality of the women attending the Forum was impressive: their level of maturing in dealing with current problems, their commitment to change,

*The Bahá'í exhibit at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya in July 1985.*

the attitude that prevailed of working together to help each other, the sincere efforts that were made to listen with objectivity to differing views, the desire to share success stories, and to learn about others' achievements. The question heard most was: 'Where do we go from here?'

Women from every part of the world could be observed listening to each other, seeking common ground for action. From all directions, one heard the word solidarity—that the women's movement had gone global—that women could work together to implement the goals of the Decade, even if governments showed reluctance to participate. Plans were made by NGOs in Nairobi—a conference of grassroots women to be held in India in 1990. Rural women made a plea that they not be left alone. African men attended the workshops on traditional practices and pledged to work with African women to abolish these practices.

A peace tent was sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. When discussion in workshops overheated, the participants were asked to go to the peace tent, where negotiators facilitated the debate. Observing the activities at the peace tent, one could not help thinking of the worldwide network of Bahá'í negotiators in the making, and particularly of the powerful opportunity that Bahá'í women are given to develop their consultative skills by actively taking part in Bahá'í community life. At the Forum, a woman parliamentarian, a member of the Swedish delegation to the United Nations Conference, noted that in the field of disarmament, out of a total of 600 participants in discussions at international level, only two are women. Surely, before long, Bahá'í women will find that they have a wonderful contribution to make in a wide number of areas that require conflict resolution.

The Forum's success was beyond the wildest dreams of the Planning Committee. For the Bahá'í United Nations office, Forum '85 was an example of successful coordination at global level with Bahá'í institutions, with non-governmental organizations and with the United Nations bodies. The experience was educational and rewarding, and wonderfully exciting for those who participated. At future gatherings of this type, where the participants are mainly members of voluntary organizations, Bahá'ís might seek to share their wealth of expertise with other groups who would probably welcome some assistance. At times, to the observer, the success that Bahá'ís attain as a result of their efficiency and dedication, plus reliance on powerful spiritual forces for support, can be overwhelming.

# 5. ACTIVITIES OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RELATING TO THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN ÍRÁN, 1983–1986

MARGARET KNIGHT

THE activities of the Bahá'í International Community in connection with the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán began during the months of revolutionary turmoil that preceded the overthrow of the Pahlavi régime and continued, with increasing vigour and intensity, in the years that followed. Details of the persecutions suffered by the Bahá'ís in Írán from 1979 to 1983 are found in vols. XVII and XVIII of *The Bahá'í World.*

The efforts of the Bahá'í International Community, working in close collaboration with National Spiritual Assemblies in all parts of the globe, evoked a sympathetic and positive response from the world community, as reflected in the importance accorded the issue by the United Nations.

By Riḍván 140 (21 April 1983) the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán was firmly established on the human rights agenda of the United Nations; the Secretary-General and his senior human rights officials were actively involved in efforts to persuade the Iranian Government to halt the persecution; governments in every continent of the world had made the Iranian Government aware of their abhorrence of its policies and of their profound concern for the Bahá'ís; and the false and malicious charges made by the Government of Írán against the Bahá'í Faith and its followers had been rejected by all the international human rights organizations that had examined them. The persecution of the Bahá'í Faith in the land of its birth had come to be recognized as the most blatant example of religious intolerance in the contemporary world. The Iranian Government, however, continued implacably to pursue its campaign of persecution against the Bahá'ís.

As each major incident of persecution occurred, the Bahá'í International Community sought the intervention of the United Nations Secretary-General, or of the appropriate specialist human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, issued appropriate press releases to the United Nations media, and wrote to the United Nations Ambassadors of almost 100 countries, seeking the help of their governments in alleviating the plight of the Bahá'í minority in Írán. Briefing papers were prepared for National Spiritual Assemblies for submission to their governments prior to every major United Nations human rights meeting, and similar briefings were circulated to the Ambassadors of countries participating in those meetings.

Shortly after Riḍván 140 (21 April 1983), the case of the Bahá'ís was taken up for the first time by the International Labour Office (ILO)—the oldest intergovernmental organization in the United Nations system—which had been made aware, through Bahá'í International Community publications, of the fact that Bahá'ís in Írán were being dismissed from their jobs because of their religion. In the course of its 15 June dialogue with a representative of the Iranian Government, the ILO's Committee on the Application of Standards stated that it shared the concern voiced earlier by its Committee of Experts regarding the grave discrimination in matters of employment practised by the Government of Írán against the Bahá'í community. Despite the Iranian representative's assertion that the Bahá'í Faith was not a religion and that Bahá'ís were denied employment only in the public sector, the Committee concluded that the discrimination was

solely on the basis of religion and that it operated in both the public and private sectors. The Committee expressed its profound concern at the situation and urged the Government of Írán to comply with the provisions of ILO Convention No. 111, which Írán had freely ratified and which prohibited this kind of discrimination.

A few days later, there was international outrage and protest when six Bahá'í men and ten Bahá'í women—some of the latter group teenagers—were executed in Shíráz.

At United Nations Headquarters in New York, the United Nations Press Correspondents Association, in a gesture of sympathy and support, agreed to put its facilities at the disposal of the Bahá'í International Community so that it could hold a Press Conference on the killings in Shíráz. (Non-governmental organizations, of which the Bahá'í International Community is one, cannot themselves host meetings on United Nations premises.) Accordingly, on 23 June 1983, Gerald Knight, Bahá'í International Community Human Rights Representative to the United Nations, addressed a packed meeting of United Nations correspondents and shared with them the full details of the tragic events in Shíráz.

The European Parliament, in a resolution adopted on 7 July 1983, expressed its 'consternation' at the Shíráz executions, which it described as 'the product of unspeakable fanaticism', and firmly repudiated the Iranian Government's claim that the Bahá'í Faith was a political organization.

In July 1983, the Bahá'í International Community published an update to its major publication *The Bahá'ís in Iran: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious Minority*. The update, which covered the period July 1982 to July 1983, contained, *inter alia*, an account of the atrocities in Shíráz, together with extracts from a 22 February 1983 press interview in which the chief religious judge of Shíráz had declared: 'Before it is too late, the Bahá'ís should recant Bahá'ísm, which is condemned by reason and logic. Otherwise, the day will soon come when the Islamic nation will deal with the Bahá'ís in accordance with its religious obligations . . .' The update was widely distributed at the United Nations, and made available to National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world.

So great was the international outrage, and so numerous the protests to the Iranian Government about the Shíráz executions that, thereafter, the Iranian authorities discontinued their practice of carrying out mass executions of Bahá'ís. Nevertheless, executions continued—albeit in smaller numbers—and the authorities continued to devise new methods of persecuting the Bahá'í minority.

On 29 August 1983, the Iranian Attorney-General issued a decree banning all Bahá'í administrative and community activities in Írán, and making membership in Bahá'í administrative institutions a criminal offence. The existence of this decree, and its far-reaching implications for the Bahá'í community in Írán, were explained and made known by the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, governments and the media. The mass arrests of former members of Bahá'í administrative institutions, which took place shortly after the announcement of the ban, were equally widely publicized.

A comprehensive document on the subject of the ban, and its manifold implications for the Iranian Bahá'í community, was prepared and submitted by the Bahá'í International Community to members of the Human Rights Committee—the United Nations body which monitors compliance by States parties with the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (Írán is a State party to the Covenant.)

During the August/September 1983 session of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the Iranian delegation circulated a booklet entitled *Bahá'ísm—its origins and its role*—a defamatory publication which was intended to 'prove' that the Bahá'í Faith was a subversive political organization, created and supported by colonial powers for the purpose of opposing Islám in general and destabilizing Írán in particular.

The Bahá'í International Community had been forewarned of the existence of this publication and had been put in possession of an advance copy. Accordingly, as soon as the Iranian document made its appearance, the Bahá'í International Community was able to circulate, in English, French and Spanish, its already-prepared publication rebutting the false and often contradictory allegations contained in the Iranian document.

In its statement to the Sub-Commission, the Bahá'í International Community called attention to the fact that the false allegations made against the Faith and its followers by the Iranian Government were merely a smokescreen whose purpose was to divert attention from the fact that the Government's activities against the Bahá'í community constituted a campaign of religious persecution. The Bahá'í International Community urged the Sub-Commission to do everything in its power to intensify the efforts of the international community to halt the persecution.

The Sub-Commission responded very positively to this appeal. In its resolution 1983/14 of 5 September 1983, it expressed its grave concern at the 'persistent reports of continuing persecution of the Bahá'ís solely on the grounds of their religious beliefs' and recommended that its parent body, the Commission on Human Rights, should consider appointing a Special Rapporteur to study the human rights situation in Írán.

During the General Debate at the opening of the 38th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 1983, the representative of the Netherlands referred in his statement to the 'maltreatment and execution of members of the Bahá'í Faith' in Írán. This was an historic moment, since it was the first occasion on which a Member State of the United Nations had mentioned the name of the Faith in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly—the highest-ranking intergovernmental meeting in the world.

The plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán was much on the minds of delegates to the Third Committee (the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee) of the 38th General Assembly. Under the agenda item dealing with religious intolerance, representatives of the Governments of Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States expressed their concern at contemporary instances of religious persecution, and almost all of them cited the Iranian Government's treatment of the Bahá'ís as the outstanding example of this form of repression.

In the debate under the agenda item dealing with gross violations of human rights, the representative of Greece, speaking on behalf of the ten Member States of the European Economic Community, declared that 'The Ten, alarmed by the religious persecutions perpetrated notably against the religious minority of the Bahá'ís, have, on several occasions, urged the Government of Írán to grant them the protection to which they are entitled under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We urge once again the Government of Írán to live up to its obligations under the Covenant . . .'

The representative of the Islamic Republic of Írán responded to this appeal by alleging that the Bahá'í Faith was 'a very well-organized, foreign-sponsored political group' and that Bahá'ís were 'criminals' rather than victims of religious persecution.

At the next major United Nations human rights meeting—the 40th session of the Commission on Human Rights in February/March 1984—the delegation of Írán again circulated its defamatory booklet *Bahá'ísm—its origins and its role*. The Bahá'í International Community responded by circulating its Commentary in rebuttal of the false allegations contained in that document.

In its statement to the Commission, the Bahá'í International Community explained that the persecution of the Bahá'í community was not simply an unfortunate side-effect of the Iranian Revolution, but was the continuation of a campaign of extermination that had been going on for nearly 150 years. The revolution—which had brought to power those very elements of Iranian society most fanatically opposed to the Bahá'í Faith—had facilitated the persecution, but it had not inspired it. The motive and inspiration for the persecution was, and always had been, deep-rooted religious intolerance.

During the debate under the agenda item dealing with gross violations of human rights, the representatives of Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Togo, the United Kingdom and the United States expressed their grave concern at the situation in Írán, and the majority referred specifically to the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís.

On 14 March 1984, the Commission adopted resolution 1984/54, in which it expressed its deep concern for the Bahá'í minority and requested its Chairman to appoint a Special Representative to establish contacts with the

Government of Írán and to make a thorough study of the human rights situation in that country. The resolution, which was adopted by a vote of 21 in favour and 6 against, with 15 abstentions, was subsequently endorsed by the Commission's parent body, the Economic and Social Council.

The decision to appoint a Special Representative was very much welcomed by the Bahá'í International Community, since it represented a significant escalation of United Nations efforts to put an end to the human rights violations taking place in Írán.

When the appointment of Mr. Andrés Aguilar of Venezuela as Special Representative of the Commission was announced later in the year, the Bahá'í International Community immediately submitted to him extensive written and documentary evidence concerning the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán, and later (in 1985) arranged for him to interview Iranian Bahá'í refugees who had personally suffered violations of their fundamental human rights.

In-depth interviews took place in April 1984 between the Bahá'í International Community Human Rights Representatives and journalist Fergus Bordewich, whose major article about the persecutions in Írán, entitled 'Their Crime is Faith', was published in the United States edition of *Reader's Digest* magazine in December 1984. The article was subsequently carried in the many different language editions of the magazine and appeared in numerous countries in every continent of the world.

At the request of the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í International Community, in May 1984, launched a major campaign to make governments, the United Nations and the media aware of the tortures being inflicted upon Bahá'ís in Iranian prisons, and to emphasize that the purpose of these tortures was not only to try to force Bahá'ís to recant their faith, but also to try to force them to make false confessions implicating themselves and their fellow believers as spies and the entire organization of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán as an espionage network.

The launching of this campaign coincided with the meeting at which the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was to consider endorsing the Commission's decision to appoint a Special Representative to study the human rights situation in Írán—and also coincided with a debate in ECOSOC on a proposed Convention on Torture.

The Bahá'í International Community was very anxious that the fact that Bahá'í prisoners were being tortured in Írán should be included in the record of the ECOSOC meeting. However, the proceedings of ECOSOC are largely a formality: it is not a forum at which human rights issues are debated in detail, and consequently there was no possibility of anyone's making a statement about the torture of Bahá'í prisoners in Írán. The Bahá'í International Community overcame this problem by preparing a fact-sheet 'based on reports received by the Bahá'í International Community concerning the treatment of Bahá'í prisoners in Evin Prison, Teheran'. The fact-sheet was written primarily as a contribution to ECOSOC's general discussion on the phenomenon of torture in the contemporary world and, as such, was distributed by a sympathetic United Nations Secretariat as ECOSOC document E/1984/NGO/5.

The Bahá'í International Community later learned that the circulation of such a document was unprecedented and that numerous non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights had been trying unsuccessfully for many years to introduce at ECOSOC statements dealing with specific cases of extremely serious human rights violations. The establishment by the Bahá'í International Community of a new precedent in this area was warmly welcomed by the NGO community—and was a further confirmation that the sacrifices and sufferings of the Bahá'ís in Írán were not in vain, but were producing consequences that would ultimately be of benefit to the whole of humanity.

In addition to providing full information about the torture of Bahá'ís to United Nations officials, the media and the United Nations Ambassadors of almost 100 governments, the Bahá'í International Community presented a formal submission on the subject to members of the Human Rights Committee. An edited version of the same document was subsequently circulated in English, French and Spanish to National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world under the title 'Systematic Torture of Bahá'ís in Iranian Prisons'.

On 6 June 1984, the Bahá'í International Community met in New York with the Com-

mission on Human Rights' Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. In her presentation to the Working Group, Margaret Knight, Alternate Human Rights Representative to the United Nations, and responsible for all submissions to the specialist human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, drew particular attention to the recent execution in Ṭihrán of former National Spiritual Assembly member Mr. Jahángír Hidáyatí, pointing out that he had been abducted the previous year and that the Iranian authorities had repeatedly and categorically denied all knowledge of his disappearance—a denial which had now been clearly disproved. The Working Group expressed its sympathy and support and undertook to continue its efforts on behalf of the fourteen Bahá'ís whose whereabouts and fate still remained unknown.

Also in June 1984, the Bahá'í International Community wrote to all members of the ILO's Committee on the Application of Standards and Recommendations, enclosing updated information about the persecutions in Írán, together with documentation testifying to the fact that Bahá'ís were being denied both employment and education solely on the grounds of their religion. During the debate which took place at the Committee's 17 June meeting, concern over the discrimination practised by the Iranian Government against the Bahá'ís was expressed by every speaker. The representative of Írán stated that the Bahá'í Faith was 'neither a political party nor a religion', but rather an illegal espionage organization. He argued that since, according to ILO Convention 111, no government was bound to employ in its civil service someone who was known to be a security risk, and since all Bahá'ís were spies, the Government of Írán was not violating the Convention by dismissing Bahá'ís from employment in the civil service. The Committee rejected this argument out of hand, reiterated its belief that Bahá'ís were discriminated against on the basis of their religion, and again called upon the Government of Írán to cease its discriminatory practices.

In August 1984, the Bahá'í International Community invoked the assistance of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Summary or Arbitrary Executions on behalf of thirty-two Bahá'í prisoners who had been condemned to death. The Special Rapporteur duly intervened with the Iranian authorities on behalf of the condemned Bahá'ís. Tragically, eight of the thirty-two (all of them former members of Bahá'í administrative institutions) were subsequently executed in Ṭihrán, but the lives of the remaining twenty-four were saved.

At the 37th session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in August/September 1984, the delegation of Írán circulated a new publication attacking the Bahá'í Faith. Entitled *Some Facts About The Bahá'í Faith*, it was largely a recapitulation of the document circulated by Írán at the 37th General Assembly in 1982 and contained the same false charges against the Faith and its followers. Responding to this new attack, the Bahá'í International Community wrote to every member of the Sub-Commission, refuting the Iranian charges and enclosing appropriate documentation.

In its statement at the meeting of the Sub-Commission, the Bahá'í International Community alluded to the Iranian publication and pointed out that, although the written records of the Bahá'í community in Írán had been confiscated in the early days of the Islamic Revolution and had been in the possession of the Iranian Government ever since, the Government had been unable to find one single shred of evidence to support its false accusations. Consequently, the authorities were now resorting to torture to try to force prominent Bahá'ís to make public confessions to false charges of espionage and other subversive activities.

In its resolution 1984/14, adopted on 29 August 1984, the Sub-Commission expressed its 'alarm at reports of continuing gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Islamic Republic of Iran', specifically expressed its concern for 'the Bahá'í religious community' and welcomed the appointment by the Commission of a Special Representative to study and report on the human rights situation in Írán.

Although it had been the practice of the Bahá'í International Community to make statements and submit papers to United Nations human rights bodies on general human rights issues (for example, the elimination of racism, the rights of the child) it had not been its practice to approach governments on any human rights issue other than that of the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán. In 1984, however, the Bahá'í International Community received permission

from the Universal House of Justice to approach governments and seek their support for the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of a Convention against Torture. The Bahá'í International Community accordingly wrote to ninety-nine United Nations Ambassadors, expressing the hope that the 39th United Nations General Assembly would 'express its repugnance and unqualified opposition to the practice of torture' by adopting the Convention. The Bahá'í International Community also liaised closely with those government delegations most actively involved in the torture issue at the General Assembly.

As a positive manifestation of its concern over torture, the Bahá'í International Community, in October 1984, made a token donation to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. (The National Spiritual Assemblies of Denmark and the Netherlands subsequently made contributions to the rehabilitation centres for victims of torture located in their own countries.)

The date scheduled for the adoption of the Torture Convention by the General Assembly—10 December 1984—was also Human Rights Day. To celebrate this important United Nations anniversary, the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on Human Rights had scheduled a meeting at United Nations Headquarters at which a distinguished panel would speak on the theme 'Combating Torture'. The meeting—chaired by Gerald Knight, who was at that time Chairman of the NGO Committee on Human Rights—was organized by the Bahá'í International Community.

The General Assembly's debate on the adoption of the Convention against Torture overlapped slightly with the Human Rights Day meeting, but the proceedings in the General Assembly were relayed to the meeting by closed-circuit television so that those present could share in the solemn and exciting moment when the President of the General Assembly announced the adoption by consensus of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

When the representative of the Netherlands—who had steered the Convention through the General Assembly's Third Committee—arrived to speak as guest of honour at the United Nations Day meeting, the tumultuous applause which greeted him testified to the joy, the appreciation and the relief of concerned NGOs and governments that this important new instrument now formed part of international human rights law.

At the same General Assembly session, the Iranian Ambassador shocked and outraged his fellow diplomats when he attacked the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and asserted that Írán would not hesitate to violate its provisions. At the 65th meeting of the Third Committee on 7 December 1984, Said Rajaie-Khorassani, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Írán to the United Nations, stated: 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a document which represents secular understanding of the Judaeo-Christian tradition by a very small group of people. It is a self-contradictory document and therefore cannot be implemented by Muslims even if they wanted to implement it. We therefore should not waste any time on it. We therefore request those concerned not to criticize us for violating something that has no validity from our point of view ... Of course we violate what must be violated without any hesitation.'

The Special Representative on Írán dealt with these arguments very firmly, and at considerable length, in the preliminary report he presented to the Commission on Human Rights at its 41st session in February/March 1985. Pointing out that 'States of all political, economic, social, cultural and religious persuasions' had participated in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights he affirmed that the rights guaranteed in that instrument 'cannot be open to challenge by any State' and concluded that 'no State can claim to be allowed to disrespect basic, entrenched rights ... which are provided for under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ... on the ground that departure from these standards might be permitted under national or religious law'.

The preliminary report of the Special Representative was brief and did not mention any specific instances of human rights violations in Írán. However, the Special Representative expressed his concern at 'the number and gravity of the alleged violations of human rights' in the Islamic Republic of Írán including violations of 'the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion ... and the right of religious minorities to profess and practise their own religion.'

In its statement at the Commission, the Bahá'í International Community drew attention to the fact that a pamphlet containing false accusations against the Bahá'í Faith—material specifically designed to incite intolerance—had been distributed by Iranian representatives at the December 1984 United Nations Seminar on the encouragement of religious tolerance. The representative of Írán had repeated the same charges in his statement at the Commission.

The statement went on to pose a rhetorical question: Why was the Government of Írán so bitterly opposed to the Bahá'ís, and why was the Government willing to damage its own reputation and endure international condemnation for the sake of eliminating a peaceful, law-abiding, non-political and totally non-threatening community? The answer was twofold: first, religious intolerance pure and simple; second, the Government's abhorrence of the Bahá'í principles and teachings. It was for these enlightened principles and teachings (which the statement enumerated) that the Bahá'ís in Írán were laying down their lives.

On 13 March 1985, the Commission adopted resolution 1985/39, in which it endorsed the general observations of its Special Representative concerning Írán's obligation to respect the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and expressed its 'deep concern at the number and gravity of the alleged violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Írán to which the Special Representative refers in his preliminary report', including 'denial of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion . . . and the right of religious minorities to profess and practise their own religion'. The Commission decided to extend the mandate of its Special Representative for one year and requested him to present an interim report to the General Assembly at its 40th (1985) session on 'the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Írán including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís', and a final report to the Commission at its 42nd (1986) session. The vote on the resolution was 21 in favour and 5 against, with 15 abstentions. The Commission's decision was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in May 1986.

The decision was a very significant one indeed. Only the gravest human rights situations are brought specifically to the attention of the General Assembly, and it is only rarely that this step is taken. Throughout the entire history of the United Nations, only five countries had previously been the subject of resolutions by the General Assembly because of their human rights violations.

In preparation for the consideration of the Írán issue at the General Assembly, the Bahá'í International Community issued a new publication entitled *Persecution of the Bahá'ís in Iran 1979–1985: A 7-Year Campaign to Eliminate A Religious Minority*. The Bahá'í International Community also published a booklet entitled *The Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations*, which explained briefly the history and scope of the Bahá'í relationship with the United Nations and included chapters on the history and organization of the Bahá'í Faith and on the application of Bahá'í principles to matters of major concern to the United Nations (for example, peace, elimination of all forms of discrimination, the right to development, and so on).

At the 38th session of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in August/September 1985, the Iranian representative claimed that the Bahá'í Faith was 'not a religion but a faith and an opinion' and that it had been 'created, protected and supported by colonialism purely for political purposes'. He went on to say that his Government's intention was 'to help and assist them [the Bahá'ís] with kindness so that they may in time grasp and understand the depth of deceit and injustice they have been subjected to by the agents of colonial and imperialist aggression . . .'

In its own statement, the Bahá'í International Community firmly rebutted the allegation that the Bahá'í Faith was a political organization and went on to point out that, in order to 'help and assist the Bahá'ís with kindness', the Government had hounded them from their jobs, deprived their children of education, confiscated their homes and possessions, deprived them of their means of livelihood, consigned hundreds of them to prison, and tortured and executed scores of others. 'The government of Írán may call this kindness,' the statement concluded, 'but we call it religious persecution.'

On 29 August 1985, the Sub-Commission

adopted resolution 1985/17, in which it welcomed the Commission's decision to ask its Special Representative on Írán to present an interim report to the General Assembly, expressed its 'alarm' at the continuing reports of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Írán, 'in particular at the evidence of persecution of the Bahá'í religious minority', and endorsed the general observations of the Special Representative in his preliminary report.

On 28 November 1985, the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament held a public hearing in Brussels on the question of human rights in Írán. The Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Germany, in an introductory statement, described the situation of the Bahá'í religious minority in Írán, then two Iranian Bahá'í refugees testified concerning the physical and psychological tortures they had suffered in Iranian prisons. The testimony was very moving, and the concluding statement by one of the refugees—that the Bahá'ís bore love in their hearts for everyone, even their torturers—elicited spontaneous applause from the audience and a warm embrace from the Chairman.

At the 39th session of the General Assembly (September–December 1985) the United Nations Secretary-General proclaimed 1986 'International Year of Peace'. It was accordingly during this session that the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum travelled to New York to present *The Promise of World Peace* to the Secretary-General.[1]

During November 1985, a series of special lunches was hosted by the Bahá'í International Community for United Nations Ambassadors, delegates to the Third Committee and United Nations media correspondents. Guest of honour Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum spoke at these lunches about the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán and emphasized the importance of the General Assembly's adopting an effective resolution on the subject of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Írán.

The report presented by the Special Representative on Írán to the General Assembly recited numerous allegations concerning human rights violations in Írán, including the allegations made by the Bahá'í refugees whom he had interviewed. The Special Representative had tried very hard to obtain the co-operation of the Government of Írán but this had not been forthcoming and he had not been permitted to visit the country to investigate the situation for himself. His report concluded that the allegations made to him 'cannot be dismissed as groundless unless proved to be so on the basis of detailed information' and that 'a continued monitoring of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Írán is called for'.

During the debate in the Third Committee on the question of religious intolerance, Írán objected to remarks made in support of the Bahá'ís by the representatives of Fiji and the United States and responded by putting forward the well-worn argument that the Bahá'í Faith was not a religion but a tool of western colonialism. Later, in the debate under the agenda item dealing with gross violations of human rights, the representatives of Australia, Canada, Jamaica, Norway, Sweden, St. Lucia and the United States, and the representative of Luxembourg, speaking on behalf of the ten Member States of the European Community (Belgium, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom) and Spain and Portugal, all referred to the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Írán, and almost all referred specifically to the plight of the Bahá'ís. In the course of a lengthy response, in which he claimed that all the expressions of concern by these delegations were politically motivated, the representative of Írán alleged that the Bahá'í Faith was a Zionist faction.

The General Assembly's consideration of the human rights situation in Írán received extensive press coverage. In most cases, the Bahá'í question was featured. Media coverage included dispatches by the four major international wire services—Agence France Presse, Associated Press, Reuters and United Press International; radio news items by the BBC World Service and Voice of America; articles in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* (five times); and numerous other press articles in the United States and throughout the world.

Throughout the entire General Assembly session, the exceptionally large Iranian delegation lobbied very actively against the adoption of any resolution of the human rights situ-

[1] For a full report see p. 334 of this volume of the international record.

*Bahá'í International Community Representatives presenting a petition appealing for a stop to the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Iran to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, United Nations Office, Geneva. The petition originated with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Japan and was signed by 65 members of the Japanese Diet. Left to right, Mrs. Machid Fatio, Assistant Secretary-General Kurt Herndl, and Mr. Gerald Knight. Geneva, Switzerland, August 1985.*

ation in Írán. Iranian representatives were equally active in capitals, trying to persuade governments—especially the smaller Third World governments—not to support any such resolution. In the Third Committee, allies of Írán introduced motions that no action should be taken on a resolution concerning human rights in Írán, but these motions were defeated.

Finally, on 13 December 1985, the General Assembly adopted resolution 40/141 concerning the human rights situation in Írán. The resolution, which specifically mentioned the Bahá'ís, was sponsored by Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Samoa, St. Lucia and the United Kingdom. It expressed the General Assembly's 'deep concern over the specific and detailed allegations of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Special Representative refers in his interim report, and, in particular, those related to the right to life, such as summary and arbitrary executions; the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; the right to liberty and security of person and to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention; the right to a fair trial; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression; and the right of religious minorities to profess and practise their own religion.' The resolution also included the decision of the General Assembly 'to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Írán, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, during its forty-first session . . .'. The vote on the resolution was 53 in favour and 30 against, with 45 abstentions.

This was the first time that the General Assembly had ever adopted a resolution about the general human rights situation in Írán, or about the particular situation of the Bahá'ís, and it was therefore the first time that the international community as a whole had expressed its concern over these issues. The adoption of the resolution represented the culmination of intensive efforts by the Bahá'í International Community and by National Spiritual Assemblies worldwide to secure the widest and clearest possible expression of international concern over the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán.

It should be recorded that the references to the Bahá'ís in the General Assembly resolution were unprecedented, since this was the first occasion on which one particular community had been singled out by name for special mention in any resolution on human rights adopted by the General Assembly.

Shortly after the General Assembly session, the Commission's Special Representative on Írán resigned his position, on the grounds that it was incompatible with his new appointment as Ambassador of Venezuela to the United Nations.

At the next major United Nations human rights meeting—the 42nd session of the Commission on Human Rights in February/March 1986—Írán again had an unusually large (15-member) delegation, and lobbied very actively against the adoption of any resolution concerning its human rights record. The representative of Írán attacked the Bahá'í Faith in three separate statements, claiming that it was anti-Islamic, a subversive political organization and an agent of Zionism, and the Iranian delegation also circulated the usual defamatory publications against the Bahá'í Faith—to which the Bahá'í International Community responded in the usual manner.

In its statement at the meeting of the Commission, the Bahá'í International Community drew attention to a recent case in which an Iranian court had ruled that a person who had killed a Bahá'í in a traffic accident was relieved of any obligation to pay a fine or damages to the family of the victim because the person he had killed was 'an unprotected infidel'. The statement went on to say: 'The persecution of the Bahá'ís has, to all intents and purposes, become institutionalized in Írán—a regular part of the work of the various branches of the civil service. This state of affairs—the dehumanization and routine victimization of an entire religious community—is a very terrible thing to contemplate.' The statement called urgently upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Írán to release all the Bahá'í prisoners, to restore full human rights to the Bahá'í community and, 'in the name of humanity, to put a speedy end to the cruel and senseless persecution of an innocent and defenceless minority.'

During the debate on gross violations of human rights, the representatives of Australia, Canada, France, Ireland, Norway and the United States specifically drew attention in their statements to the situation of the Bahá'ís.

In view of the resignation of its Special Representative, the Commission did not have before it any formal report on the human rights situation in Írán. In the absence of such a report, the major issue surrounding the adoption of a resolution on Írán by this session of the Commission was the question of Írán's willingness to co-operate with the Commission's Special Representative. Írán, which had failed successively to co-operate with the United Nations Secretary-General, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission's Special Representative, now offered to co-operate—but on certain conditions, one of which was that no substantive resolution should be adopted on the question of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Írán. Another condition was that the Commission should appoint a new Special Representative who was sympathetic to the Iranian position.

Despite strenuous lobbying efforts by Írán and its allies, the Commission rejected the conditions as unacceptable and, on 12 March 1986, adopted resolution 1986/41 by a vote of 19 in favour and 4 against, with 16 abstentions. The resolution was sponsored by Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. In it, the Commission expressed its deep concern at the 'specific and detailed allegations of grave human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Írán referred to in the report of its former Special Representative, requested its Chairman to appoint a new Special Representative on Írán, and requested the new Special Representative 'to present an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Írán, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís'.

# IV
# RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

## 1. INCORPORATION OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

140, 141 and 142 of the Bahá'í Era
21 April 1983 to 20 April 1986

*In previous volumes, many certificates of incorporation or other documents attesting recognition of various National Spiritual Assemblies have been reproduced. The following are representative of the forms of recognition obtained by National Spiritual Assemblies during the period covered by this volume.*

1. Certificate of Registration of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands; 22 November 1984.

2. Act incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bermuda; assented to by the Governor 12 August 1985.

3. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bophuthatswana; 12 April 1984.

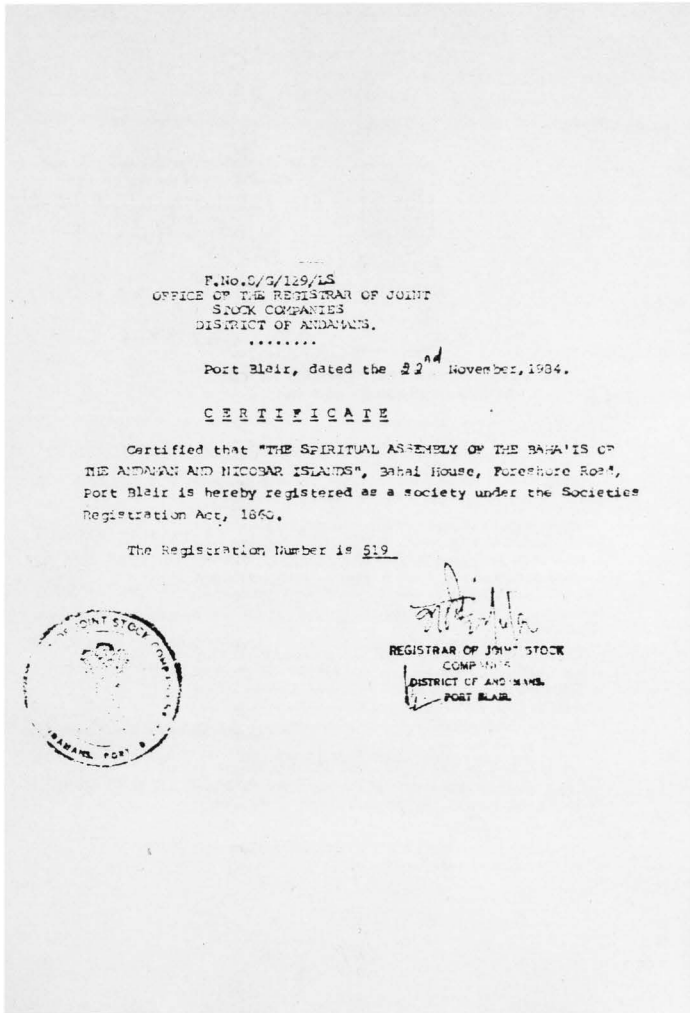
4. Extract from the Official Bulletin of the Republic of Cape Verde, issue of 10 August 1985, announcing the Decree of the Minister of Justice which granted judicial personality to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cape Verde; 27 July 1985.

5. Act of Parliament incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Commonwealth of Dominica; 20 December 1985.

6. Memorandum and Articles of Association of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Grenada filed 24 March 1986; registration dated 26 March 1986.

7. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands; 19 November 1983.

8. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Marshall Islands; 11 April 1986.



F.No.C/3/129/LS
OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF JOINT
STOCK COMPANIES
DISTRICT OF ANDAMANS.
.....

Port Blair, dated the 22nd November, 1984.

C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that "THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS", Bahai House, Foreshore Road, Port Blair is hereby registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

The Registration Number is 519

REGISTRAR OF JOINT STOCK
COMPANIES
DISTRICT OF ANDAMANS
PORT BLAIR

*1. Certificate of Registration of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands; 22 November 1984.*

No. 39 29

BERMUDA

1985 : No. 39

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Act entitled "The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bermuda Act 1985" which received the assent of the Governor on the 12th August, 1985

Clerk to the Senate

## THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF BERMUDA ACT 1985

[12th August, 1985]

WHEREAS it has been decided by the Universal House of Justice to form in Bermuda a National Spiritual Assembly:

AND WHEREAS in accordance with the Bye-Laws of the constitution of the Universal House of Justice a body consisting of Mary M. Walker, Leon G. Johnson, Lucille N. L. Rochester, Leighton E. G. Rochester, Frank A. Esposito, Hilda M. Harford, Lionel S. Haynes, Derick D. Symonds and Lloyd F. Williams has been elected as The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bermuda:

AND WHEREAS a petition has been presented by the aforenamed nine persons praying that an Act may be passed to constitute the above named and their successors a body corporate in Bermuda under the name of "The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bermuda" and it is deemed expedient to grant the prayer of the petition:

Be it enacted by The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Assembly of Bermuda, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bermuda Act 1985.

*2. Act incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bermuda; assented to by the Governor 12 August 1985.*

FORM CM3

REPUBLIC OF BOPHUTHATSWANA.
COMPANIES ACT, 1973
(Section 64)

Registration No. of Company

84/0107

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION OF A COMPANY
NOT HAVING A SHARE CAPITAL

This is to certify that NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF BOPHUTHATSWANA (Incorporated Association not for gain) was to-day incorporated under the Companies Act, 61 of 1973, and that the Company is a Company limited by guarantee and is incorporated under section 21.

Signed and sealed at MMABATHO this Twelfth day of April One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-four (1984).

REGISTRAR GENERAL.

*3. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bophuthatswana; 12 April 1984.*

N.º 32 — BOLETIM OFICIAL DA REPÚBLICA DE CABO VERDE

— 10 DE AGOSTO DE 1985

(137)

**Assembleia Espiritual Nacional dos Bahá'ís de Cabo Verde**

**Sede: Rua Madragoa — Praia**

Nós:

1) António Leão Correia e Silva, residente na Praia, em qualidade de presidente;
2) Pierre Martel, residente na Achada Santo António, Praia em qualidade de vice-presidente;
3) Arnaldo Martins Silves Ferreira, residente na Fazenda, Praia em qualidade de secretário;
4) Avelino Sanches de Barros, residente na Achadinha, Praia em qualidade de tesoureiro.
5) Armando dos Santos Alves, residente na Achadinha, Praia;
6) António Monteiro Teixeira, residente na Achada Santo António Praia;
7) Pedro de Sousa Lobo, residente na Praia;
8) Olga Lopes Correia, residente na Fazenda, Praia;
9) Etelvina Andrade Mendes de Barros, residente na Achadinha, Praia.

Por todos foi dito:

Que constituem uma associação religiosa com a denominação de Assembleia Espiritual Nacional dos Bahá'ís de Cabo Verde, com os poderes, responsabilidades, direitos, privilégios e obrigações atribuídos por Bahá'u'lláh, fundador da Fé Bahá'í, por Abdu'l-Bahá, o Seu Intérprete e Exemplar, por Shoghi Effendi, o Seu Guardião, e pela Casa Universal de Justiça, ordenada por Bahá'u'lláh nas Suas Escrituras Sagradas com organismo supremo da Religião Bahá'í, que serão por Ela exercidas, administradas e realizadas e pelos seus qualificados sucessores; a comunidade Bahá'í existindo em Cabo Verde desde 1954;

*4. Extract from the Official Bulletin of the Republic of Cape Verde, issue of 10 August 1985, announcing the Decree of the Minister of Justice which granted judicial personality to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cape Verde; 27 July 1985.*

1985 NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA (INCORPORATION) ACT 24

# COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

ACT No. 24 OF 1985.

L.S.

I assent

C.A. SEIGNORET
*President.*

20th December, 1985.

AN ACT FOR THE INCORPORATION OF A BODY TO BE KNOWN AS "THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA".

(Gazetted 27th December, 1985.)

WHEREAS a representative body of the Baha'is of the Commonwealth of Dominica named the National Spiritual Assembly has been constituted consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and five other Members;

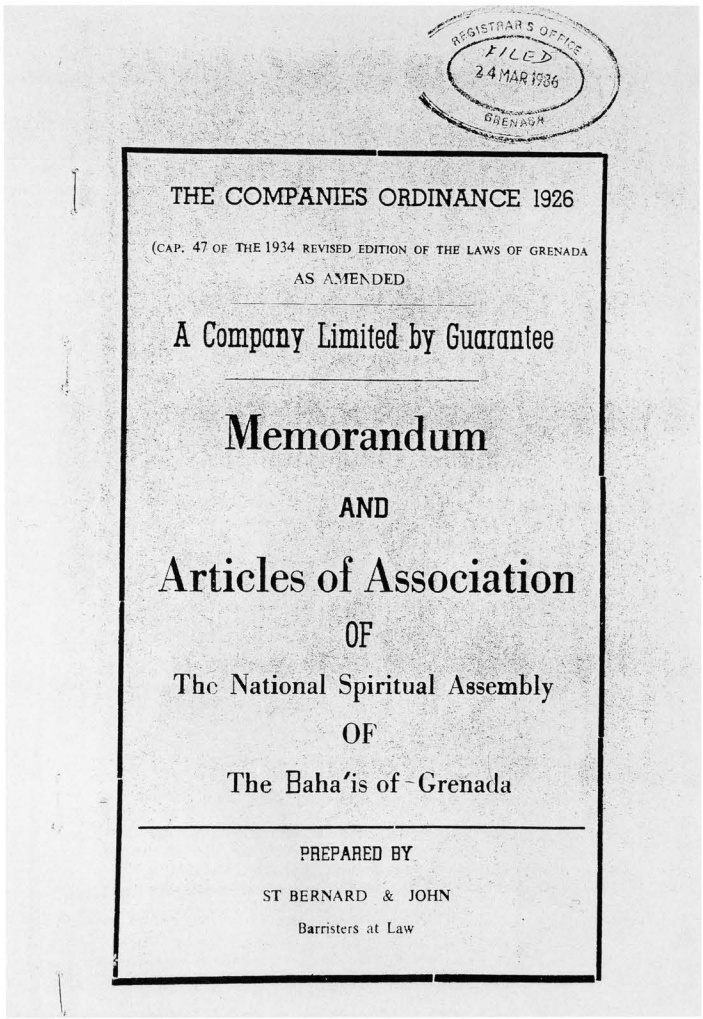
AND WHEREAS it is expedient that the said Assembly be incorporated for the purpose of exercising the powers hereinafter set forth;

BE IT ENACTED by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Dominica as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the — Short title.

**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA (INCORPORATION) ACT, 1985.**

*5. Act of Parliament incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Commonwealth of Dominica; 20 December 1985.*




*6. Memorandum and Articles of Association of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Grenada filed 24 March 1986; registration dated 26 March 1986.*

NO. 1556

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

THE COMPANIES ACT, CAP. 358

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS

I, CERTIFY that THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS is this day incorporated under the Companies Act, Cap. and that the Company is Limited.

GIVEN under my hand and Seal at the City of Saint John in Antigua and Barbuda this day of November, 1983.

Registrar of Joint Stock Companies.

REGISTRY OF COMPANIES ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

*7. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands; 19 November 1983.*

Republic of the Marshall Islands
OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF CORPORATIONS
MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS 96960

# Certificate of Incorporation

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

HAVE BEEN DULY FILED AND ENTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS IN THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF CORPORATIONS, REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

EFFECTIVE 10am MARSHALL ISLANDS TIME ON April 11 1986, THE PERSON SIGNING SAID ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION AND THEIR ASSOCIATES AND SUCCESSORS SHALL CONSTITUTE A BODY CORPORATE UNDER THE NAME OF

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS (Non-Profit)
FOR THE TERM SPECIFIED IN ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION UNLESS SOONER LEGALLY DISSOLVED.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name officially and have therein impressed my Seal of Office, Republic of the Marshall Islands, on this 11th day of April, 1986.

Don R. Howard
REGISTRAR OF CORPORATIONS

*8. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Marshall Islands; 11 April 1986.*

# 2. A SELECTION OF OTHER DOCUMENTS RECORDING OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

140, 141 and 142 of the Bahá'í Era
21 April 1983 to 20 April 1986

1. Letter dated 5 December 1983 from the District Commissioner of Narok, Kenya, authorizing the Bahá'ís to practice and teach the Bahá'í Faith in the Narok District.

2. Letter dated 30 November 1983 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Luxembourg, to the Public Relations Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg, giving assurance of the Government's support in attempting to alleviate the suffering of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

3. Resolution of the Legislature of the State of New Mexico, U.S.A., passed in February 1984, expressing 'condemnation of Iran's brutal persecution of members of the Bahá'í Faith'.

4. Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Ministry of Religious and Minorities Affairs, Government of Pakistan, appointing a Marriage Registrar for solemnizing marriages between members of the Bahá'í community in the Province of Sind.

5. Letter dated 5 June 1984 from the principal of the Mmabatho High School, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, setting out the conditions under which students may be permitted to absent themselves on Bahá'í Holy Days.

6. Letter dated 15 February 1984 from the Commissioner of Income Tax, New Delhi, India, stating that donations made to the National Bahá'í Charitable Society will be eligible for tax relief.

7. Excerpt from letter dated 25 July 1984 from the Internal Revenue Service of the United States granting tax-exempt status to the Bahá'í Ḥuqúqu'lláh Trust.

8. Letter dated 1 November 1984 from the Office of the Commissioner of Karachi Division, Karachi, Pakistan, appointing a Bahá'í representative to the Divisional Minority Committee.

9. Resolution No. 214 of the Legislature of Guam, adopted 29 November 1985, 'Relative to recognizing the International Year of Peace as designated for 1986 by the United Nations, the promise of world peace as exemplified by the Bahá'í Faith, and acknowledging the importance of world peace to everyone'.

10. Certificate of Registration of the Bahá'í Publishing Agency of the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya, dated 25 October 1983.

11. Ordinance No. 30962/IC/187 of the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications, Chile, dated 4 April 1986, permitting the use of 'Bahá'í' in the name of the Bahá'í radio station.

12. Letter dated 2 September 1985 from the District Commissioner of Nickerie, Suriname granting permission for Bahá'ís to broadcast radio programmes with religious content on Radio RANI.

13. Letter dated 27 September 1983 from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Andamans, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Port Blair, allotting land for the purpose of a Bahá'í burial ground.

14. First day cover of a postal stamp entitled 'Freedom of Worship' and featuring the first Latin American Bahá'í House of Worship, issued in October 1983 by the Government of Panama.

15. First day cover of a postal stamp issued 20 January 1985 by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Sri Lanka, to mark 'World Religion Day'. First introduced in Sri Lanka by the Bahá'ís in 1981, 'World Religion Day' has now become a national event endorsed by the Government. The stamp depicts the intertwined symbols of the nation's major religions with the Bahá'í Faith represented by a nine-petalled rosette containing the word 'Bahá'í'. The pentacle has been added to denote the Bábí Faith.

16. Extract from the 23 January 1985 issue of the Official Journal of the Republic of France announcing the registration of the *Association bahaie du corps médical et des professions connexes de France*.

17. Certificate dated 12 March 1984 of the Senate of the State of Hawaii, U.S.A., commending Gayle Morrison, the Bahá'í author of *To Move the World*, for the significant contribution made by her book to the advancement of racial unity. The author was also the recipient of a Certificate of Commendation from the House of Representatives and a Resolution of the Kauai County Council in a similar vein.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Telegrams: "DISTRICTER", Narok
Telephone: Narok 4
When replying please quote
Ref. No. DER. 2/8/Vol.1/310
and date

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER
P.O. Box 4
NAROK, KENYA

5th December, 83
19

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

BAHAI FAITH

This is to certify that the followers of the above faith are authorized to practice and propagate activities pertinent to the Bahai tenets in the District, without prejudice to the Laws of Kenya.

( P. NDEMO )
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER
NAROK

PN/mrm

*1. Letter dated 5 December 1983 from the District Commissioner of Narok, Kenya, authorizing the Bahá'ís to practice and teach the Bahá'í Faith in the Narok District.*

GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG

MINISTÈRE
DES AFFAIRES ETRANGÈRES

LE MINISTRE

Luxembourg, le 30 novembre 1983

Madame,

J'ai l'honneur d'accuser reception de votre lettre du 18 novembre 1983 par laquelle vous avez bien voulu me fournir de nouvelles précisions sur le sort inhumain et inadmissible réservé à la communauté baha'ie en Iran.

Je vous remercie de cet envoi qui, comme les précédents, a suscité un vif intérêt auprès de mes Services.

Je tiens à vous renouveler à cette occasion l'assurance que le Gouvernement luxembourgeois ne manquera aucune occasion, dans quelque enceinte que ce soit, pour stigmatiser les méthodes abjectes appliquées à l'encontre de votre communauté en Iran et ne ménagera aucun effort pour intervenir partout où cela sera possible et de la façon la plus appropriée afin de soulager les souffrances que vos coreligionnaires ont à endurer.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Madame, l'assurance de ma considération très distinguée.

Colette Flesch

Madame Liliane Ehringer,
Secrétaire du Comité des Relations Publiques
de l'Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale des
Baha'is du Luxembourg
Boîte postale 311
LUXEMBOURG

*2. Letter dated 30 November 1983 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Luxembourg, to the Public Relations Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg, giving assurance of the Government's support in attempting to alleviate the suffering of the Bahá'ís in Irán.*

The Legislature
of the
State of New Mexico

THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION - 1984

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1

INTRODUCED BY
REPRESENTATIVE NICK L. SALAZAR
AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

A JOINT MEMORIAL
EXPRESSING CONDEMNATION OF IRAN'S BRUTAL PERSECUTION OF MEMBERS OF THE BAHA'I FAITH

WHEREAS, the persecution of Members of the Baha'i Faith and the destruction of Baha'i holy places in Iran has outraged the people of New Mexico, the United States and the world; and

WHEREAS, the government of Iran has outlawed all Baha'i Institutions in that country and declared membership in Baha'i administrative bodies a criminal act; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Baha'i Faith, an independent, peaceful and law-abiding religious community, have been persecuted, tortured, imprisoned and executed by the Iranian government for no reason other than their religious beliefs; and

WHEREAS, such genocidal actions violate basic human rights and outrage common decency and civilized people everywhere; and

WHEREAS, condemnations of Iran's mistreatment of the Baha'i Community have been voiced by the President of the United States, the United States Congress, many of these United States and the United Nations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the State of New Mexico, assembled in the seventy-second year of Statehood, express their shock and revulsion at this brutal repression and persecution of this religious minority by the current government of Iran and join the states, nations and peoples of the world in condemning such actions and policies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Memorial be transmitted to the Congress of the United States, the President of the United States, the New Mexico Congressional Delegation, the Secretary-General of the United Nations General Assembly and to the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Incorporated, as representatives of the Baha'i Community.

Signed and Sealed at The Capitol,
in the City of Santa Fe.

REPRESENTATIVE RAYMOND G. SANCHEZ, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STEPHEN R. ARIAS, CHIEF CLERK
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE NICK L. SALAZAR
RIO ARRIBA, SANTA FE & SAN MIGUEL COUNTIES

*3. Resolution of the Legislature of the State of New Mexico, U.S.A., passed in February 1984, expressing 'condemnation of Iran's brutal persecution of members of the Bahá'í Faith'.*

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Religious Affairs
and Minorities Affairs

.....

NO: 5(4)/84-CN Islamabad, the 04th February, 1986.

To

Mr. Riaz Ahmad Shirazi,
Secretary,
National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahai's of Pakistan,
Karachi.

Subject:- APPOINTMENT OF MARRIAGE REGISTRAR FOR THE BAHAI COMMUNITY.

Dear Sir,

I am desired to refer to your representation No. GOP/141/BL, dated 15th December, 1984 on the above mentioned subject and to inform you that Mr.Farsheed Rohani S/O Khodadad Rohani, resident of 10 Motivala Mansion, Frere Road, Saddar Karachi has been appointed as Honorary Registrar of Marriages by the Sind Government for solemnising marriages between the members of the Bahai Community in the Province of Sind in accordance with the Provision of special Marriage Act, 1872.

Yours Faithfully,

(GHULAM MUSTAFA BHATTI)
Section Officer (N)

*4. Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Ministry of Religious and Minorities Affairs, Government of Pakistan, appointing a Marriage Registrar for solemnizing marriages between members of the Bahá'í community in the Province of Sind.*

Mmabatho High School,
P.O. Box 3428,
Mmabatho

Tel. (0140) 21665

5 June 1984

National Spiritual Assembly of
the Baha'is of Bophuthatswana,
P.O. Box 3396,
Mmabatho

Re: Baha'i Holy Days

Dear Sir:

I have received your letter of 28 May 1984 with regards to the abovementioned matter. Below you will find the school policy with regards to Baha'i students taking Holy Days off from school.

1. This day will be observed by the whole family - i.e. if the parents go to work, then the child goes to school.

2. The child's work must be up to date and no test or examination must be scheduled for the day in question.

3. Parents must undertake to ensure that any work missed will be caught up independently.

4. If the above conditions are in order, then arrangements should be made in advance - prefereably a week before, but at least the previous day.

5. No blanket approval is given and each parent is expected to make arrangements with the principal in each case.

I trust the above clarifies this matter for you and the families who will be affected by same.

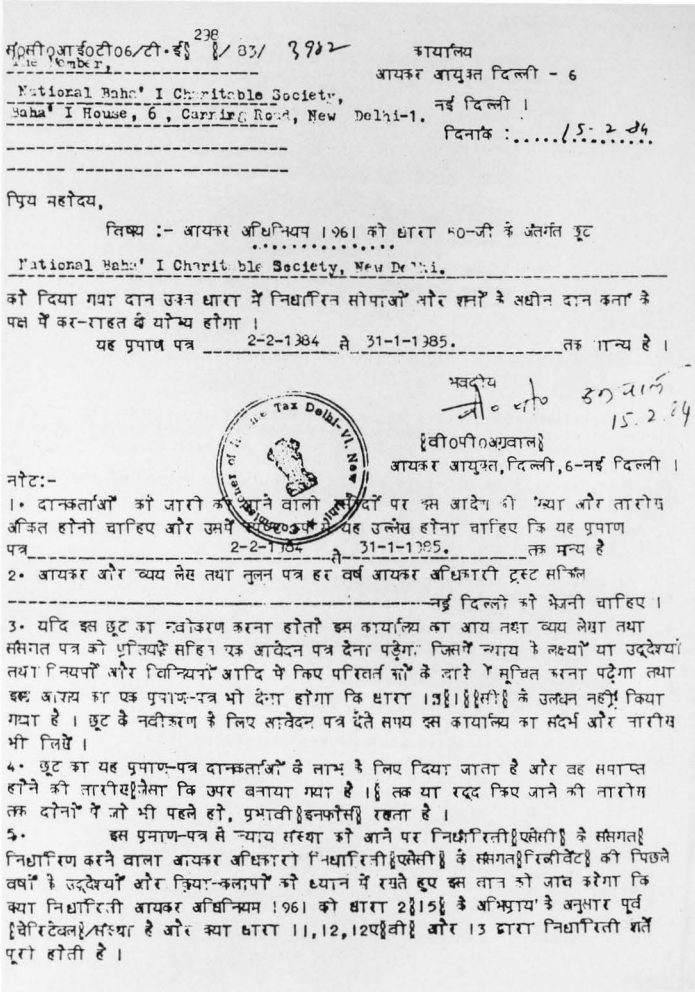
Yours sincerely,

Martin J. Mulcahy

Martin J. Mulcahy
Principal

MJM:mm

*5. Letter dated 5 June 1984 from the principal of the Mmabatho High School, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, setting out the conditions under which students may be permitted to absent themselves on Bahá'í Holy Days.*



संदर्भ संख्या/File Number, 238 सी0आई0टी06/टी·ई॰ ई/83/ 3982

कार्यालय
आयकर आयुक्त दिल्ली - 6
नई दिल्ली ।
दिनांक : 15.2.84

National Baha' I Charitable Society,
Baha' I House, 6, Curzon Road, New Delhi-1.

प्रिय महोदय,

विषय :- आयकर अधिनियम 1961 की धारा 80-जी के अंतर्गत छूट .....

National Baha' I Charitable Society, New Delhi.

को दिया गया दान उक्त धारा में निर्धारित शर्तों और शर्तों के अधीन दान कर्ता के पक्ष में कर-राहत के योग्य होगा ।

यह प्रमाण पत्र 2-2-1984 से 31-1-1985. तक मान्य है ।

भवदीय
ह0 अ0 15.2.84
(वी0पी0अग्रवाल)
आयकर आयुक्त, दिल्ली, 6-नई दिल्ली ।

नोट:-

1. दानकर्ताओं को जारी की जाने वाली रसीदों पर इस आदेश की संख्या और तारीख अंकित होनी चाहिए और उसमें स्पष्ट रूप से यह उल्लेख होना चाहिए कि यह प्रमाण पत्र 2-2-1984 से 31-1-1985. तक मान्य है

2. आयकर और व्यय लेखे तथा तुलन पत्र हर वर्ष आयकर अधिकारी ट्रस्ट सर्किल ..... नई दिल्ली को भेजनी चाहिए ।

3. यदि इस छूट का नवीकरण कराना होतो इस कार्यालय का आय तथा व्यय लेखा तथा संलग्न पत्र को प्रतियों सहित एक आवेदन पत्र देना पड़ेगा जिसमें न्यास के लक्ष्यों या उद्देश्यों तथा नियमों और विनियमों आदि में किए परिवर्तनों के बारे में सूचित करना पड़ेगा तथा इस आशय का एक प्रमाण-पत्र भी देना होगा कि धारा 13(1)(सी) के उलंघन नहीं किया गया है । छूट के नवीकरण के लिए आवेदन पत्र देते समय इस कार्यालय का संदर्भ और तारीख भी लिखें ।

4. छूट का यह प्रमाण-पत्र दानकर्ताओं के लाभ के लिए दिया जाता है और वह समाप्त होने की तारीख (जैसा कि ऊपर बताया गया है ।) तक या रद्द किए जाने की तारीख तक दोनों में जो भी पहले हो, प्रभावी (इनफोर्स) रहता है ।

5. इस प्रमाण-पत्र से न्याय संस्था को आने पर निर्धारिती (एसेसी) के संलग्न (निर्धारण करने वाला आयकर अधिकारी निर्धारिती (एसेसी) के संलग्न (रिलेटिव्ज) की पिछले वर्षों के उद्देश्यों और क्रिया-कलापों को ध्यान में रखते हुए इस बात की जांच करेगा कि क्या निर्धारिती आयकर अधिनियम 1961 की धारा 2(15) के अभिप्राय के अनुसार पूर्व (चेरिटेबल) संस्था है और क्या धारा 11, 12, 12(बी) और 13 द्वारा निर्धारिती शर्तें पूरी होती है ।

*6. Letter dated 15 February 1984 from the Commissioner of Income Tax, New Delhi, India, stating that donations made to the National Bahá'í Charitable Society will be eligible for tax relief.*

Internal Revenue Service
District Director

Department of the Treasury

Date: JUL 25 1984

Employer Identification Number:
36-3297939
Accounting Period Ending:
MAY 31
Form 990 Required: ☐ Yes ☒ No

BAHAI HUQUQULLAH TRUST
BAHAI NATIONAL CENTER
WILLMETTE, IL 60091

Person to Contact:
MS. R. WALLACE
Contact Telephone Number:
(312) 856-1200

Dear Applicant:

Based on information supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

We have further determined that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code, because you are an organization described in section 509(a)(3)

*7. Excerpt from letter dated 25 July 1984 from the Internal Revenue Service of the United States granting tax-exempt status to the Bahá'í Ḥúqúqu'lláh Trust.*

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF KARACHI DIVISION KARACHI.
NO. HMS/JUBA/11 (876)/84 1-XI- October 1984.

To

Mr. Farsheed Kowhani,
Secretary,
Spiritual Assembly of the ,
Baha's of Karachi.
Baha I Hall ,
Business Recorder Road,
Karachi.

Sub. MINORITY AFFAIRS-FORMATION OF DIVISIONAL MINIORITY COMMITTEE.

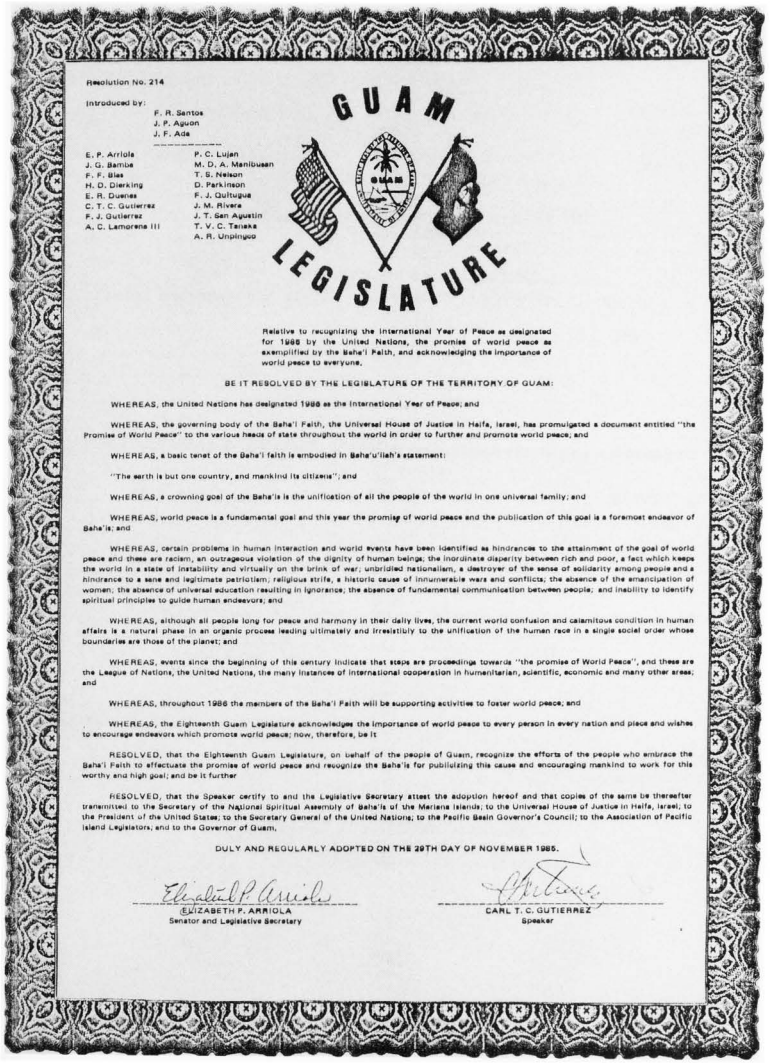
Ref. Reference your letter No. 180/141 BE dated 18.10.1984 on the above subject.

Commissioner Karachi has been pleased to appointment Mr. Faredoon Yazamaidi as member of the Divisional Minority Committee.

A meeting of this Committee has been fixed on 3.11.1984 at 11.00 A.M. He may please be advised to attend the meeting on that date. His full address and telephone number , if any, may please be supplied for record in this office.

( [illegible] GAZI )
ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER
FOR COMMISSIONER KARACHI.

*8. Letter dated 1 November 1984 from the Office of the Commissioner of Karachi Division, Karachi, Pakistan, appointing a Bahá'í representative to the Divisional Minority Committee.*



Resolution No. 214

Introduced by:
F. R. Santos
J. P. Aguon
J. F. Ada

E. P. Arriola
J. G. Bamba
F. F. Blas
H. D. Dierking
E. R. Duenas
C. T. C. Gutierrez
F. J. Gutierrez
A. C. Lamorena III
P. C. Lujan
M. D. A. Manibusan
T. S. Nelson
D. Parkinson
F. J. Quitugua
J. M. Rivera
J. T. San Agustin
T. V. C. Taisacan
A. R. Unpingco

GUAM LEGISLATURE

Relative to recognizing the International Year of Peace as designated for 1986 by the United Nations, the promise of world peace as exemplified by the Baha'i Faith, and acknowledging the importance of world peace to everyone.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE TERRITORY OF GUAM:

WHEREAS, the United Nations has designated 1986 as the International Year of Peace; and

WHEREAS, the governing body of the Baha'i Faith, the Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel, has promulgated a document entitled "the Promise of World Peace" to the various heads of state throughout the world in order to further and promote world peace; and

WHEREAS, a basic tenet of the Baha'i faith is embodied in Baha'u'llah's statement:

"The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens"; and

WHEREAS, a crowning goal of the Baha'is is the unification of all the people of the world in one universal family; and

WHEREAS, world peace is a fundamental goal and this year the promise of world peace and the publication of this goal is a foremost endeavor of Baha'is; and

WHEREAS, certain problems in human interaction and world events have been identified as hindrances to the attainment of the goal of world peace and these are racism, an outrageous violation of the dignity of human beings; the inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a fact which keeps the world in a state of instability and virtually on the brink of war; unbridled nationalism, a destroyer of the sense of solidarity among people and a hindrance to a sane and legitimate patriotism; religious strife, a historic cause of innumerable wars and conflicts; the absence of the emancipation of women; the absence of universal education resulting in ignorance; the absence of fundamental communication between people; and inability to identify spiritual principles to guide human endeavors; and

WHEREAS, although all people long for peace and harmony in their daily lives, the current world confusion and calamitous condition in human affairs is a natural phase in an organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet; and

WHEREAS, events since the beginning of this century indicate that steps are proceedings towards "the promise of World Peace", and these are the League of Nations, the United Nations, the many instances of international cooperation in humanitarian, scientific, economic and many other areas; and

WHEREAS, throughout 1986 the members of the Baha'i Faith will be supporting activities to foster world peace; and

WHEREAS, the Eighteenth Guam Legislature acknowledges the importance of world peace to every person in every nation and place and wishes to encourage endeavors which promote world peace; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Eighteenth Guam Legislature, on behalf of the people of Guam, recognize the efforts of the people who embrace the Baha'i Faith to effectuate the promise of world peace and recognize the Baha'is for publicizing this cause and encouraging mankind to work for this worthy and high goal; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Speaker certify to and the Legislative Secretary attest the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the Mariana Islands; to the Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel; to the President of the United States; to the Secretary General of the United Nations; to the Pacific Basin Governor's Council; to the Association of Pacific Island Legislators; and to the Governor of Guam.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 29TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 1985.

ELIZABETH P. ARRIOLA
Senator and Legislative Secretary

CARL T. C. GUTIERREZ
Speaker

*9. Resolution No. 214 of the Legislature of Guam, adopted 29 November 1985, 'Relative to recognizing the International Year of Peace as designated for 1986 by the United Nations, the promise of world peace as exemplified by the Bahá'í Faith, and acknowledging the importance of world peace to everyone'.*

FORM BN/3 (r. 5)

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

THE REGISTRATION OF BUSINESS NAMES ACT
(*Cap.* 499, *section* 14)

**CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that ....Bonaventure Wafula and Mehraban Sohaili .....

carrying on business under the business name of BAHA'I PUBLISHING AGENCY.

at Plot No. 37/275, Masaba Road Off Bunyala Road, Lower Hill Facing Nairobi West, Baha'i Centre. P.O. Box 47562 Nairobi.

have/has been duly registered under Number ....99485... pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of the Registration of Business Names Act and the Rules made thereunder.

GIVEN under my hand at Nairobi this twenty fifth day of October,

One thousand nine hundred and eighty three.

Assistant Registrar

GPK 209—20m—27/82

*10. Certificate of Registration of the Bahá'í Publishing Agency of the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya, dated 25 October 1983.*

REPUBLICA DE CHILE
MINISTERIO DE TRANSPORTES Y TELECOMUNICACIONES
SUBSECRETARIA DE TELECOMUNICACIONES

ORD.: N° 30962 /IC 187 /

ANT.: Carta Ingreso SUBTEL N° 11.556 de fecha 25 de Marzo de 1986.

.86 - 034

MAT.: Comunica nombre de fantasía.

SANTIAGO, 04 ABR 1986

DE : SUBSECRETARIO DE TELECOMUNICACIONES

A : REPRESENTANTE LEGAL, SOCIEDAD RADIODIFUSORA KALIMAT LIMITADA

1. Mediante carta en antecedente, se solicita un pronunciamiento de esta Subsecretaría de Estado sobre la designación del nombre para su radioemisora en Onda Media, para la ciudad de Labranza, otorgada mediante el Decreto Supremo N° 166 de fecha 14 de Octubre de 1985 del Ministerio de Transportes y Telecomunicaciones.

2. Respecto a lo solicitado, se comunica a Ud. que esta Subsecretaría acoge su petición, en el sentido de que el nombre de la radioemisora sea el primero de su terna: Bahá'í.

Saluda a Ud.,

GUSTAVO ARENAS CORRAL
TENIENTE CORONEL
SUBSECRETARIO DE TELECOMUNICACIONES

*11. Ordinance No. 30962/IC/187 of the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications, Chile, dated 4 April 1986, permitting the use of 'Bahá'í' in the name of the Bahá'í radio station.*

DISTRICTS - COMMISSARIAAT
NICKERIE

No. 4702
Bijlage(n)
Onderwerp

Nieuw-Nickerie, 2 sept. 1985.

Aan
de Directeur van Rani
Alhier.

Hierbij moge ik U vragen de "BAHAI GEMEENTE" ook in aanmerking te laten komen voor het verzorgen van een godsdienst-programma, gelijk de andere gemeenten in het district Nickerie, dat wil zeggen onder de zelfde restricties en tijdstippen.

De Districts-Commissaris van Nickerie,

(M.L. SOE AGNIE).

RR/..
Rough translation:
Hereby I request you to also consider the Baha'i Community to have a religi ous-programma, as is the case with the other communities in the district Nickerie, which means under the same restrictions and times.

*12. Letter dated 2 September 1985 from the District Commissioner of Nickerie, Suriname granting permission for Bahá'ís to broadcast radio programmes with religious content on Radio RANI.*

R.C.No.45/83 446/83
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER,
A N D A M A N S.
...
PORT BLAIR, the 27th September, 1983.

To

The Secretary,
Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai's,
Port Blair.

Sub:- Allotment of land to be used as Burial ground - re.

...

Sir,

With reference to your application dated 25/8/1983 requesting for allotment of land for Burial ground, you are hereby informed that your request has been considered and an area of 0.80 Hects bearing S/No.1/3 situated at Garacharma is allotted and set a part for the purpose of Burial ground in favour of the Bahai community.

You are requested to take over the physical possession of the said land from the Tahsildar, Port Blair.

Yours faithfully,

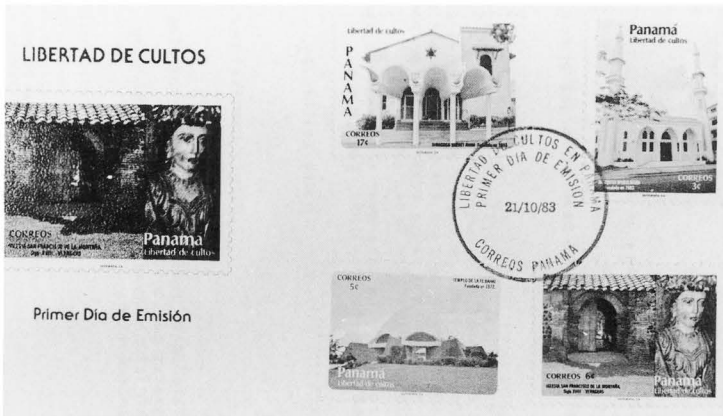
Deputy Commissioner.

Copy to:-

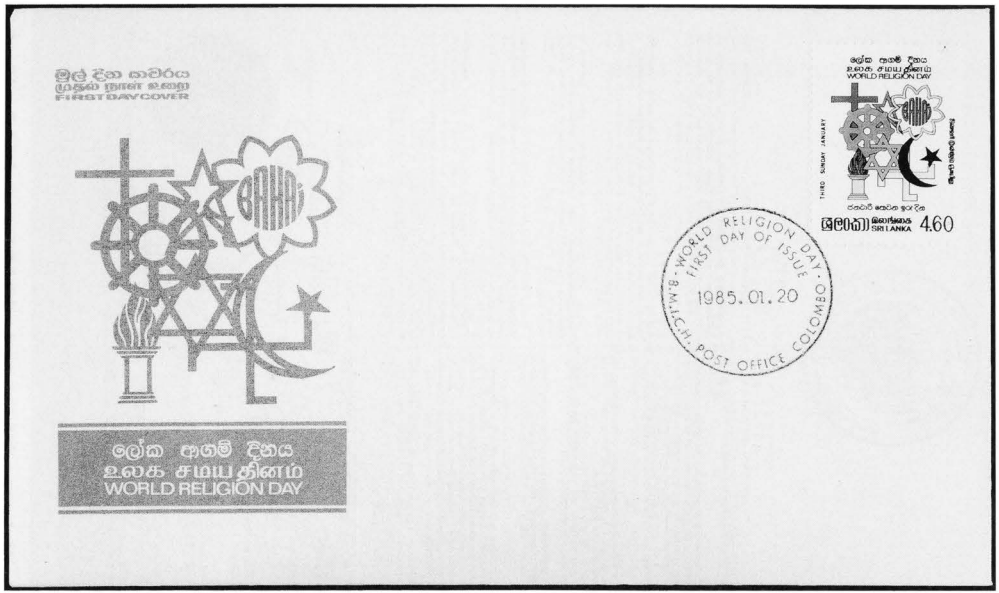
1. The Tahsildar, Port Blair, for information and necessary action.
2. The Assistant Commissioner, South Andamen for information.

Deputy Commissioner.

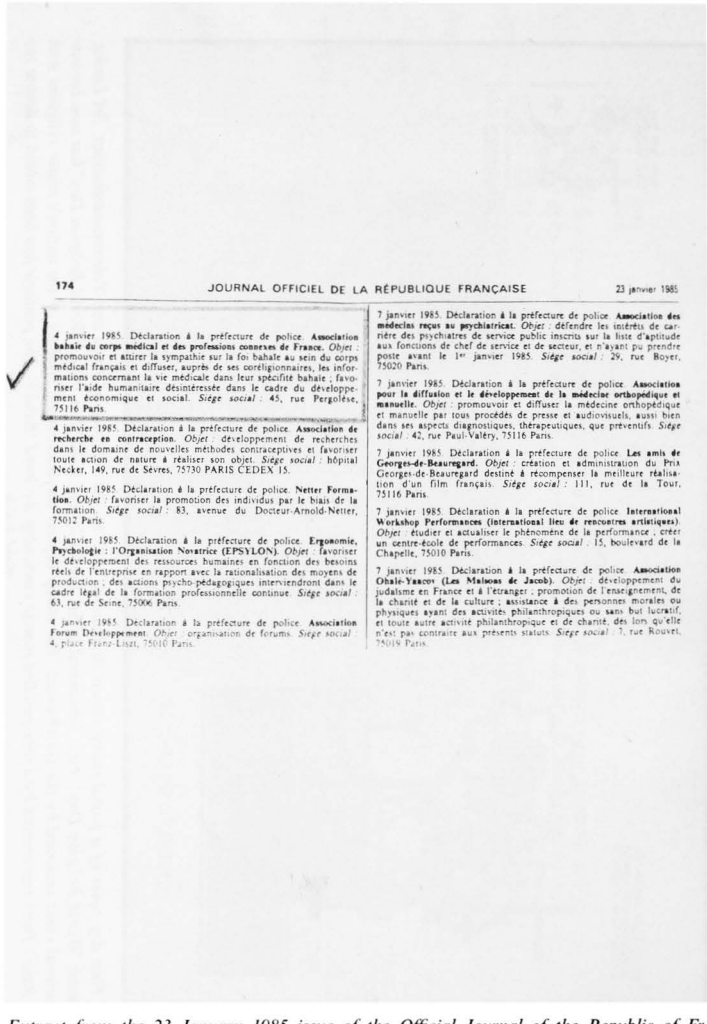
*13. Letter dated 27 September 1983 from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Andamans, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Port Blair, allotting land for the purpose of a Bahá'í burial ground.*




*14. First day cover of a postal stamp entitled 'Freedom of Worship', and featuring the first Latin American Bahá'í House of Worship, issued in October 1983 by the Government of Panama.*




*15. First day cover of a postal stamp issued 20 January 1985 by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Sri Lanka, to mark 'World Religion Day'. First introduced in Sri Lanka by the Bahá'ís in 1981, 'World Religion Day' has now become a national event endorsed by the Government. The stamp depicts the intertwined symbols of the nation's major religions with the Bahá'í Faith represented by a nine-petalled rosette containing the word 'Bahá'í'. The pentacle has been added to denote the Babí Faith.*



174 JOURNAL OFFICIEL DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE 23 janvier 1985

4 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Association bahaie du corps médical et des professions connexes de France.** *Objet :* promouvoir et attirer la sympathie sur la foi bahaie au sein du corps médical français et diffuser, auprès de ses corréligionnaires, les informations concernant la vie médicale dans leur spécifité bahaie ; favoriser l'aide humanitaire désintéressée dans le cadre du développement économique et social. *Siège social :* 45, rue Pergolèse, 75116 Paris.

4 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Association de recherche en contraception.** *Objet :* développement de recherches dans le domaine de nouvelles méthodes contraceptives et favoriser toute action de nature à réaliser son objet. *Siège social :* hôpital Necker, 149, rue de Sèvres, 75730 PARIS CEDEX 15.

4 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Netter Formation.** *Objet :* favoriser la promotion des individus par le biais de la formation. *Siège social :* 83, avenue du Docteur-Arnold-Netter, 75012 Paris.

4 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Ergonomie, Psychologie : l'Organisation Novatrice (EPSYLON).** *Objet :* favoriser le développement des ressources humaines en fonction des besoins réels de l'entreprise en rapport avec la rationalisation des moyens de production ; des actions psycho-pédagogiques interviendront dans le cadre légal de la formation professionnelle continue. *Siège social :* 63, rue de Seine, 75006 Paris.

4 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Association Forum Développement.** *Objet :* organisation de forums. *Siège social :* 4, place Franz-Liszt, 75010 Paris.

7 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Association des médecins reçus au psychiatricat.** *Objet :* défendre les intérêts de carrière des psychiatres de service public inscrits sur la liste d'aptitude aux fonctions de chef de service et de secteur, et n'ayant pu prendre poste avant le 1er janvier 1985. *Siège social :* 29, rue Boyer, 75020 Paris.

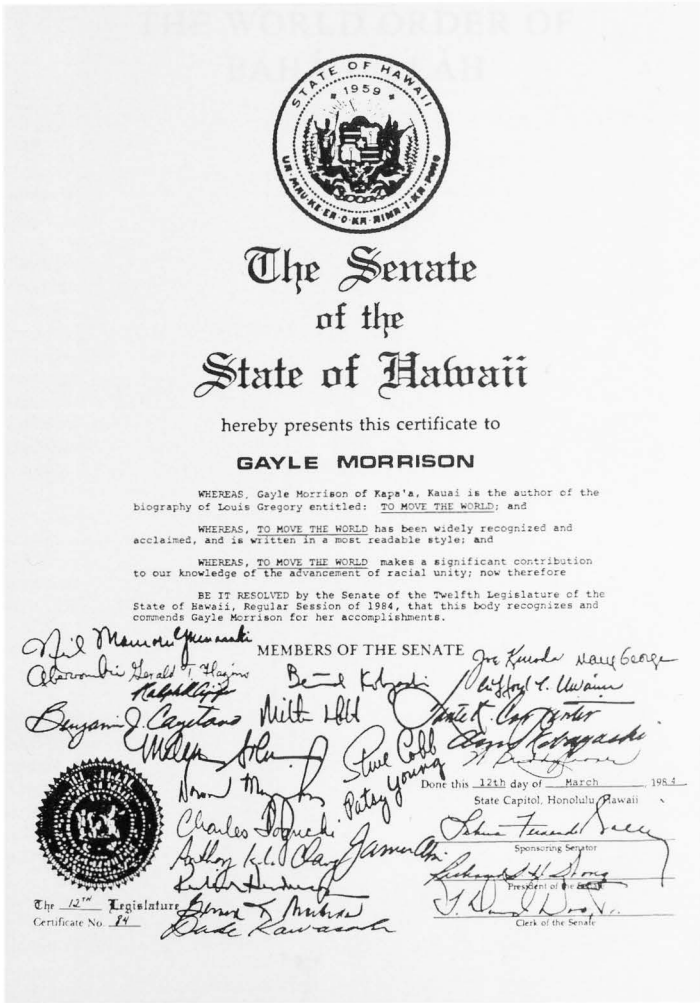
7 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Association pour la diffusion et le développement de la médecine orthopédique et manuelle.** *Objet :* promouvoir et diffuser la médecine orthopédique et manuelle par tous procédés de presse et audiovisuels, aussi bien dans ses aspects diagnostiques, thérapeutiques, que préventifs. *Siège social :* 42, rue Paul-Valéry, 75116 Paris.

7 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Les amis de Georges-de-Beauregard.** *Objet :* création et administration du Prix Georges-de-Beauregard destiné à récompenser la meilleure réalisation d'un film français. *Siège social :* 111, rue de la Tour, 75116 Paris.

7 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **International Workshop Performances (international lieu de rencontres artistiques).** *Objet :* étudier et actualiser le phénomène de la performance ; créer un centre-école de performances. *Siège social :* 15, boulevard de la Chapelle, 75010 Paris.

7 janvier 1985. Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **Association Ohale-Yaacov (Les Maisons de Jacob).** *Objet :* développement du judaïsme en France et à l'étranger ; promotion de l'enseignement, de la charité et de la culture ; assistance à des personnes morales ou physiques ayant des activités philanthropiques ou sans but lucratif, et toute autre activité philanthropique et de charité, dès lors qu'elle n'est pas contraire aux présents statuts. *Siège social :* 7, rue Rouvet, 75019 Paris.

*16. Extract from the 23 January 1985 issue of the Official Journal of the Republic of France announcing the registration of the* Association bahaie du corps médical et des professions connexes de France.



The Senate
of the
State of Hawaii

hereby presents this certificate to

GAYLE MORRISON

WHEREAS, Gayle Morrison of Kapa'a, Kauai is the author of the biography of Louis Gregory entitled: TO MOVE THE WORLD; and

WHEREAS, TO MOVE THE WORLD has been widely recognized and acclaimed, and is written in a most readable style; and

WHEREAS, TO MOVE THE WORLD makes a significant contribution to our knowledge of the advancement of racial unity; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twelfth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 1984, that this body recognizes and commends Gayle Morrison for her accomplishments.

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE

Done this 12th day of March, 1984
State Capitol, Honolulu, Hawaii

Sponsoring Senator

President of the Senate

Clerk of the Senate

The 12th Legislature
Certificate No. 14

*17. Certificate dated 12 March 1984 of the Senate of the State of Hawaii, U.S.A., commending Gayle Morrison, the Bahá'í author of* To Move the World, *for the significant contribution made by her book to the advancement of racial unity. The author was also the recipient of a Certificate of Commendation from the House of Representatives and a Resolution of the Kauai County Council in a similar vein.*

PART THREE

# THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

*The Seat of the Universal House of Justice from the north.*

# 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 daysprings 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 Riḍván 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] April 1963 A.D.

Hugh E. Chance

Hushmand Fatheazam

Amoz 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 UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

*Facsimile of signatures on the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice: 26 November 1972*

# 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 person recognised 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 Constitution[2] 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. 527.
[2] Declaration of Trust and By-Laws for a National Spiritual Assembly. See p. 509.

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 activites 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'ẓam' 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 BOARD 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.

# 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 unparalled 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 un-influenced 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 recognised.

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 a few of His followers to serve Him as Hands 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 prevaileth 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 lights 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, however, 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.[1] 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 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 on 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

[1] See 'The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 334.

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: North-western Africa, Central and East Africa, Southern Africa, North America, Central America, South America, Western Asia, Southeastern Asia, North-eastern 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 unfoldment 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 operation. 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 Coun-

[1] In November 1980 the thirteen Boards of Counsellors were consolidated into five, 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.

sellors 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.*[1]

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 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 preservation 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.[2]

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 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

[1] Shoghi Effendi, letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, 21 December 1939; see *Messages to America*, pp. 32–33.

[2] Shoghi Effendi, letter in Persian to the Bahá'ís of the East, Naw-Rúz 111 (1954).

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 BAHA'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 BAHA'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.

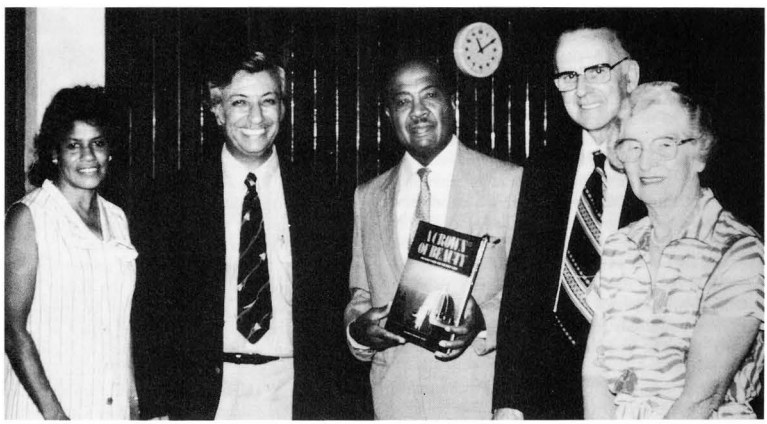
Authority for the expulsion and reinstatement of Covenant-breakers remains with the Hands of the Cause of God. All such matters will be investigated locally by the relative Continental Board of Counsellors in consultation with any Hand or Hands who may be in the area. The Continental Board of Counsellors 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, 17 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 Riḍván 1974 and conclude five years later at Riḍván 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 Riḍván 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.



*The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Featherstone (right), visiting the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Mr. Ellis Clarke (centre), accompanied by Counsellor Ruth Pringle (left) and member of the National Spiritual Assembly Dr. M.H. Jamalabadi (second from left). The meeting took place on 22 March 1984 in Port of Spain.*

# 2. THE WORK AND TRAVELS OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE

THE Hands of the Cause of God, freed in 1968 of administrative duties, were able increasingly to devote their efforts to serving as standard-bearers for the Bahá'ís of the world in support of the teaching activities launched by National Spiritual Assemblies and other institutions of the Bahá'í Faith.

During the course of the Seven Year Plan, no less than in the teaching plans that preceded it, these remarkable individuals have been fonts of inspiration, encouragement and reinforcement. Their contribution to the achievement of the goals and the influence of their example upon the Bahá'í friends takes effect on numerous levels, both manifest and intangible. Their universal services in protecting the Cause of God; in proclaiming its truths; in deepening the knowledge of its adherents; in galvanizing the rank and file to greater heights of accomplishment; in awakening to an appreciation of the Bahá'í Cause a large segment of the public, often uninformed of its true nature and its relevance to the spiritual and social perils confronting society; and in presenting Bahá'í literature to Heads of State and others in authority, have continued unabated.

Not alone through their travels, but also through their consultation, their presence at gatherings large and small, including inaugural Conventions of new National Spiritual Assemblies and the annual Conventions of established national communities, their correspondence, their writings and addresses, their association with Bahá'í pilgrims and their interaction with Bahá'ís in the field, often in farflung and remote areas, they 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*...

In the period covered by this volume of *The Bahá'í World*, the years 140, 141 and 142 of the Bahá'í Era, (21 April 1983 to 20 April 1986), the Bahá'í community was robbed of the services of the Hand of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í who passed away 16 November 1984, on his ninety-sixth birthday.

Although these pages lack scope to chronicle the full range of the services of the Hands—some frail or in ill health but of undiminished spiritual power—let the following excerpts culled from *Bahá'í International News Service* bulletins, and other sources, suggest in brief outline some of their major travels as well as a few of their other activities which are less amenable to documentation.

## 1983

*April*

*Bangladesh*: Bahá'í books were recently presented to libraries, newspaper editors and notables ... *Thief in the Night* by the Hand of the Cause William Sears was given to three libraries ... (From report received June 1983)

*Taiwan:* The National Spiritual Assembly has announced the publication of the translation into Chinese of *Release the Sun* by the Hand of the Cause William Sears. (From report received April 1983)

*May*

*Canada*: On returning from the International Convention, the Hand of the Cause John Robarts turned his attention to Canada's National Convention in Guelph, Ontario. He made a moving appeal for special contributions over and above regular gifts in order to remove Canada's financial deficit and start the new year with a clean slate. The appeal resulted in one hundred per cent participation by those attending the meeting ... The next task the Hand of the Cause set for himself and his wife Audrey was a month of travel teaching in Indian areas of Canada. With Indian believers as local coordinators, a schedule was set up for Mr. Robarts beginning with the Eastern Canadian Native Council at Tyendinaga on 3 July. (From report received August 1983)

*Dominica/St. Lucia*: Between 20 May and 30 May the three National Conventions which gave birth to two new sustaining pillars of the Universal House of Justice were successfully accomplished in a spirit of excitement, optimism and enthusiasm ... The Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem contributed immensely ... his abiding love for the beloved Guardian knit all hearts together. His presence, example and participation had a profound effect. Important new contact was established with sympathetic people of prominence through radio, television and the press. (From report received 27 June 1983)

*India*: The visit of the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone to New Delhi in May resulted in an interview in the *Hindustan Times* published on 15 May ... The news article pointed out that Mr. Featherstone has travelled to ninety-six countries of the world thus far to assist in propagating the Bahá'í Faith. (From report received June 1983)

*Macau/Hong Kong*: Stepped-up activity has been noted in both Macau and Hong Kong since the visit of the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone last January. Counsellor Rúḥu'lláh Mumtází paid a three-day visit to both places in May, learning of the increased pace of the work in Macau ... A surge in enrolments in both Hong Kong and Macau has been reported in the two months since Riḍván ... In Macau, five of the new members are boat-dwellers. They constitute a new locality, the region's twenty-first, Macau Marine. (From reports received 21 June and 7 July 1983)

*Excerpts from cabled messages from National Conventions*:

*Cameroon Republic*: DEEPLY GRATEFUL INSPIRING RIDVAN MESSAGE. DELIGHTED LISTEN TAPED COMMENT AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM BRINGING CLOSER LINK HOLY LAND.

*Canada*: CANADIAN CONVENTION BLESSED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND CAUSE JOHN ROBARTS ... INSPIRING CHALLENGING MESSAGE BELOVED HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS ...

*Dominica*: HAPPY ANNOUNCE FORMATION NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY DOMINICA PRESENCE HAND CAUSE KHADEM COUNSELLOR PRINGLE SECRETARY PARENT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY FIRST PIONEER DOMINICA BILL NEDDEN ...

*France*: HAND CAUSE UGO GIACHERY COUNSELLOR AGNES GHAZNAVI ... OVER TWO HUNDRED PARTICIPANTS ... ENKINDLED ENCOURAGED BY RIDVAN MESSAGE MOVED BY EXHORTATION TO ACTION BY HAND CAUSE.

*St. Lucia*: ... SUCCESSFUL SPIRIT FILLED CONVENTION RESULT PRESENCE HAND CAUSE KHADEM REPRESENTATIVE YOUR AUGUST BODY ...

*United States*: ... ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED BELIEVERS ATTENDING ... CONVENTION ENRICHED BY PRESENCE HAND CAUSE GOD WILLIAM SEARS ...

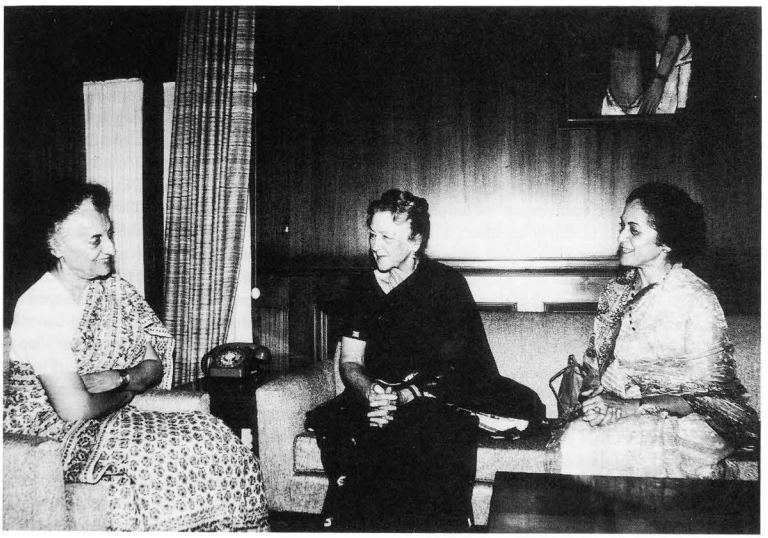
*June*

*Virgin Islands*: On 8 June the Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands passed a resolution condemning persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán. Senator Bent Lawetz, in introducing the bill, said that the first correspondence from the Bahá'í community had elicited his sympathy, but that he felt moved to introduce the resolution protesting the atrocities after taking time to read a book the Bahá'ís had sent him—*A Cry from the Heart* by William Sears ... (From report received June 1983)

*July*

*Asia*: With customary vigour the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone and his wife, Madge Featherstone, moved briskly through engagements in eight countries in three months, visiting more than twenty-five communities of Bahá'ís, widely varied in culture, language and custom. Leaving for Bombay on 6 April, the Featherstones were to visit India twice—before and after the International Convention—Greece, Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore and three major islands of Indonesia, ending up in their own Australia the first week of July. The trip featured high-level state visits to Indonesia in company with Counsellor John Fozdar; participation in the National Conventions of both India and Nepal; visits to the New Era School, the Bahá'í Youth Academy at Panchgani and the nearby Institute of Rural Technology with staffs, students and teachers all benefitting from the active

*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum (left) with His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, following the arrival of the Hand of the Cause in Apia, Western Samoa, in August 1984 on the occasion of the dedication of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands.*



*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum (centre) paying a courtesy visit to Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India (left), at the Prime Minister's Secretariat in New Delhi on 20 October 1984. The Hand of the Cause is accompanied by Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání.*

role of Mrs. Featherstone as well; carrying news of the International Convention to remote places; sessions of advice and encouragement to National Assemblies; and always, in many places, press and radio coverage of the activities of the energetic visitors. (From reports received through 2 August 1983)

*Australia*: EXTRAORDINARY JOY TOTAL UNITY EMANATING FROM HISTORIC FIRST CONFERENCE NORTH TROPIC CAPRICORN BLENDING ABORIGINAL ISLANDER AND AUSTRALIAN COMMITMENT TO RENEW EFFORTS TO SPREAD FAITH BEYOND GOALS. UNMARRED HAPPINESS ... EXCELLENT MEDIA COVERAGE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC MEETING. HAND CAUSE GOD FEATHERSTONE JOINED ONE HUNDRED FIFTY BAHAIS ATTENDING FROM ALL PARTS AUSTRALIA ... (Cablegram received 5 July 1983)

*Austria*: A cable from Innsbruck gave the good news that one thousand five hundred participants from forty countries were in attendance at the International Youth Conference held from 23–26 July in the capital of the Austrian Tyrol. It expressed joyous thanks for the inspiring message from the Universal House of Justice and gratitude for the presence of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. The youth cabled: RECEPTIVE HEARTS MINDS AND SPIRITS RESPONDED TO THE WISDOM LOVING ADVICE AND ENERGIZING ENCOURAGEMENT OF AMATULBAHA. MANY POINTS RELATING DIRECTLY TO THE SITUATIONS FACING BAHAI YOUTH IN TODAYS WORLD WERE CLARIFIED ... Direct results of the conference included: ten newly-enrolled Bahá'ís, thirty-six offers of international pioneering and an equal number of offers for national pioneering; ninety offers to travel teach *en route* from the conference and more than two hundred offers to travel teach before Riḍván. (Cablegram received 27 July 1983)

*Bermuda*: The Bahá'í community of Bermuda achieved a new level of proclamation on 9 July through their commemoration of the Martyrdom of the Báb. The National Spiritual Assembly presented copies of *A Cry from the Heart* by William Sears to members of parliament—forty in the House of Assembly and eleven Senators ... The book by Mr. Sears, and *A Crown of Beauty*, were given to the Premier of Bermuda, the Hon. John W. Swan, the presentation receiving major coverage by radio, television and newspapers. (From report received July 1983)

*Canada*: LAND DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR YUKON TEACHING INSTITUTE BEING HELD ANNIVERSARY MARTYRDOM THE BAB PRESENCE HAND CAUSE JOHN ROBARTS ... (From cablegram received from the Spiritual Assembly of Whitehorse, Canada, 7 July 1983)

*Europe*: On 19 July 1983 Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum left the Holy Land to attend a series of events to which she had been invited. The first of these was the European Youth Conference in Innsbruck, Austria ... Amatu'l-Bahá was the soul and the heart of this gathering. She poured out her love, her wisdom, her encouragement, as well as her words of admonition and advice ... The Mayor of the city of Innsbruck, at a reception given by him in honour of the Faith, met with Amatu'l-Bahá and representatives of the different nations attending the conference. Later, addressing the entire conference, he praised the high standard of conduct of Bahá'í youth ... During the one week she spent in Vienna, after the conference, Amatu'l-Bahá gave a radio interview in German with a journalist, resulting in the publication of an excellent article. She also spoke to over one hundred and fifty Bahá'ís who had gathered in Vienna ... The next item on her itinerary was the Cyprus Summer School held on the Turkish side of the island ... Over one hundred and fifty believers from ten different countries attended the five-day school and enjoyed the participation of the Hand of the Cause ... On two successive evenings, Amatu'l-Bahá spoke to over three hundred believers who had travelled from all parts of Turkey to be with her during the three days she spent in Istanbul ... The last part of Amatu'l-Bahá's journey took her to Italy where she was the special guest at the twenty-second Summer School of Italy held in Fuscaldo in the southern Province of Calabria. After all the years of hoping for this privilege, the friends were overjoyed with her presence. Over eight hundred attended and one hundred and fifty children had their separate school. Fifty non-Bahá'ís also attended the Summer School, seventeen of whom embraced the Cause and added

to the already overflowing cup of happiness and exultation ... Amatu'l-Bahá was away from the Holy Land for a very fruitful and busy eight weeks and returned to Haifa on 13 September. (From report received September 1983)

*The Netherlands*: In June and July the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery paid visits to two of Scandinavia's four Summer schools and spent time in the Netherlands where he visited every community, holding more than ten meetings. Up to one hundred friends were attracted to gatherings where he 'awakened a new spirit in the hearts of the believers,' the National Assembly reported. In informal meetings with individuals, it was stated, he covered a wide range of topics, 'answering questions and sharing his great wisdom and vast experience. Addressing groups, he spoke of the goals of the Seven Year Plan, encouraging greater participation.' The Dutch national community was greatly moved by the Hand of the Cause who gave so freely of his time and energy despite limited strength. (From reports received through 14 August 1983)

*August*

*Greenland*: Assigned to Denmark to develop with a view to a National Spiritual Assembly's being formed eventually, Greenland began the second phase of the Seven Year Plan with one Local Assembly (in Nuuk), six localities and a high level of participation among its small band of devoted believers. Since the visit to Greenland of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum last spring, and with the arrival of two new pioneers from Canada, 'spiritual floodgates have opened on this country, as can be witnessed by recent unprecedented growth, individual interest in the Faith near fever peak in some areas, and an increasing degree of awareness among the general public ... The visit of the Hand of the Cause had a profound and far-reaching effect. Several have enrolled, most of them students at the college. They come from localities all over the country so we have the beginnings of a true national community developing here ... These new souls have begun the critical work of translating the Writings into Greenlandic working together as a group so that, as they put it, "we can translate the spirit as well as the words." (From reports received through 23 August 1983)

*September*

*Australia*: INSPIRED GATHERING OVER FOUR HUNDRED FRIENDS MILDURA NATIONAL CONFERENCE. BLESSED BY THE PRESENCE OF HAND OF CAUSE COLLIS FEATHERSTONE COUNSELLORS KHAN AND STEVESON. IMPRESSIVE OPENING OF CONFERENCE SUPPORTED BY CITIZENS MILDURA MAYOR LOCAL DIGNITARIES AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. INTERESTED MEDIA ACHIEVED WIDEST POSSIBLE COVERAGE. CONCURRENT ADULT AND VITAL YOUTH CONFERENCE OUTSTANDING SUCCESS. BELIEVERS JOYOUSLY DEDICATED ACHIEVE ALL GOALS. NEW VISION NEW SPIRIT COMMITMENT DETERMINATION TO PERSEVERE UNTIL FINAL VICTORY ASSURED ... (Cablegram received 5 September 1983)

*United States*: The annual Green Lake Conference held each autumn in Wisconsin cabled the World Centre on 19 September: WITH FULL HEARTS DEEP COMMITMENT FOLLOW BANNER HOISTED BY BELOVED SUPREME HOUSE JUSTICE GRATEFUL ASSURANCE PRAYERS SUCCESS HOLY SHRINES. HAND CAUSE KHADEM COUNSELLOR BURAFATO NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER FIVE AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS HOST OF ASSISTANTS VOW IN CONCERT WITH WORLDWIDE BAHAI FAMILY MIRROR FORTH BEAUTY LIGHT BAHAULLAH FOR ALL TO SEE EXCEED REPLACEMENT IRANS LOST ASSEMBLIES HERE IN WEST AS LIGHTHOUSES DESTINED ILLUMINE WORLD ENVELOPED EVER INCREASING DARKNESS. (Cablegram received 19 September 1983)

*October*

*Sierra Leone*: Border teaching began in Sierra Leone on 9 October with two three-month extension projects dedicated to the Hands of the Cause Enoch Olinga and Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir ... (Report received October 1983)

*December*

*Malawi*: Forty-three adults and eight children gathered in Limbe, Malawi from 22 to 28 December for the Bahá'í Summer School where they viewed the film 'Pilgrimage' and discussed plans for seven teaching projects undertaken in the name of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga.

*United States*: On Wednesday, 28 December—three days before its 31 December

deadline—the National Spiritual Assembly announced the thrilling news that the goal of $1,000,000 for the construction and operation of radio Station WLGI in South Carolina had been met. This accomplishment was made possible by an unprecedented outpouring of funds from Bahá'ís across the country following a dramatic taped appeal by the Hand of the Cause of God William Sears that was broadcast in more than a thousand Bahá'í communities at the Feast of Masá'il (12 December)... Reported in *Bahá'í News* (U.S.A.) March 1984

## 1984

*January*

Uganda: Soon after the lifting of the ban on the Faith in early 1979, the community of Chelekura, Uganda decided to build a permanent Bahá'í Centre measuring twenty-two by forty-five metres. The whole community, including small children, were involved in the construction. Dedicated Bahá'í women carried water (to be used in brick-making) on their heads early in the morning before going to the field, and late in the evening after returning. Youth spent long hours preparing the mud and molding the bricks. In all, over 25,000 bricks were made by hand. The friends expect to complete and dedicate the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in loving memory of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga before the end of the Seven Year Plan. (From report dated 5 January 1984)

*February*

*United States*: The Hand of the Cause William Sears highlighted the Los Angeles Youth Conference held at the University of Southern California on 25 February 1984 with his talk on the 2 January letter from the Universal House of Justice. With words of love, inspiration and cheer, he urged the youth to respond to the appeal contained in that letter ... (From report received 25 April 1984)

*March*

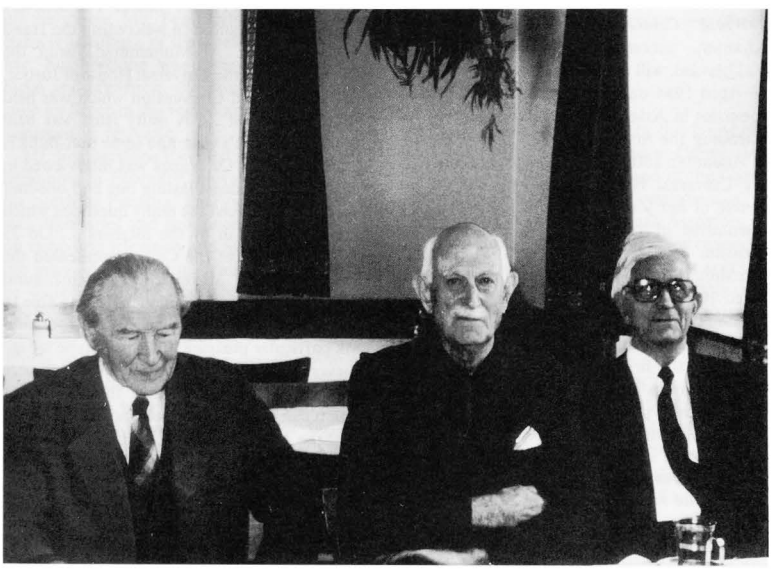
*World Centre*: Princess Gcenaphi of Swaziland was received as a pilgrim on 19 March 1984 accompanied by Chief Johannes Dlamini and a group of nineteen other Bahá'ís, including native believers and pioneers, from Swaziland ... The visit of the Princess marked the first time a member of a reigning royal family had come on pilgrimage to the World Centre. Princess Gcenaphi is a daughter of the late King Sobhuza II; her young brother is designated to succeed his father when he comes of age.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, who had met the Princess and her father during her tour of Africa some years ago, held a reception at the Master's house in honour of the royal visitor and her fellow Bahá'ís from Swaziland. Among those in attendance were the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, members of the Universal House of Justice and Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre. The occasion was memorable not only for the spirit of loving welcome and joy that Rúḥíyyih Khánum injected into it, but also for the vibrant responses of the honoured guests who enthralled the gathering with singing, traditional dancing and the playing of drums. (From *Bahá'í International News Service*, No. 134, March 1984)

*Sierra Leone*: At Riḍván 140 there were only fourteen Local Spiritual Assemblies in Sierra Leone. At the end of 1983, Sierra Leone decided to mobilize to achieve the goals. Teaching teams were formed and projects were started dedicated to the memory of the late Hands of the Cause Enoch Olinga and Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. Their aim was to consolidate the victories achieved and win additional goals of ten new Local Spiritual Assemblies and the opening of ten new localities by Riḍván 141. The first phase of the project ended triumphantly with ten new Assemblies, eight of them formed in the last two months, and with five hundred enrolled in the Faith ... (From report received 15 March 1984)

*Trinidad and Tobago*: OVERJOYED GRATEFUL BLESSING VISIT BELOVED HAND CAUSE COLLIS FEATHERSTONE MRS. FEATHERSTONE COUNSELLOR RUTH PRINGLE. FRIENDS INSPIRED URGED

*The Hand of the Cause of God John Robarts (third from left) and Mrs. Audrey Robarts (third from right) at the land dedication ceremony for the Yukon Bahá'í Teaching Institute in Whitehorse, Canada, on 9 July 1983.*



*The Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery (centre), with Mr. Fritz Semle, one of the first Bahá'ís in Switzerland (left), and Mr. Massih Sabet (right) at Landegg Academy in 1984.*

GREATER SERVICE. COURTESY CALLS PRESIDENT CLARKE TOBAGO HOUSE ASSEMBLY CHAIRMAN ROBINSON GAVE IMPETUS OUR PROCLAMATION EFFORTS. TV RADIO PUBLICITY SUCCESSFUL. PUBLIC CELEBRATION NAW RUZ WONDERFUL EVENT CAPACITY ATTENDANCE ... (Cablegram received 26 March 1984)

*Barbados*: The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone met with Governor-General Sir Hugh Springer, of Barbados, during his three-day visit, 27–29 March, to the Bahá'í community. Mr. Featherstone was accompanied by the chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly who presented a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, to His Excellency. In addition to addressing the friends and assisting with making tapes for the Bahá'í radio programme, Mr. Featherstone was interviewed by television, radio and newspaper reporters and segments of one of his television interviews was broadcast later that night during the 'National News' programme. (From report received 4 July 1984)

*April*

*World Centre*: Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, accompanied by Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání, will be leaving the Holy Land on 18 April 1984 on an extensive tour of several countries in Asia and Australasia. She will be attending the first Convention of the Bahá'ís of Andaman and Nicobar Islands on behalf of the Universal House of Justice. Also in the course of her journey she will act as the representative of the House of Justice on the occasion of the dedication of the House of Worship in Samoa. (From an announcement dated 10 April 1984)

The Hand of the cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, who will represent the Universal House of Justice at the first Convention of the Bahá'ís of the Canary Islands, will leave the World Centre for this purpose on 16 April 1984. (From an announcement dated 10 April 1984)

*Excerpts from National Convention Cables*:

*Andaman and Nicobar Islands*: REJOICE INFORM SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION HISTORIC CONVENTION PORT BLAIR ANDAMAN NICOBAR ISLANDS BLESSED PRESENCE HAND CAUSE AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM MRS. NAKHJAVANI COUNSELLORS BOMAN SORABJEE AFSHIN ...

*Canary Islands*: HEARTS FILLED WITH EMOTION HISTORIC OCCASION FIRST ELECTION NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY ... GRATIFYING PRESENCE HAND CAUSE ALI AKBAR FURUTAN REPRESENTATIVE SUPREME BODY COUNSELLOR HENUZET ...

*Martinique*: HAPPY OFFER NEW PILLAR TO THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. IN PRESENCE OF THE VERY REVERED HAND OF THE CAUSE OF GOD DR. VARQA VERY LOVED COUNSELLOR DR. SARAH PEREIRA ...

*French Guiana*: WITH JOY ANNOUNCE FORMATION SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF BAHAIS OF FRENCH GUIANA PRESENCE APPRECIATED HAND CAUSE DR. VARQA COUNSELLOR KING ... EXCEPTIONAL SPIRIT UNITY ENTHUSIASM.

*Grenada*: AT OUR NEWLY ACQUIRED NATIONAL HAZIRATULQUDS HISTORIC FIRST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY ELECTED IN TRULY SPIRITUAL ATMOSPHERE. THOUGH SADDENED ABSENCE OF HAND OF THE CAUSE ZIKRULLAH KHADEM THANKFUL PRESENCE OF YOUR REPRESENTATIVE COUNSELLOR RUTH PRINGLE.

*Martinique and French Guiana*: The believers of Martinique rejoiced in welcoming the Hand of the Cause Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, the representative of the Universal House of Justice, to their inaugural Convention which was held from 20–22 April ... A unity feast was held during Dr. Varqá's visit, and some non-Bahá'ís in attendance ... Dr. Varqá was interviewed in a live radio broadcast lasting one and one-half hours, and answered the many questions which were telephoned in by the listeners ... On 23 April, the Hand of the Cause represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural Convention of French Guiana. He was able to address the friends on several occasions and took particular pleasure in visiting some village believers. Some parts of the Convention were broadcast and televised and the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Eberhard Friedland, the first to bring the Faith to French Guiana, was interviewed. Another television program consisted of an open invitation to the populace to participate in a musical evening with the Bahá'ís. (From report received 19 June 1984)

*May*

*United States*: The conference of Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members held from 11–

13 May 1984 in Lincolnwood, Illinois was blessed by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem and by the message from the Hand of the Cause William Sears and enriched by the representative of the International Teaching Centre, Dr. Peter Khan ... (From report received 14 May 1984)

WE HASTEN TO SHARE WITH UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE THE JOY OF VICTORY. TODAY MAY 23, 1984 AT 4:35 P.M. EDST, RADIO STATION WLGI WENT ON THE AIR IN TEST BROADCAST THAT BEGAN WITH TAPED STATEMENT BY HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS. (Cable dated 23 May 1984)

*Trinidad and Tobago*: On 22 March the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, Counsellor Ruth Pringle and National Spiritual Assembly member Mr. Hasan Jamalabadi, paid a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and presented him with a copy of the Bahá'í book *A Crown of Beauty*. His Excellency Ellis Clark 'welcomed the party and spoke of the national anthem of Trinidad and Tobago which states that all religions have equal rights and a place in the nation.' Picking up the theme, Mr. Featherstone talked about Bahá'ís as citizens of the world. That same day Mr. Featherstone was interviewed for both radio and television, the programs reaching a wide audience in the region and resulting in an appreciative response.

Mr. Featherstone travelled in South America beginning in February, moving from Chile as far north as Panama. Everywhere he went he met dignitaries and prominent persons, spoke on radio and television and was interviewed by the press. After leaving Trinidad and Tobago he visited Barbados where he was received by His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir Hugh Springer, who accepted a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII. Mr. Featherstone's continued travels took him to Guyana and to Suriname where he met with President Ramdat Misier, had radio and newspaper interviews and met particularly with Bush Negroes; to French Guiana, where he again attracted the notice of the media and met people in authority; and to Brazil where the Bahá'ís happily gathered round him. (From reports received April through May 1984)

*Korea*: Having motored over 2,000 kilometres, stopping at twelve locations in Korea, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum described the Korean people as a 'most endearing race'. In a cablegram to the World Centre on 22 May she spoke of many gatherings that were held including two public meetings with resultant publicity and of fruitful, loving consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly. (Report Received 22 May 1984)

*Cook Islands*: After completing his successful visit to Suriname, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile where he met with the friends and obtained excellent publicity in the press, on radio and in television interviews of from ten minutes to more than a half-hour in duration, the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone flew to Tahiti where he met Counsellor Owen Battrick and Auxiliary Board member Ruth Harnish and other friends. From the Society Islands the Hand of the Cause proceeded to the Cook Islands, cabling on 31 May: BOUNTY PARTICIPATE LARGEST PUBLIC MEETING HELD RAROTONGA COOK ISLANDS SUNDAY 27 MAY OVER 400 PRESENT ... The Hand of the Cause was received by Sir Thomas Davis, Prime Minister, in a thirty-minute cordial interview. (From report received 3 June 1984)

*June*

*Germany*: After representing the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural Convention of the Canary Islands, the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan visited communities in Europe. The National Spiritual Assembly of Germany cabled on 12 June: FRIENDS GERMANY GRATEFUL FOR VISIT BELOVED HAND CAUSE ... ON SATURDAY 9 JUNE 400 FRIENDS PARTICIPATED IN A MEETING AND WERE DELIGHTED TO HEAR MR. FURUTAN'S ENCOURAGING TALK. (Cablegram received 12 June 1984)

*Marina Islands*: In Rota Island, Rúḥíyyih Khánum met with the Mayor, who received her warmly. The largest gathering of believers ever held in Saipan took place during her visit, in addition to a public meeting well attended by guests of Bahá'ís. Remarkable contact was achieved with officials. Amatu'l-Bahá was according a forty-minute interview with the President of the Senate and also met the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant-Governor. In

Guam she was cordially received by the Governor and held numerous meetings with the National Spiritual Assembly, the friends and the public. Justice Richard Benson of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia accompanied Amatu'l-Bahá and Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání from Guam to Yap where the Hand of the Cause addressed two meetings and met the Paramount Chief of the outer islands and his son, the Lieutenant-Governor of Yap. In Palau, where she spent five nights, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum was granted a twenty-minute interview with the President, and also met the Vice-President. This lap of the journey completed, the Hand of the Cause and her companion set off for Truk, Ponape, Majuro and a month-long visit to Papua New Guinea. (Cablegram received 8 June 1984)

*July*

*South Pacific*: Prior to the dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Samoa, Rúḥíyyih Khánum completed three months of arduous travel from Korea through many islands and countries of the South Pacific. Using various means of travel, including a 14-metre dugout canoe, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum spared no effort to visit believers in outlying villages. During a forty-five minute plane stop at Funafuti, Tuvalu, *en route* to Fiji, she and her companion, Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání, made a brief visit to the Bahá'í Centre for 'prayers, addresses and loving gifts.'

In her cable to the Universal House of Justice about her two-week visit to Fiji, Rúḥíyyih Khánum reported that she 'renewed old ties.' In Suva, excellent press and radio interviews marked the visit. She was received by Governor-General Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau for one-half hour and had a cordial one-hour interview with the Indian High Commissioner, Chitilenchery Pathiyil. A reception tendered in her honour by the National Spiritual Assembly was attended by many notables including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jonati Mavoa, and the Ombudsman for Fiji, Sir Moti Tekaram. In addition to meeting with the National Assembly, pioneers and youth, a large meeting was held near Suva in Navuso village which was attended by a prominent Paramount Chief, the local Methodist pastor and believers from many places.

Rúḥíyyih Khánum spoke many times during a three day conference held at the Bahá'í Institute during her visit to Tarawa Island, Kiribati. She described her 48-hour visit to the Malaita Islands, in the Solomons, as being so packed with events that it felt like a one-month experience. Extensive media coverage was given in the Solomons including two radio interviews of one-half hour each. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum's half-hour interview with Prime Minister Solomon Mamolini was described as most cordial. At a dinner party she met the Minister of Finance and the Chief Police of the entire nation, as well as other notables. Accompanied by the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Gertrude Blum, she visited the grave of Alvin Blum. She also met with the National Spiritual Assembly.

Bahá'ís of many communities of Papua New Guinea had the opportunity to meet with Rúḥíyyih Khánum, as she travelled by helicopter, canoe and other means to visit isolated jungle areas. Particularly joyful gatherings were held in the Mt. Brown and Gulf area. These visits were soul-satisfying, the Hand of the Cause reported, for she slept on the floor of native huts—'a reminder of the wonderful days of my trip to Africa'.

In Port Moresby Amatu'l-Bahá was interviewed repeatedly on radio and by the press thus obtaining 'probably the largest concentrated proclamation ever received.' She was courteously received by the Governor-General Sir Kingsford Dibela who, with many other high-ranking officials, attended the banquet held in Rúḥíyyih Khánum's honour. (Based on various reports)

*Canada*: Native believers in traditional dress were part of an audience of five hundred Bahá'ís who gathered for the dedication of the Yukon Bahá'í House, 6–8 July 1984 at Whitehorse, Yukon. The friends were blessed with the presence of the Hands of the Cause Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and John Robarts at the formal dedication, and heard a taped message from the Hand of the Cause William Sears. The cabled message to the Universal House of Justice from the conference stated: OVERWHELMED EVIDENCES POWER UNITY COMPLETION MAGNIFICENT BUILDING ONE SHORT YEAR. HEARTS UPLIFTED PRESENCE HANDS OF CAUSE VARQA ROBARTS. (From report received 28 July 1984)

*India*: Named in memory of the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, a teaching project in Bhind, North Madhya Pradesh, India has enrolled 73,000 new believers in less than three months. More than twenty years ago, mass teaching started in this area which is densely populated and has the highest literacy level in the State. (From report received 23 July 1984)

*Norway*: Counsellor Hartmut Grossmann and Mrs. Grossmann, Auxiliary Board members Gerd Strand and Polin Rafat, and seven members of the Norwegian National Spiritual Assembly participated in the Bahá'í Summer School held in Geilo from 5–12 July ... One of the highlights of the Summer School was the children's performance of *The Wonder Lamp*, a play by the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qasim Faizi. (From report received 4 September 1984)

*August*

*Canada*: Almost 2,000 youth from fifty-two countries, deeply moved by the sacrifice of the martyrs and determined to vindicate their sacrifice, rededicated themselves to the goals of the Seven Year Plan when they attended the International Bahá'í Youth Conference in London, Ontario, 25–27 August. Inspired by the presence and vision of the Hands of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and John Robarts, the youth cabled the Universal House of Justice their promise TO CARRY FORTH THE MESSAGE FOR WHICH THE WORLD SO DESPERATELY CRIES ... (From report received 9 September 1984)

'To Move the World' was the theme of an unusual conference held in Halifax, Nova Scotia in memory of the Hand of the Cause Louis Gregory. Participants included the Hand of the Cause John Robarts, Counsellor Sarah Pereira, Dr. William Roberts and guests H. A. S. Wedderburn and Dr. P. Anthony Johnstone. Mr. Wedderburn spoke on his experience with early integration efforts in Nova Scotia and his respect for the Bahá'ís whom he has met, especially the Hand of the Cause Rúḥíyyih Khánum; and Dr. Johnstone, speaking on 'Unity in Diversity', stated that to his knowledge 'nowhere in Canada or America is any group but the Bahá'í Faith working actively for the oneness of the races.' (From letter received 16 August 1984)

*Republic of Ireland*: OVER 430 PARTICIPANTS IRISH SUMMER SCHOOL DEEPLY TOUCHED PRESENCE HAND OF THE CAUSE ZIKRULLAH KHADEM APPRECIATIVE PARTICIPATION COUNSELLOR TAHERZADEH ... (Cablegram received 22 August 1984)

*Italy*: For one week, from 18–25 August, three hundred and fifty Bahá'ís from fourteen countries enjoyed the wonderful spiritual atmosphere of the North Italy Summer School, graced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery and other distinguished participants. The message of the Universal House of Justice announcing more martyrdoms in Írán was read at an evening session. Dr. Giachery spoke eloquently ... seven persons, including a girl of fifteen, asked to be accepted as Bahá'ís. Dr. Giachery assured all assembled that this was the fruit of the sacrifice of the Persian Bahá'ís. He also shared with the friends moving recollections of the beloved Guardian ... (Based on cable received 30 August 1984)

*September*

*Tonga, Australia, India*: The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum in a cable dated 14 September 1984 described her three-day visit to Tonga where she was received by His Majesty King Taufa-Ahu Tupou who, in a most sympathetic manner, enquired about the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Írán ... In Perth, Amatu'l-Bahá was received by Dr. Gordon Stanley Reid, Governor of Western Australia. In addition, she met with more than three hundred Bahá'ís from more than forty centres ... On 10 October it was learned that during her visit to Calcutta, Rúḥíyyih Khánum attended a two-day Victory Conference which was addressed by Lt. General S. K. Sinha. The Governor of Bihar, Sir A. R. Kidwai, gave a special tea reception at the palace for about forty guests, including Ministers of the State Government, many ex-Ministers and other notables, and a Bahá'í delegation. Amatu'l-Bahá gave a lecture at the Khoda-Baksh Oriental Library, visited Bhagwatipur District where she addressed faculty and students and Kanhauli College, and laid the cornerstones for the Enoch Olinga Girls' School and the Raḥma-

*The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone took this photograph of his wife, Mrs. Madge Featherstone (standing 13 from right), with the Bahá'ís of Pikosa Village in Papua New Guinea on 4 October 1984.*

*The Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem, (front, second from right) with friends attending a Pioneering Institute at the National Bahá'í Centre in Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., in 1985.*

tu'lláh Muhájir Institute ... Later, in Santiniketan, she laid the cornerstone for the future buildings of the Glory School.

*United States*: A mass teaching project on the Sioux Reservations in South Dakota, begun in the summer of 1983 and continued this year, is yielding exciting results. More than two hundred and fifty believers have enrolled and have had the bounty of visits from many distinguished Bahá'ís, including the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem ... (Report received 25 September 1984)

*Sikkim*: Commemorating World Peace Day, a delegation from the Local Spiritual Assembly of Bangkok was received on 27 September 1984 by the Governor of Bangkok, Admiral Tiam Makarananda. Dr. Tawil Panalaks, Vice-Chairman of the Bangkok Assembly, presented the Governor with two books in English, *An Introduction to the Bahá'í Faith* and *All Things Made New* by the late Hand of the Cause John Ferraby ... (From report received November 1984).

*October*

*Canada*: A cable sent 3 October 1984 from a conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan stated, in part, JOYOUS MEMORIES HAND CAUSE [ENOCH] OLINGA AT QUAPPELLE INSTITUTE AND PRESENCE NEWLY APPOINTED AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBER SHIRLEY LINDSTROM POTENT FORCES REMINDERS DESTINY BELOVED [INDIAN] FRIENDS ...

*Cape Verde Islands*: News was received from the National Spiritual Assembly of the enrollment of more than five hundred believers during the teaching plan named in honor of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga ... (Cablegram received 1 October 1984)

*India*: Two thousand volunteers ... are participating in the teaching projects in the Bhind area of Northern Madhya Pradesh ... Between 1962 and 1984, thousands of people in this area have had the boon of hearing, meeting and talking to the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, Mr. Enoch Olinga, Mr. Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and Mr. Collis Featherstone ... In memory of Dr. Muhájir, a special project is being conducted from 23 May to 12 November under which consolidation assistance will be given to two hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies in wholly Bahá'í villages by teams from ten Area Teaching Committees ... (From Report received 12 November)

*November*

*India, Sikkim*: After spending six nights in Bhutan, the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and her travelling companion, Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání, proceeded to Sikkim where they spent seven days. Rúḥíyyih Khánum met with the National Spiritual Assembly, visited the Bahá'í school in Gangtok, addressed a successful public meeting and laid the cornerstone for another Bahá'í school on the Ranipur Temple land.

On returning to New Delhi on 19 October, Amatu'l-Bahá was received by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and then attended a conference held at the Temple site where more than four hundred friends from fourteen countries had gathered.

On 21 November all the Bahá'ís serving at the World Centre had the joy of meeting with the beloved Hand of the Cause on her return to the Holy Land following seven months of travel. (From various reports).

*Boliva*: The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bolivia has forwarded to the World Centre the greetings of one hundred and five indigenous Aymara-speaking Bahá'ís who attended a recent conference named in honour of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. The message was signed with the individual signatures of all believers who attended.

*Ghana*: Sixteen Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed and two hundred and ninety-one persons were enrolled as Bahá'ís during the recent teaching project 'Entry by Troops' named in honour of the late Hand of the Cause Paul Haney. The project was centered in the Enchi District in the Western Region and extended from 15 July to 13 September. (From report received 7 November 1984)

*United States*: The station of Bahá'u'lláh and the significance of the martyrs and their sacrifices were the major subjects chosen by the

Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem for his addresses to a gathering of one thousand Bahá'ís in the high-school auditorium at Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. The conference, sponsored by the Local Spiritual Assembly in cooperation with other local communities, attracted Bahá'ís from Arkansas, Texas, Missouri and from all parts of Oklahoma. (From report received November 1984)

A 'Month of Firesides' competition announced in the November issue of *Youth Hotline*, a publication of the National Youth Committee of the Bahá'ís of the United States, explains that the district holding the largest number of firesides, on a per capita basis, during the Bahá'í month extending from 3–23 November, will receive the prize of the presence of the Hand of the Cause William Sears and his wife, Marguerite, for one week in that district next year.

*Canada*: Three Hands of the Cause of God—Dhikru'lláh Khádem, John Robarts and 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá—were among the 1,150 people present in Ottawa on 2–4 November for the ninth annual Conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies which was dedicated to the memory of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. Each of the Hands addressed the conference and the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan presented a paper entitled 'Shoghi Effendi and the Countries of the East', which was read on his behalf by Dr. A. M. Ghadirian. The Ḥasan M. Balyúzí memorial lecture, 'Shoghi Effendi: Expounder of the Bahá'í Faith', was prepared by Mr. David Hofman and presented by his daughter, Dr. May Hofman Ballerio. (From report received December 1984)

*United States*: On 19 November 1984 funeral and burial services for the Hand of the Cause of God Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í were carried out with utmost beauty, simplicity and reverence, attesting to the loving attention given the planning by members of his immediate family. Some one hundred and fifty Bahá'ís and friends gathered at the Arcadia Funeral Home in Phoenix, Arizona at one o'clock in the afternoon. They faced a simple polished wood casket bearing the earthly remains of the Hand of the Cause. At the head of the casket rested a small woven symbol of the Greatest name, above it on the wall, a larger framed symbol. On one side of this was placed a framed, full-length photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and on the other, in the shape of a bird in flight, a framed calligraphic rendering of the names of all the Hands of the Cause. Atop the casket lay long-stemmed red roses, a gift of the Continental Counsellors serving in the United States. Around it were banks of floral arrangements forming a fragrant, lovely frame. The service included a musical rendition of a passage from the *Hidden Words*, a reading in English and chanting in Persian of the Tablet to Mr. 'Alá'í from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, reading of messages from the Universal House of Justice and the Counsellors and of a tender biographical tribute to the services of the Hand of the Cause. Selections from the Sacred Writings were also read. Burial was in Camelback Cemetery, just east of Phoenix. The granddaughter of the Hand of the Cause expressed loving gratitude on behalf of the family and commented that this day was the ninety-sixth anniversary of his birth.

Mr. 'Alá'í had spent the last months of his life in Arizona where he received the devoted attention of members of his family. He participated as honoured guest in a Bahá'í gathering in February commemorating the thirty-second anniversary of his appointment to the rank of Hand of the Cause. He passed away on 16 November only a few hours after having been taken to the hospital. The cabled message from the Universal House of Justice extolled his MORE THAN SEVENTY YEARS UNINTERRUPTED DEDICATED SERVICES THRESHOLD BAHAULLAH. (From report received 28 January 1985)

*December*

*Italy*: Dedicated to the memory of the Hand of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, the Winter School held in Italy drew an attendance of three hundred and seventy people, eighty of whom were youth. They consulted enthusiastically on a program for International Youth Year.

*Zaire*: The Regional Women's Committee of North-eastern Zaire has established, in the local language, a women's magazine entitled *Martha Root* in honour of that outstanding Hand of the Cause.

*India*: Thirty-one Bahá'ís from India and abroad carried out a teaching project named for

the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir in Rohtak, Haryana for two months, ending on 8 December. In the period, 4,500 people were contacted with the Teachings and 145 of them embraced the faith. They are students, teachers, farmers, labourers, businessmen and village heads. They live in twenty-three villages. Assemblies were formed in seven villages and two plots of land were donated for construction of Bahá'í buildings. One hundred and twenty-five teachers at five village schools were given the message of Bahá'u'lláh. In three colleges of Rhtak City, one hundred and thirty professors and lecturers and hundreds of students heard of the Faith. (From report received 4 February 1985)

## 1985

*January*

*Brazil*: Two history-making conferences were held in Brazil in January 1985 and were attended by the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. From 10–13 January the 'Bahá'í International Conference of the Amazon' took place at the Opera House in Manaus, capital city of Amazonas State in western Brazil. The second conference was 'Bahá'ís of the Indian Nations of the Northeast' and was held on 18–20 January in Aguas Belas, Pernambuco, a village of the Fulni'o tribe.

The International Amazon Conference marked the tenth anniversary of the Green Light Expedition. It drew an attendance of three hundred and fifty friends from twenty-eight countries and resulted in exceptionally wide coverage in the media. Some 2,500 posters were distributed throughout Manaus.

The second conference was described as equally outstanding. The maximum attendance was estimated to be 1,500, mostly Indians. Substantial delegations and leaders from eight Indian nations attended including four Bahá'í chiefs. The first prayers in the Fulni'o language were read. This is the only native language of the northeast that has been preserved. (From reports received through January 1985)

*Australia*: Australian Bahá'ís held the first ever Aboriginal/Islander Seminar in January at Cairns, Queensland, with the participation of the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone. At its close on 30 January, the National Spiritual Assembly reported by telex to the World Centre that Aboriginal and island believers will spearhead the movement to achieve five new Spiritual Assemblies in their areas to pave the way for further advances among both peoples in Victoria and Western Australia. Counsellor Tinai Hancock was an active participant in the proceedings. (From report received 30 January 1985)

*Panama*: In a cablegram from Panama on 10 February, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum conveyed news of a cordial interview with the President of Panama which was, in part, televised on a news program. During the forty-five minute discussion, the President expressed interest in the National Spiritual Assembly's plans for a radio station for the Guaymi area. Approval for the station is at present being sought from the Government. Other important events in which the Hand of the Cause participated were the laying of a cornerstone at Boca de Soloy (the location of the Muhájir Institute and site of the Guaymi Cultural Centre), a one-hour meeting on 5 February with the Minister of Government (during which Amatu'l-Bahá was accompanied by Counsellors Mas'ud Khamsí and Ruth Pringle) and a visit to the Governor of Chiriquí State. On her arrival in Panama, where wide publicity had been obtained in advance, Amatu'l-Bahá was interviewed by three television stations. There was a public meeting, a Bahá'í teaching conference, two meetings with the National Assembly and a reception for prominent women. An excellent youth conference in which she participated drew an attendance of more than one thousand. (From cablegram received 10 February 1985)

*Hawaii*: The life of the Hand of the Cause Agnes Baldwin Alexander is the first of one hundred and twenty-seven biographies of 'Notable Women of Hawaii' appearing in a book of that title published by the University

of Hawaii Press. The volume was edited by Barbara Bennett Peterson. Miss Alexander's biography, which documents her seventy years' service to the Bahá'í Faith, was written by Duane K. Troxel from existing Bahá'í sources including papers located in the Bahá'í National Archives of Hawaii and Japan.

*February*

*Sikkim*: The Temple Land School at Saramsa, Ranipul was inaugurated on 9 February by the National Spiritual Assembly of Sikkim ... The newly-appointed principal, Mr. Ganesh Shenoy, credited the constant encouragement received from Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání and Counsellor Shirin Boman with the realization of the auspicious event. (From report received 14 March 1985)

*Spain*: The announcement of the publication of *Un Grito del Corazón*, the Spanish translation of *A Cry from the Heart*, a book written by the Hand of the Cause William Sears, resulted in one 15-minute and one 45-minute live radio interviews about the Faith, and the appearance of a review of the book in the widely-read Sunday edition of the newspaper *Levante*. (From *Boletín de Información Bahá'í*, February 1985)

*France*: The Local Spiritual Assembly of Nice inaugurated its Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds on Naw-Rúz, in the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery. In a telex dated 17 March 1985 it was stated that the attractive Centre would serve as a focus of activities for the region and the country.

*Taiwan, Guam, Malaysia*: On a visit to Taiwan in March, the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone held a friendly meeting with Vice-President Lee, and another with the Minister of Interior Affairs. In Guam, on 7 April, he held a conversation with Governor Ricardo Bordallo followed by a meeting with the Speaker of the Legislature. The above-mentioned contacts furthered the friendly relationships between the Bahá'ís and leading figures in their countries. As always, Mr. Featherstone also gave his time and energies freely to meeting with the believers.

Malaysian friends report the benefits to many communities deriving from visits by Mr. Featherstone and his wife during March. The Featherstones visited Malacca, Seremban, Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya and Ipoh.

*Western Caroline and Cook Islands*: The historic inaugural Conventions of the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Western Caroline Islands on 22 April and the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Cook Islands on 27 April were honoured by the presence of Mr. Featherstone, representing the Universal House of Justice. While visiting the Caroline Islands he was received cordially by Governor Mangefel and Chief Roboman. (From reports received through 30 April 1985)

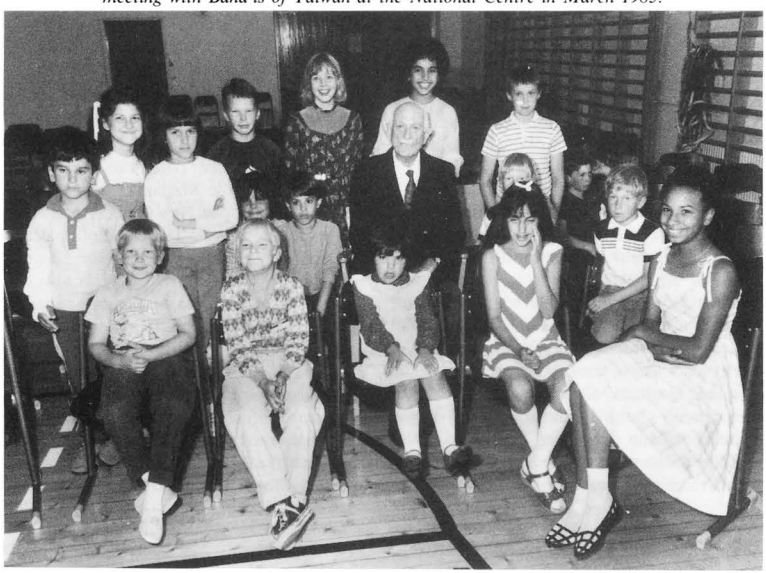
*April*

*Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago*: The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem visited Grenada in April. The National Spiritual Assembly cabled the World Centre on 30 April stating that his moving and inspiring address to the community had uplifted the hearts of the friends. The National Convention of Trinidad and Tobago cabled the World Centre expressing joy in the attendance of Mr. Khádem at their National Convention. Mrs. Khádem was also in attendance as was Counsellor Peter McLaren and more than one hundred other friends.

*Sierra Leone*: Nine teaching projects named for the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga are in progress in countries of Africa where there has been a great influx of believers. One such is taking place in Sierra Leone and many reports are being received recording the extraordinary devotion of the African women and men who are conducting the campaign. (From reports received through 30 April 1985)

*Burma*: A woman friendly towards the Bahá'í Faith, who works in curriculum development for the Department of Education, told Bahá'í visitors that she is greatly impressed by Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan's book, *Mothers, Fathers and Children*, and is translating passages into Burmese for use in some of the courses she is developing. (From report received 23 April 1985)

*The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Madge Featherstone (centre) meeting with Bahá'ís of Taiwan at the National Centre in March 1985.*



*The Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery visiting the children during the Finnish Bahá'í Summer School held in Kangasala in July 1985.*

*Polynesia*: *Tusitala*, the in-flight publication of Polynesian Airlines, in its Autumn 1985 issue, carries a two-page article on the Samoan Temple with a dramatic aerial photograph of the completed building at Apia, Western Samoa. The article by Michael Day, a Bahá'í of New Zealand, is entitled 'A Beacon of Unity' and, in addition to describing the genesis, construction and purpose of the House of Worship, refers to the participation of the Head of State, and the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and H. Collis Featherstone, in the dedication ceremony. (From report received April 1985)

*May*

*United States*: From 15 May to 15 June 1985, thirty-five travelling teachers criss-crossed the State of Kansas in a massive teaching effort. The visitors included the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem, seven members of the National Spiritual Assembly and four members of the Auxiliary Board. More than one hundred separate activities were scheduled for twenty cities and towns. The Hand of the Cause William Sears addressed sixty-two leaders of thought winning their hearts completely. With his wife, Marguerite, Mr. Sears visited seven cities in nine days. Kansas won the 'month of firesides' competition last November, their 'prize' being the participation of Mr. and Mrs. Sears in their teaching work. (From report received June 1985)

*Canada*: The Hands of the Cause Jalál Kházeh, 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and John Robarts met with all the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada and representatives of its seventeen national committees, with three members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas and twelve members of the Auxiliary Board, at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds on 19 May 1985 in a spiritually-charged meeting during which Canada's role in developing the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh was explored in depth. (From report received June 1985)

*Pakistan*: On 26 June the first course in a new socio-economic enterprise called the 'Faizi Project' began in Hyderabad. Brief courses in welding and in shorthand/typing are being offered by hired teachers, and study of the Teachings is conducted by friends from a nearby community. (From report received 10 July 1985)

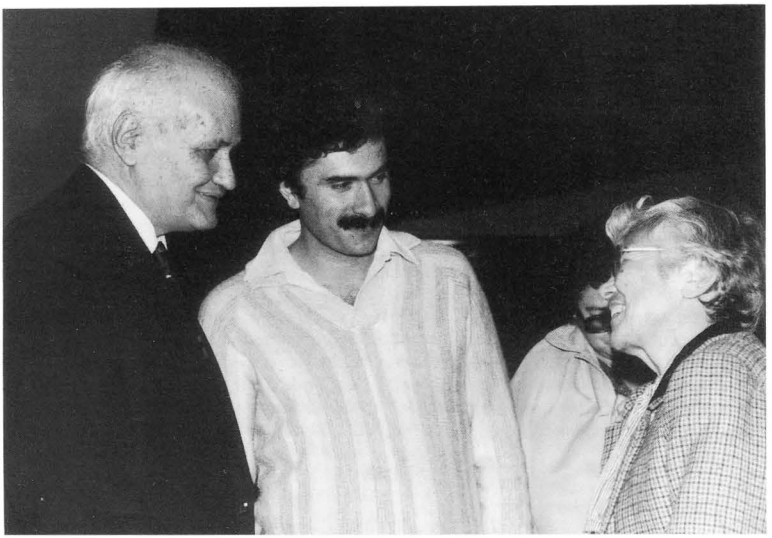
*United States*: The International Youth Conference held in Columbus, Ohio from 3–7 July 1985, which was graced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem, attracted 3,300 youth from forty-two nations and received extensive media coverage, including the broadcasting of portions of the conference, by *Voice of America* to Írán. Ohio State Senator Robert Ney participated, urging the youth, in both English and Persian, to 'Move the World'. An award was presented to United States Congressman James Leach for his continued efforts in defense of the Bahá'ís in Írán. (From cable received 10 July 1985)

One hundred leaders of religious education and social organizations who make up the Inter-Faith Ministries attended a reception for the hand of the Cause William Sears during his visit to Wichita, Kansas. Since that time there has been growing interest in the Bahá'ís and a great current of sympathetic understanding has surged. (From report received 12 July 1985)

*August*

*Hawaiian Islands*: The International Youth Conference on the garden island of Kauai, held from 8–11 August 1985, was a rare opportunity for youth across the vast Pacific region to draw close to one another. Three hundred attended from Australia, the Marianas, the Marshalls, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomons and Tonga. The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone was the featured speaker, and Counsellor Ben Ayala also contributed to the success of the gathering. On opening night, representatives of the Governor of Hawaii and the Mayor of Kauai, and two members of the Kauai City Council attended and praised the Faith in their speeches ... The conference participants heard a stirring message on tape from the Hand of the Cause William Sears on the theme 'Youth Can Move the World'. (From cables received to 15 August)

*Peru*: Four hundred youth from seven countries and four native tribes were present at the Youth Conference in Peru held from 2–5 August 1985. They expressed gratitude for the presence of the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Muḥammad



*The Hand of the Cause of God Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá (left) in Lima, Peru, in August 1985, with Mr. Moozhan Martin and Auxiliary Board member Mercedes Sánchez.*

Varqá and participation of members of the Continental Board of Counsellors, Dr. H. Aḥmadíyyih, Dr. Farzám Arbáb and Isabel P. de Calderón. Three evening events were an outstanding success, with more than eight hundred attending each night. The gathering culminated in the creation of eight national and international projects. (From cable received 7 August 1985)

*Burkina*: In Burkina Bahá'ís are carrying out a teaching project in the name of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga. Four Departments are the goals of the project, and nineteen native believers from five African countries are the teachers. (From cable received 10 September 1985)

*Chad*: For the opening of the teaching project named in honour of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, four travelling teachers spent eight days visiting communities in three subprefectures where they raised up five new Local Assemblies and opened five localities. There were one hundred and five people who accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Similar successes were reported in other districts throughout the country. The Bongor Assembly organized a program about marriage and the education of women and children, and invited several officials to attend. (Based on report received 12 September 1985)

*November*

*United States*: Transcending all presentations of the statement of the Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, has been that made on 22 November 1985 by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, in New York. It was described by the House of Justice as an event whose significance will warm the hearts, evoke the admiration and inspire the appreciation of future generations.

Amatu'l-Bahá headed a delegation that included Dr. Victor de Araujo and Mr. Gerald Knight of the United Nations Office of the Bahá'í International Community. The delegation was assured by the Secretary-General that he had, on the day before, read a marked copy of *The Promise of World Peace* with the salient points highlighted. He called the statement beautiful and inspiring.

On the first day of her stay Amatu'l-Bahá addressed a luncheon whose guests included diplomats from twenty-one countries of Europe, Africa, the Americas and Australasia. Luncheons for Ambassadors and high officials of the United Nations Secretariat during the week brought participation by forty-eight countries, some Ambassadors attending in person, others sending representatives. There was a reception for Non-Governmental Organizations, and various dinners were held. A luncheon and press briefing on 19 November for representatives of the major international news media was attended by all media having correspondents at the United Nations, except two, who were given separate briefings. The high level of interest was attributed to the presence of Rúḥíyyih Khánum. One correspondent formally and publicly expressed gratitude for the briefing, on behalf of the United Nations Correspondents' Association.

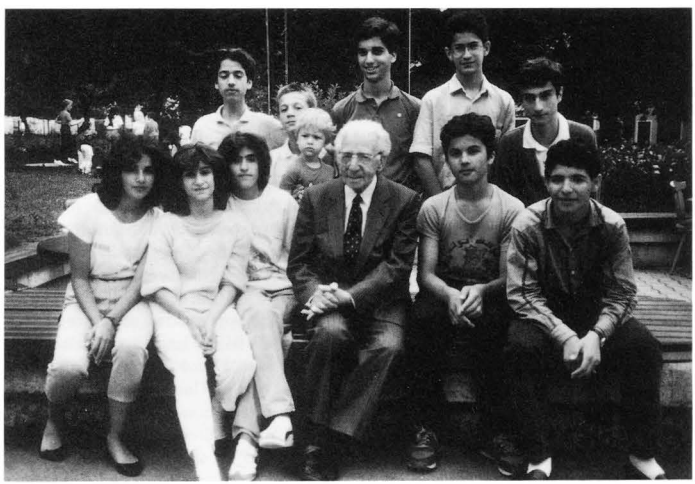
Four radio interviews were held with Rúḥíyyih Khánum, one of fifteen minutes' duration for the B.B.C. foreign service, broadcast on 27 and 28 November, and two for United Nations Radio—one of them a women's program and one for Radio UNICEF—and another interview was held with Radio Netherlands. All major wire services filed stories, and articles appeared in *The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal*, and three times in one week in *The New York Times*.

Six hundred American Bahá'ís attended a meeting addressed by the Hand of the Cause on 24 November before her departure from New York. (Compiled from cables and reports received through 21 December 1985)

## 1986

*January*

*Singapore*: The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Featherstone, having completed a visit to Malaysia, arrived in Singapore on 17 January in time to attend the burial ceremony for Mr. Teo Geok Leng, the first Chinese believer of Singapore. At the Bahá'í cemetery at Choa Chu Kang, Mr. Featherstone recited the Prayer for the Dead, and in the evening spent two hours with more than fifty Bahá'ís who had gathered from various centres. (From Nineteen Day Feast Newsletter, Singapore, 7



*The Hand of the Cause of God 'Alí-Akbar Furútan visiting with youth during the Austrian Bahá'í School held in Spittal am Pyhrn in 1986.*

# 3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE AND THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

21 June 1968

REJOICE ANNOUNCE MOMENTOUS DECISION ESTABLISH ELEVEN CONTINENTAL BOARDS COUNSELLORS PROTECTION PROPAGATION FAITH THREE EACH FOR AFRICA AMERICAS ASIA ONE EACH FOR AUSTRALASIA EUROPE...

The Universal House of Justice

24 June 1968

... those who have been appointed to the first Continental Boards of Counsellors for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith:

*Northwestern Africa*

Ḥusayn Ardikání (Trustee, Continental Fund), Muḥammad Kebdani, William Maxwell.

*Central and East Africa*

Oloro Epyeru, Kolonario Oule, Isobel Sabri, Midhí Samandarí, 'Azíz Yazdí (Trustee, Continental Fund).

*Southern Africa*

Seewoosumbur-Jeehoba Appa, Shidán Fatḥ-i-A'ẓam (Trustee, Continental Fund), Bahiyyih Ford.

*North America*

Lloyd Gardner, Florence Mayberry, Edna True (Trustee, Continental Fund).

*Central America*

Carmen de Burafato, Artemus Lamb, Alfred Osborne (Trustee, Continental Fund).

*South America*

Athos Costas, Hooper Dunbar (Trustee, Continental Fund), Donald Witzel.

*Western Asia*

Masíḥ Farhangí, Mas'úd Khamsí, Ḥádí Raḥmání (Trustee, Continental Fund), Manúchihr Salmánpúr, Sankaran-Nair Vasudevan.

*Southeast Asia*

Yan Kee Leong, Khudáraḥm Paymán (Trustee, Continental Fund), Chellie Sundram.

*Northeast Asia*

Rúḥu'lláh Mumtází (Trustee, Continental Fund), Vicente Samaniego.

*Australasia*

Suhayl 'Alá'í, Howard Harwood, Thelma Perks (Trustee, Continental Fund).

*Europe*

Erik Blumenthal, Dorothy Ferraby (Trustee, Continental Fund), Louis Hénuzet.'

The Universal House of Justice

24 June 1968

'... The number of Auxiliary Board members to be assigned to each continental zone is as follows:

| | *Protection* | *Propagation* |
|---|---|---|
| AFRICA | | |
| Northwestern | 3 | 6 |
| Central and East | 4 | 7 |
| Southern | 2 | 5 |
| | 9 | 18 |
| AMERICA | | |
| North | 4 | 9 |
| Central | 2 | 8 |
| South | 3 | 10 |
| | 9 | 27 |
| ASIA | | |
| Western | 4 | 15 |
| Southeastern | 2 | 7 |
| Northeastern | 1 | 7 |
| | 7 | 29 |
| AUSTRALASIA | 2 | 7 |
| EUROPE | 9 | 18' |

The Universal House of Justice

10 July 1969

'With great joy we announce that we have decided to increase the total number of members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith to thirty-eight by adding John McHenry III to the Continental Board of Counsellors in North East Asia and Mas'úd Khamsí to the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America...

*The members of the Universal House of Justice, Hands of the Cause, Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre and members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors in Haifa for a Counsellors' Conference held 27 December 1985–2 January 1986.*

*The Continental Board of Counsellors for Africa in December 1985. Front row, left to right: Gila Michael Bahta, Ḥusayn Ardekání, Mabuku Wingi, Húshang Ahdieh, Kassimi Fofana, Oloro Epyeru, Roddy Lutchmaya, Daniel Ramoroesi, Thelma Khelghati. Back row, left to right: Peter Vuyiya, Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, Lucretia Warren, Edith Senoga, Friday Ekpe, Beatrice Asare, Mihdí Samandarí, Zekrollah Kazemi.*

'We also rejoice to announce the appointment of Mrs. Shirin Boman to the Continental Board of Counsellors of Western Asia to fill a vacancy on that Board ...'

The Universal House of Justice

Riḍván 1970

... IN VIEW EFFECTIVE REINFORCEMENT THIS NOBLE WORK BY ABLE DEDICATED CONTINENTAL BOARDS COUNSELLORS THEIR AUXILIARY BOARDS TOGETHER WITH GROWING NEED AND EXPANSION WORLD COMMUNITY ANNOUNCE AUGMENTATION VITAL INSTITUTION THROUGH APPOINTMENT THREE ADDITIONAL COUNSELLORS IRAJ AYMAN WESTERN ASIA ANNELIESE BOPP BETTY REED EUROPE AND AUTHORIZATION APPOINTMENT FORTYFIVE ADDITIONAL AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS NINE AFRICA SIXTEEN ASIA TWO AUSTRALASIA EIGHTEEN WESTERN HEMISPHERE ...

The Universal House of Justice

5 June 1973

ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHMENT HOLY LAND LONG ANTICIPATED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE DESTINED EVOLVE INTO ONE THOSE WORLD SHAKING WORLD EMBRACING WORLD DIRECTING ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS ORDAINED BY BAHAULLAH ANTICIPATED BY ABDULBAHA ELUCIDATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI. 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. CALLING UPON HOOPER DUNBAR FLORENCE MAYBERRY AZIZ YAZDI PROCEED HOLY LAND ASSUME THIS HIGHLY MERITORIOUS SERVICE ...

The Universal House of Justice

8 June 1973

'The number of zones has been raised to twelve by ... the new zone of South Central Asia ...

'The number of Counsellors is now raised to fifty-seven by the appointment of Mr. Friday Ekpe and Mr. Dhikru'lláh Káẓimí in Northwestern Africa, Mr. Húshang 'Ahdíyyih and Mr. Peter Vuyiya in Central and East Africa, Dr. Sarah Pereira and Mrs. Velma Sherrill in North America, Mr. Rowland Estall and Mr. Paul Lucas in Central America, Mrs. Leonora Armstrong, Mr. Peter McLaren and Mr. Raúl Pavón in South America, Mr. Dipchand Khianra and Mrs. Zena Sorabjee in South Central Asia, Mr. Firaydún Míthāqíyán in South-eastern Asia, Mr. Richard Benson and Miss Elena Marsella in North-eastern Asia and Miss Violet Hoehnke in Australasia. Dr. William Maxwell who has been rendering distinguished service as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Northwestern Africa has been obliged to return to the United States ...'

The Universal House of Justice

7 October 1973

'... the number of Auxiliary Board members throughout the world is to be raised to two hundred and seventy, of whom eighty-one will serve on the Auxiliary Boards for the Protection of the Faith and one hundred and eighty-nine will serve on the Auxiliary Boards for the Propagation of the Faith. In all there will be fifty-four Auxiliary Board members in Africa, eighty-one in the Western Hemisphere, eighty-one in Asia, eighteen in Australasia and thirty-six in Europe.'

The Universal House of Justice

30 September 1974

'... Mrs. Salisa Kermani was appointed by the House of Justice to the Board of Counsellors for South Central Asia in place of Mr. Vasudevan who is presently furthering his education in the United States. Mr. John McHenry ... has returned to the United States ... He has tendered his resignation as a Counsellor ...'

International Teaching Centre

6 January 1975

'... The decision has been taken, therefore, after consultation with the International Teaching Centre, to break the present zone of Northwestern Africa into two separate zones of Northern and Western Africa, to each of which will be transferred parts of the Central and East African zone ...

'Because of the creation of a new Board[1] for Northern Africa, the Counsellors in this and the one for Western Africa must be regrouped, new appointments made to the Northern Board, and the number of Auxiliary Board members increased. We decided, therefore, that the Board for Northern Africa will consist of Mr. Muḥammad Kebdani, already serving as a Counsellor, Mr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, and

[1] Raising the total to thirteen.

# 3. A PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ANNUAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTION

Article VIII of the Model Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of a National Spiritual Assembly (see pp. 514–15) presents the essential elements which govern the election, functions and authority of the National Bahá'í Convention, the body which constitutes the electoral college for the National Spiritual Assembly of its country.

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 the country; 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 Bahá'í community.

Over the years, national Bahá'í communities have evolved procedures which are followed at their National Conventions, and which vary according to the size of the Convention and the conditions of the country in which it is held. The following is an outline of the elements of a typical procedure.

*Order of Business*

The initial business of the Convention follows an order dictated by the priorities of the business:

- Call to order by the Presiding Officer of the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly (this is usually the Chairman, but could be any member of the Assembly designated by it for the purpose).
- Prayer and devotional readings provided by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly.
- Opening of the Convention by the Presiding Officer of the National Spiritual Assembly.
- Roll call of the delegates by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly.
- Election of the Chairman and Secretary of the Convention, and such other officers as may be required, by plurality vote in a secret ballot of the assembled delegates from among their own number.
- Adoption of the Agenda of Convention (see below).
- Reading of any message from the Universal House of Justice.

The remaining business of the Convention follows the order of the Agenda which is adopted, and includes the following elements, some of which are distributed throughout the period of the Convention.

- Presentation of the Annual Report of the National Spiritual Assembly, including its financial report, supplemented by the annual reports of its Committees. It is desirable for these reports to be supplied to the delegates in writing in advance so that only supplementary reports need to be given orally at the time of the Convention. Among these reports, presentions may be made on special subjects by well-qualified members or representatives of the National Assembly or its Committees or by non-Bahá'í experts whose exposition is necessary or desirable for the information of the delegates.
- Election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. This, in accordance with the express desire of the Guardian of the Faith, should take place approximately midway during the Convention sessions so that the delegates will have the opportunity to consult with both the outgoing and incoming Assemblies.
- Approval of any messages from the Convention to the Universal House of Justice and other institutions, agencies or persons.
- Consultation on the affairs of the Bahá'í Faith both national and international. Referring to the role of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly in this consultation, Shoghi Effendi has written:

> Banishing every vestige of secrecy, of undue reticence, of dictatorial aloofness, from their midst, they should radiantly and abundantly unfold to the eyes of the delegates, by whom they are elected, their plans, their hopes, and their cares. They should familiarize the delegates with the various matters that will have to be considered in the current year, and calmly and conscientiously study and weigh the opinions and judgements of the delegates. . . .

Mr. 'Imád Sábirán. The Board for Western Africa will consist of Mr. Ḥusayn Ardikání (Trustee), Mr. Friday Ekpe, Mr. Dhikru'lláh Káẓimí, and Dr. Mihdí Samandarí (transferred from the Central and East African Board).

'We are also increasing the number of Auxiliary Board members in Africa, adding 9 members to the Board for Protection, and 9 to that for Propagation, bringing the totals for that continent to 27 and 45 respectively...'

The Universal House of Justice

17 March 1976

'The membership of six of the Boards of Counsellors has been increased by the appointment of one additional Counsellor in each case, as follows: Western Africa, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati; Southern Africa, Mr. William Masehla; South Central Asia, Mr. Burhání'din Afshín; North-eastern Asia, Mr. Hideya Suzuki; Australasia, Mr. Owen Battrick; Europe, Mr. Adib Taherzadeh.

'The number of Auxiliary Board members throughout the world has been raised from 288 to a new total of 378, 117 of which are for protection and 261 for propagation...'

International Teaching Centre

24 March 1976

'... the Universal House of Justice has authorized the appointment of ninety more Auxiliary Board members...'

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

31 October 1976

'The Universal House of Justice announces with pleasure that it has appointed three new Counsellors as follows:

Dr. Peter Khan—to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia

Dr. Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih—to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America

Mr. Angus Cowan—to the Continental Board of Counsellors in North America'

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

24 March 1977

ANNOUNCE AUTHORIZATION INCREASE MEMBERSHIP BOARDS BY 297 RAISING TOTAL TO 675 OF WHICH 279 ARE AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS FOR PROTECTION AND 396 FOR PROPAGATION OF FAITH...

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

29 August 1977

KINDLY CABLE MR IMBUM CHINNIAH ... QUOTE INFORM YOU WITH PLEASURE YOUR APPOINTMENT CONTINENTAL BOARD COUNSELLORS SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA...

The Universal House of Justice

29 June 1979

... MOMENT PROPITIOUS ANNOUNCE DURATION TERMS SERVICE MEMBERS CONTINENTAL BOARDS COUNSELLORS AS ANTICIPATED IN ANNOUNCEMENT ESTABLISHMENT THAT INSTITUTION AND IN CONSTITUTION UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. DECISION NOW TAKEN THAT TERMS WILL BE OF FIVE YEARS STARTING DAY COVENANT 26 NOVEMBER 1980...

The Universal House of Justice

4 July 1979

JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT COUNSELLOR ANNELIESE BOPP TO MEMBERSHIP INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE

The Universal House of Justice

7 February 1980

... DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING DEVOTED COWORKER INPERAJU CHINNIAH...

The Universal House of Justice

20 October 1980

HEARTS SADDENED PASSING DISTINGUISHED COUNSELLOR LEONORA STIRLING ARMSTRONG...

The Universal House of Justice

3 November 1980

'... we have decided that the time is ripe for a further step in the development of the institution itself that will, at one and the same time, accord greater discretion and freedom of action to the Continental Boards of Counsellors in the carrying out of their duties, and widen the scope of each Board to embrace an entire continent. In accordance with this decision, the zones of the Continental Boards of Counsellors will, from the Day of the Covenant of the year 137 [26 November 1980] be as follows:

1. Africa, comprising the areas of the four present zones of that continent.
2. The Americas, comprising the present zones of North, Central and South America.
3. Asia, comprising the present zones of Western, South Central and South-eastern Asia, together with the present zone of North-eastern Asia without the Hawaiian Islands and Micronesia.

*The Continental Board of Counsellors for Europe in December 1985. Front row, from left to right, Sohrab Youssefian, Ursula Mühlschlegel, Agnes Ghaznavi, Polin Rafat, Hartmut Grossman. Back row, from left to right, Adam Thorne, Adib Taherzadeh, Leo Niederreiter, Louis Hénuzet.*

*The Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia in December 1985. Front row, from left to right: Joy Stevenson, Tinai Hancock, Gayle Morrison. Back row, from left to right: Suhayl 'Alá'í, Sírús Naráqí, Ben Ayala, Kamran Eshraghian, Richard Benson, Lisiate Maka.*

4. Australasia, comprising the present zone of Australasia plus the Hawaiian Islands and Micronesia.
5. Europe.

'Those who are now appointed as Counsellors to serve on these Continental Boards for the next five years are:

*Africa*: Dr. Húshang Ahdieh (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Ḥusayn Ardekání, Mr. Friday Ekpe, Mr. Oloro Epyeru, Mr. Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, Mr. Zekrollah Kazemi, Mr. Muḥammad Kebdani, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, Mr. William Masehla, Mr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, Mr. Kolonario Oule, Mrs. Isobel Sabri, Dr. Mihdí Samandarí, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mrs. Bahíyyih Winckler.

*The Americas*: Dr. Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih, Dr. Farzam Arbáb, Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mr. Athos Costas, Mr. Angus Cowan, Mr. Lloyd Gardner (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Mas'úd Khamsí, Mrs. Lauretta King, Mr. Artemus Lamb, Mr. Peter McLaren, Mr. Raúl Pavón, Dr. Sarah Pereira, Mrs. Ruth Pringle, Mr. Fred Schechter, Mrs. Velma Sherrill, Mr. Donald Witzel.

*Asia*: Mr. Burháni'd-Dín Afshín, Mrs. Shirin Boman, Dr. Masih Farhangí, Dr. John Fozdar, Mr. Zabíhu'lláh Gulmuḥammadí, Mr. Aydin Güney, Mr. Dipchand Khianra, Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Mumtází, Mr. S. Nagaratnam, Mr. Khudáraḥm Paymán (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Manúchihr Salmánpúr, Mr. Vicente Samaniego, Mrs. Zena Sorabjee, Dr. Chellie Sundram, Mr. Hideya Suzuki, Mr. Yan Kee Leong.

*Australasia*: Mr. Suhaye 'Alá'í, Mr. Ben Ayala, Mr. Owen Battrick (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Richard Benson, Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Dr. Peter Khan, Mr. Lisiata Maka.

*Europe*: Mr. Erik Blumenthal, Mrs. Dorothy Ferraby, Dr. Agnes Ghaznavi, Mr. Hartmut Grossmann, Mr. Louis Hénuzet (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mrs. Ursula Mühlschlegel, Dr. Leo Niederreiter, Mrs. Betty Reed, Mr. Adib Taherzadeh.

'A number of friends who have rendered highly valued services as Counsellors are not being reappointed for the coming term, and we wish to express here our profound gratitude for the devoted labours they have rendered and are rendering in the path of the Cause. These dearly-loved believers are:

Mr. Seewoosumbur-Jeehoba Appa, Dr. Iraj Ayman, Mr. Rowland Estall, Mr. Howard Harwood, Miss Violet Hoehnke, Mrs. Salisa Kermani, Mr. Paul Lucas, Miss Elena Marsella, Mr. Alfred Osborne, Miss Thelma Perks, Mr. Hádí Raḥmání, Mr. 'Imád Sábirán, Miss Edna True . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

14 November 1980

'The Universal House of Justice has requested that we inform the Boards that the number of Auxiliary Board members alloted to each continent is as follows:

| | *Protection* | *Propagation* |
|---|---|---|
| Africa | 81 | 99 |
| Americas | 54 | 117 |
| Asia | 99 | 117 |
| Australasia | 18 | 27 |
| Europe | 27 | 36 |
| Totals | 279 | 396' |

International Teaching Centre

27 November, 1980

'In consideration of the extension of the area of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia we have decided to increase the number of Auxiliary Board members allocated to that continent by nine on each Board, raising the totals to twenty-seven Protection Board members and thirty-six Propagation Board members . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

24 June 1981

. . . ANOTHER FOUR DISTINGUISHED BELIEVERS NOW GATHERED ABHA KINGDOM ON BEING MARTYRED . . . DR. MASIH FARHANGI MEMBER BOARD COUNSELLORS ASIA . . .

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

17 August 1981

. . . DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING EMINENT DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY MEMBER BOARD COUNSELLORS AFRICA . . . MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA . . .

The Universal House of Justice

13 May 1982

'The Universal House of Justice announces with pleasure the appointment of Dr. Ṣábir Áfáqí to the Continental Board of Counsellors

*Counsellor Shirin Boman and Dr. Perin Olyai (fifth and fourth from right in the second row, seated) with friends during the second Himalayan Bahá'í Teaching Conference, held in Sikkim in 1984.*

*Counsellor Gila Michael Bahta (second from right) with a display created to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of the Bahá'í Faith into Ethiopia. Others, from left to right: Michael Tekle, Techeste Ahderom, Abayneh Merhatsion; in Addis Ababa, December 1983.*

in Asia to replace Dr. Masíḥ Farhangi, who was martyred last year.'

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

19 May 1983

'For ten years the International Teaching Centre has rendered invaluable services at the World Centre of the Faith, and it is with great joy that we now announce a number of major steps in the evolution of this vital institution of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

'Since the tragic death of Mr. Paul Haney there have been only two Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land. We have therefore decided to call upon Dr. 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá and Mr. Collis Featherstone to participate in the discharge of the special duties of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land when the occasion requires, as for example, in dealing with matters of Covenant-breaking. They will be able to perform these functions either by correspondence or by periodic sojourns at the World Centre.

'We have decided to raise the number of resident members of the International Teaching Centre to nine. For reasons of health Mrs. Florence Mayberry is leaving the World Centre, bringing to an end her highly valued services on this institution. Four new Counsellor members have therefore been appointed: Dr. Magdalene Carney, Mr. Mas'úd Khamsí, Dr. Peter Khan and Mrs. Isobel Sabri, whom we now call upon to transfer their residences to the Holy Land, where they will join the Hands of the Cause of God, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and 'Alí Akbar Furútan and Counsellors Anneliese Bopp, Hooper Dunbar and 'Azíz Yazdí.

'We have further decided, as foreshadowed in previous announcements, to institute a five-year term for the Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre. Each term will start on 23 May immediately following the International Bahá'í Convention, and the current term will end on 23 May 1988. Should circumstances prevent the Universal House of Justice from making new appointments at the end of any five-year term, the Counsellors will remain in office until such time as new appointments can be made.

'With the rapid growth of the Faith, its emergence from obscurity, and the diversification of the activities that the believers in many lands must undertake in such fields as education, rural development, radio and public relations—matters which must increasingly occupy the attention of the Universal House of Justice—we have decided that the time is ripe to devolve increased responsibility upon the International Teaching Centre, in the fields of protection and propagation of the Faith. The duties of the International Teaching Centre, including those announced previously and those now being assigned to it, are as follows:

—To assume full responsibility for coordinating, stimulating and directing the Continental Boards of Counsellors, acting also 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, from this knowledge, to make reports and recommendations to the Universal House of Justice and give advice to the Continental Boards of Counsellors.

—To watch over the security and ensure the protection of the Faith of God.

—To be alert to possibilities for the extension of the teaching work and the development of economic and social life both within and without the Bahá'í community, 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.

—To direct the work of the Continental Pioneer Committees.

—To administer the expenditure of the International Deputization Fund.

—To administer an annual budget that will be provided from the Bahá'í International Fund, allocating therefrom to the Continental Boards of Counsellors monies for special teaching projects and literature subvention, and, when necessary, contributions to the Continental Funds...

'In the near future the International Teaching Centre will be moving into its new offices near the House of the Master, in the building which served for several decades as the Western Pilgrim House, later as the seat of the International Bahá'í Council and, for the past twenty

*The seat of the International Teaching Centre at 10 Haparsim Street, Haifa, in 1985.*

*The Council Chamber in the seat of the International Teaching Centre in 1985.*

years as that of the Universal House of Justice. Now, most befittingly, it will serve as the office of the International Teaching Centre until the permanent building for that mighty institution can be raised on Mount Carmel in close proximity to the Universal House of Justice.'

The Universal House of Justice

27 June 1983

The Universal House of Justice announces with pleasure the appointment of the following Continental Counsellors:

| | |
|---|---|
| In Africa: | Mr. Gila Michael Bahta |
| | Mr. Kassimi Fofana |
| In the Americas: | Mr. Shapoor Monadjem |
| In Australasia: | Mrs. Joy Stevenson |

The Universal House of Justice

4 August 1983

DEEPLY MOURN LOSS OUTSTANDING PROMOTER FAITH WILLIAM MASEHLA.

The Universal House of Justice

24 October 1983

DEEPLY DEPLORE LOSS ZEALOUS SERVANT CAUSE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH RAÚL PAVÓN DISTINGUISHED PROMOTER FAITH AND INDEFATIGABLE WORKER IN TEACHING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES LATIN AMERICA.

The Universal House of Justice

6 December 1983

... announces with pleasure the appointment of the following Continental Counsellors:

| | |
|---|---|
| In Africa: | Mr. Mabuku Wingi |
| In the Americas: | Mrs. Isabel P. de Calderón |

The Universal House of Justice

Riḍván 1984

'... The International Teaching Centre, operating from its world seat, has provided loving and wise leadership and direction to the Boards of Counsellors. Its sphere of service has been immensely extended by the assignment of new responsibilities and by raising the number of its Counsellor members to seven. The dedicated services of the Counsellors in all the continents, ably supported by the Auxiliary Board members, have been invaluable in fostering the spiritual health and integrity of the world-wide community. To develop further this vital organ of the Administrative Order, it has been decided to establish a term of five years service for those appointed to the Auxiliary Boards, commencing November 26, 1986...'

The Universal House of Justice

7 March 1985

DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING ESTEEMED LLOYD GARDNER STALWART DEFENDER INTERESTS FAITH AMERICAS.

The Universal House of Justice

24 October 1985

It gives us great happiness to announce the membership of the Continental Boards of Counsellors as from the Day of the Covenant, 26 November 1985. The number of Counsellors has been increased from 63 to 72 and adjustments have been made in their geographical distribution in consonance with the development of the Faith around the world.

The membership of the Continental Boards of Counsellors as now appointed is:

*AFRICA* (*18 Counsellors*): Mr. Húshang Ahdieh (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Ḥusayn Ardekání, Mrs. Beatrice O. Asare, Mr. Gila Michael Bahta, Mr. Friday Ekpe, Mr. Oloro Epyeru, Mr. Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, Mr. Kassimi Fofana, Mr. Zekrollah Kazemi, Mr. Muḥammad Kebdani, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, Mr. Roddy Dharma Lutchmaya, Mr. Daniel Ramoroesi, Dr. Mihdí Samandarí, Mrs. Edith Senoga, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mrs. Lucretia Mancho Warren, Mr. Mabuku Wingi.

*THE AMERICAS* (*17 Counsellors*): Dr. Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih, Mr. Eloy Anello, Dr. Farzam Arbáb (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Dr. Wilma Brady, Mrs. Isabel P. de Calderón, Mr. Rolf von Czekus, Mr. Robert Harris, Mrs. Lauretta King, Dr. Peter McLaren, Mr. Shapoor Monadjem, Mrs. Ruth Pringle, Mr. Donald O. Rogers, Mr. Fred Schechter, Dr. Arturo Serrano, Mr. Alan Smith, Dr. David R. Smith, Mr. Rodrigo Tomás.

*ASIA* (*19 Counsellors*): Dr. Ṣábir Áfáqí, Mr. Burháni'd-Dín Afshín, Dr. Iraj Ayman, Mr. Bijan Fareed, Dr. John Fozdar, Mr. Zabíḥu'lláh Gulmuḥammadí, Mr. Bharat Koirala, Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Mumtázi, Mr. S. Nagaratnam, Dr. Perin Olyai, Mrs. Rose Ong, Mr. Khudáraḥm Paymán (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Masíh Rawḥání,

*A banquet held in the House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Haifa on the occasion of the Counsellors' Conference held from 27 December 1985–2 January 1986. Seated, from left to right: member of the Universal House of Justice Glenford Mitchell, Counsellors Beatrice Asare and David Smith, the Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery, and Counsellor Sohrab Youssefian.*

*Counsellor Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadiyyih consulting during the Counsellor's Conference held in Haifa from 27 December 1985–2 January 1986.*

Mr. Vicente Samaniego, U Soe Tin, Dr. Ilhan Sezgin, Mrs. Zena Sorabjee, Dr. Chellie J. Sundram, Mr. Michitoshi Zenimoto.

*AUSTRALASIA (9 Counsellors)*: Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í, Mr. Ben Ayala, Justice Richard Benson, Dr. Kamran Eshraghian, Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mr. Lisiate Maka, Mrs. Gayle Morrison, Dr. Sírús Naráqí, Mrs. Joy Stevenson (Trustee of the Continental Fund).

*EUROPE (9 Counsellors)*: Dr. Agnes Ghaznavi, Mr. Hartmut Grossman, Mr. Louis Hénuzet (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mrs. Ursula Mühlschlegel, Dr. Leo Niederreiter, Mrs. Polin Rafat, Mr. Adib Taherzadeh, Mr. Adam Thorne, Mr. Sohrab Youseffian.

The following nineteen devoted believers who are now being relieved of the onerous duties of membership on the Boards of Counsellors, will, as distinguished servants of the Cause, continue through their outstanding capacities and experience to be sources of stimulation and encouragement to the friends.

Mr. A. Owen Battrick, Mr. Erik Blumenthal, Mrs. Shirin Boman, Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mr. Athos Costas, Mr. Angus Cowan, Mrs. Dorothy Ferraby, Mr. Aydin Güney, Dr. Dipchand Khianra, Mr. Artemus Lamb, Mr. Kolonario Oule, Dr. Sarah Pereira, Mrs. Betty R. Reed, Dr. Manúchihr Salmánpúr, Mrs. Velma Sherrill, Mr. Hedeya Suzuki, Mrs. Bahíyyih Winckler, Mr. Donald Witzel, Mr. Yan Kee Leong.

We express to each and every one of these dear friends our heartfelt gratitude and assure them of our prayers in the Holy Shrines for the confirmation of their highly meritorious and self-sacrificing services to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Universal House of Justice

24 October 1985

'At this time when the Bahá'í world is facing the challenge of the International Year of Peace, on the point of completing the Seven Year Plan and standing on the threshold of a new Six Year Plan, we have felt it important to call upon the Counsellors from all the continents to gather at the World Centre for a conference to deliberate on the tasks and opportunities of the years immediately ahead. This conference will take place from 27 December 1985 through 2 January 1986 and is yet one more sign of the rapid advance and consolidation of the institutions of the Cause of God.'

The Universal House of Justice

1 January 1986

'The presentation of the condition of the Bahá'í International Fund at the Counsellors' Conference has precipitated many requests for information...

'It is essential that the friends throughout the world be educated in the importance of the funds: local, national, continental and international ... Such education can be greatly assisted by the Counsellors and their Auxiliary Boards, and should be adapted to the conditions of every Bahá'í community...'

The Universal House of Justice

2 January 1986

'The eager expectation with which we welcomed to the World Centre, on 27 December, sixty-four Counsellors from the five continents to discuss, with the International Teaching Centre, the challenges and opportunities facing the Bahá'í world community, has, at the conclusion of their historic conference, been transmuted into feelings of deepest joy, gratitude and love.

'Graced by the presence of the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Ugo Giachery, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and Collis Featherstone, the Conference was organized and managed with admirable foresight and efficiency by the International Teaching Centre...

'The beloved Counsellors, strengthened and enriched by their experience in the Holy Land, will, as early as possible, consult with all National Spiritual Assemblies on measures to conclude triumphantly the current Plan, and on preparations to launch the Six Year Plan. In anticipation of those consultations, National Spiritual Assemblies will receive the full announcement of the aims and characteristics of that Plan, so that together with the Counsellors they may formulate the national plans which will, for each community, establish its pursuit of the overall objectives.

'This new process, whereby the national goals of the next Plan are to be largely formulated by National Spiritual Assemblies and Boards

of Counsellors, signalizes the inauguration of a new stage in the unfoldment of the Administrative Order. Our beloved Guardian anticipated a succession of epochs during the Formative Age of the Faith; we have no hesitation in recognizing that this new development in the maturation of Bahá'í institutions marks the inception of the fourth epoch of that Age.'

The Universal House of Justice

March 1986

HEARTS GRIEFSTRICKEN PASSING OUTSTANDING PROMOTER CAUSE ANGUS COWAN.

The Universal House of Justice

# 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 a 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. In 1974, the Bahá'í International Community established relations with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and in 1976 was welcomed into consultative status with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

# 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 56 in 1963 to 135 by Riḍván 1983) 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 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 activites 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 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 activites 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.

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 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 Continental Board of Counsellors for the Americas in December 1985. Front row, left to right: Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih, Wilma Brady, Alan Smith. Second row, left to right: Donald Rogers, Ruth Pringle, Isabel de Calderón, Eloy Anello, Shapoor Monadjem. Third row, left to right: Lauretta King, David Smith, Rolf von Czekus, Farzam Arbáb. Back row, left to right: Rodrigo Tomás, Arturo Serrano, Robert Harris, Fred Schechter, Peter McLaren.*

*The Continental Board of Counsellors for Asia in March 1986. Seated, from left to right: Perin Olyai, Ṣábir Áfáqhí, Rose Ong, Iraj Ayman, Zena Sorabjee, Zabíḥu'lláh Gulmuḥammadí, Michitoshi Zenimoto. Standing, from left to right: Vicente Samaniego, John Fozdar, Chellie Sundram, Burhání'd-Dín Afshín, S. Nagaratnam, Khudáraḥm Paymán, Masíḥ Rawḥání, Bijan Fareed, Rúḥu'lláh Mumtází.*

*Agenda for Consultation*

An agenda for the sessions of the Convention is usually prepared beforehand by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly, including the various matters of national Bahá'í importance which it feels demand the attention of the delegates. This agenda will include the items mentioned above and below at appropriate times during the Convention. The Reports of National Committees are often presented at the time during the consultation when related subjects are to be discussed.

This agenda should be presented to the Convention immediately after the election of the Convention Officers and is usually adopted by majority vote of the assembled delegates. However, the Convention may, by majority vote, omit or add items, change the order, or even adopt an entirely new agenda.

*Conduct of Business*

Every deliberative body, to fulfil its functions, must conduct its deliberations in accordance with some established rules of order. The procedure here set forth for the National 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 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 others. Any necessary limitation to be placed upon individual discussion shall be determined by the Chairman in the absence of any specific motion duly carried by majority vote of the delegates themselves. It is 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 do other delegates. Members of the outgoing and incoming National Spiritual Assembly who are not delegates may participate in the consultation but not vote, as is also the case with any representative of the Continental Board of Counsellors who may have been deputed to attend on behalf of the Board.

Any other person may be given the right to address the Convention, by majority vote of the delegates present. But care must be taken that such permission is not abused, since the delegates have limited time at their disposal to engage in their vital deliberations.

The Chairman shall call for votes by a show of hands or similar means.

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 outgoing National Spiritual Assembly provides the Convention officers with a roll of elected delegates, ballot-papers, a ballot-box and tellers' report forms.

The election is conducted by the Convention, but delegates unable to attend have the right to vote by mail.

The policy governing the appointment of tellers, like other details of Convention procedure which are not defined in the Constitution of the National Spiritual Assembly, is within the discretion of the National Assembly to decide. The usual practice is for the National Assembly either to ask the Convention Chairman to appoint the tellers, or to appoint them itself. Tellers may be appointed from among the assembled delegates or from among Bahá'ís who are present but are not delegates.

The electoral method is as follows:

1. After a period of prayer, the Convention Chairman calls upon the delegates to record their votes, during which time silence is observed. When all delegates have had reasonable time to complete their ballot-papers, the Chairman calls upon the Secretary to collect the ballots.

2. The Convention Secretary calls the roll of delegates, whereupon each delegate in turn places his or her ballot in the ballot-box; and as names are called, those ballots received by mail are also placed in the ballot-box by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly.

3. When all ballots are cast, the ballot-box is handed to the tellers, who retire from the Convention hall to count the votes and determine the result of the election.

4. The result of the balloting is reported by the tellers to the Convention, and the tellers'

report is accepted by vote of the Convention.

5. A tie vote for the ninth place may be broken by a revote between the persons tied, carried out by secret ballot of the delegates present at the Convention.

6. If a member duly elected to the National Spiritual Assembly submits his resignation to the National Assembly and his resignation is accepted, his place must be filled by a ballot of all the delegates, not merely those present in the Convention hall. If all delegates are present, then such a by-election can be held while the Convention is still in session.

7. The ballots, together with the tellers' report, certified by all the tellers, are given to the National Spiritual Assembly.

*The Convention Record*

The permanent record of each successive National Bahá'í Convention consists 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 Bahá'í World Centre and other institutions, agencies and persons.
5. Resolutions and other transactions of the assembled delegates.
6. The result of the election of the National Spiritual Assembly.

*Duties of Delegates outside the Convention Sessions*

The National Convention is not a continuously functioning institution, but the delegates do have three duties to perform before and after the Convention sessions.

Before the Convention each delegate should do his best to familiarize himself with the conditions of the Cause in his region and with the views of the Bahá'ís whom he is elected to represent.

After the Convention each delegate should, as far as possible, share his experiences and impressions of the Convention with the Bahá'ís in his area.

During the year, if there is a need for a by-election to the National Spiritual Assembly, the delegates will be called upon to vote to fill the vacancy.

# *New National Spiritual Assemblies 1984*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Canary Islands.*

# *New National Spiritual Assemblies 1984*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Cape Verde Islands.*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Equatorial Guinea (one member absent).*

# *New National Spiritual Assemblies 1984*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of French Guiana.*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Gabon. Counsellor Húshang Ahdieh is seen in the front row, centre.*

# *New National Spiritual Assemblies 1984*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Grenada.*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Martinique (one member absent).*

## *New National Spiritual Assemblies*

### *1984*

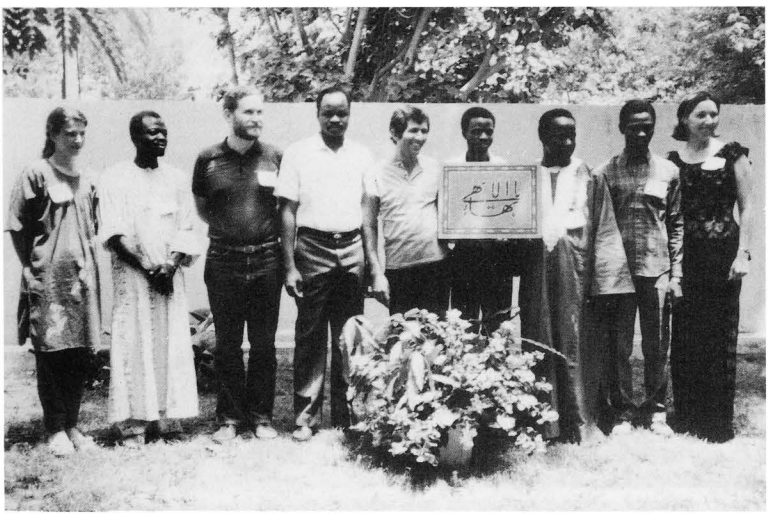
*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Yemen (North).*

### *1985*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ciskei.*

# *New National Spiritual Assemblies 1985*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Cook Islands (one member absent). The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone is seated third from left, and Counsellor Tinai Hancock is seated second from right.*



*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Mali.*

## *New National Spiritual Assemblies 1985*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Mozambique. Counsellor Shidan Fat'he-Aazam is seen fifth from right.*

*The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Western Caroline Islands (two members absent). The Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone is seen on the left.*

# IV

# THE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY[1]

## 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.

[1] From *The Bahá'í Community*, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, 1963.

*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 country 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 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 except in special circumstances.

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 Riḍván, 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

[1] Written in 1923.

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 ['Abdu'l-Bahá's] 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 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 threefold 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 dis-

cussion, and a majority decision becomes unanimous 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 such 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 judgement 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 auth-

ority 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 consulation 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, 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.

### *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 to 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., p. 27.

'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 indispensible, 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 purposes 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 ...' V.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 unfailing 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 principal 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. | *Bahá'í Administration* |
| *Bahá'í News* | *U.S. Bahá'í News* |
| B.W. | *The Bahá'í World* |
| G.P.B. | *God Passes By* |
| M.A. | *Messages to America* |
| P.U.P. | *The Promulgation of Universal Peace* |

# 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 origin.

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 acceptence 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 herinafter 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;

[1] Name of country or origin.

provided, however, 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 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 of the Spiritual Assembly shall be by plurality vote.

SECTION 3. All voting members of the local Bahá'í communtiy 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

[1] Name of country or origin.

all income and expenditure of its fund, reports of its committees and presentation of any other matters 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

*Alternaive '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 origin.

*Some members of a Local Spiritual Assembly in Ethiopia, 1986.*

*Some members of a Local Spiritual Assembly in Chile, 1984.*

*Members of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Utsunomiya City, Japan, with a friend, in 1985.*

*Members of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Francavilla, Italy, in 1984.*

*The chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Nong Sameth, Thailand, making a presentation during a Nineteen Day Feast in November 1985.*

*A Bahá'í in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., giving her opinion during consultation at a Nineteen Day Feast in June 1984.*

# V

# THE INSTITUTION OF THE MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR

## 1. FOREWORD

*Blessed is he who, at the hour of dawn, centring his thoughts on God, occupied with His remembrance, and supplicating His forgiveness, directeth his steps to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and, entering therein, seateth himself in silence to listen to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Mighty, the All-Praised. Say: The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is each and every building which hath been erected in cities and villages for the celebration of My praise. Such is the name by which it hath been designated before the throne of glory, were ye of those who understand.*

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 Revelation 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 Messages 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 fervour, 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 dis-

interested 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.*

*Friends gathered for the dedication of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands file into the Samoan Temple on 2 September 1984 to view a portrait of Bahá'u'lláh, and to be individually anointed with the essence of roses by the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.*

# 3. THE DEDICATION OF THE FIRST MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AND THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CONFERENCE APIA, WESTERN SAMOA

30 August–2 September 1984

## A. REPORT OF THE DEDICATION AND CONFERENCE

### A Beacon of Unity

THE Samoan House of Worship (*Maota Tapua'i Bahá'í Samoa*) stands as a beacon of unity about 600 metres up the gentle north-facing slope of a mountain about nine kilometres south of Apia, Western Samoa. The plot of land on which it stands was purchased in 1975 and subsequently additional plots were acquired to permit direct access to the temple from the main road.

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was designed by a prominent Iranian architect, Mr. Husayn Amanat (Ḥusayn Amánat), who was appointed architect at Riḍván 135 of the Bahá'í Era (21 April 1978) and whose design for the Temple was approved by the Universal House of Justice in September 1978. Influenced, he said, by the simplicity of life of the Samoan people and by the lush and verdant landscape, Mr. Amánat created a building of striking beauty which is at once unique and yet sympathetically and harmoniously related to its setting. He has used the form of the traditional Samoan dwelling, the *fale*, and the open plan of such structures, in conceptualizing the design of the House of Worship. The building successfully pays homage to the warmth and nobility to which Mr. Amánat was strongly drawn in the character of the Samoan people, yet it manifests the ineffable grandeur which befits a House of Worship raised to the glory of Bahá'u'lláh. The building is crowned by a dome, tiled in white mosaic, which rests atop nine pairs of buttresses clad in granite of a soft red hue, and although imposing and dignified, the structure is of a scale and proportion compatible with the surroundings.

'The nine ribs of mirrored glass, the graceful arch windows, and the wide expanse of glazing over each portal appear to draw the light through the structure itself,' Michael Day wrote in the Autumn 1985 issue of *Tusitala*. 'Modern building techniques have allowed the dome to be built in this way, providing an iridescent effect when lit at night. The shell of the dome and the internal structure are of a white reinforced concrete, bushhammered to a soft texture and accented with distinctive native ifilele wood joinery and a warm red tile floor finish. The main hall seats 500 and a cantilevered mezzanine level rings the perimeter providing additional seating for 200 people including the choir.

'During the day, worshippers can gaze upward to the blue tropical skies. At night the glass reflects the interior light, the interplay of the shadows making a marvellous mosaic in the interior.'

The foundation stone of the Mother Temple of the Pacific islands was laid on 27 January 1979 by His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, the first Head of State to embrace the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the representative of the Universal House of Justice on that occasion, participated by placing in a niche in the stone a small casket of Dust from the sacred Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.

Materials for the construction of the Temple were brought from various parts of the Pacific,

*Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat, architect of the Samoan Temple, holding a scaled model of the House of Worship with the completed building in the background.*

and in the interior, at mezzanine level, wooden carvings and *tappa* designs, adapted from the traditional bark cloth patterns used throughout the Pacific, provide effective ornamentation that does not conflict with the portals above which are carved quotations from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

From the top of the dome to the basement floor is a height of 31 metres (102'); from the top of the dome to ground level is 28 metres (92'). The dome itself is 19 metres (62') in height and 27 metres (88') in width.

Great excitement swept through the Bahá'í community of Samoa as the day drew near for the official dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and its opening to public worship.

**Setting the Stage**

During the week prior to the dedication of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific islands, Bahá'ís from all over the Pacific began to arrive in Apia, where, for at least a month in advance of the dedication, the local believers of Samoa had been busily engaged in preparing the Temple grounds for the great event. But much remained to be done: the grounds needed levelling and cleaning; shrubs and flowers had to be planted; the chairs required assembling.

The guests who arrived early lent their aid willingly. It was a colourful scene with Bahá'ís of all ages and races working together cheerfully from 6:00 a.m. until late in the evening. As they worked, they sang melodious songs with Bahá'í themes. For some, a drink of coconut juice or a piece of papaya sufficed for lunch. Those with greater physical strength assembled and carried the chairs to the Temple auditorium, unearthed huge rocks and carried them away, and also created a rock garden; others, including women and children, greatly assisted in levelling the ground, preparing the soil, planting shrubs, carrying water for the new plants. The women and youth worked far into the night collecting palm fronds and weaving garlands, hundreds of yards in length, of fragrant frangipani. The garlands were looped along the entire length of the main paths leading to the Temple, the electric standards in the gardens were decorated

*Bahá'í youth with baskets of flowers they have brought on 31 August 1984 to decorate the grounds and buildings for the Samoan Temple dedication ceremonies.*

with plaited palms and flowers, and the Temple balcony was hung with chains of ferns.

Counsellor Suhayl Ala'i (Suhayl 'Alá'í), Mr. Hugh Carden, and the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa met for long hours virtually every evening attending to details necessary to ensure the success of the dedication and conference. A tremendous spirit of unity and love developed throughout the week.

Attracted by the lights used at night, a plague of moths invaded the interior of the Temple by the thousands necessitating two fumigations the day before the official opening, and requiring that the building be cleaned again and again by teams of voluntary workers. Despite their physical exhaustion and lack of sleep, nothing dampened the enthusiasm of the believers.

On the night before the dedication, the friends worked all through the night as though it were broad daylight. As morning approached, the tired workers came down the mountainside to prepare themselves to return for the day's events. The stage had been set by the people of Bahá for the dedication ceremony, a momentous occasion in the history of the Pacific islands.

**The Arrival of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum**

Prior to the dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Samoa, the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum had completed a journey, of three months' duration, which took her to Korea and through many islands and countries of the South Pacific.

Having learned that His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II would be at the airport in Apia to greet the distinguished visitor who was to represent the Universal House of Justice at the dedication, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly assembled at the exit of the airport's VIP lounge to greet their honoured guest and her travelling companion, Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání. The National Spiritual Assembly had brought garlands of fresh flowers as a symbol of welcome, and a young child stood by ready to present a beautiful bouquet to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. Hundreds of Bahá'ís had also gathered at the airport as a token of love and respect. The plane arrived, the door opened, and Rúḥíyyih Khánum and Mrs. Nakhjavání were the first ones out. By that time the Deputy Prime

Minister was on the tarmac waiting to greet the party. The Hand of the Cause, Mrs. Nakhjavání, Counsellor Tinai Hancock, and other members of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum's party were escorted by the deputy Prime Minister towards the VIP lounge where they spent a brief time. His Excellency the Prime Minister of Samoa, Tofilau Eti, escorted His Highness and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum towards the official car, a black limousine, which transported them to the city with police escort and full motorcade ceremony.

In addition to the Prime Minister, among those who received Rúḥíyyih Khánum at the airport were cabinet ministers, as well as diplomatic and Government officials. The Bahá'ís experienced a deep sense of happiness, feeling that the befitting and gracious reception accorded Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum at the airport was a most auspicious beginning of the occasion for which they had laboured so strenuously.

**The Arrival of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Other Guests**

For a week in advance of the dedication and conference, groups of Bahá'ís arrived in Apia almost every hour, filling up many seats on the airplanes and occupying all available space in hotels and guest houses in town. Bahá'ís from various parts of the world were also billeted in the homes of local friends. At the National Centre the lights burned practically all night as people gathered there to obtain information and to be directed to the various service committees to which they were assigned. Everyone had work to do and those who were not on committees volunteered to assist at the Temple site or to answer questions about the Faith asked by members of the public. Despite the busy schedule and the long hours, there was a sense of purpose and direction to the friends' efforts, and the feeling that all were being aided by a spiritual and physical strength drawn from an invisible source.

The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Madge Featherstone arrived, as did Pa Ariki Lady Davis and her Cook Islands group. The film crew settled in, and Gina and Russ Garcia were welcomed and immediately started training the special choir that was to perform in the Temple.

**The International Teaching Conference**

The conference opened on Thursday evening, 30 August. The chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Samoa and the local chiefs welcomed the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum in the customary Samoan way. A warm and loving welcome was conveyed to the distinguished friends from all over the world who had travelled long distances to be present. Words of greeting were extended to the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and to Mrs. Featherstone, to all the Counsellors, the members of the Auxiliary Board, and the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. The message from the Universal House of Justice to the friends gathered in Apia for the occasion of the dedication of the Temple was read by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.

It was noted that there were present approximately 1,400 Bahá'ís from forty-five different countries and islands around the globe; all islands of the Pacific were represented, and all six continents. The conference was held in the gymnasium which had been built for the 1983 South Pacific Games.

The opening session the following day was devoted to the reading of greetings which had been received from other National Spiritual Assemblies, other institutions of the Faith, individual Counsellors and other friends and well-wishers. An especially moving event was the reading aloud of the letter from the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery whose devotion to the advancement of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in Samoa is both heart-warming and noteworthy. Counsellor Joy Stevenson presented a talk on 'The Significance of a House of Worship' which was followed by an address delivered by Rúḥíyyih Khánum on 'The Development of the World Centre'.

On Friday afternoon representatives of the National Spiritual Assemblies were invited to speak on the history and development of the Faith in their own countries. The presentations were moving, vivid and informative, and the speakers took the opportunity to present gifts to the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa for the Temple, and to His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II.

Although the Cook Islands do not yet have a National Spiritual Assembly, their representative, Pa Ariki Lady Davis, was requested

to talk about the progress made towards the establishment of the first National Assembly. She began by expressing her joy at being present, conveyed greetings to all the guests, and said she would like to begin 'in the Pacific way'—the signal for the Cook Island friends to play their ukuleles and sing as she danced, inviting others to join her. It was a happy outpouring of spirit, completely in keeping with the joyousness of the occasion. She then proceeded to outline the rise and development of the Faith in the Cook Islands.

The friends from Tonga, before delivering their addresses, chanted a Tongan song while presenting to the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa a gift of a *tapa*, 100 feet in length, which extended the full length of the gymnasium, as well as a very large Tongan fine mat.

The Knights of Bahá'u'lláh—those Bahá'ís so named by Shoghi Effendi in 1953–54 for their service in opening an island, country or territory to the Faith—were called forward and introduced to the gathering by Rúḥíyyih Khánum, and each was asked to address the conference. A number of these friends who first brought the Cause to the Pacific are still at their posts. Tribute was also paid to Bahá'ís who settled in areas not named as virgin territories because others had previously visited those places briefly.

An address then followed by the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone who stressed the role of women and youth in building the world of tomorrow. He also urged support of the purpose and activities of the United Nations International Youth Year, 1985.

Interspersed between the presentations mentioned above were musical items and songs sung by the choir under the guidance and direction of Gina and Russ Garcia.

A banquet was held on Saturday night at Aggie Grey's Hotel. The friends then gathered at the gymnasium where Dr. Arthur Lyon Dahl addressed a well-attended public meeting which was followed by spirited performances of music and other entertainment presented by representatives of various islands of the Pacific.

**The Dedication Ceremony**

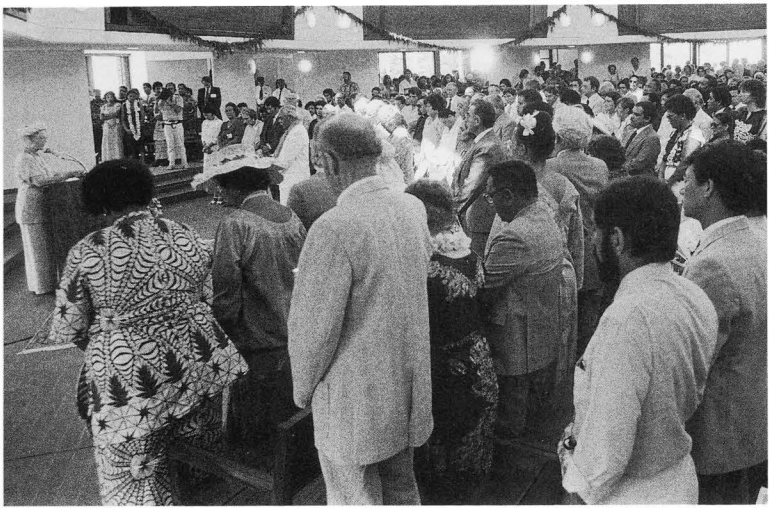
On 1 September 1984, most of the Bahá'ís had assembled at the ancilliary building and were ready to enter the House of Worship. Among the distinguished guests present for the dedication ceremony were His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, Princess Tooa Salamasina Malietoa, his sister, and Her Highness Masiofo Lily Malietoa, his wife; His Excellency the Prime Minister Tofilau Eti and four members of his cabinet—the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Education, the Minister for Public Works, and the Minister for Agriculture; the Australian and New Zealand High Commissioners; the representative of the United Nations; the representative of the Republic of Nauru; the representative of the island of Niue; and a number of high-ranking dignitaries of various churches. In addition, the guests included heads of various Government departments, private companies, leaders of various non-governmental organizations, members of the diplomatic corps, parents and friends of the local believers, and Bahá'ís from around the world. The Temple was filled to overflowing.

His Highness was met by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum at the ancillary building and they were escorted into the House of Worship. When they were seated, the ceremony began. The choir sang the song composed by Mr. Charles Wolcott, 'Blest Art Thou, O House'. Listening as the choir sang the uplifting words one could truly say, 'This is, indeed, the House of God'.

In his brief remarks before Rúḥíyyih Khánum officially dedicated the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II emphasized that the House of Worship stands as a symbol of the three fundamental verities of the Bahá'í Faith, the unity of God, the unity of His Prophets and the unity of mankind; the Temple is a gift to the peoples of the world and is open to all people regardless of race, religion or creed.

In fitting words, with dignity and graciousness, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum then dedicated the first Mother Temple of the Pacific islands and declared it open to public worship.

An inspiring programme of devotions touched the hearts of the listeners. In every respect, the ceremony was perfect. The auditorium was filled, and still there were friends listening from outside. The service lasted for about an hour—an hour of solemnity touched with the sweetness of victory; the climax of one major triumph but simultaneously the starting point of another phase in the development of



*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum speaking during the dedication ceremonies in the Samoan Temple on 1 September 1984.*

the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the Pacific.

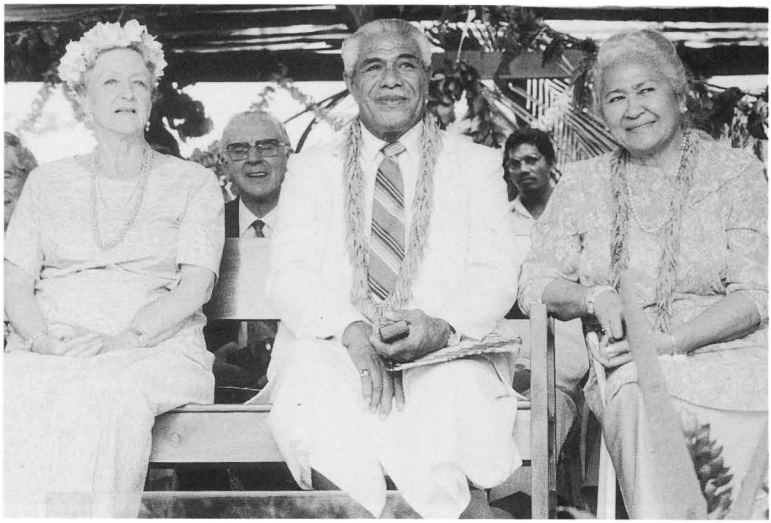
The dedication was followed by a traditional and extremely joyous Samoan *Sua* ceremony held in an area adjacent to the Temple, a ceremony calling for the customary gift of fine mats and large roast pigs, presented, on this occasion, to His Highness and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum by the Bahá'ís of Samoa. *Sua* gifts were also presented to other guests. Gifts for the Universal House of Justice, and for His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, were also presented. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, presented His Highness with a model of the Samoan Temple. Then the local Bahá'ís sang an original song composed by them and performed in the traditional Samoan way. This was followed by traditional dancing and other light entertainment. As twilight descended the programme concluded with His Highness and all the guests standing and singing the national anthem of Western Samoa, a moving moment as the words wafted over this particular piece of land, 'Arise, Samoa, and raise your flag. This is your crown. Look at the stars that are on it, the sign that Jesus died for Samoa ... do not be afraid, Samoa is founded on God, our freedom...'

**The Banquet**

A banquet for more than 200 guests was held at Aggie Grey's Hotel on Saturday evening. Although His Highness was indisposed and could not attend, Princess Tooa Salamasina Malietoa, his sister, and Her Highness Masiofo Lily Malietoa, his wife, were present, as were a number of heads of Government departments, members of the diplomatic corps and other invited guests. Toward the end of the evening, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum gave a brief talk. On behalf of the guests, the Consul for Nauru, Mr. Ted Annandale, responded.

**Viewing of the Portrait of Bahá'u'lláh**

On Sunday morning, in three sessions the first of which began at 8:00 a.m., the friends visited the Temple to view the portrait of Bahá'u'lláh and were anointed individually by Rúḥíyyih Khánum with attar of rose. With only a brief break, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum stood in the House of Worship for five hours as the Bahá'í friends quietly assembled and filed through, awed and moved by the experience of viewing the portrait of their Lord, conspicuously reverent, and fully conscious of the privilege which was theirs. This was undoubt-



*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, left, sits with His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II and Her Highness Masiofo Lily during the Samoan* Sua *ceremony held after the Temple dedication on 1 September 1984.*

edly the high point of the dedication, as many of the Pacific island Bahá'ís who were present had not had the privilege of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Later, in her closing remarks, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum stated that as she watched the friends walking up, one by one, to view the portrait, she could hear the words of the song 'We are the people of Bahá' ringing in her ears. She pointed out that as spiritual tidal waves carrying Bahá'u'lláh's message of love and unity will spread throughout the Pacific region as a result of there being a Bahá'í House of Worship standing on the mountain at Tiapapata, the Bahá'ís must fearlessly ride the crest of these spiritual waves as they go forth to teach the Faith. The great silent teacher, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, having already started its work, she remarked, it is now entirely up to the believers to work together to win new victories and triumphs for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

A 30-minute 16mm film 'The Dawning Place', also available as a video, was made by Martine Dahl and is being distributed by Arc Productions and the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Committee.

In concluding its report, upon which this account is based, the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa noted that the Head of State of Western Samoa had, in his dedicatory address, expressed his gratitude to the Universal House of Justice for choosing Samoa as the place where the Mother Temple of the Pacific would be erected, and for the presence of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum as its representative. On behalf of all Bahá'í communities throughout the islands of Samoa, the National Assembly extended its thanks to the Universal House of Justice for its guidance and prayers, to Counsellor Suhayl Ala'i and Mr. Hugh Carden and the many volunteers for their assistance, and to 'our dearest mother, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Lilian Ala'i' who brought the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to Samoa in January 1954 and who, through her example and counsel, 'directs our thoughts in channels which in future will bear fruit.'

## B. MESSAGE OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum reading the message from the Universal House of Justice during the opening session of the International Teaching Conference, on 30 August 1984, in Apia, Western Samoa.*

TO THE Friends gathered in Apia, Western Samoa on the occasion of the Dedication of the Mother Temple of the Pacific Islands.

Dearly-loved Friends,

In these historic days we are witnessing a major triumph in the development of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Not only is the raising up of this House of Worship a further significant fulfilment of the Blessed Beauty's promise, it also presages a brilliant future in the Pacific for His Faith, whose quickening light is casting its rays on the peoples of this vast ocean. In his message to the Bahá'í world in April 1957 the beloved Guardian, referring to the Pacific, wrote, '... Bahá'í exploits bid fair to outshine the feats achieved in any other ocean, and indeed in every continent of the globe...'

In reviewing the religious history of the Pacific during the Bahá'í Dispensation we recall that it was only a short time prior to the Declaration of the Báb that the Teachings of Christ spread throughout these islands; that the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh were first proclaimed there when the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander arrived in the Hawaiian Islands in December 1901; that at the beginning of the World Crusade in 1953 only a handful of islands had had any contact with the Faith; and that at Riḍván 1959 when the first regional National Spiritual Assembly of the South Pacific was established in Suva there were in its area but twelve Local Spiritual Assemblies in nine island groups. Witness now what has happened in the quarter century since 1959.

—The first reigning monarch in the world to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is the Head of State of Western Samoa whose official residence is near the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

—There are now a total of thirteen National Spiritual Assemblies in the homelands of the Polynesians, the Melanesians and the Micronesians.

The Caroline Islands
Fiji
The Hawaiian Islands
Kiribati
The Mariana Islands
The Marshall Islands
New Caledonia and The Loyalty Islands
Papua New Guinea
Samoa
The Solomon Islands
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu

—Two additional National Spiritual Assemblies are to be formed at Riḍván 1985, those of: The Cook Islands and the Western Caroline Islands.
—Nearly five hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies are established.
—Bahá'ís reside in nearly 2,000 localities.
—There are more than 31,000 believers in the Pacific.
—Bahá'ís constitute more than one per cent of the total population in eight national communities in the Pacific.
—The seventh Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the world stands in all its glory on the mountainside at Tiapapata. This spot has now become the spiritual heart of the Bahá'í communities in the Pacific basin.

The new Temple of light is the outward expression of the illumination of hearts and minds by the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, that process initiated in these islands at the turn of the century and now reaching a mighty crescendo. The effulgent light of His Teachings has aroused stirrings in the friends, impelling them to apply these heavenly principles in their personal lives and in the daily activities of their communities. Just as the spiritual illumination of the Bahá'ís is symbolized in the Temple, so the development of local community life in all its aspects, whether administrative or social, which flow from the fountain-head of faith in God's Revelation, will reach a fuller expression in the form of various dependencies around this edifice—dependencies which the Guardian described as '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.'

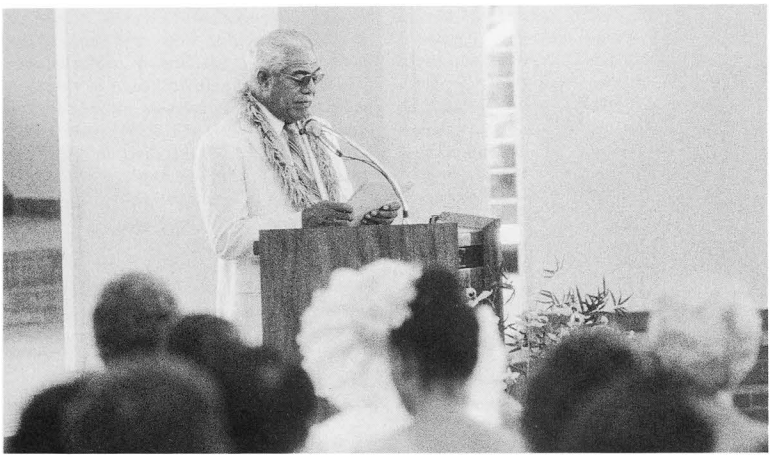
The dedication of this noble edifice will undoubtedly mark the beginning of a new phase in the growth of the Faith in this hemisphere. The portents of success are many and varied. The friendliness and spiritual perceptiveness of the people of the Pacific, the freedom enjoyed by the friends in travelling and sharing their faith with others, the absence hitherto of organized and concerted opposition to the Faith, the relatively low level of infection by the forces of materialism so rapidly invading every part of the world, and the genuine simplicity of the mode of life of the peoples of these islands—all combine to make of the Pacific a region rich with promise for the further dramatic spread of the Faith and for the efflorescence of its community life.

Let the joyous spirit generated at this conference, reinforced by your common endeavours and crowned by your participation in the dedicatory ceremony, be the generating impulse for a mighty surge of teaching activity which will yield a vast increase in the number of followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the far-flung islands of the Pacific. As the Seven Year Plan hastens towards its conclusion, you have a priceless opportunity to take advantage of the favourable conditions in your region to win victories in the Plan which will astonish the world and will fulfil the great promises enshrined in our Writings. Our prayers ascend at the Holy Threshold for the success of your selfless endeavours in the path of His Cause.

# C. TEXT OF ADDRESS OF HIS HIGHNESS MALIETOA TANUMAFILI II

## HEAD OF STATE OF WESTERN SAMOA

## 1 September 1984



FIVE years ago the corner-stone for this House of Worship was laid with thanksgiving to God. Today we are doubly joyful and filled with gratitude, for its doors are now open to all.

As Head of State of Western Samoa I warmly welcome each of you.

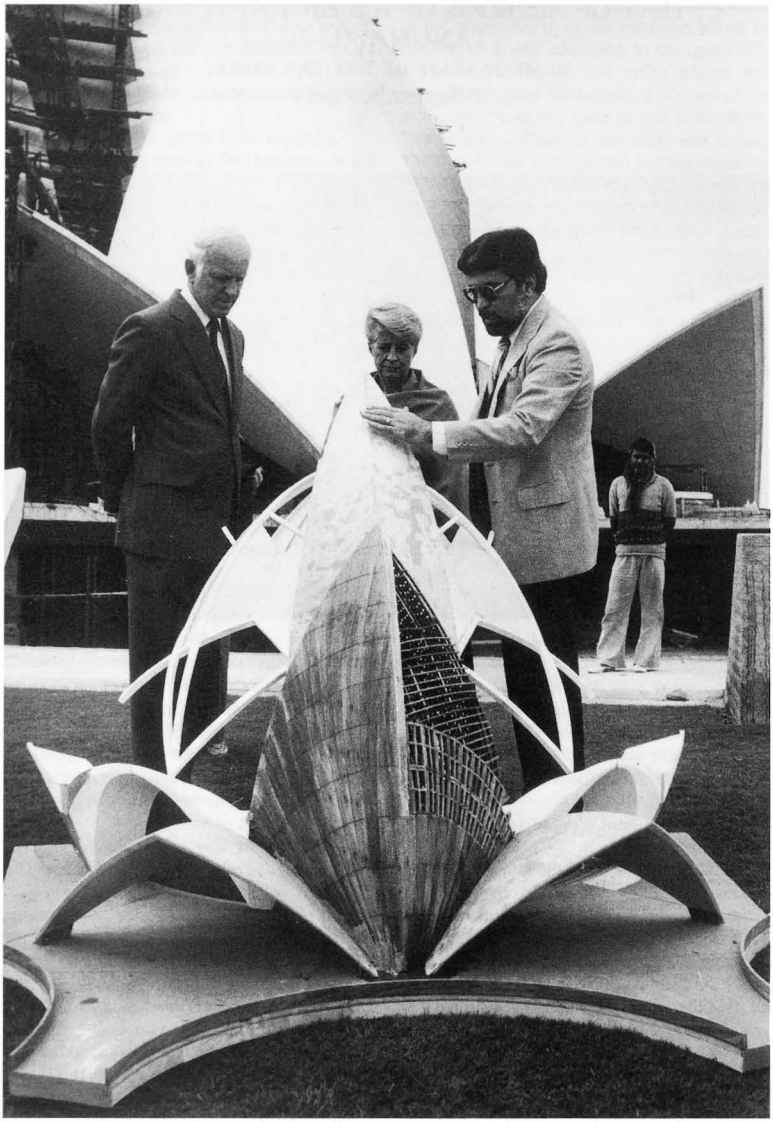
I am deeply grateful to the Universal House of Justice for choosing Western Samoa as the recipient of such a gift. Five years of creativity, hard work, and craftsmanship have gone into this unique and exquisite building.

My sincere and warmest thanks to the Bahá'ís all over the world, high and low, who gave so generously and with such sacrifice to build this Temple.

There are many who deserve our gratitude: Mr. Amanat, who designed such an inspirational Temple; the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa, who was entrusted with the project of raising it; the contractors, Mainzeal Construction Ltd., and the engineers whose efforts ensure that this structure will last for centuries. There were also specialists from abroad and workers and craftsmen from our own country who toiled diligently. I offer sincere thanks and gratitude and may Almighty God amply reward all of you.

Special thanks also to the Prime Minister and Cabinet and other government officials who facilitated construction of this building. Particular mention should also be made of the government of Niue, from whose country the white aggregate used in the concrete was carefully quarried and shipped.

My special gratitude for Madame Rabbani who has once again graced our shores as the representative of the Universal House of Justice. She is present today and will dedicate this House of Worship to the significant principles of the oneness of God, the oneness of religion, and the oneness of humanity so eloquently expressed in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith.



*Mr. Fariburz Ṣahbá, right, architect of the Indian Temple, explaining the method of construction to the Canadian High Commissioner to India Mr. William Warden, and to Mrs. Warden, as they examine a model showing the structure of the shells in New Delhi in May 1986.*

# 4. THE MOTHER TEMPLE OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

## Progress Report 21 April 1983–21 April 1986

THE fascinating story of the beginnings of the Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent will be found in previous volumes of the international record.[1] In brief, the National Spiritual Assembly of India, Pakistan and Burma, as it was then known, was assigned, during the Ten Year Crusade (1953–63), the goal of acquiring a site in New Delhi for the construction of a House of Worship. A site consisting of 22 acres of land was acquired but was subsequently requisitioned by the Government for a green belt area. On 1 February 1978, the Government agreed to release the entire 22 acres as a result of representations by the National Spiritual Assembly and after viewing the arresting design for the House of Worship. The inspired design of the Iranian architect, Mr. Faríburz Ṣahbá, of a Temple in the form of an unfolding lotus, was approved by the Universal House of Justice and he was appointed architect of the building, his appointment being confirmed by the House of Justice on 3 August 1977.

On 17 October 1977, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum laid the foundation stone for the Mother Temple of the Indian Subcontinent in a special ceremony. In her address on that occasion she stated that in addition to the lotus having ancient associations with Buddhism and Hinduism and other great religions and cultures, it stood as a symbol of the Manifestation of God. 'The lotus,' she said in part, 'is probably the most perfect flower in the whole world. It is symmetrical; it is exquisitely beautiful. And how does it grow? It raises its head out of the slime absolutely clean and perfect. Now this is what the Manifestation of God is in the world.'

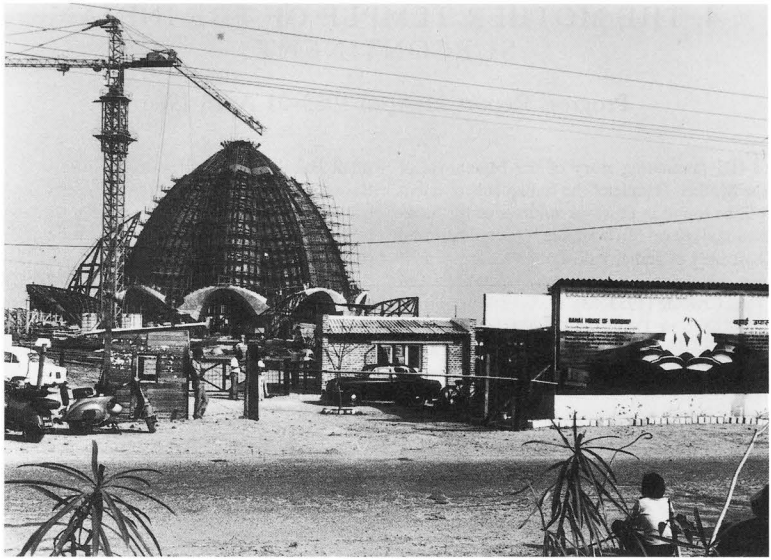
The cost of the five separate parcels comprising the site was approximately US $15,000—a sum raised by voluntary sacrificial contributions from among the then numerically small Bahá'í communities of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. Although the sums contributed by individual Bahá'ís are known only to the treasurer of the community, it is now the pride of the Indian believers that the late Ardashír Rustampúr (1901–82), a Bahá'í of Zoroastrian background who came from humble origins and who operated a modest restaurant in Hyderabad, offered his entire life savings toward the purchase of the largest and most expensive of the plots; and that only through strenuous insistence on the part of the treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly did he agree to accept back a small amount for his own use. Questioned about his gift, he said, 'I did not have a penny when I started. All that I accumulated was given to me by God. Now the money was needed for His purposes ... I am only a temporary trustee.' Not the finished temple but the mere idea of it was already exerting an influence on hearts.

After a three-year odyssey of study and prayerful search, Mr. Ṣahbá, who had been an associate architect associated with the design of the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice, and who began for the first time to think seriously of creating a Temple design only when it was suggested to him that he do so by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, captured in 400 blueprints his chosen design in readiness for translating concept into tangible reality.

After considerable study and negotiation, Mr. Ṣabhá chose the firm of Flint and Neill, a renowned structural engineering firm that also worked on the Bahá'í temple located in Panama, to assist in the translation of his vision into a building of structural reliability. For about 18 months, Mr. Ṣahbá and Dr. Flint, with the assistance of specialist engineers and the use of computers, collaborated in working out all the details of the building's structure. Finally, it was time to call for tenders.

The contract was awarded in April 1980 to Engineering Construction Corporation Ltd. of India. Mobilization of the site took about two

[1] See 'The Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Mother Temple of the Indian Subcontinent', *The Bahá'í World*, vol XVII, pp. 368–70. An article bearing the same title by the architect, F. Ṣahbá, and one entitled 'The Lotus of Bahapur' by Sheriar Nooreyezdan, will be found in vol. XVIII, pp. 571–84.



*The construction site for the Indian Temple on 12 March 1984, with a boom extended for concreting operations.*

months and witnessed the growth of a small township at Bahapur, including site offices, storage facilities, housing for the 400 labourers (including approximately 90 families), and a primary school for their children. Labour intensive, employment-creating construction methods were favoured: for example, all the excavated rocks and earth were carried in headloads. A total quantity of 6,000 cubic metres of rock was excavated in this manner, enough to build a stone wall five feet high and one foot thick extending over twelve kilometres. The foundation was completed in December 1980.

On 30 July 1980 the first trowelful of concrete was poured into the first pit of the innermost circle of columns by Mrs. Golnar Ṣahbá, an occasion marked by the traditional offering of prayers and the distribution of sweets. The happy and historic occasion took place in the presence of representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors, the National Spiritual Assembly, the Delhi Bahá'í community, and visiting Bahá'ís. REJOICE NEWS COMMENCEMENT CONSTRUCTION MASHRIQULADHKAR HEART INDIAN SUBCONTINENT, the Universal House of Justice cabled, in part, and went on to draw a contrast between this victory and the sad events transpiring in the land of Bahá'u'lláh's birth where the members of the community bearing His name were being arrested, imprisoned, tortured and martyred.

The progress made toward construction of the Lotus Temple between the commencement of construction and Riḍván 140 B.E. (21 April 1983) has been recorded in vol. XVIII of *The Bahá'í World*. Below, in the words of the architect, is set out a description of the progress made during the period covered by this book, up to Riḍván 143 B.E. (21 April 1986).

The achievement of constructing a building such as this in India is more fully appreciated when one considers the magnitude and multiplicity of problems that were confronted and creatively overcome. In a report in which the architect takes the reader behind the scenes, at a crucial juncture in the erection of the building, one finds confirmation of the principle that nothing of significance, in art as in life, is realized without consecrated effort, commitment, and love expressed as co-operation.

*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, centre, touring the Indian Temple site accompanied by Counsellor Burháni'd-Dín Afshín, left, and architect Ṣahbá, right, during a visit in April 1984.*

'With the completion of the formwork of the inner leaves scale of the building', the architect wrote, 'the complexity of the task became more and more evident. A total of 60,000 cubic feet of timber was now exposed to the sun. Temperatures of over 45° centigrade, followed by monsoon rains, were threatening the formwork. The fire hazard was very high. We were trying very hard to give encouragement and assurance to the contractor and workers who were looking at this impossible "mountain" and were asking hundreds of questions: How could we protect the formwork from moving and cracking? How could we work on staging which stored heat and would burn one's hand from a distance of 10 centimetres? How could we fix the reinforcement in such small working spaces and make sure that the reinforcement cage, which was 30 metres high, would not break away from its position? How could we pour concrete in such extreme heat when the temperature of the aggregate and sand are above 54° centigrade, and the concrete sets inside the mixer, while employing labourers who, for the most part, have never seen a vibrator and who converse in ten different languages?

'Day after day was spent talking to the contractors and engineers, none of whom were experienced in such high quality work, trying to come up with answers to all of these questions. I was growing more anxious by the moment. Their total co-operation was vital to the success of this phase of the project and they were completely dismayed. Several times previously, I had informed the management of the company that such delicate and complicated construction required the attention and involvement of their most experienced and qualified engineers and that not just anyone could manage it, but I failed in convincing them of this.

'The tension between the contractor and the site engineers intensified and became increasingly apparent in their relationship with the workers on the site, until after a few months, relations completely broke down. This development, together with other complications in the contractor's organization, created total labour unrest. In spite of several requests and warnings by us, our contractor decided that a large number of labourers who were not following the instructions of the engineers should be retrenched. As was expected, this move resulted

in a full labour strike. The labourers, while showing great respect for the Temple and the Bahá'í staff, refused to allow the contractors and engineers to enter the site, and to negotiate. It became our task to mediate between the labourers and the contractor in order to settle this very complicated situation.

'Often I would request prayers of the Universal House of Justice, and there were times when I thought that this would be the end of my dreams in India. Labour disputes sometimes take years to settle, and there existed a real possibility that all the formwork and timber staging might be ruined. If this were the case, it would then become a very basic contractual issue of who should pay for the damage, and resolution of that question by itself could take years. On the other hand, if by chance these problems were resolved and we started work again, even then there was little hope, for these reluctant engineers had no vision and without this we could not complete such a enormous task. The tension was excruciating. However, in spite of all these complications I regularly received guidance and assurances from the Universal House of Justice, which expressed confidence that 'this beautiful Temple in India will be built without interruption'[1], and that the 'challenges' would be met and the 'complexities' resolved successfully within the desired time range.[2] With the House of Justice reposing such trust in me and offering this kind of assurance, how could I dare not grapple with and overcome every problem which arose.

'Later on, when the problems were worked out and we were able to resume work, on 16 January 1984, I realized that everything that had happened was a part of Bahá'u'lláh's plan. After months of negotiations with labourers and contractors, with us acting as mediator, ultimately all contractor-labour problems were resolved. Our efforts proved to senior contractor management that they could trust us and that even the severest difficulty could be resolved in a spirit of team-work and co-operation. The contractor finally understood that such a special venture required special people. Those who were reluctant and unqualified left the project, and the old team was replaced with a fresh and devoted crew who believed in team-work and who were not intimidated by new challenges. We started again with confidence. Once again we began to wrestle with our technical questions and problems.

'I was faced with a gigantic task. I had to build confidence among all those connected with the project and convince them that they could accomplish things that not only had never been done before in India, but which would be considered impossible anywhere else in the world.

'One day, Mr. Arthur Erickson, one of the most distinguished architects in North America, told me that perhaps the only reason that such complicated quality work was achieved was the fact that no one *truly* knew what they were doing. Otherwise, if they had been experienced, they would have been so daunted by the challenge that they never would have attempted it.

'Days, weeks and months were spent in endless meetings, discussing how to overcome the problems that continually plagued us. We had no modern, sophisticated equipment to help us. We had to invent our own equipment, find or "create" our own technicians and devise our own techniques. For instance, we did not have refrigerated concrete mixers to cool the concrete. We built special sealed storage for materials. We put 20 workers to work crushing tons of ice blocks by hand into a powder, and instead of water, we used ice. Everything had to be shaded, protected from the elements. Each shell was covered with a tarpaulin umbrella to protect the formwork and the workers from the heat and the rain during the concreting operation. When there was no rain, this huge shed constituted a serious fire hazard and required to be kept under surveillance round the clock; and when there was rain, we worked like sailors, as the tarpaulin shed which shielded the newly laid concrete and which was 30 metres high, tended to billow like a sail in the wind and heavy rain, and hundreds of workers struggled to stop the water from entering and spoiling the freshly laid concrete. Examples of such splendid teamwork, and of human relationships being strengthened through unified and co-operative overcoming of adversity, are usually only found in old fairy tales and heroic legends.

'In order that no construction joints would show, I wanted to concrete the shell which was 22 metres high and 13 centimetres thick in one operation. Our consultants had recommended

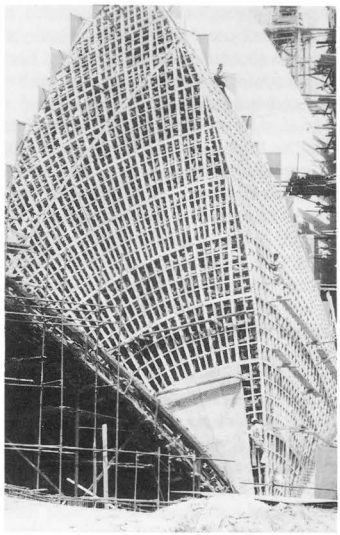
[1] Letter From the Universal House of Justice to Mr. Ṣahbá dated 26 April 1979.
[2] Letter From the Universal House of Justice to Mr. Ṣahbá dated 29 December 1981.

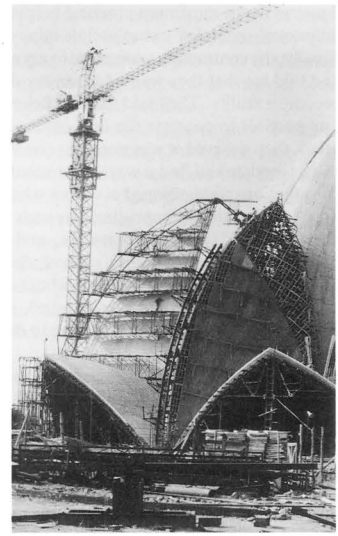
2 metres as the maximum practical height. The difference sounded absolutely impossible. Finally, the contracting team came to my rescue and told me that they wanted to see my dream become a reality. They said that if I believed it was possible to concrete the shell in one operation, they believed it was possible—we would work together and find a way. After months of consultation, we developed a system which, at first, sounded totally impractical, as each operation involved about 300 people, and they needed to be co-ordinated to act with the precision of a watch and absolutely without error, as just one mistake could ruin the shell, and it was unthinkable that we should have to demolish a defective shell and reconcrete it.

'We were so sceptical of the system that we decided to do only half of the first shell, and, if we found it practical, to proceed with the other shells in one piece. Earlier, the inside formwork of the entire shell had been erected with a special, elegant pattern, accurate within a millimetre, and representing absolute perfection. Then, galvanized reinforcement was fixed with a complicated system which allowed for the adjustment of the double-curved reinforcement cage and guaranteed the required concrete cover to the reinforcement. Now, the external formwork was to be fixed: but how could we concrete a 22-metre high shell between two layers of form with a gap of only 13 centimetres? This is what prompted the invention of our own climbing shutter system. The back form was built in hundreds of pieces about 60 centimetres in height. These pieces, each in a different shape and size, were fixed in their exact location with the help of special guides which we called "shaped templets", and these would dictate the geometry of the shells. These pieces had all been erected and checked in their locations then we numbered them from 1 to, say, 500 or 600. Then they all were removed from their positions and kept on different platforms waiting for their turn, for the big concreting day. More than 30 engineers, technicians and almost 300 workers were involved in this operation. These workers came from many different backgrounds and spoke several different languages, and none understood English. How could we recognize who was a mason, who was a carpenter and who was the vibrator operator? We decided for the purpose of identification of the tradesmen to use coloured armbands—red for carpenters, yellow for masons, green for vibrator men, and so on. Work commenced with traditional prayers (Puja) and a coconut breaking ceremony. Each of us participated, and then, with hearts full of anxiety, commenced work.

'In brief, the system worked like this. First, a row of back formwork was fixed in position by the carpenters so the concrete workers could start. The concrete was carried by crane from the mixers to the platforms, and from there, was carried by headloads to its place. Needle vibrators were placed in pre-planned locations within the cage of galvanized reinforcement and could be moved up by workmen who were standing on the platform a distance of 10 metres higher up. As soon as the concrete reached the full height of the first row of back formwork, then the masons and concrete team stepped back and the reinforcement team checked the reinforcement. After approval, this team then stepped back and again the carpenters came forward. They had only ten minutes to fix the second row of back forms which were numbered. Each of these was a different size and had to be fixed in its exact place. The reinforcement team then stepped back and the supervisors checked the form. The supervisors then stepped back and the whole process was repeated. This entire procedure looked like an ancient Roman battle. Every move had to be carefully calculated, like in a game of chess or in working a gigantic three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle.

'We had to work at a fast pace, as the concrete in the previous row might set and a cold joint might appear on the concrete surface which would be a permanent defect. This recurrence of the operation was to follow for 48 hours and in between, the labourers were to change shifts, but even this had to be smoothly planned so that it would not affect the concrete operation. During the 48-hour operation, all types of accidents could happen—a storm could hit, the equipment might break down. Power failure was a common problem and had to be anticipated. Labour safety was an important concern as there were so many workers in such small working spaces, especially when after ten hours of work in such heat, they grew sleepy and nervous. I don't know how we managed to get through that first operation, but I know that after the first half shell was concreted, none of us could talk. Everyone had shouted so much that we lost our voices, but we were so proud





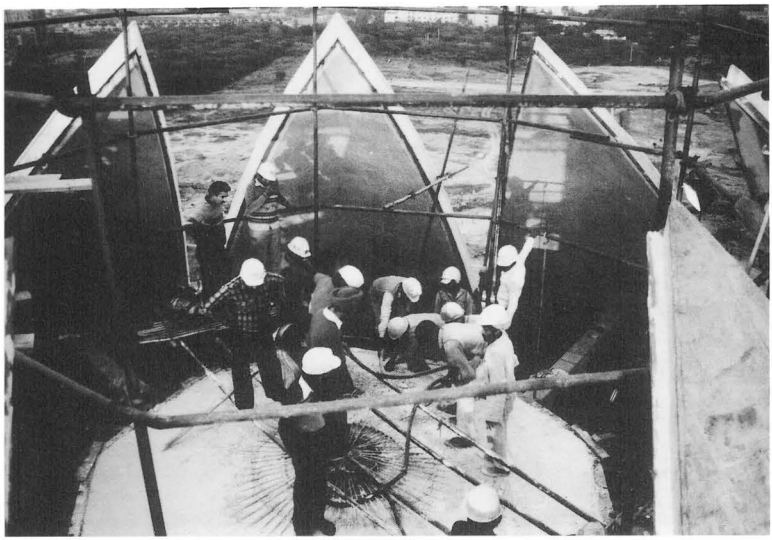
*Two views of construction work on the Indian Temple in May 1985. At left, wood frames on an outer leaf being covered by plywood to provide a back form. At right, special staging placed for the work of applying marble to the surface.*

and happy that the system had worked, nothing else mattered. We were jubilant!

'After the dust had cleared, and our voices came back, extensive meetings were held in which we reviewed our shortcomings and mistakes. New ways were proposed to improve on the system. We all gained confidence, and afterwards, the other shells were concreted in one piece. During those long days and nights of concreting, everybody had a wonderful feeling of elation. You could see this in the faces of each worker. Everyone cared. Everyone helped. I have many unforgettable memories of those days and nights which extended over a two-year period. Our supervisory team worked with a truly admirable spirit of sacrifice. Everyone worked a minimum of 12 hours a day, and in addition, due to the lack of sufficient personnel, we had to work night shifts. No one wanted to miss such historical moments. Sometimes I had to insist that they should go home and rest.

'One night when I was climbing up the ladder on the edge of a shell which was 35 metres high, suddenly I felt totally exhausted and could not climb a single step further. I looked up to see more than twenty thin, boney hands of the workmen reaching for me, and I seized them gratefully. When I relaxed on the platform above and looked around, I saw all the love and concern of the world in those compassionate, beautiful faces, and I thought how fortunate we were to work with such noble people and construct such a befitting tribute in the name of Bahá'u'lláh. I am sure that everyone on the site shared this same feeling. One night one of our carpenters came to me and told me, 'My mother tells me: It is not good that you work on a temple for money. I tell her: You know I need money to be able to survive and provide food for the children. But I tell her: I work hard. That is my contribution.' This is illustrative of the feeling and spirit which went into the making of the Lotus of Bahapur.

'Another major problem was vibration. In order to ensure that the concrete was going down inside the thin shells and around the heavy reinforcement cage, we had to use numbers of mold vibrators. When operating, these vibrators would shake the entire structure making an



*Concreting of the last part of the superstructure of the Indian Temple, the roof of the fan chamber at the top of the dome, during December 1985.*

enormous noise and one could visualize thousands of nuts and bolts which held the entire staging together, becoming loose and falling down. This could cause serious damage to the temporary structure. Dozens of carpenters were in charge of tying the bolts, starting from the top of the building, working their way down, and when they reached the bottom of the structure, repeating this same operation.

'Dehydration was a prevalent problem. Working in such odd locations, in such extreme heat and humidity, for hour upon hour, and constantly perspiring, the workers would become dehydrated and sometimes one would suddenly faint. To prevent this, a number of labourers were designated to distribute lemon and salt water among the workers. In addition, a safety device was designed consisting of several layers of net and mesh which were positioned so that if anyone working without a safety harness were to lose control and fall inside or outside of the building, he would be caught by the net and would not be hurt.

'At the same time that the concreting operation of the shells was proceeding, another major operation was in progress. This was the supply of the marble panels for the cladding of the external surfaces of the shells and the inner arches of the building. I had chosen white pentelikon marble from Greece for this work and a distinguished marble contractor, Marmi Vincenti, in Italy, was awarded the contract for supplying, cutting and shaping the marble. The fixing of marble would be done locally in India. This was yet another "impossible" task, as great risk was involved. First, we had to shape the double curved slabs. Each piece of marble was a curved quadrilateral of a different size and dimension, and had to be cut and curved to a very exact geometry by one contractor, then, these would be fixed to their location by another contractor. The dimensions of each panel had to be calculated very carefully. A full scale model of the arches was constructed in Italy to the exact geometry, and a dummy of the marble slabs was made out of gypsum. Then, a marble slab was made in accordance with the shape and size of the dummy of every single piece. A quantity of approximately 10,000 square metres of marble was checked in Italy and only then was it shipped to India.

'The whole operation was to be done under

*A model of the Indian Temple, in the foreground, is compared with the actual building in progress on 13 January 1986. The photograph shows that the exquisite geometry of the design has been perfectly replicated in reality.*

close supervision and some of the Bahá'í youth of Bombay came to our assistance. They accompanied every shipment of marble from Italy to avoid damage which could occur from the loading and unloading of the crates from ship to truck and, finally, to road transport destined for Delhi. Then we had to solve the problem of fixing the marble to the building.

'A method had to be devised to allow for the movement and deflection of the thin shells. It was decided that the marble should be free from the shell and each piece should act independently. Special stainless steel anchors were designed and fabricated to allow for tolerance from three dimensions and to be used to fix the marble panels to the concrete shells with bolts. This method was absolutely unheard of in India, and this being the case, not even an experienced marble worker could be used. We required a much more meticulous and careful craftsman. We decided that our own carpenters were the best candidates for this exacting work. They were familiar with the geometry of the shells as they had produced the framework for them. However, they are reluctant to work with a totally new material which bore no relation to wood. In order to familiarize them with the work, in consultation with the contractors, a practical new system was devised. As an initial step, part of the first dummy shell panels were made with wood to the exact size of the marble panels. The carpenters could then easily fix these wooden panels to their exact position with the same stainless steel anchors. We then instructed them to remove the wooden panels and replace each one with its assigned marble piece. In a matter of a few weeks, they mastered the skill of marble fixing and started to fix the marble in place with complete confidence.'

Thus, at 21 April 1986, the construction of the Temple was proceeding apace and it was confidently expected that it would be finished by the date established for its completion, December 1986, when it was scheduled to be dedicated by the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and opened for public worship, a gift of the Bahá'ís to the people of India and of the world.

# 5. THE JEWEL IN THE LOTUS[1]

CHARLES MACDONALD

IN his *Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols*, J.C. Cooper has described the lotus as 'an almost universal symbol', 'the flower that was in the beginning, the glorious lily of the Great Waters'.

Certainly in the context of the rich and diverse culture of India it was a happy and inspired choice by the architect, Mr. F. Ṣahbá, as his design for the Bahá'í House of Worship, Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent.

Reverence for the sacred lotus is deeply rooted and widespread throughout the country among Hindus, Buddhists and Jains alike. For all, it represents the Manifestation of God and is a symbol of piety, purity and tenderness. In Buddhist tradition the Bodhisattva, Avokokileswara, is represented as born from a lotus and is the object of the sacred mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum*—'O Jewel in the Lotus'. Jamshed Fozdar, in his *Buddha Maitrya-Amitabha Has Returned*,[2] identifies the Báb with this promised Buddha, who is to appear with Buddha Maitrya at the end of the aeon. Bahá'u'lláh is Maitrya-Amitabha, Lord of Infinite Light, for whom the Lotus is also a symbol. And now, high in the dome of this beautiful edifice, translucent to the sky by day, and illumined by night, the Symbol of the Greatest Name will appear, and surely for many will be recognized as the Object of their quest for the most precious 'Jewel in the Lotus'.

In Hinduism the lotus is the highest form or aspect of earth, the procreative power of eternal substance, the mover on the face of the waters, the self-generative, the self-born, immortal and spiritual nature of man. It is an emblem of the Sun-gods—Surya and Vishnu. The Goddess, Lakshmi, beloved of Vishnu, is always portrayed as sitting or standing on a lotus and holding aloft a lotus flower in each hand. On the threshold of a temple it signifies the dwelling place of divinity.

It is the universal ground of existence; opening with the sun and closing with sunset it represents solar renaissance, hence all renaissance, creation, fecundity, renewal and immortality. The lotus also represents spiritual unfolding as with its roots in the slime it grows upwards and flowers in the sun and in the light of heaven. It is thus a symbol of superhuman and divine birth issuing unsullied from the muddy waters.

Ancient Jain sculptures at Mathura depict the lotus as a medallion or floral decoration. The shape of the lotus can even be seen in the ornamentation of the Malik mosque in Kirmán, suggesting that it has some religious significance for Muslims—Certainly it is one of the oldest designs woven into Persian carpets, and in Iranian tradition it symbolizes the sun or light. It is thus a unifying symbol for many Indian religions and has also deep spiritual significance in many other cultures including Chinese and Egyptian.

The choice of the elevated site to the South East of New Delhi appears to have been divinely ordained because many years ago Bahá'u'lláh had put His own name on the area. It is Bahapur (Place of Baha). Efforts to track the origin and local significance of the name have so far not been successful but further research may prove rewarding.

Only a few hundred yards away, on the opposite side of the road, the Kalkaji Temple is a centre of pilgrimage for thousands of Hindu devotees who on special days converge from many villages of India, often approaching the

[1] Reprinted from *Herald of the South*, Vol. 6, January 1986.
[2] New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976.

object of their veneration with frequent prostrations. Recently a number of them were seen sitting on the road and turned in prayer towards the great silhouette of the Bahá'í Temple—their explanation, that Kalki (not to be confused with the goddess Kalka to whom the Temple is dedicated) now dwells in this new Temple (the promised Avatar and Tenth Incarnation of Lord Krishna). Whence this insight remains a mystery, but for Bahá'ís it is an exciting promise of things to come when the great Silent Teacher finally emerges in all its beauty and purity.

Four hundred years ago the unrealized dream and fondest wish of the greatest of the Mogul Emperors, Akbar, in his palace near Agra, a little over one hundred miles to the south, was that all men might be united in a single universal religion for which he saw himself as the creative instrument. Conqueror of all northern India, with people of many faiths in his realms, he had great religious tolerance and he hoped that his new eclectic religion would unite all creeds, castes and peoples. But few embraced this new movement, even though it had the authority and backing of the great despotic Emperor.

In Tennyson's famous poem 'Akbar's Dream', the Emperor recounts his vision and the frustration of his hopes to his counsellor and friend Abul Fazl, but he foresees an 'alien race', from the west who would make it a reality.

Well I dreamed
That stone by stone I rear'd a sacred fane,
A temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
But loftier, simpler, always open door'd
To every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace
and Love and Justice came and dwelt therein
(and then despairingly)
I watching my son
And those that follow'd loosen stone from stone
All my fair work, and from the ruins arose
The shriek and curse of trampled millions even
as in the time before; but while I groan'd
From out the sunset pour'd an alien race
Who fitted stone to stone again, and Truth,
Peace, Love and Justice came and dwelt therein.

And now after four hundred years, the sacred fane of his dream, 'always open door'd' is being rear'd (by aliens from out the sunset) for Peace, Love, Justice, to dwell therein forever.

That Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was one of those sensitives and seers, unconsciously moved by the presence on earth of the Promised One, is also amply demonstrated in these verses from his poem Locksley Hall:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world and all the wonder that would be
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales
Heard the heavens fill with shouting and there rained a ghastly dew,
From the nations airy navies grappling in the central blue
Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm
With the standards of the people plunging through the thunder storm
Till the war drums throbb'd no longer, and the battle flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe
and the kindly earth shall slumber lapt in universal law.

Poets and seers through the ages, from the time of the Upanishads and Vedas up to the messianic stirrings of nineteenth century Europe, and particularly England, have caught glimpses down the corridors of time of a great climacteric in human affairs and of the features and symbols of the golden age of peace and harmony which would follow. And now this lotus Temple, reaching to the heavens, is a glorious, triumphant symbol, proclaiming the dawn of that promised age.

At Agra, another architectural masterpiece, the lovely Taj Mahal, has for centuries captured the imagination of the world and has attracted a constant stream of many thousands of visitors, eager to gaze on and marvel at its beauty. In future years this magnificent House of Worship, reflecting the majesty and glory of the Lord of the New Age, may well rival or even surpass it.

# 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 exerpts 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

[1] *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 250.

[2] ibid., pp. 303–305.

[3] *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 407.

character of the Bahá'í teachings in a letter written 21 March 1932, to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada:

'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 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 county, 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 in 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 insti-

tutions 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.'[1]

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.'[2]

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

[1] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 64–67.
[2] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, December 1932.

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 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 various 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 loyalities, 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 the essentially non-political, supranational in character, rigidly non-partisan, and entirely dissociated from nationalist 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

[1] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, April 1933.
[2] ibid., January 1934.

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 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 case, 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 that others than believers will achieve the holy mission of the Faith. We Bahá'ís have in reality accepted a world order

[1] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 197–198.
[2] US. *Bahá'í News*, April 1949.
[3] *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 ed.), p. 4.
[4] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, January 1949.

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.'[1]

Shoghi Effendi points out, as a guiding principle 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.[2]

'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.*'[3]

[1] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X. pp. 278–279.

[2] *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 ed.), p. 162.

[3] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 198.

# VII
# RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT

## 1. LOYALTY TO GOVERNMENT

WHEN a great social crisis sweeps through a civilization, moral values become impaired and moral issues confused. In the crisis of our time, members of the Bahá'í Faith go on record as firmly upholding the principle of loyalty to government.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, laid upon His followers this sacred obligation: '*In every country where any of this people* (Bahá'ís) *reside, they must behave towards the government of that country with loyalty, honesty and truthfulness.*'[1] The Bahá'í Writings state further, '*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*'[2] Should a Bahá'í act contrary to the laws of the government his conduct would be considered reprehensible before God, for members of this community '*should at all times manifest . . . truthfulness and sincerity*' and '*be constant in . . . faithfulness and trustworthiness.*'[3]

In elucidation of this cardinal spiritual and social principle 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the authorized Interpreter of the Faith, has written: '*According to the direct and sacred command of God we* (the Bahá'ís) *are forbidden to utter slander, are commanded to show forth peace and amity, are exhorted to rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and harmony with all the kindreds and peoples of the world. We must obey and be the well-wishers of the governments of the land . . .*'[4]

The followers of Bahá'u'lláh are exhorted to be 'good citizens'.[5] The Bahá'í teachings foster in the individual adherent an appreciation of authority and an intelligent and balanced patriotism. The Bahá'í is encouraged 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.'[6]

Allegiance to government, far from being a concept to which the Bahá'í gives lip service, is a spiritual obligation reinforced by and inseparable from those teachings of Bahá'u'lláh's on which His followers pattern their individual spiritual development. '*Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts,*'[7] Bahá'u'lláh enjoins.

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 part in subversive political and social movements.

[1] Bahá'u'lláh: Bishárát, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 22–23.
[2] 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 233.
[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 294.
[4] 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *The Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 8.
[5] 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 319.
[6] Shoghi Effendi: *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 65.
[7] Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 285.

## 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. In 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. Non-cooperation 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. SUMMARY OF THE GUARDIAN'S INSTRUCTIONS ON THE OBLIGATIONS OF BAHÁ'ÍS IN CONNECTION WITH MILITARY SERVICE

IMMEDIATELY prior to 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 non-combatant status when this is possible under the laws of their country, were clearly stated by the Guardian of the Faith. On 27 November 1938 he instructed his secretary to write to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles: 'He has noted your Assembly's request for his advice as to what forms of national service the friends may volunteer for in times of emergency. While the believers, he feels, should exert every effort to obtain from the authorities a permit exempting them from active military service in a combatant capacity, it is their duty at the same time, as loyal and devoted citizens, to offer their services to their country in any field of national service which is not specifically aggressive or directly military. Such forms of national work as air raid precaution service, ambulance corps, and other humanitarian work or activity of a non-combatant nature, are the most suitable types of service the friends can render, and which they should gladly volunteer for, since in addition to the fact that they do not involve any violation of the spirit or principle of the Teachings they constitute a form of social and humanitarian service which the Cause holds sacred and emphatically enjoins.'

A further query from that National Spiritual Assembly dated 9 May 1939 evoked the following reply on 4 June 1939, in amplification of the above principles:

'His instructions on this matter, conveyed in a letter addressed to your Assembly during last

November, were not intended for that particular occasion, but were meant for present conditions, and for any such emergencies as may arise in the immediate future.

'It is still his firm conviction that the believers, while expressing their readiness to unreservedly obey any directions that the authorities may issue concerning national service in time of war, should also, and while there is yet no outbreak of hostilities, appeal to the government for exemption from active military service in a combatant capacity, stressing the fact that in doing so they are not prompted by any selfish considerations, but by the sole and supreme motive of upholding the Teachings of their Faith, which make it a moral obligation for them to desist from any act that would involve them in direct warfare with their fellow-humans of any other race or nation.

'The Bahá'í Teachings, indeed, condemn, emphatically and unequivocally, any form of physical violence, and warfare in the battlefield is obviously a form, and perhaps the worst form which such violence can assume.

'There are many other avenues through which the believers can assist in times of war by enlisting in services of a non-combatant nature—services that do not involve the direct shedding of blood—such as ambulance work, anti-air raid precaution service, office and administrative works, and it is for such types of national service that they should volunteer.

'It is immaterial whether such activities would still expose them to dangers, either at home or in the front, since their desire is not to protect their lives, but to desist from any acts of wilful murder.

'The friends should consider it their conscientious duty, as loyal members of the Faith, to apply for such exemption, even though there may be slight prospect of their obtaining the consent and approval of the authorities to their petition.'

After the war, on 20 July 1946, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States enquired of the Guardian whether the existence of the United Nations in its present form changed the attitude of the Bahá'ís toward military duties which might require the taking of human life. The Guardian's reply, written by his secretary, was:

'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 duty that necessitates the taking of life. There is no justification for any change of attitude on our part at the present time.'

The Guardian therefore has made it clear that it is obligatory and not an optional matter for all Bahá'ís to apply for and maintain a non-combatant status if this is possibly under the law. Where such a law exists, Bahá'ís cannot voluntarily enlist in any branch of the armed forces in which they would be subject to orders to engage in the taking of human life.

The Universal House of Justice amplified this later statement:

'There is no objection to a Bahá'í enlisting voluntarily in the armed forces of a country in order to obtain a training in some trade or profession, provided that he can do so without making himself liable to undertake combatant service.

'There is likewise no objection to a Bahá'í seeking or continuing a career in the armed forces, provided that he can do so without making himself liable to undertake combatant service.'

# 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 Riḍván (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'ís 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 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 Mírzá 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.[1] (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 Jamádíyu'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 Jamádíyu'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,

[1] (i.e., 1260 A.H.)

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:

| *Days* | *Arabic Name* | *English Name* | *Translation* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st | Jalál | Saturday | Glory |
| 2nd | Jamál | Sunday | Beauty |
| 3rd | Kamál | Monday | Perfection |
| 4th | Fiḍál | 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:

| *Month* | *Arabic Name* | *Translation* | *First Days* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st | Bahá | Splendour | March 21 |
| 2nd | Jalál | Glory | April 9 |
| 3rd | Jamál | Beauty | April 28 |
| 4th | 'Aẓamat | 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 consisting 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 REGARDING BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

| | *Works Revealed During This Period* | *Houses Occupied During This Period* |
|---|---|---|
| A. BAGHDÁD<br>Arrival latter part Jamádiyu'th-Tháni, 1269 A.H.<br>12 March–10 April 1853 A.D.<br>Departure for Sulaymáníyyih on Wednesday, 10 April 1854 A.D.—Rajab 12, 1270 A.H. | Kullu'ṭ-Ṭa'ám | House of Ḥájí 'Alí-Madad (in old Baghdád)<br>House of Sulaymán-i-Ghannám |
| B. SULAYMÁNÍYYIH<br>Before reaching Sulaymáníyyih, He lived for a time on the Sar-Galú mountain.<br>During His absence from Baghdád His family transferred their residence from House of Ḥájí 'Alí-Madad to that of Sulaymán-i-Ghannám.<br>Nabíl arrived at Baghdád 6 months after Bahá'u'lláh's departure for Sulaymáníyyih. | Prayers<br>Qaṣídiy-i-Varqá'íyyih<br>Sáqí-Az-Ghayb-i-Baqá | |
| C. BAGHDÁD<br>Arrived from Sulaymáníyyih on Wednesday, 19 March 1856 A.D.—Rajab 12, 1272 A.H.<br>Departure from Baghdád for Constantinople, Wednesday afternoon (first day of Riḍván), 22 April 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 3, 1279 A.H.<br>Short stay in Mazra'iy-i-Vashsháash during above period to celebrate Naw-Rúz ended with departure on Thursday, 26 March 1863 A.D.—Shavvál 5, 1279 A.H. | Tafsír-i-Ḥurúfát-i-Muqaṭṭa'ih<br>Ṣaḥifiy-i-Shaṭṭíyyih<br>Haft-Vádí (Seven Valleys)<br>Tafsír-i-Hú<br>Lawḥ-i-Ḥúríyyih<br>Javáhiru'l-Asrár<br>Kitáb-i-Íqán<br>Kalimát-i-Maknúnih (Hidden Words)<br>Subḥána-Rabbíya'l-A'lá<br>Shikkar-Shikan-Shavand<br>Ḥúr-i-'Ujáb<br>Halih-Halih-Yá Bishárat<br>Ghulámu'l-Khuld<br>Az-Bágh-i-Iláhí<br>Báz-Áv-u-Bidih-Jámí<br>Malláḥu'l-Quds (Holy Mariner) | |

| C. BAGHDÁD—*continued* | *Works Revealed During This Period* | *Houses Occupied During This Period* |
|---|---|---|
| Arrival at Garden of Najíbíyyih (Garden of Riḍván), 22 April 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 3, 1279 A.H. | Súriy-i-Ṣabr revealed on first day of Riḍván | |
| Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh's Family at Garden of Riḍván on eighth day after first of Riḍván. | | |
| Departure from Garden of Riḍván for Constantinople last day of Riḍván at noon on Sunday, 3 May 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 14, 1279 A.H. | | |
| Length of overland journey from Garden of Riḍván to Sámsún on Black Sea: 110 days. | | |

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,
Saláḥíyyih (stayed 2 nights),
Dúst-Khurmátú,
Táwuq,
Karkúk (stayed 2 days),
Irbíl,
Záb River,
Barṭallih,
Mosul (stayed 3 days),
Zákhú,
Jazírih,
Nuṣaybín
Ḥasan-Áqá,
Márdin,
Díyár-Bakr,
Ma'dan-Mis,
Kharpút (stayed 2 or 3 days),
Ma'dan-Nuqrih,
Dilik-Táṣh,
Sívas,
Ṭúqát,
Amasia (stayed 2 days),
Iláhíyyih (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 | *Works Revealed During This Period* | *Houses Occupied During This Period* | *Duration* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Arrival at noon on Sunday, 16 August 1863 A.D.—Rabí'u'l-Avval 1, 1280 A.H. | Subḥánáka-Yá-Hú Lawḥ-i-'Abdu'l-'Azíz Va-Vukalá | House of Shamsí Big (near the mosque of Khirqiy-i-Sharífh) | 1 month |

| D. CONSTANTINOPLE—*continued* | *Works Revealed During This Period* | *Houses Occupied During This Period* | *Duration* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Length of sea voyage from Sámsún to Constantinople: 3 days.<br><br>Length of journey from Constantinople to Adrianople: 12 days. | | House of Vísí Páshá (3-storey, near Sulṭán Muḥammad Mosque) | 3 months |

1. Kúchik-Chakmachih (3 hours from Constantinople—spent one night)
2. Búyúk-Chakmachih (arrived about noon)
3. Salvarí 4. Birkás 5. Bábá-Iskí

| E. ADRIANOPLE | *Works Revealed During This Period* | *Houses Occupied During This Period* | *Duration* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Arrival on Saturday, 12 December 1863 A.D. —Rajab 1, 1280 A.H. | Súriy-i-Aṣḥáb | 1. Khán-i-'Arab (caravanserai, two-storey, near house of 'Izzat-Áqá) | 3 nights |
| | Lawḥ-i-Ḥajj I | | |
| Length of stay: 4 years, 8 months, 22 days. | | | |
| | Lawḥ-i-Ḥajj II | | |
| Length of overland journey from Constantinople to Adrianople: 12 days. | Kitáb-i-Badí'<br>Súriy-i-Mulúk (Tablet of the Kings) | 2. House in Murádíyyih quarter, near Takyiy-i-Mawlaví | 1 week |
| Departure from Adrianople on Wednesday, 12 August 1868 A.D.—Rabí-'u'th-Thání 22, 1285 A.H. | Súriy-i-Amr<br>Súriy-i-Damm<br>Alváḥ-i-Laylatu'l-Quds<br>Munájátháy-i-Ṣiyám (Prayers for Fasting) | 3. House in Murádíyyih quarter, near house 2<br>4. Khániy-i-Amru'lláh (several storeys, near Sulṭán-Salím Mosque) | 6 months |
| | Lawḥ-i-Sayyáh | 5. House of Riḍá Big | 1 year |
| | Lawḥ-i-Nápulyún I (First Tablet to Napoleon III) | 6. House of Amru'lláh (3-storey, north of Sulṭán-Salím Mosque) | 3 months? |
| | Lawḥ-i-Sulṭán (Tablet to the Sháh of Persia) | 7. House of 'Izzat-Aqá | 11 months |
| | Lawḥ-i-Nuqṭih | | |

1. Uzún-Kuprí
2. Káshánih (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 in the morning of the following day 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 | *Works Revealed During This Period* | *Houses Occupied During This Period* | *Duration* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Arrival on Monday, 31 August 1868 A.D.—Jamádíyu'l-Avval 12, 1285 A.H. | Kitáb-i-Aqdas<br>Lawḥ-i-Nápulyún II (Second Tablet to Napoleon III) | 1. Barracks | 2 years, 2 months 5 days |
| | Lawḥ-i-Malikih (Tablet to Queen Victoria) | 2. House of Malik<br>3. House of Rábi'ih | 3 months |
| Purest Branch died on Thursday, 23 June 1870 A.D.—Rabí'u'l-Avval 23, 1287 A.H. | Lawḥ-i-Malik-i-Rús (Tablet to the Czar)<br>Súriy-i-Haykal<br>Lawḥ-i-Burhán<br>Lawḥ-i-Ru'yá<br>Lawḥ-i-Ibn-i-Dhi'b (Epistle to Son of the Wolf) | 4. House of Manṣúr<br>5. House of 'Abbúd (where Kitáb-i-Aqdas was revealed)<br>6. Mazra'ih | 2 or 3 months |
| Passed away 29 May 1892 A.D. | Lawḥ-i-Páp (Tablet to the Pope) | 7. Qaṣr (Mansion, where He passed away) | |

# 6. DATES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE RISE OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh .... 12 November 1817
Birth of the Báb ..... 20 October 1819
Declaration of the Mission of the Báb in Shíráz ..... 23 May 1844
Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá ..... 23 May 1844
Departure of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca ..... September 1844
Arrival of the Báb in Máh-Kú, Ádhirbáyján ..... Summer 1847
Incarceration of the Báb in Chihríq, Ádhirbáyján ..... April 1848
Conference of Badasht ..... June 1848
Interrogation of the Báb in Tabríz Ádhirbáyján ..... July 1848
Martyrdom of the Báb in Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján ..... 9 July 1850
Attempt on the life of Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh ... ..... 15 August 1852
Imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh in the Síyáh-Chál of Ṭihrán ..... August 1852
Banishment of Bahá'u'lláh to Baghdád ..... ..... 12 January 1853
Withdrawal of Bahá'u'lláh to Kurdistán ... ..... 10 April 1854
Return of Bahá'u'lláh from Kurdistán ..... ..... 19 March 1856
Declaration of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh .. ..... 22 April 1863
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Constantinople ... ..... 16 August 1863
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Adrianople ..... ..... 12 December 1863
Departure of Bahá'u'lláh from Adrianople . ..... 12 August 1868
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká ..... ..... 31 August 1868
Death of the Purest Branch .. 23 June 1870
Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh ..... 29 May 1892
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
Commencement of the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of 'Ishqábád ..... ..... 28 November 1902
Release of 'Abdul-Bahá from His incarceration ..... September 1908
Interment of the Báb's remains on Mt. Carmel ..... 21 March 1909
Opening of the first American Bahá'í Convention ..... 21 March 1909
'Abdu'l-Bahá's departure from Egypt ..... ..... September 1910
'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in London ..... ..... 4 September 1911
'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in America ..... ..... 11 April 1912
Laying of the corner-stone of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette, Ill., by 'Abdu'l-Bahá ..... 1 May 1912
Second visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Europe and tour through the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Hungary and Austria ..... ..... December 1912 to June 1913
'Abdu'l-Bahá's return to the Holy Land .... ..... 5 December 1913
Unveiling of the Tablets of the Divine Plan . ..... April 1919
Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 28 November 1921
Verdict of the Islamic Court in Egypt pronouncing the Faith to be an independent religion ..... 10 May 1925
Martha Root's first interview with Queen Marie of Romania ..... 30 January 1926
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
Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf July 1932
Inception of the First American Seven-Year Plan ..... April 1937
Celebration of the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb ..... 23 May 1944
Inception of the Second American Seven-Year Plan ..... April 1946
Centenary of the Martyrdom of the Báb ... ..... 9 July 1950
Completion of the Arcade and Parapet of the Shrine of the Báb on Mt. Carmel ..... ..... 9 July 1950

Inauguration of the Centenary Celebrations of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Prophetic Mission ..... October 1952

First Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Kampala, Uganda, Africa ..... 12–18 February 1953

Inauguration of the Ten-Year International Bahá'í Teaching and Consolidation Plan ..... April 1953

Bahá'í dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette, Illinois ..... 1 May 1953

Public dedication ..... 2 May 1953

All-American Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Chicago ..... 3–6 May 1953

Third Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Stockholm, Sweden ..... 21–26 July 1953

Fourth Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, New Delhi, India ..... 7–15 October 1953

Completion of the construction of the Shrine of the Báb ..... October 1953

Expansion of the Faith to 100 additional countries and islands by settlement of the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh ..... 1953–1954

Completion of exterior of International Archives Building ..... 1957

Passing of Shoghi Effendi 4 November 1957

The holding of five Intercontinental Teaching Conferences successively in Kampala, Sydney, Wilmette, Frankfurt, Djakarta/Singapore ..... 1958

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 Africa, Kampala, Uganda ..... 14 January 1961

Dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, Sydney, Australia 16 September 1961

Completion of the Ten Year Crusade ..... April 1963

Election of the Universal House of Justice ..... 21 April 1963

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 of the *Súriy-i-Mulúk* ..... September/October 1967

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 *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* ..... October 1967

The holding of six Intercontinental Conferences simultaneously in Panama City, Wilmette, Sydney, Kampala, Frankfurt and New Delhi ..... October 1967

His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa, embraced the Faith ..... 19 February 1968

Establishment by the Universal House of Justice of the Continental Boards of Counsellors ..... 21 June 1968

First Oceanic Conference, Palermo, Sicily ..... 23–25 August 1968

Commemoration of 100th anniversary of arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land ..... 31 August 1968

The Bahá'í International Community accredited with consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council ..... 27 May 1970

Commemoration of 100th anniversary of the death of Mírzá Mihdí, 'The Purest Branch' ..... 23 June 1970

The holding of eight Oceanic and Continental Conferences in La Paz, Rose Hill (Mauritius), Monrovia, Singapore, Kingston, Suva, Sapporo and Reykjavik, between August 1970 and September 1971

Commemoration of 50th anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá ..... 26–28 November 1971

Completion of erection of Obelisk, Mt. Carmel ..... 19 December 1971

Dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America, Panama .....29 April 1972

Adoption by the Universal House of Justice of its Constitution ..... 26 November 1972

Publication by the Universal House of Justice of *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* . April 1973

Establishment by the Universal House of Justice of the International Teaching Centre ..... 5 June 1973

Launching of the Five Year International Teaching Plan ..... April 1974

His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa, visits the resting place of Shoghi Effendi ..... 12 September 1976

The holding of eight Intercontinental Conferences in Helsinki, Anchorage, Paris, Nairobi, Hong Kong, Aukland, Bahia

(Brazil) and Mérida (Mexico), between July 1976 and January 1977

Commemoration of the Centenary of the termination of Bahá'u'lláh's Confinement in the prison-city of 'Akká ..... June 1977

Launching of the Seven Year International Teaching Plan ..... April 1979

Commemoration of Fiftieth Anniversary of the passing of Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf ..... July 1982

The holding of five International Teaching Conferences in Dublin, Quito (Ecuador), Lagos, Canberra, and Montreal, between June and September 1982

Occupation by the Universal House of Justice of its Permanent Seat ..... January 1983

Opening of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá to pilgrims ..... April 1983

Dedication of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands ..... 1 September 1984

Inauguration on United Nations Day of period of dissemination to Heads of State and to the general public of *The Promise of World Peace*, a letter addressed by the Universal House of Justice to 'The Peoples of the World' ..... 24 October 1985

Launching of the Six Year International Teaching Plan ..... April 1986

*The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí*

# PART FOUR

# IN MEMORIAM

# IN MEMORIAM

## SHU'Á'U'LLÁH 'ALÁ'Í
1889–1984

Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í was born on 16 November 1889 in Ṭihrán, Írán, the second son of Muḥammad Náẓimu'l-Ḥukamá (known as Siyyid Muḥammad Náẓimu'l-Ḥukamá) and Khadíjih (better known by the familiar 'Bíbí Ján'). The father of Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í who held several degrees in theology was supposed to become a divine in keeping with family tradition. Learning that his intimate friend, 'Andalíb, had embraced the Bahá'í Faith (he would go on to become a famous Bahá'í teacher and poet), he attempted to bring him back to what he considered to be the right path but in so doing became converted and subsequently confirmed after receiving a Tablet spontaneously addressed to him by Bahá'u'lláh and delivered by Jináb-i-Samandar, the father of the late Hand of the Cause Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí. Siyyid Muḥammad Náẓimu'l-Hukamá was nineteen years of age. Filled with zeal for the Bahá'í Cause and fearless in proclaiming it he was, soon after his conversion, condemned to death as a heretic at his birthplace, Lahíjan (Gílán), but he escaped to Ṭihrán, and in time became a physician attached to the court of the Sháh. Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í's mother was related to the learned Mírzá Aḥmad Azghandí of Khurásan, one of the early believers referred to in *The Dawn-Breakers* (pp. 125–127, 184).

In his eighty-fourth year, in an interview conducted by Farídih Ṣubḥání and Nasrín Raḍaví, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í (his first name means 'ray of the sun of divinity') related:

'I was seven years old when 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in reply to a letter written by my father, revealed a Tablet in His own handwriting, a copy of which was given to me by my father. I was told to memorize the Tablet. I did memorize it and now at the age of eighty-four I still remember it. It has been my guide and refuge in life.' He then chanted, with great feeling, the Tablet whose words set out the blueprint of his Bahá'í life and service:

*O flame of the love of God! The ray must shed light and the sun must rise; the full moon must shine and the star must gleam. Since thou art a ray, beseech thou the Lord to enable thee to give illumination and enlightenment, to brighten the horizons and to consume the world with the fire of the love of God. I hope that thou mayest attain such a station, nay surpass it. Upon thee be His glory.*

Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í's early studies were undertaken at home with a private teacher and at the age of ten he was sent to the newly-opened Tarbíyat school in Ṭihrán. Later he attended medical college but he soon left it to pursue his study of accountancy. At the age of nineteen he was appointed financial officer of the Police Department. From 1914 to 1919 he served as treasurer of the Ministry of Justice and, for twenty-five years, as comptroller and chief financial officer of the army, rising to the rank of General. He assisted in the reorganization and modernization of the Ministry of Post and Telegraph, and aided in streamlining a number of Government agencies. He was on the boards of directors of Bank Melli Írán (the National and later the Central Bank) from its inception in 1927, and that of Bank Sepah for three decades. His trustworthiness and integrity were proverbial and the Government of his country often charged him with delicate commissions. For example, when an inventory of the Crown jewels (valued at $7 billion) was made, he was asked to supervise the exacting task.

At the age of twenty-three he married his cousin, Furúghíyyih 'Alá'í, a remarkable woman of great sagacity, patience and practicality. Five children were born of their union: Ḥishmat, Mihrangíz, Bihjat, Farahangíz and Amír.

Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í was merely eighteen years old when he was appointed as a member of a committee called 'Maḥfil-i-Muratib', the responsibility of which was to conduct Bahá'í meetings in Ṭihrán and to assume some of the functions of a Local Spiritual Assembly. In 1913 he was elected to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán and his membership continued until 1943 without interruption save for short periods when he was away from the city. He pioneered with his family to Tajríish, a village in the suburbs of Ṭihrán, in 1944, and was elected to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly there.

*Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í*

He visited the Holy Land twice, once in 1923 *en route* to Europe on a Government mission, when, in the absence of the Guardian, he was received with great kindness by the Greatest Holy Leaf, and on a second occasion in 1952 when he and his wife made their pilgrimage.

In 1934 when the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán came into being he was elected to serve on it and continued to do so until the time he was called by the Guardian, who had already entrusted him with numerous delicate assignments within Írán and which he discharged with complete integrity, to assume world-wide responsibilities. He was one of the second contingent of Hands of the Cause appointed by Shoghi Effendi on 29 February 1952. Almost immediately he began his international travels, commencing with attendance at the four International Conferences held in 1953 in Kampala, Wilmette, New Delhi and Stockholm, with visits to centres in the United States, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, India, Pakistan, North Africa and the Middle East. In 1956 he toured centres in India, Ceylon, Indonesia and Malaya and participated in the first Southeast Asia Teaching Conference in August of that year. In subsequent years, in addition to his wide travels on behalf of the Cause and his invaluable services in Írán in connection with the management of the extensive properties of the Faith there, including the Holy Places, and often calling for important negotiations with the Government, he represented the beloved Guardian at the National Convention of Pakistan (1957), and the World Centre at the National Conventions of Colombia and Jamaica (1961) and of Ceylon (1962).

The protection of the Cause in the country of its birth was a principal concern of General 'Alá'í, particularly during the turbulent decade of the seventies, but his international travels continued without abatement, taking him, in 1975, to the United Kingdom and Europe where he met the Bahá'í friends and addressed public meetings. In various centres in Germany he was introduced to a number of distinguished orientalists who accepted Bahá'í literature for university and State libraries. He was able to leave Írán for visits to the Holy Land and for consultation with the International Teaching Centre in 1977 and again in 1978, and was present at the International Convention at Riḍván 1978. He took up residence in France in late 1978 and attended the National Convention of the Bahá'ís of Austria in 1979.

In January 1981, General 'Alá'í settled in Scottsdale, Arizona, U.S.A., where, on 16 November 1984, the ninety-sixth anniversary of his birth, he passed away peacefully surrounded by close members of his family and devoted friends. He had, for over seventy years, served the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and his native country, Írán, honourably, faithfully, courageously and with unquestioned fidelity. The many priceless services he rendered through a long and full life, and his unique character, were encapsulated in the cable sent by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 18 November 1984:

> GRIEVED ANNOUNCE PASSING HANDCAUSE SHUAULLAH ALAI 16 NOVEMBER THUS ENDING MORE THAN SEVENTY YEARS UNINTERRUPTED DEDICATED SERVICES THRESHOLD BAHAULLAH. HE WAS TOWER STRENGTH CRADLE FAITH WHERE HE SERVED EMINENTLY DEVOTEDLY IN ITS EMERGING ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS SINCE THEIR INCEPTION. HIS MEMBERSHIP MANY

DECADES NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FREQUENTLY AS CHAIRMAN BEARS WITNESS TRUST BAHAIS IRAN PLACED HIS NOBLE PERSON. HIS EXEMPLARY COURAGE REPRESENTING INTERESTS FAITH HIGH PLACES HIS INTEGRITY PERFORMING OFFICIAL DUTIES ENHANCED PRESTIGE BELOVED FAITH HE SO DILIGENTLY SINCERELY CHAMPIONED ENTIRE LIFE. HIS MANIFOLD ACHIEVEMENTS CROWNED HONOUR APPOINTMENT HAND CAUSE 29 FEBRUARY 1952. THIS ENABLED HIM EXTEND SERVICES FAITH INTERNATIONAL ARENA. SUPPLICATING SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BAHAI WORLD INCLUDING ALL MASHRIQULADHKARS. (Based on an article by DR. ḤISHMAT 'ALÁ'Í)

## REGINALD 'REX' COLLISON
1884–1983
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Reginald Collison, known as 'Rex', was born in central Ohio, U.S.A., in 1884. He was a kind, humble man with an acute and avid interest in nature. Having been born and reared on a farm, he spent the first eighteen years of his life roaming the fields and woods which fostered in him a great love of the countryside and of rural living.

In describing his parents and early life, Rex said, 'My parents were true Christians and it is to their love, broad-mindedness and Christian virtues that I owe almost everything. My love for them is beyond words. We were poor and I am glad we were for it welded our hearts into a loving family unit.'

About 1903, the parents of Rex Collison gave up everything they held dear and moved to Columbus, Ohio, so that their three children could attend Ohio State University, and were gratified when Rex and his sister and brother achieved distinguished academic records.

After devoting three years to research in animal nutrition in Ohio, Rex Collison accepted a position in plant research on the staff of Cornell University. He held this post for thirty-three years, retiring in 1945 as Chief of Research and Professor Emeritus. During his time at Cornell, Professor Collison's agronomic and pomological research was concerned with many projects and his studies in relation to plantings in New York of tree fruits and small fruits such as strawberries and blueberries influenced significantly decisions in that State on soil management and fertilization.

Rex married Mary Gale[1] in 1920 and, as he often put it, they became 'partners in every sense of the word'. They heard of the Bahá'í Faith, studied it together and eagerly declared their acceptance in 1923. Their mutual supreme mission then became to joyously offer the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to a disillusioned and skeptical society.

After retiring from Cornell in 1945, Rex and Mary and their two daughters, Beverly and Audrey, moved to Geyserville, California, where they already had purchased a home from John Bosch in 1933. Beverly and Audrey, old enough to pursue their own life patterns, settled in Geyserville, while Rex and Mary, in quest of new insights into the significance and purpose of life, set off, in 1952, for Kampala, Uganda, to do pioneering work for the Bahá'í Faith. In Uganda they served on the committee charged with the responsibility of supervising construction of the Mother Temple of Africa.

But a finer laurel was yet to be won. When the Ten Year Crusade was launched in 1953, the Collisons were the first American believers to arise. Accompanied by Mr. Dunduzu Chisiza, a young Nyasaland African who served as their interpreter and shared their home for over a year, they settled in Ruanda-Urundi. (Today, Nyasaland is known as Malawi, Ruanda as Rwanda, and Urundi as Burundi.) For their service in opening Ruanda-Urundi to the Faith the trio were named by Shoghi Effendi Knights of Bahá'u'lláh.

Returning to Kampala in 1955, the Collisons were later appointed custodians of the Mother Temple of Africa and they served the Faith in this capacity with great devotion until 1966 when they found it necessary to return home to Geyserville.

God's purpose for man as expressed in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is a simple one, 'to know and to worship God'. The achievement of this purpose is what Rex and Mary devoted their lives to—what they longed for, toiled for, prayed for, suffered for. Their life together exemplified the ideal of marriage as taught by Bahá'u'lláh. One could not imagine a happier

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 486.

*Reginald 'Rex' Collison*

union; they were indeed as the two wings of a bird, flying in harmony with the will of God.

With the passing of Mary Collison in 1970, Rex found his life taking on new meaning and direction. Now it was time to deepen and nurture the dormant relationship with his two daughters (now Beverly Neussl and Audrey MacLeod) and their families. With kindness, patience and deep love he wove a new and wonderful golden thread of meaning into the fabric of his family life, the results of which will surely unfold with the fullness of time.

Rex, a humble and independent soul, did not want to be a burden to anyone as old age slowly but inevitably took its toll. Even in his ninety-ninth year and until he died on 25 June 1983 he attended to his own cooking, house-cleaning and many chores.

There is much that might be said about this most remarkable man, but perhaps his most outstanding trait was his overwhelming love of life. He embraced life wholeheartedly and gloried in it unceasingly. This enthusiasm was infectious as attested by several people in nearby Cloverdale (one of them being one hundred years old) who looked forward eagerly to Rex's weekly classes on the Bahá'í Faith. His devotion to teaching was matched by his service as a Spiritual Assembly member and his love for conducting weekly fireside meetings. With his energetic approach and his enthusiastic support of every aspect of Bahá'í life, he was an inspiration to the entire Bahá'í community. His radiance of character was truly admired by family, friends and casual acquaintances alike. He was a gemstone finely cut and supremely polished.

Informed of his passing, the Universal House of Justice on 27 June 1983 cabled:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BAHAULLAH REX COLLISON. HIS LONG RECORD DEVOTED SERVICES IN TEACHING PIONEERING FIELDS AT HOME AND AFRICA HAS IMMORTALIZED HIS NAME. DOUBTLESS HIS RICH REWARD ABHA KINGDOM SOURCE JOY PRIDE HIS LIFE COMPANION MARY. PRAYING SHRINES CONTINUING UNFOLDMENT HIS NOBLE SOUL WORLDS GOD.
>
> RONALD W. CALL

## 'INÁYATU'LLÁH ISHRÁQÍ
Martyred 16 June 1983

## 'IZZAT JÁNAMÍ ISHRÁQÍ
Martyred 18 June 1983

## RU'YÁ ISHRÁQÍ
Martyred 18 June 1983

In his testimony during the hearing on the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, held on 2 May 1984 before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States House of Representatives, Mr. Sa'íd Ishráqí stated, in part: 'I am an Iranian Bahá'í who has resided in the United States for the last six years ... I appear before this Subcommittee to tell the story of the persecution of my family, three members of which have been martyred for their beliefs. My story is not unique. But it may throw some light on what is happening to the Bahá'ís in Írán.'

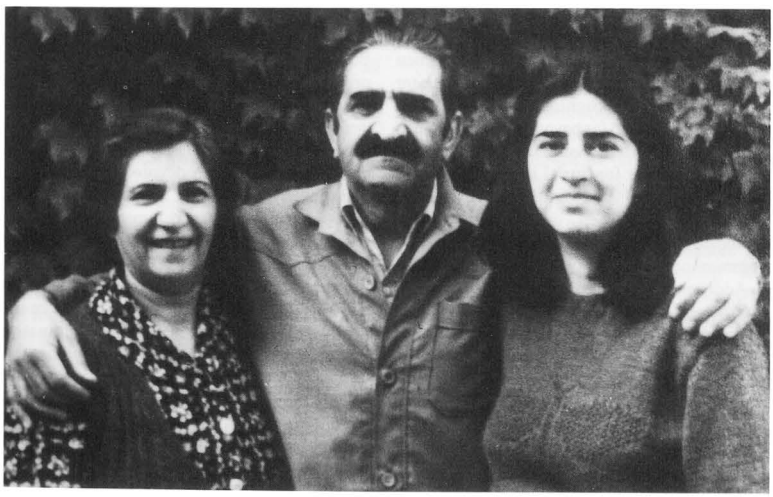
He related that at 5:00 a.m. on 17 June 1983 he had received a long distance telephone call from his brother in Australia informing him that their father had been martyred the day before, in Shíráz, Írán; and on 19 June, the day after Sa'íd Ishráqí held a memorial service to commemorate his father's passing, the tele-

phone rang again—this time his brother, Vaḥíd, informed him that both their mother, and their young sister, Ru'yá, had been martyred in Shíráz, on 18 June.

'On 29 November 1982,' Sa'íd Ishráqí continued, 'my father 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí, my mother, 'Izzat [Jánamí] Ishráqí, and my sister, Ru'yá, were arrested. They were taken to prison by the authority of the Government in Shíráz. They were arrested at 8:00 p.m. Government officials came to the house and asked them to go with the officials for questioning. That night, besides my parents and my sister, forty-five other Bahá'ís were arrested in Shíráz.' No information was available as to why Bahá'ís were being rounded up, Sa'íd Ishráqí stated, and later it was learned that they were being put on trial. For refusing to recant his belief, 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí was hanged, together with five other Bahá'í men. Originally from Najafábád, Iṣfahán, 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí was said to be sixty-one years of age at the time of his martyrdom; he had retired from employment in the Írán Oil Company but was deprived of his pension because of his being a Bahá'í. He was an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board, and served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz. He and his wife acted as marriage counsellors and were popular with the youth of their community.

When the names were called of the six Bahá'ís who were to be executed, an eyewitness reported, Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí vied with another of the men, Dr. Bahrám Afnán, to be the first to give his life. On the day of his death, his daughter, Rosita (Ruzitá), celebrated her engagement with his blessing and, as he had promised, he was with the young couple in spirit at their engagement ceremony.

Mrs. 'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí was said to be in her fifty-seventh year when she was hanged on 18 June 1983, only two days after her husband was executed. She and her daughter, Ru'yá, had been imprisoned on an earlier occasion and then released, but they had refused to leave Shíráz where their home was a centre of Bahá'í activity. Many gathered there for succour, or sought guidance and assistance. Ru'yá taught Bahá'í children's classes, and one of the charges brought against her during her trial was that she was a teacher of 'an accursed heresy'. On one occasion when Mrs. Ishráqí was being led to an interrogation blindfolded she experienced difficulty walking and was ridiculed by her questioner who taunted, 'Are you so blind that you cannot walk?' 'Ah,' she replied, 'I am merely outwardly blind, but you are inwardly blind.' She received with equanimity the news of her



*'Izzat Jánamí, 'Ináyatu'lláh, and Ru'yá Ishráqí*

husband's martyrdom, having guessed his fate. She and her daughter died with eight other Bahá'í women, all of whom refused to recant their faith despite intimidation and torture.

Miss Ru'yá Ishráqí was reported to be twenty-three years of age when she died, and was in her second year of studies at a veterinary college. Attractive, intelligent, possessed of a pleasing personality and an engaging nature, she was much esteemed by the youth of Shíráz with whom she enjoyed considerable popularity. She was devoted to her father and had a close rapport with him. In addition to whatever physical tortures Ru'yá had inflicted upon her, during her interrogations she was forced to endure the torment of having the judge say, in effect, 'All you and your Dad have to do is deny your faith and simply become Muslims. Just tell them you are not Bahá'ís. If you do, I'll let you and your Mom and Dad go free. I'll even let your Dad have his retirement money. And I'll permit you to resume your studies.' But the judge's inducements were to no avail. Ru'yá remained steadfast and was hanged with her mother.

When her sister, Ruzitá, came to the prison to inquire whether her mother and sister were among those Bahá'í prisoners who were rumoured to have been executed, the attendant of the morgue remarked, 'Didn't you have enough? Your Dad was here yesterday.' But yielding to her pleading, he admitted her. Ruzitá found the bodies of the ten martyred women and immediately identified her sister. Only later was she able to recognize her mother who seemed to have aged far beyond her years. When Ruzitá attempted to claim the bodies of her mother and sister for burial it was ascertained that the bodies of all the martyrs had been buried unwashed, unshrouded, unceremoniously and secretly by the authorities, in a common unmarked grave.

Additional information about the Ishráqí family, and other martyrs, will be found elsewhere in this volume in the section entitled 'The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán'.

ROGER WHITE

## JAMSHÍD SÍYÁVUSHÍ
Martyred 16 June 1983

## ṬÁHIRIH ARJUMANDÍ SÍYÁVUSHÍ
Martyred 18 June 1983

Among the six Bahá'í men who were hanged in Shíráz on 16 June 1983 for refusing to recant their belief in the Bahá'í Faith was Mr. Jamshíd Síyávushí who was said to be thirty-nine years of age at the time of his martyrdom. Born in 'Adasíyyah, Jordan, he was raised in Yazd, Írán, where he obtained his primary and secondary education. After completing his national military service, he lived for a brief time in Núrábád village. Later he secured employment in Ṭihrán and was able to pioneer to the homefront goal of Varámín where he served on the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Jamshíd Síyávushí married Ṭáhirih Arjumandí, *circa* 1971. The couple settled in Karaj. As they did not have private transport, Ṭáhirih commuted daily to the University of Ṭihrán, and completed her studies in nursing. Later, in response to the call of the Five Year Plan (1974–1979), they pioneered to Yásúj, a tribal area in Fárs Province, but were living in Shíráz when they were arrested in November 1982. Mr. Síyávushí was a merchant and operated a clothing store; he was elected to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz. Mrs. Síyávushí had memorized the entire *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*; she was an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board, Mr. Yadu'llah Vaḍat, who was martyred on 30 April 1981. She served, as well, on the committee that lent assistance to Bahá'ís who were homeless as a result of persecution. Theirs were busy lives. Mr. and Mrs. Síyávushí were childless and extremely devoted to one another.

Reminiscing in prison after her arrest, Mrs. Síyávushí said, 'I married Jamshíd twelve years ago and we had an extremely happy, loving life ... When the troubles for the Bahá'ís started, we were attacked and our house and shop [in Yásúj] were pillaged. I was also fired from my hospital job and we were left with no alternative but to go to Shíráz. We owned nothing and had considerable financial difficulties, yet we were content with our simple living. I had applied for jobs at many hospitals but they all refused, saying that although they needed my services as a nurse, they could not recruit me because of my being a Bahá'í. Finally, though, I was employed in a private hospital and Jamshíd

*Jamshíd Síyávushí*

*Ṭáhirih Arjumandí Síyávushí*

managed to open a shop. It was only three months after the shop began making profits that they arrested and imprisoned us.'

When Mrs. Síyávushí glimpsed her husband in prison she expressed shock at his appearance. 'He was trembling continuously because of the torture he had been subjected to,' she stated. 'The guards wanted a statistical update of all the Bahá'ís in Shíráz and also receipts of contributions and the funds collected. Jamshíd who kept the books and receipts did not hand them over and that was why he had been tortured. Locking me in one room within earshot, they continued their attempts to force him to give them what they wanted, and knowing I was listening, threatened to kill him on the spot.' He was placed in solitary confinement for a considerable period of time, lashed on the soles of his feet with electric cables, deprived of sleep for long intervals, had his toe-nails pulled out, and his back was covered with festering wounds caused by repeated lashings. He was barely able to speak and had to be supported by two guards who held him under his arms. So desperate did he become, and so anguished about the uncertainty of the fate of his wife, that he attempted unsuccessfully to take his own life.

On one occasion, which proved to be their final meeting, Mr. and Mrs. Síyávushí were brought face to face by the prison authorities. Each was told beforehand the falsehood that the other had recanted and become a Muslim. In their last hurried moments together the couple assured one another that they remained steadfast.

Mrs. Síyávushí, too, received lashings and for a time was placed in solitary confinement where the cells have no bathrooms or toilets—facilities which the prisoners may use only three times in twenty-four hours, at the discretion of the prison guards.

As a trained nurse, Mrs. Síyávushí occupied herself in prison in caring for those prisoners who were in need of medical attention. Her extreme patience and consideration were evident in all her acts. A former prisoner has written, 'In the prison cells there was little space for movement as large groups of prisoners were herded together and they were required to sleep at night on their sides in order that all could be accommodated. On many nights the Bahá'í prisoners would notice that Ṭáhirih was not beside them. She had moved and would be sleeping at their feet so that they could have more space and would be more comfortable. She was always caring for others, trying to make them

as comfortable as she could ... she was often seen crying for her husband, repeating his name over and over again and praying to Bahá'u'lláh to accept her own life as a sacrifice for Jamshíd's.'

One of the Bahá'í prisoners who was released has recorded her recollection of saying goodbye to her fellow prisoners. 'Ṭáhirih, that lover of the Abhá beauty, was there, too. I can still hear her voice ringing in my ears: "Go tell the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz, tell the National Spiritual Assembly and, if possible, tell the Universal House of Justice of what we endure. And tell the Bahá'ís to live in contentment and not in luxury, to be detached from this material world and to spend their time in serving the Cause. The things of the world do not last. We have learnt that here in prison."'

After her husband was hanged on 16 June and when it became apparent that she would meet the same fate, Ṭáhirih Síyávushí encouraged her family not to mourn, and she was without a trace of anxiety or unhappiness. 'See how beautiful I am! Just look at me!' she exclaimed when she saw her father for the last time—and she was laughing. On the evening of 18 June 1983, two days after the execution of her beloved husband, in the thirty-second year of her life, she was hanged with nine other Bahá'í women.

Additional information about Mr. and Mrs. Síyávushí will be found elsewhere in this volume in the section entitled 'The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán'.

ROGER WHITE

## SHÁHÍN (SHÍRÍN) DÁLVAND
## MUNÁ MAḤMÚDNIZHÁD
## ZARRÍN MUQÍMÍ-ABYÁNIH
## MAHSHÍD NÍRÚMAND
## SÍMÍN ṢÁBIRÍ
## AKHTAR THÁBIT
## NUṢRAT GHUFRÁNÍ YALDÁ'Í

Martyred 18 June 1983

On 20 June 1983 the Universal House of Justice announced to the Bahá'í world that on 16 June in Shíráz six Bahá'í men between the ages of twenty-eight and sixty-six—four of them members of Local Spiritual Assemblies in Shíráz or surrounding areas—had been executed after a long period of imprisonment and torture. Two days after the men were martyred, ten women Bahá'ís, similarly imprisoned and tortured, met the same fate. All sixteen deaths were part of a campaign of terror against the Bahá'ís instigated under the Islamic revolution. The intention was to undermine the morale of the Bahá'í community by exterminating its prominent members and administrative officers, to intimidate and dishearten the general Bahá'í community, and to extirpate the Bahá'í Faith from the land of its birth.

The seven women named above were among the ten whose lives were terminated in Shíráz on 18 June 1983 because they refused to forfeit their allegiance to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and denounce His Faith as heresy. Three other Bahá'í women, Mrs. 'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí, aged fifty-seven; her daughter, Ru'yá, aged twenty-three; and Mrs. Ṭáhirih Arjumandí Síyávushí, aged thirty-two, died with them; their stories are told elsewhere in these pages. The deaths of all these women were accomplished through hanging, though not in the relatively swift—one might almost say humane—fashion of the modern scaffold in which the body drops suddenly from a considerable height; rather, by a method which resulted in slow strangulation and the maximum of suffering.

It has been stated that the women were hanged one by one, starting with the older ones, the younger ones being forced to watch, it being thought by their oppressors that this might frighten them and weaken their resolve. Eyewitnesses report that the women, young and old alike, sang the praises of Bahá'u'lláh as they were led to the scene of their final agony, and that even some of the guards who escorted them pleaded with them to recant and save themselves. 'THE EXECUTION OF THESE GUILTLESS WOMEN IN THE NAME OF RELIGION MUST SHOCK CONSCIENCE HUMANITY,' the Universal House of Justice stated in its telex to selected National Spiritual Assemblies. 'THEY WERE ARRESTED FOR ACTIVITIES IN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY INCLUDING EDUCATION OF YOUTH.' The press of the free world recorded its shock, outrage and disbelief. 'Now they are hanging women!'—headline of a story in a major North American newspaper—typified the reaction of the media.

Miss Sháhín Dálvand, known to her friends

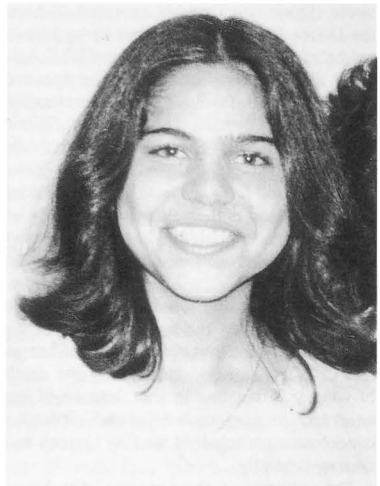
*Sháhín ('Shírín') Dálvand*

as 'Shírín', was born to a Bahá'í family in Shíráz in December 1956. She had three sisters and one brother. Apart from a short period during her childhood which was spent in Mashhad, she spent all her life in her birthplace. Her diligence won her a reputation as an outstanding student. She passed her high school examinations with honours and her senior thesis at the University of Shíráz where she earned her bachelor of science degree was highly praised by her professors. During her final year of school, Shírín's parents lived in England where she might have joined them, but she chose to remain in Shíráz with her grandparents. Until her arrest and imprisonment on 29 November 1982 she served on a number of Bahá'í committees, including those relating to youth activities and child education. She also devoted her time to visiting and consoling the families of Bahá'í prisoners and martyrs, and tried to help relieve the difficulties suffered by Bahá'í refugees from the villages.

In prison she remained calm and unruffled. A fellow prisoner wrote of her, 'She was a manifestation of faith and devotion and a symbol of courage and steadfastness.' And describing the moment when the interrogator asked Shírín whether she would uphold her belief even to the moment of execution, the same prisoner wrote, 'Shírín courageously answered, "I hope the Divine favour will assist me to be firm in my belief to the last moment of my life." Agitated, the judge remarked that killing does not depend on Divine favour. "You can be executed if you wish!" he said. Shírín replied, "Your honour, we Bahá'ís believe that not a leaf falls from a tree except by the will of God. Your will or my will has no effect. In each instance the will of God is the sole factor."' Many of her fellow prisoners felt that her answers during her lengthy interrogations were inspired.

On 21 July 1983 the Lord Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne addressed a letter to Shírín's parents stating, 'At the recent meeting of the City Council there were expressions of horror and despair following the news of the death of your dear daughter in Iran, because of her adherence to religious beliefs,' and expressing condolences 'on behalf of the City Council and citizens generally'.

The youngest of these martyrs was Muná Maḥmúdnizhád, aged seventeen. The daughter of Farkhundih and Yadu'lláh Maḥmúdnizhád, she was born on 10 September 1965 in Yemen where her parents served as pioneers during the Ten Year Crusade. In 1969, when the Government of Yemen expelled all foreigners, Muná's parents returned to Írán, settling first in Iṣfahán, then in Kirmánsháh, and finally in Tabríz. When Muná was nine, the family moved to Shíráz. Muná had a warm and loving nature, possessed a fine singing voice, and distinguished herself as a student. She took a conscientious interest in both her intellectual and spiritual growth and, as a result, was very mature for her age. She considered 10 September 1980, the day she reached the age of fifteen and was officially registered as a Bahá'í youth, as her true birthday. She was delighted to be recognized as a member of the Bahá'í community and spared no effort to serve the Faith. She acted as a liaison for the youth committee in the Nineteen Day Feast, and conducted Bahá'í children's classes for the child education committee. She tried in various ways to make her efforts more effective. For example, by going to school on foot instead of riding the bus, she saved enough from her pocket money to buy coloured crayons, notebooks and pencils, which she gave as a prize to her students in the children's class; and she compiled a small booklet of prayers which she gave to the children to memorize.



*Muná Maḥmúdnizhád*

An essay written by Muná for school on the assigned topic of conscience and liberty as fruits of Islám, in which she explored with clarity and force the restriction placed upon her as a Bahá'í in discussing the principles of the Bahá'í Faith with Muslim students, and argued that the source of spiritual freedom is God and His endowment cannot be withheld or conditioned by man, brought down the wrath of the school principal, a fanatical individual, who forthwith forbade her to mention the Faith in school ever again, an unjust injunction with which she nevertheless obediently complied.

At 9:30 p.m. on 23 October 1982, when Muná was preparing for an English test, five revolutionary guards stormed into her home, searched it, attempted to terrorize and intimidate Muná and her parents, and at 11:30 arrested them. Although her mother was subsequently released after many months of imprisonment, Muná's father was executed on 12 March 1983.

One of the guards who was present when Muná was hanged related that she asked to be the last to die, and that she prayed for the souls of those who executed her friends. She is said to have lightly kissed the hangman's hand, then kissed the rope and placed it around her own throat.

Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih, the daughter of Umm-i-Hání and Ḥusáyn Muqímí-Abyánih, was born on 23 August 1954 in Abyánih, and raised in Ṭihrán. She was an honour student in high school and at age twenty-one graduated from the University of Ṭihrán where she obtained her degree in English literature. Denied an opportunity to teach school because she was known as a Bahá'í, she found employment as an administrative assistant, interpreter and accountant, but was discharged, after the revolution, with other Bahá'í employees. She memorized the entire text of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, made a thorough study of the Qur'án, was tireless in her service to the Faith and a brilliant exponent of its teachings. Even as a child she had displayed an extraordinary gift for reciting poetry and her eloquence and deportment were such that one of her interrogators, when she was in prison, commented during her trial that she should have obtained a degree in public speaking. She had a warm bond of friendship with her father, with whom she would spend hours discussing the Bahá'í Writings, and she wrote accomplished poetry, often on Bahá'í themes. Among her papers was found a tender and poetic tribute to her friend, Navíd-A'zam Jávíd, who died tragically young at her pioneering post in Africa. She eulogized in verse her former teacher, Mr. Háshim Farnúsh, who was martyred on 23 June 1981.

On 24 October 1982, Zarrín's parents were arrested, and her own arrest followed two days later. After a period of imprisonment her parents were freed.

Zarrín's impassioned and well-reasoned defence of the Faith during her interrogations, and her deep knowledge of the Qur'án, so impressed one of her judges that he invited other judges to sit in during one of the sessions. Although she was blindfolded, Zarrín was aware that others were present when the judge who had examined her exclaimed, 'Now, what answer do you have to give to this lady? Has anyone a question he would like to ask? I am tired. What will you say to this girl? She admits that she is a Bahá'í and claims that in fulfilment of the verses of the Qur'án the Promised One has come. Which one of you has a question to ask or an answer to give her?' Silently, they all arose and filed out. The judge confided to Zarrín that the others had not believed his oral reports about her courage and brilliance, so he invited them to

*Zarrín Muqímí-Abyánih*

*Mahshíd Nírúmand*

see for themselves. 'I feel I must tell you the truth,' he said, 'so that in the next world I won't be guilty in the presence of God's justice.'

When Zarrín was summoned for the verdict, as was customary, the judge asked her to recant or die. 'I have found the path of truth,' she said, 'and I will not give it up at any price. Therefore, I kiss the judge's decree.'

Her will was written on a piece of white cloth and delivered to her family by a released prisoner who had sewn it into the collar of her dress. Although in prison her letters were censored and she was restricted to writing only a few lines, Zarrín wrote a note to her sister in which she said farewell, the tone suggesting that she had foreknowledge of her fate.

Mahshíd Nírúmand, who was arrested in Shíráz on 8 December 1982, had been born in that city in 1955. Although she graduated in physics from the University of Shíráz in 1979 she was not given a degree because of her being a Bahá'í. She was active in the Bahá'í community, serving as an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board, and on a number of service committees. She was also a youth advisor.

There were two waves of arrests of Bahá'ís in the autumn and winter months of 1982, and Mahshíd was caught and imprisoned in the second wave. She was at home with her two sisters at 7:00 p.m. on the night she was arrested. Seven revolutionary guards entered the home, checked the girls' identity cards and then left. There was some confusion about Mahshíd's identity. The guards returned, however, with a list on which her name appeared correctly, and the terror began. Mahshíd was ordered to stand in a corner silently while the men searched and overturned her room, confiscating all Bahá'í materials and even leafing through non-Bahá'í books in which it was thought she might have concealed Bahá'í documents. Mahshíd's copy of the Qur'án was also seized because, the guards explained, it was not fitting that the holy book of Islám should be in the home of an 'infidel'. Mahshíd was courageous throughout the entire ordeal, her sisters reported. At 1:30 a.m. Mahshíd was taken away by the guards who, in a curious gesture of sympathy, invited her father to follow in his car in order that the family would know Mahshíd's whereabouts.

Although she was by nature pensive and retiring, and had a calm and soothing disposition, Mahshíd was capable of defending the Faith with great force, conviction and dignity. Even under cross examination, she was demure and unperturbed, breaking her silence only to give

brief replies which illustrated effectively her profound knowledge of the Bahá'í teachings.

Throughout her long imprisonment, Mahshíd remained strong and steadfast. She was solicitous of others, often shared her food with her fellow prisoners, and encouraged them to be staunch. When the bodies of the ten martyred women were viewed by one of the Bahá'ís after the hanging, it was reported that Mahshíd appeared to be in a deep and peaceful sleep, and that she cradled on her shoulder the head of the youngest girl, Muná Maḥmúdnizhád.

Símín Ṣábirí, her mother has written, was only twenty-four years and four months old at the time of her execution. Símín was born in the village of Dahbíd in Fárs Province, Írán, on 2 March 1958, the youngest of five children. Her mother, Ṭavús Pampúsíyán, had come from a Jewish family who had recognized and embraced the Faith, and who were severely persecuted during their lives. Símín's father, a former Muslim, had independently investigated and accepted the Bahá'í teachings. He was a widower at the time of his marriage to Ṭavús Pampúsíyán and two of the six children from his earlier union were still young girls and needed a mother's care. Mrs. Ṣábirí has recorded that Símín, as a child, was extraordinarily well-mannered, tidy and fastidious. She was intelligent, quick-witted and artistic, and had an intense interest in art and handicrafts.

Símín was a good pupil and achieved high grades at school, and she was an avid student of the Bahá'í writings. After completing high school she studied commercial subjects including secretarial skills and typing, and found employment in an agricultural firm. 'One day', her mother wrote, 'she ran towards me with a happy smile and announced her appointment as an assistant to the Auxiliary Board member.' She is thought to be the youngest assistant to have been appointed in Írán. As well, she served on the Bahá'í education committee.

On 16 November 1978 angry mobs attacked, looted and set afire the homes of a number of Bahá'í families in Shiráz. The Ṣábirí home was attacked, its windows broken, and stones were thrown. Despite being injured by broken glass, Símín remained cheerful. Although she and her family took refuge with relatives and thus escaped further bodily harm, not long after their home was confiscated, as were the homes of many other Bahá'í families. On 26 October 1982 Símín was imprisoned and subjected to the four indoctrination sessions to which all prisoners were exposed. These were designed to explore and hold up to ridicule and sinister accusation their Bahá'í activities, correct their 'misguided' thinking, invite them to recant and to embrace Islám. If the prisoners would but co-operate, their lives were to be spared, they were to be freed and fêted by the media, and celebrated as duped victims of a vile heresy, of evil and murky intent, from whose eyes the veils had fallen enabling them to return to the clear light of Islám.

*Símín Ṣábirí*

Símín was soon recognized as one of the most fearless and outspoken of the Bahá'í prisoners. She saw in the interrogations arising from the imprisonment of Bahá'ís throughout Írán a God-given opportunity to acquaint judges and others at high levels of authority with the true nature of the Bahá'í Faith, the goals of its administrative order, its severance from political concerns. For her, each session in which a Bahá'í was interrogated was a proclamation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, a teaching opportunity; each session held the potentiality of having the truth of the Bahá'í Faith bear in on the minds and hearts of the interrogators. Fluently, lucidly, passionately she fielded the

*Akhtar Thábit*

questions put to her in her examinations by the judge. 'It is important that the truth is being made known to judges all across the country in order that they might understand that the Bahá'í Faith is a religion, not a political movement,' a fellow prisoner reports her to have said. But she was under no illusions. After her fourth interrogation, having foreseen the outcome, she gently tried to prepare her parents for final separation. On one occasion she said to her mother, 'Don't expect that I shall be released.' And whenever her family visited she urged them to realize that she was content with the will of God and prayed that they would reconcile themselves to her loss.

Símín's mother, admitted for a few moments to the room where the bodies of the martyrs lay, has written that as she bent to kiss her daughter's face, her heart scalded with grief, she exclaimed, 'My dearest Símín, I have given you in the path of God!'

Born in 1958 in Sarvistán, about fifty miles from Shíráz, to a family of modest means, Miss Akhtar Thábit was a model pupil, as her teachers have attested—cheerful, willing and always ready to assist her classmates in the study of their lessons. Humility, kindness of heart, respect for her elders and an eagerness to serve others were among Akhtar Thábit's distinguishing characteristics. She was always attractively and tastefully attired in simple and becoming clothes that she made herself. While still attending school she had to find employment in order to assist her family.

Ever devout in nature, and faithful in discharging her duties, Akhtar served as a teacher of children's classes and was an assistant to a member of the Auxiliary Board. She transcribed the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* in her own handwriting, the better to fix its precepts in her mind and heart.

Hostile elements in Sarvistán often attacked and molested the Bahá'ís, murdered them, and plundered their properties. On 8 November 1978, when she was still a teenager, Akhtar Thábit and her family were driven from their home, as were a large number of other Bahá'ís from theirs, when fanatical townspeople launched an assault against the Bahá'í community. Undismayed, Akhtar continued her studies in Shíráz, graduated as a pediatric nurse and found a job caring for children in a hospital in that city. So valued were her services that after her arrest on 23 October 1982 the hospital manager telephoned and pleaded with the authorities to release her. But as her captors made her release conditional upon her recanting her belief in Bahá'u'lláh, she remained in prison where she put her nursing skills at the disposal of all, including non-Bahá'ís convicted of prostitution and drug addiction. She busied herself washing the clothing of her fellow Bahá'í prisoners—their garments being considered untouchable and defiled by the prison authorities because they belonged to 'infidels'—and hung it to dry on a line improvised from plastic bags. Prisoners in other wards sometimes called on her for help, claiming that the peacefulness of her countenance alone was an aid to them. Her nursing skills enabled her to be of particular assistance to one of the Bahá'í prisoners who sustained heart failure on two occasions when she was subjected to beatings; and she comforted and nursed as well as she could Mrs. Ṭúbá Zá'irpúr (martyred 12 March 1983) who had grown weak and helpless as a result of being severely tortured.

When exhorted by the judge to recant her belief in the Bahá'í Faith and embrace Islám and thus save her life, Akhtar Thábit is said to have replied that she was a Bahá'í and had never concealed her affiliation with the Cause

*Nuṣrat Ghufráni Yaldá'í*

of Bahá'u'lláh, and that on the basis of His teachings she already accepted and revered all the Manifestations of God and Their holy books, including Muḥammad and the Qur'án.

At one stage the investigator insisted that Akhtar write a detailed account of her life from childhood to the time of her arrest. When she had complied, not failing to mention the oppression and persecution she had witnessed as a child, he grew angry. She reported to a fellow prisoner that he said, 'Having already been subjected to considerable tyranny and oppression, why don't you repent? Why don't you just say those few simple words, "I am not a Bahá'í"?'

In reply, she said, 'How can I deny the divine truth of the Bahá'í Faith?'

'Even at the expense of your life, do you intend to remain firm in your belief?' she was asked. 'I hope so, by the grace of God,' was her reply.

Mrs. Nuṣrat Ghufráni Yaldá'í's kindness and hospitality were legendary and her home was considered one of the centres of Bahá'í community life in Shíráz where she served on the Local Spiritual Assembly. She was born into an old and distinguished Bahá'í family in Nayríz, a town approximately a hundred miles south-east of Shíráz where many significant episodes in the early history of the Faith were enacted. Mrs. Yaldá'í, on her mother's side, was descended from the cultured and wealthy Ḥájí Muḥammad-Taqí, an ardent follower of the Báb who sacrificed his worldly possessions to aid Vaḥíd and was subsequently imprisoned and tortured. He was honoured through Bahá'u'lláh bestowing on him the title 'Ayyúb' (Job) and addressing to him the *Súriy-i-Ṣabr* (Surih of Patience) also known as *Lawh-i-Ayyúb* (Tablet of Job). Mrs. Yaldá'í was a worthy great-granddaughter of so eminent a personage.

Raised in an atmosphere of pious simplicity, Mrs. Yaldá'í, even as a small child, memorized many prayers and when bidden to recite them she would reverently fold her arms, close her eyes and chant with a spirit of deep devotion.

In her early adulthood she was married to Aḥmad Yaldá'í, also a native of Nayríz, and the couple made their home in Shíráz. Mrs. Yaldá'í, in addition to raising her children, was active in Bahá'í affairs; in all kinds of weather she would travel to outlying villages to bring to the Bahá'ís of those areas news of the progress of the Faith throughout the world. She was deeply loved and respected by the Bahá'ís and had a great capacity for displaying affection and concern for everyone she met. Because the Bahá'ís visited her in large numbers, intransigent and hostile neighbours reviled her in the streets, heaped abuse upon her, and from time to time would ask the police to break up meetings in her home on the pretext that the Bahá'ís were disturbing the peace. On at least one occasion when the police asked her to desist from holding Bahá'í gatherings in her home, she refused on the grounds that it was her religious obligation to be hospitable, and to open her doors to friends and strangers alike.

Mrs. Yaldá'í, whose twenty-eight-year-old son, Bahrám, was hanged on 16 June 1983 for refusing to repudiate the Bahá'í Faith and who, it was reported, went dancing to his death, was one of the many Bahá'í women prisoners who were tortured, and she was at least twice given severe beatings of as many as 200 lashes. Those who saw her after those beatings testified that strips of her blood-soaked clothing were embedded in the weals that covered her body. Her wounds, an eyewitness recounted, were still

visible after she was hanged. Mrs. Nuṣrat Ghufráni Yaldá'í was fifty-four years of age at the time of her death.

ROGER WHITE

## WILLIAM MMUTLE MASEHLA
1921–1983

William Mmutle Masehla was born in Sophiatown, a township of Johannesburg, South Africa, on 21 February 1921. He was a member of St. Peter's Anglican Church from childhood. Due to lack of funds he received only a primary and secondary education and was unable to attend high school. He started working as a welder at the early age of fifteen. At the time of his passing he had been working for many years as head of the photocopy and filing department of a brokerage firm, and was highly valued by his employer.

In 1952 William met Daphne Senne whom he married on 15 October of that year. She had been born into the Senne family of Kgale in the village of Phokeng, near Rustenburg. The couple were blessed with six lovely children: Matilda, Faith, Billy, Bahiyyih, Elise and Gregory.

William was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith in the fall of 1954 by his sister-in-law, the late Mrs. Dorothy Senne.[1] He then met the early pioneers and attended several talks on the new Revelation. Inspired by what he heard, William accepted the Faith and, to a great extent, was deepened in his understanding of it by William and Marguerite Sears. In 1955, Daphne also embraced the Faith.

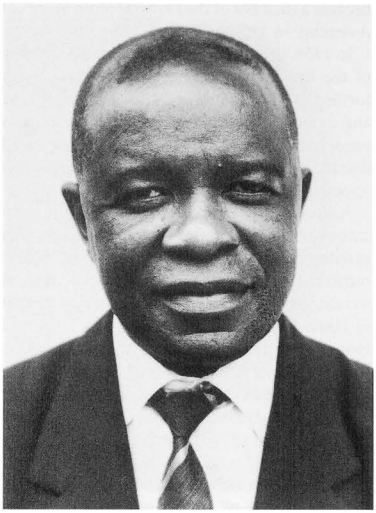
From the moment he became a Bahá'í, William expressed his love for Bahá'u'lláh through courageous and indefatigable service. Through his tireless efforts beginning in 1955, the Cause was established in the mountains of Lesotho, the Cape escarpment and Karoo region, the desert of Kalahari and Namibia, the rural areas of the Transvaal, the plateau of the Orange Free State, the protectorates of Botswana and Swaziland, and other black states in southern Africa. He was a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Alexandra in 1956, moved to Dube (Soweto) in 1957 and became a member of the Dube/Mofolo Spiritual Assembly in 1958.

In 1956, the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South and West Africa was formed. William was one of the nine elected and except for one year served on it in various capacities, including recording secretary and corresponding secretary, until 1968 when he was appointed to the Auxiliary Board.

A shining event in William's life was the dedication of the Kampala Temple which he was privileged to attend in January 1961. He remarked of it, 'What a joy it is to be amidst so many Bahá'í friends.' In 1963 he was present in Haifa for the election of the first Universal House of Justice and, as part of the delegation from Southern Africa, proceeded to attend the World Congress in London. He was keenly aware of the greatness of the Cause manifested in that gathering in Albert Hall. He used to say, 'You could not resist the mighty power of God packed in that hall where the first international House of Justice was sitting.' It was William who chaired the final session of that Congress on 2 May, and in that poignant moment when Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum broke down during her telling of the story of the life of Shoghi Effendi, it was he who started the singing of *Alláh-u-Abhá*.

William Masehla's twenty-nine years of dedicated service were crowned by his appointment in 1976 as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors. Despite ill health arising from a rare bone disease, acute multiple myelome, he discharged his duties with true distinction. His strong will and radiant spirit carried him to Haifa to attend the International Convention in April 1983. He passed away quietly on 17 July 1983. An account of his funeral, which appeared in the September 1983 issue of *Bahá'í International News Service*, reads, in part: 'Six hundred people came from all over southern Africa to attend the funeral of Counsellor William Masehla on 24 July at his family home in Soweto ... Tributes from National Spiritual Assemblies and individuals were offered, interspersed with songs and prayers ... Flowers, beautiful and profuse, covered the grave of one whose happy radiant smile will linger always in memory ... All of southern Africa mourned him, mourners coming from Botswana, Bophuthatswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Venda, Ciskei, Transkei, Namibia and many cities of South

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 435.



*William Mmutle Masehla*

Africa. The International Teaching Centre in a special tribute spoke of the sweetness of his personality, his total dedication and his devoted services despite suffering and ill health.'

Those who knew Counsellor William Masehla know how richly he was endowed with the qualities of love and humility. He was a keen observer of his fellow-men and his observation was tempered with deep compassion. He reflected on all that he heard and read, and carried into every experience of life his torch of sincerity, not only as a guide to his own path but as a light and stimulus to those about him. The theme of his words was always the same: the radiance and capacity implanted in each human soul; the value of each one's contribution; the need to carry on the work of the Faith ever hopeful and assured. 'With or without you', he repeatedly said, 'the Cause will grow and expand. It is the plan of Almighty God, not yours.'

On 17 July 1983 the Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa with instructions that it be shared with all National Assemblies in Africa:

DEEPLY MOURN LOSS OUTSTANDING PROMOTER FAITH WILLIAM MASEHLA. HIS LONG RECORD DEVOTED SERVICES SHEDS IMPERISHABLE LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH SOUTHERN AFRICA. PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. CONVEY RELATIVES PROFOUND SYMPATHY.

M. D. RAMOROESI

## INEZ MARSHALL COOK GREEVEN
1889–1983

Inez Marshall was born in Alexandria, Virginia, on 26 September 1889 into a family directly descended from John Marshall, one of the signatories of the Declaration of Independence. She was the youngest of four daughters and grew up in a loving family which lavished care and attention upon the children. Her grandmother read extensively to her from the Bible.

After her first marriage to a Mr. Cook she went to live in New York City where, not long after, she was widowed as a result of an epidemic of influenza. Consequently, it was as Inez Cook that she became a Bahá'í in 1919, travelled twice to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land, and began a long life of dedicated service to the Bahá'í Faith. Upon the death of 'Abdu'l-Bahá she centered her devotion on Shoghi Effendi with whom she conducted correspondence extending from December 1924 to October 1957, within a month of his passing.

In 1926 she married Max Greeven[1] who embraced the Faith the following year. In 1930 Mr. Greeven settled in Bremen, Germany, as a partner in the European branch of a large American cotton firm. The couple later resided in The Hague and Amsterdam until 1940. Throughout this period they constantly proclaimed the Faith and were instrumental in having translations made into Dutch of a considerable quantity of vitally needed Bahá'í literature. They constantly sought the approval of Shoghi Effendi in all they undertook and received from him continual support and encouragement. 'I am deeply touched by the sentiments you have expressed and by the good wishes you have conveyed to me,' he wrote in his own hand on 7 April 1937. 'I prize them, and feel deeply grateful for the spirit of pro-

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 909.

found and genuine devotion that so strikingly animates you both in the service of the beloved Faith. May the Almighty, Whose Cause you serve with such distinction and to the institutions of whose Faith you are so deeply attached, bless you richly in your high endeavours and exemplary services.'

Inez's own words give an account of her Bahá'í life:

'I first heard of the Bahá'í Faith in 1918. My sister, India Haggarty, and I were vacationing at the Griswald Hotel, in New London, Connecticut. On the verandah Mrs. Grace Krug was speaking to a group of women. Her personality impressed me for she carried within her a divine fire which I sensed but did not comprehend at the time. However, she stirred my heart so that toward the end of September I met her in New York, and my sister and I began our deepening and understanding of the significance of the Cause. In early December we became Bahá'ís.

'At the request of Mrs. Krug I wrote a letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and He responded with a Tablet. In it He particularly stressed, "Know thou the value of the soul who guided thee."

'The following year in April, 1919 Dr. and Mrs. Krug organized a pilgrimage to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We arrived in Haifa on April 21, 1919 for a nine-day visit. After our allotted stay I was allowed to remain in Haifa with Dr. and Mrs. Krug while the rest of the party went on to visit other parts of Palestine. It was during this period when there were only a few of us that I had the opportunity to draw closer to the Master. He gave me the name of "Hoviyeh" [Huvíyyih] ... My spiritual experiences were numerous and my soul was elevated to another plateau. When the Master spoke to me in English the tones of His voice were so beautiful that my heart dilated with joy. From His personality emanated an aura that set others on fire with the same fire. My visit in that wonderful world drew to a close. 'Abdu'l-Bahá invited me to return whenever I should feel the need of spiritual refreshment.

'The following year I did return in September with my sister, Daisy, and we remained there until October 3, 1920. The Master said to me, "Study the teachings and know all the points. I have never encouraged anyone more than you, for I want you to have an eloquent tongue and speak about the Faith."'

*Inez Greeven*

The Master also encouraged Inez to marry but said that she must choose carefully and select a man who would be a 'friend for life'. In the spring of 1934 Inez returned to Haifa with her second husband, Max Greeven, her 'friend for life' whom she adored. Shoghi Effendi had invited Max to come to Haifa for consultations. Subsequently, Max Greeven made an important contribution to the work of the Cause in Germany. The couple came away from the Holy Land 'with hearts overflowing with love' for the Guardian.

Max and Inez were living in Amsterdam when Holland was invaded in 1940, but they managed to escape to the United States where they eventually established residence in Carmel, California. Mr. Greeven died in 1961. Again a widow, Inez lived until her ninety-third year, centering her life in the Bahá'í Faith to the end. She died on 21 July 1983. On her grave marker are inscribed the last words 'Abdu'l-Bahá said to her when she parted from Him in 1920: 'Turn thy face to the Kingdom and I will be there.'

Brent Poirier wrote of her, 'One more of the precious handful of the dwindling number of believers who had attained the Presence of their

Master, has returned to that Presence. We believers in this part of California will miss her dearly, as she was a priceless link to the Heroic Age of the Faith.'

(Adapted from an article by
DOROTHY GREEVEN)

## LUCIENNE MIGETTE
1903–1983

ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL LUCIENNE MIGETTE HER ASSOCIATION MAY MAXWELL AND STEADFAST DEVOTION WELL-NIGH HALF CENTURY AS PILLAR FAITH FRANCE ENRICH ANNALS FRENCH BAHAI COMMUNITY. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY FRIENDS RELATIVES.

Universal House of Justice
9 August 1983

*Lucienne Migette*

On 16 April 1936 in Lyon, France, at a meeting organized, with the help of Lydia Zamenhof, by an Esperantist/Theosophist, Lucienne Migette heard the Bahá'í message for the first time. The lecturer, May Maxwell, immediately convinced her of the truth of the Bahá'í Revelation; she enrolled on 1 July 1936. Six months later, through her efforts, three people accepted the Faith in Lyon. In the France of that period, enrolments were rare and precious.

Miss Migette was born on 6 November 1903 in Paris. She had trained as a classical ballet dancer and subsequently graduated as a chemical engineer. An uncommon force of character lay beneath her frail physical appearance.

Mrs. Maxwell called her 'the new Joan of Arc', a name which she herself had had bestowed upon her by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Very early in her Bahá'í life, Lucienne undertook teaching trips. At first, she set out with a list of addresses given to her by Lydia Zamenhof, mostly of Esperantists who had shown some interest in the Bahá'í Cause, but she became increasingly adept at fostering interest in the Faith among her own acquaintance. She was in constant contact with the Bahá'í International Bureau in Geneva and, in 1938, she attended the Congress of Religions for Peace, organized in Switzerland by the Oxford Group, during which she read some words of Bahá'u'lláh on the subject of universal peace.

In 1940, as a result of the efforts of Lucienne and her spiritual children, the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Lyon was established. This goal accomplished, Lucienne immediately set out again on teaching trips across France, despite the disruptions to life caused by World War II. These journeys ceased in December 1941 by which time she had already started the work of translating Bahá'í literature into French, a task that occupied her until the end of her days. In July 1941, for the first time, a small prayer book in French was mimeographed. The following month, she was able to obtain a permit to travel to Switzerland for the purpose of 'correcting a prayer book translated from English into French ...'

Lucienne settled in Paris after the war and pursued her teaching work for the Faith. She was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Paris, which was, until the first National Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1958, the mother-Assembly of the French community. She served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, and several times was elected as chairman, until 1965 when she was appointed to the Auxiliary Board for protection. She had already made a trip to Reunion Island, and other islands of the Indian Ocean, at the request

of the Hands of the Cause, to protect the Faith against the attacks of Covenant-breakers.

When she was obliged to stop travelling, due to illness, Lucienne devoted all her time to the arduous task of translating the Holy Writings. Her first typewritten translations which had been made during the 1940s and which were so vital to the teaching work at that time, were eventually incorporated into her book entitled *Le Cycle de l'Unité*. The basic works she translated are many and include such important titles as Bahá'u'lláh's *Hidden Words*, Shoghi Effendi's *God Passes By*, the compilation *Bahá'í World Faith* and *A Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. The French Bahá'í Publishing Trust, in its annual report of 28 January 1984, devoted a paragraph of tribute to Lucienne Migette, who died on 8 August 1983:

'During the last year, Lucienne Migette left us to join the Abhá Kingdom. The name of Miss L. Migette will remain forever associated with that of the Publishing Trust. For several decades, she untiringly worked behind the scenes, bringing to the Trust not only her deep knowledge of the French language (she was the author of a glossary and a manual used by all the friends in preparing or reviewing translations), but also her scholarly grasp of comparative religions, so outstandingly portrayed in her book *Le Cycle de l'Unité*. If we are able today to offer to the Bahá'í world a large quantity of basic books on the Faith, this is in large measure due to the excellent quality of the translations she made.'

Through her ceaseless activity, tenacity and complete dedication to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, Lucienne Migette will be an example for all those local communities in France for whose establishment or consolidation she selflessly laboured. Her perseverance, attention to detail, accuracy, finesse in finding the right word, and command of the French language, are models for present and future translators of the Bahá'í Texts into French.

PIERRE SPIERCKEL

## SYLVIA IOAS
1895–1983

SADDENED PASSING DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH SYLVIA IOAS. HER LONG YEARS SERVICE DIVINE THRESHOLD CONSTANT SUPPORT CLOSE COLLABORATION HER DISTINGUISHED HUSBAND CROWNED BY HER APPOINTMENT BY BELOVED GUARDIAN AS MEMBER INTERNATIONAL BAHAI COUNCIL AND HER SUBSEQUENT ELECTION SAME HISTORIC INSTITUTION AS ITS VICE PRESIDENT. HER GRACIOUS MANNER CHEERFUL DISPOSITION HOSPITABLE SPIRIT REMAIN AS INDELIBLE IMPRESSIONS HER FRUITFUL LIFE. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES HER RADIANT SOUL MAY BE RICHLY REWARDED ABHA KINGDOM. URGE NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICES.

Universal House of Justice
25 August 1983

Sylvia Kuhlman Ioas was born on 19 September 1895 in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. Her mother was Czech, her father's family came from Munich. She was reared in a stable, loving family.

It was Leroy Ioas[1] who brought the knowledge of Bahá'u'lláh into her life. He was to remain her guide, teacher and companion. She became a Bahá'í shortly before their marriage in Chicago in 1919. Within a short time her immediate family also became Bahá'ís.

Sylvia and Leroy settled in San Francisco, California, where they spent twenty-eight rich and fruitful years. Both served the Faith vigorously but in quite different ways: Leroy, the teacher, the organizer, the speaker; Sylvia, the warm hostess, the faithful sustainer. One of her charming characteristics was to feel those she loved could do anything; this surely gave strength to both her husband and the burgeoning communities he labored to build in the Bay area. Those years in San Francisco were passed in a life by which she felt deeply fulfilled: raising her two daughters, making a home, helping her husband, content to be in the background, with a genuine and unassumed modesty. Her home was the scene of many Bahá'í gatherings, happy evenings that knit the community together. It was the meeting place for the weekend National Teaching Committee

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 291.

*Sylvia Ioas*

meetings that shaped the goals and successes of the first Seven Year Plan. Her cottage in Geyserville was a magnet for the deepening of Bahá'ís and visitors.

In 1946, Leroy was promoted by his employer, the Southern Pacific Railroad; this meant a move to Chicago. It was a difficult decision, but when Shoghi Effendi indicated that it would be good for Leroy to be closer to the National Bahá'í Center, they made plans to leave San Francisco. They settled in Wilmette, close to the House of Worship. The few short years there were a kind of flowering after lean years: Leroy had a fine position, they had a lovely home, Sylvia was able to travel more extensively than she had. She loved activity as she loved people, and to the close of her days was instantly ready to go out, to do, to see. In Wilmette she particularly loved the nearness of the Temple where she could serve as a guide.

Sylvia was alone when the cablegram arrived from Haifa appointing her husband a Hand of the Cause. She telephoned him at his office; both were stunned by the news. He cabled Shoghi Effendi that he was overcome by a sense of unworthiness. When invited shortly thereafter to move to Haifa, Leroy wondered whether he could accept: he was several years from retirement, with family charges. It was Sylvia who said, 'Of course you will, Roy!' He later wrote to one of his brothers: 'Sylvia has been a tower of spiritual strength, much stronger than I, and the one who has aided me in carrying this through. How God ever gave me such a wonderful wife, I don't know, but thank God He did.'

Sylvia perceived the grandeur of the atmosphere she was moving into. Yet the move was traumatic for her, as she rid herself of everything she had gathered over thirty years, and set out with very few possessions. It was in some way her personal world she gave away. And she did it alone, as Leroy went on almost immediately to Haifa. She later wrote a friend, 'I had never had to do anything like that before; I didn't know how to begin.'

Life in Haifa was not easy. It was a period of great austerity and lack of accustomed privacy. One of the Hands of the Cause paid tribute to the spirit in which Sylvia took up this challenging life: 'Very few persons who worked in Haifa in those austere years could display so much poise, dignity and wisdom as dear Sylvia did.' And he added: 'Sylvia's angelic presence in that Holy Spot made things better for everyone.'

Sylvia's learning was intuitive rather than intellectual. In Haifa she was frequently in the presence of Shoghi Effendi; she breathed the Holy atmosphere of the Shrines; she came to the knowledge of how the triumphs of the Faith were achieved. Under these influences it was as if she became a new person, developing capacities that had lain dormant. She served tirelessly, cleaning the Shrines with other wives of the Hands of the Cause, helping to run the Pilgrim House where they lived, greeting visitors, spending long hours with Bahá'í pilgrims on visits to Bahjí and Mazra'ih. One of them remembered, and suggests that she touched many lives in this quiet way.

In May 1955 she was honored by Shoghi Effendi, the first personal honor to come to her. The Guardian appointed her to the International Bahá'í Council, the ninth member of that august body. Leroy was very proud of this distinction that came to her. She was further honored by election to that body in 1961. She worked on it with all the capacity she had. In 1963, when the work of the Council was ended, the members received this tribute: 'All the

Hands present at our meeting in Bahjí wish to express to the members of the Council their deep appreciation of the services they have rendered the Cause of God ... collectively and severally they have greatly contributed to strengthening the World Centre of the Faith ...'

During the World Congress, Leroy suffered a pneumonia that was diagnosed as fatal, from which the prayers of the friends in London saved him. He was to live two additional years, years of diminishing physical strength during which he and Sylvia undertook a long teaching trip. He had become, said a friend, spiritually irresistible; the harvest of their travels was rich. For Sylvia, the two years were a time of increasing concern, as she cared for him day and night, and faced step by step the realization of his loss. One afternoon two months before his death, Leroy turned to his daughter and said with a strange intensity: 'She's an angel! She's an angel!'

Leroy's death was one of the several great sorrows of her life. In the eighteen years she lived without him, she was valiant and uncomplaining, but not without pain: 'I miss him so very much. He was a tower of strength to me, even when sick; he had such loving ideas, so many kind thoughts for everyone.' She met her personal tragedies with a quality of faith that was unchanging and without doubts. This caused her prayers to be very powerful.

Though she had to leave Haifa, it always remained home. Her thoughts were there; her energy came from there. When visiting the Holy Land with her family nine years later, she looked down as Lod Airport came into view and said joyously, 'Oh, I'm home!'

She lived as a widow first in Wilmette, where loving friends eased the transition to her life alone. She was busy with the Local Assembly and with guiding. In 1968 she moved to Alexandria, Virginia, to be near her grandchildren. There a close Bahá'í community gave her spiritual support and opportunities for service. She was a member for ten years of the Spiritual Assembly; she held firesides; she took part in teaching projects, opening areas in Southern Virginia; she scrubbed the Bahá'í Center so that a children's school could be opened; she took her grandchildren to summer schools and conferences, to Alaska and Bermuda. But then, she loved to sit down with a volume of *The Bahá'í World* and just read. Often when one called this was what she was doing. Perhaps it took her back. Certainly she brought a breath of Haifa, and the historical perspective she acquired there, to all who knew her in those years. She retained her affectionate nature and cheerfulness, even as her memory faded in the last years. She passed away on 24 August 1983. She is buried in Washington, D.C. next to her daughter, Farrukh.[1]

In a long letter of devotion written to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1919, Leroy asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá to remember her: 'O my Lord, may Thy blessings and confirmation descend upon my dear wife that she may be of the utmost firmness and steadfastness in the Covenant and Testament, and render always greater service in the Cause.'

ANITA IOAS CHAPMAN

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 919.

*Munireh Anwar*
(*Munírih Anvar*)
1918–1983

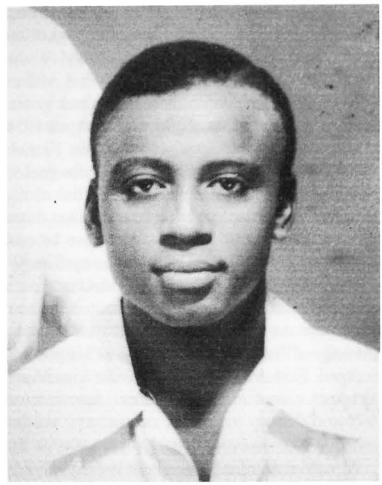
*Abdullah Anwar*
(*'Abdu'lláh Anvar*)
1904–1983

*Informed that 'Abdu'lláh Anvar passed away on 25 September 1983, the Universal House of Justice cabled* DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED VALIANT PROMOTER FAITH ABDULLAH ANWAR. HIS LONG RECORD HISTORIC SERVICES PIONEERING FIELD IN HIGHLY SENSITIVE INTENSELY INHOSPITABLE REGIONS IS UNFORGETTABLE. HIS REWARD ABHA KINGDOM UNDOUBTEDLY BOUNTIFUL. ARDENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL. ASSURE RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY. INFORMING NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES CONCERNED HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS. *On 2 November 1983 his faithful wife of forty-eight years succumbed to a heart attack. The House of Justice cabled* ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS LOVING PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL STEADFAST SELFLESS MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH MUNIREH ANWAR WHO NOW JOINS HER ILLUSTRIOUS HUSBAND IN ABHA KINGDOM AND WHO ALWAYS SHARED IN HIS HEROIC SERVICES SACRED THRESHOLD.

## SAMUEL NJIKI
## (NJIKI SAMUEL NJENJI)
1935–1983
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BAHAULLAH SAMUEL NJIKI HIS DEVOTED PIONEERING SERVICES CAMEROON WARMLY REMEMBERED. PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL HEAVENLY KINGDOM ASSURE RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY.

23 October 1983
Universal House of Justice



*Samuel Njiki*

Mr. Njiki Samuel Njenji, known as Samuel Njiki, who was born in 1935 in Batala-Bangante, Nde Division, Western Province, Republic of Cameroon, was the first Bamilike tribesman to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The son of Mr. Njenji Isaiah and Mrs. Minkeu Marie, both of Batala, he was educated at the primary school level and later on successfully completed a course in typewriting. In 1974, he obtained an Advance Diploma in Salesmanship (London).

Mr. Njiki was employed as a typist with Cameroon Development Co-operation (CDC) in the area office in Bota from 1950 to 1954. Early in 1954 he came into contact with the Bahá'í Faith through Mr. Enoch Olinga, a Ugandan from Teso, who, although he was himself a relatively new Bahá'í, had travelled 3,000 kilometres from his home to settle in West Africa to open Cameroon to the Bahá'í Faith. For his service in opening British Cameroon to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in October 1953, Shoghi Effendi designated Mr. Olinga a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh; in October 1957 he was named by the Guardian a Hand of the Cause.

Writing of Mr. Olinga in *Bahá'í News*, May 1984, Mr. Don Addison, who is an ethnomusicologist specializing in African studies and who served as a faculty member at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, from 1981 until 1983, stated, 'When one strives ... to appreciate how strong are the cultural ties that bind an African to his traditional society, and to his indigenous culture (and hence to his very identity) it becomes all the more clear what an amazing example Enoch Olinga must have been to others when he set out for Cameroon. Most Africans in their whole lives never travel more than a few miles from their home areas (isolated cases for education or business being the most notable exception), let alone to other countries, so the feat that Mr. Olinga accomplished by settling in West Africa was, in and of itself, truly inspiring.'

At the intercontinental conference held in Kampala, Uganda, from 12 to 18 February 1953 there had been read the message from Shoghi Effendi calling for the opening of 'that phase of the Ten-Year Crusade which, God willing, will culminate in the introduction of our glorious Faith in all the remaining territories of that vast continent [Africa] as well as the chief neighbouring islands lying in the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans.'[1] Among the thirty-three virgin territories and islands assigned to Africa was British Cameroon as well as French Cameroon. In a cablegram dated 8 February 1954, Shoghi Effendi reported on the progress of the Ten-Year Crusade and stated that 'All African States, Colonies, Protectorates and Trust territories, with the exception of Togoland, Spanish Guinea, Bechuanaland, Swaziland, Gambia and the French Cameroons have been opened.'[2]

A few weeks after Mr. Samuel Njiki became

[1] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 135–140.
[2] ibid., p. 56.

a Bahá'í he heard Mr. Olinga read the stirring and history-making cable from the Guardian requesting the opening to the Faith of the remaining unopened territories in West Africa. Immediately five people arose to fill these goals. Among them was Mr. Njiki who in April 1954 moved to Douala, in what was then French Cameroon, an act for which he was designated by Shoghi Effendi a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Soft-spoken and gentle, Mr. Njiki later recalled those unique times, remarking how unaware he and the other local believers were of the true implications and deep significance of the Guardian's call, but adding that they were united in their eagerness to arise and spread the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh. Arriving at his post on 9 April 1954 Mr. Njiki cabled the Guardian: ARRIVED. GRATEFUL PRAYERS KNOWLEDGE UNDERSTANDING ESTABLISH COMMUNITY VIRGIN LAND ALSO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES I MAY MEET.

Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff, an Indian believer resident in England, also arose to open French Cameroon to the Faith, arriving at her goal on 16 April 1954. She, too, was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for this service. Although she and Mr. Njiki reached Douala only days apart, they had not met one another before their arrival. They met by pre-arrangement at the Post Office where Mr. Njiki sat on the steps clasping as identification his Bahá'í prayer book. A re-enactment of their meeting was recorded on film within minutes of their having met, and the resulting photograph of Mr. Njiki, showing him seated on a bench, holding his prayer book as though awaiting his fellow pioneer, appeared in the June 1954 issue of the Indian *Bahá'í News Bulletin*, No. 69. A news item in that same issue reports the arrival of the two pioneers at their post, and notes that although Mr. Samuel Njiki fell ill and was in hospital for some time, he had recovered and joined Mrs. Munsiff in winning friends among the local people.

On 24 August 1954, the assistant secretary wrote to Mr. Njiki on Shoghi Effendi's behalf saying how pleased the Guardian was with 'the sacrificial services' Mr. Njiki was rendering, and adding: 'The Guardian becomes very happy when he contemplates the fact that so many of the new African Bahá'ís have arisen to pioneer for the Faith. He feels those of you who are doing this are laying the foundation for great spiritual service in the Cause of God, that you are rendering historic service, and that you are becoming the honour and glory of the African people. The full extent of your deeds and services is not known now, but in the future they will be greatly valued and appreciated.' After assuring Mr. Njiki that the Guardian would offer prayers on his behalf, the assistant secretary continued: 'He is hoping that through the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, you will be able to bring the light of Divine Guidance to many of the native inhabitants of the French Cameroons.'

Mr. Njiki remained at his pioneering post in Douala until 1956. Upon returning he settled in New Town, Limbe. Eventually he occupied a modest home near the Local Centre in New Town, remaining there until his passing on 5 October 1983, after undergoing surgery at Provincial Hospital. From January 1972 until his death he was employed by the Ministry of Equipment, Department of Construction.

Samuel Njiki was married to Ndawoua Pauline by whom he had four children, Bless, Nancy and Lawrence, and an infant born after Mr. Njiki's passing.

In addition to his pioneering service, Mr. Njiki was a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Limbe up to the time of his death and, to the degree that his deteriorating health permitted, he participated in the teaching work and served on various committees including the Local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds Committee and the Local Visiting Committee. The name of Samuel Njiki will be remembered through the ages for the part he played in what surely will be acclaimed in future as one of the most important and thrilling episodes in the annals of the Bahá'í Faith on the African continent.

(Adapted from a memoir by the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF CAMEROON)

## RAÚL PAVÓN
## (RAÚL PAVÓN MEJÍA)
## 1933–1983

DEEPLY DEPLORE LOSS ZEALOUS SERVANT CAUSE BAHAULLAH RAUL PAVON DISTINGUISHED PROMOTER FAITH AND INDEFATIGABLE WORKER IN TEACHING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES LATIN AMERICA. HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICES AS MEMBER BOARD COUNSELLORS AMERICAS AND

*Raúl Pavón*

UNIQUE ENDEAVOURS ESTABLISHMENT FIRST BAHAI RADIO STATION WARMLY REMEMBERED. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL WORLDS GOD AND SOLACE LOVING COMFORT HIS BEREAVED FAMILY. FEEL CONFIDENT HIS DEARLY CHERISHED PARENTS REJOICE ABHA KINGDOM RANGE HIS DEDICATED SERVICES. URGE ALL COMMUNITIES AMERICAS HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING HIS HIGHLY VALUED CONTRIBUTIONS BELOVED FAITH.

Universal House of Justice
23 October 1983

Only future generations will be able to properly assess the varied activities and projects spearheaded by Raúl Pavón Mejía to promote the objectives of the Cause he so ardently loved; we stand too close to his accomplishments in the field of mass teaching and the vision he held, and shared, of the future spread of the Faith through the mass media, especially radio.

Raúl was born in Otavalo, Ecuador, where he resided at the time he passed away. He heard of the Bahá'í Faith during the mid-1950s and in May 1958 wrote to the National Teaching Committee of Ecuador requesting to be accepted as a Bahá'í. He sometimes related that after becoming a Bahá'í, he left books and pamphlets lying about the house hoping his parents would become curious and read them. His mother, Señora Clementina Mejía de Pavón has told of her curiosity and her decision one day to look over some of the material to see what her son was 'mixed up in'. She later said that he had often mentioned the Faith, but that it had never really touched her heart. Now she began seriously to investigate the Cause and became a Bahá'í in July 1960. Raúl's father, Señor Segundo Pavón Barrera also began to study the Faith, and in December 1960, he too became a staunch believer. (The signal contributions to the Faith in Ecuador made by Mr. and Mrs. Pavón are recorded in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, 'In Memoriam'.) As the years passed, the entire Pavón family became Bahá'ís.

Raúl was a Bahá'í for twenty-five years during which he was a teacher of the Faith, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador and of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Otavalo and Quito, serving also on various national and local committees. For the last ten years of his life he served as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America and the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas when the Boards of the Americas were merged. He early gained the love and respect of his fellow Counsellors. He was especially popular with youth. Everywhere he went they sought him out. When he arrived in Lima, Peru, on his last visit, even though he was not well and was there to meet with the National Assembly, he took time out to have lunch with Bahá'í youth. Before special meetings, the youth of Lima begin with prayers at the graveside of their dear friend Raúl.

When queried as to how he became interested in converting the masses, Raúl related in an interview that he had become enthralled by the Guardian's letters when he first read them; that he had studied them carefully, and had become caught up in the spirit of what the Guardian desired, and what he meant by 'mass conversion'. These messages inspired him to engage in mass teaching among the indigenous people. In 1960, while he was teaching in another area of the country, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Otavalo, the Teaching Committee, and some pioneers who lived there asked the National Teaching Committee if Raúl might transfer to

Otavalo to help in teaching the Indians of the surrounding area. Their request was granted, and he was privileged to assist in the election of the first all-Indian Local Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador in Vagabundo, Ecuador, in 1961.

Raúl did not become famed as a successful mass conversion teacher without being tested. These tests at times so tried his soul that he sometimes considered pioneering to another country. But Ecuador could never release him. Though his services were shared from time to time with other countries, at their request, it seems to have been his destiny to remain in his own country to serve the Cause.

The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir loved Raúl dearly, and was well aware of the opportunities for mass conversion in Ecuador. On his visits, Dr. Muhájir began to spend more time with Raúl in the mass teaching areas, helping and guiding him and the other teachers. Raúl said he learned a lot from Dr. Muhájir about direct teaching, and about the power generated from using the name of Bahá'u'lláh. Reminiscing, Raúl called the days spent with the Hand of the Cause some of the happiest of his life.

Raúl was a very shy man, avoiding the limelight whenever possible. However, after he was named a member of the Board of Counsellors, much of his shyness disappeared. It seemed that the power of that institution helped to bring forth many of his latent talents. Raúl knew that Shoghi Effendi had advocated the use of radio for spreading the Teachings, and he diligently pursued this vision until it became reality in Radio Bahá'í, Ecuador, the first Bahá'í-owned and operated station in the world. He also envisioned the use of television, the arts, and drama as media of proclamation and was active in these fields whenever time permitted. He also loved poetry and wrote beautiful poems inspired by the Faith. While in Canada a few months before he died, he wrote a haunting poem foreshadowing his early demise. This poem was forwarded to his family after his death. He wrote others describing the early days of mass teaching or immortalizing those who worked closely with him in the teaching field.

He was very delicate from childhood. One of his co-workers recalls how sick he would sometimes become while travelling over the high mountain ranges to reach the homes of the indigenous people. Often he could hardly breathe. She fretted that she was unable to carry him down the mountain and did not dare to leave him alone to go to find help. They prayed together that he would be able to walk down the mountain for there was no transportation and houses were miles apart. She relates that on three distinct occasions she witnessed the power of faith revive him when it seemed he was dying and there was no help in sight. Many times his doctors ordered him to stay out of the mountains but he would leave only for short periods to rest and teach at a lower altitude. He missed the teaching work among the indigenous in the Sierra and would always return to this work and to his devoted family as soon as possible.

As the years passed and he was called upon as a Counsellor to travel constantly, his attacks became more frequent, often necessitating medical care while on his journeys. When returning from a meeting of the Board of Counsellors in August 1983, he became very ill in the airport in Miami, Florida, and was placed in a hospital in that city. As soon as he felt better he left to return home and consult with his family about the diagnosis made there that he needed an operation. Seeking further medical advice, he was put in touch with a Bahá'í physician in the United States, where he again went for tests and treatment. Returning to Ecuador a few weeks later he found a cable from Bolivia asking him to come immediately because of an emergency situation with their radio station. He felt it his duty to go and left the following day without taking the requisite time to rest or to acclimate himself again to the high altitude. After a week in Bolivia he became ill and left for Lima, Peru. There he met with the National Assembly and, refusing hospitality, went to a hostel near the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. His condition worsened during the night and he was taken to hospital on the following day. Information was sent to his shocked family and friends in Ecuador that he was not expected to live. After an operation it was found that he had an incurable, chronic condition, as previously diagnosed, and, indeed, could not live.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Peru had a quorum of its members present in the hospital all week praying for him and ready to be of whatever assistance they could, and a number of believers, including youth, kept a vigil at the hospital until his death. As it became apparent

that the end was near, his devoted Bahá'í doctor asked Raúl if he had a message for his family and for Counsellor Mas'úd Khamsí. He answered, 'Only that I love them very much'; and again, asked if he had any words for his family, he answered, 'All the Bahá'ís are my family.'

Raúl Pavón Mejía was interred on Sunday morning, 23 October 1983, in the new extension of the English Cemetery in Lima. A short distance away, in the older section of the cemetery, rests the father of the Bahá'í Faith in Ecuador whom Raúl so deeply admired, John Pope Stearns. A beautiful eulogy was pronounced at the graveside by Mr. Donald Witzel of Venezuela who represented the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas.

The International Teaching Centre sent the following cable:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY LOSS OUTSTANDING EXEMPLARY SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY RAUL PAVON. HIS DEVOTED HISTORIC SERVICES SPANNING TWO DECADES WILL EVER REMAIN ASSOCIATED TREMENDOUS UPSURGE INDIGENOUS BELIEVERS FULFILLMENT PROMISE MASTER AND ESTABLISHMENT FIRST BAHAI RADIO STATION. EXTEND HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES LOVE BEREAVED FAMILY AND FRIENDS. ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS SHRINES BOUNTIFUL REWARD ABHA KINGDOM.

And on 24 October 1983 the Teaching Centre wrote to all Counsellors: 'We know you are saddened at the loss of such an active colleague, and that you will wish to join your prayers with those of the institutions and friends at the World Centre for his rich blessing in the realms on high.'

(Adapted from a memoir by
HELEN BASSETT HORNBY)

## YVONNE LIEGEOIS CUELLAR
1896–1983

On 7 December 1983, in Arapahoe County, Colorado, U.S.A., well into the eighth decade of her life, Yvonne Liegeois Cuellar died, far from Bolivia, the land where she was the first to embrace the Bahá'í Faith and where she was to render it her highest and most distinguished services. She loved Bolivia devotedly and being possessed of a great vision of its future was convinced that its people would win astounding victories for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. She was indefatigable in her advocacy of the Faith for which she made immense sacrifices and to which she demonstrated exemplary loyalty and steadfastness. Nothing could dim the radiance of her spirit. On 11 November 1950, in his own hand, Shoghi Effendi wrote assuring her of his 'heartfelt admiration for the spirit that so powerfully animates you in the service of our beloved Faith, and of my profound gratitude for the many and splendid achievements which have distinguished the record of your stewardship to the Faith you love so dearly.'

Yvonne who was born Yvonne Alice Liegeois in Paris on 11 March 1896, has left an account of how she learned of and accepted the Faith, from which the following extracts are taken:

'In November of 1940, after undergoing radical surgery in Buenos Aires, Argentina, I returned to my home in La Paz, Bolivia, with little resistance and a sad heart. At that time my native country, France, had fallen to the Nazis and the news was very depressing ... A short while later, a woman who exuded happiness and radiance came with the news that I had always been awaiting—Christ had returned; He had fulfilled His promise and announced His mission exactly at the time that the prophet, Daniel, predicted. He is called Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God. He has written His revelation with His own pen; He has come to bring peace, justice and unity to the world. He has proclaimed that women have the same rights to education as men. These were the principles for which I argued and fought during my youth in France.'

The radiant Bahá'í with whom Yvonne had come into contact was Eleanor Adler of Los Angeles, California, who, despite her ignorance of Spanish, had felt impelled to bring the message of Bahá'u'lláh to La Paz just six months after she herself embraced the Cause. Yvonne wrote: 'At the time, I had a few paying guests at our home ... I had a room ready to receive Eleanor Adler, whom I heard talking about these teachings to a Mr. Gee [of the cable office]. I was facing the fireplace where eucalyptus wood burned gaily, and then turned to Eleanor and said, "I want to know all about this!" "I'll tell you about it," she replied. "No! I want to read His Words by myself!" ... That very night she

handed me copies of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Scriptures*, and *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh* ... I could scarcely sleep, entranced by the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, the Word of God!'

From that point on Yvonne dedicated herself to the service of the Cause. She lived to teach the Bahá'í Faith. She simply could not understand how anyone could fail to recognize Bahá'u'lláh and respond to His teachings. She proclaimed the Cause to everyone she knew and to people in every walk of life. She sponsored in her home meetings and banquets at which the Faith was presented to a circle of international guests which included well-known writers, poets, intellectuals, statesmen and members of the diplomatic corps. She brought the Faith to the attention of leading authors including Abel Alarcón, Vicente Donoso Tórrez and Max Bairon who wrote extensive and well-informed articles about the Faith. *El Diario* and *La Razon*, newspapers of La Paz, published the first articles about the Cause.

Through Yvonne's dedicated efforts to make them aware of the Cause, her husband, Colonel Arturo Cuellar Echazu, accepted the Faith in 1944, as did their daughter in 1946. Colonel Cuellar joined Yvonne in proclaiming the Faith by means of programmes on Radio Illimani and Radio Bolivar of La Paz.

In 1945, largely through the efforts of Yvonne, her husband and Flora E. Hottes, the Spiritual Assembly of La Paz was formed, the first in Bolivia. A photograph of this Assembly was placed by Shoghi Effendi in the Mansion at Bahjí. Two years later, Yvonne was able to arrange the first audience with a Bolivian President, His Excellency Enrique Hertzog, who graciously accepted a Bahá'í book presented in the name of the Spiritual Assembly of La Paz. Later in 1947 the Bolivian government accorded official recognition to the Faith.

Encouraged by the Guardian with whom she was in frequent correspondence, Yvonne, in 1948, opened a second Bahá'í Centre in La Paz, on Illampu Street, as a venue for reaching the indigenous people.

In 1949, after meeting the Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins at a Bahá'í conference in Rio de Janeiro, Yvonne's enthusiasm knew no bounds. She encouraged her husband to join her in a teaching trip to Tarija where she delivered addresses on the Faith to the University and the Rotary Club. She also addressed the University at Sucre and, with the Guardian's approval, visited Cochabamba. These may be regarded as the first teaching trips within Bolivia.

Yvonne and her husband made a substantial contribution towards the translation of Bahá'í literature into Spanish. Colonel Cuellar translated *Foundations of World Unity*, extracts from *God Passes By*, and reviewed the translation of *The Renewal of Civilization*. He also helped with the review of some other early translations. Yvonne encouraged the La Paz community to become self-sufficient in the publication of pamphlets.

She was of great assistance to all the pioneers who arrived in Bolivia. In 1949 when Dorothy Campbell was stricken for a week with typhoid in La Paz, Yvonne brought her mattress to Dorothy's home, slept there and helped nurse her back to health. Such were her detachment and generosity.

In June 1953, the Cuellars had to leave Bolivia and go to the United States where they helped form the Local Spiritual Assembly of Park Ridge, Illinois. Three years later the National Spiritual Assembly of South America requested their urgent return. The La Paz community needed them so they moved to Bolivia where they continued to be pillars of the Cause. Then one day some people knocked on Colonel and Mrs. Cuellar's door and asked for information about the Faith. It was Andrés and Carmelo Jachakollo who embraced the Faith in 1957 and ever since have served it as travelling teachers. Their enthusiastic activity in promoting the Cause reinforced Mrs. Cuellar's conviction that Bolivia would witness entry by troops. Foreseeing that the Bolivian community could go forward rapidly, she worked towards creating a team of trained believers who could carry on the work. For a nominal fee, she and her husband donated the present National Centre, totally furnished and well equipped, which serves as the permanent seat of the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia. When mass conversion in indigenous areas began, Yvonne obtained a document from Alvaro Perez del Castillo, the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, which permitted Bahá'í teachers to travel without hindrance throughout the entire country including the rural areas. She also donated Bahá'í literature to the libraries in La Paz.

*Yvonne Liegeois Cuellar*

This done, she was able to respond to the appeal for teachers to visit France in preparation for the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of that country which was to be held in 1958. She was very happy to assist with the strengthening of the Faith in the land of her birth. She was on a trip through Marseilles and Lyon when she was informed of the death of the beloved Guardian. She immediately returned to Paris, consulted with the Local Spiritual Assembly and proceeded to London. After Shoghi Effendi's burial she continued her journey to various centres in France, and then settled in the United States where she continued to teach with vivacity and enthusiasm. She visited Bolivia in 1969 and was thrilled to see how the Bahá'í community had expanded and developed. She maintained close correspondence with the National Spiritual Assembly, and until the last moment of her life she continued to support and pray for the growth of the Faith in Bolivia. In honour of her devoted and loyal services the National Assembly has placed a photograph of dearly-loved Yvonne Cuellar in the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and in all the Bahá'í institutes, and after her passing commemorative meetings were held throughout the country in tribute to this extraordinary being whose efforts in the early days of the Faith are an incomparable example for the Bahá'ís of Bolivia who deeply love and respect her. On her tomb at Riḍván 1984 there was mounted a plaque adorned with a nine-pointed star and the legend: 'The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bolivia in grateful memory of: Yvonne de Cuellar Spiritual Mother and First Believer of the Bahá'í Community of Bolivia.'

Describing the lives of Yvonne and Arturo in the United States, Dorothy Stewart has written: 'They settled near their daughter in Littleton, Colorado, in 1969 and continued their distinctive service to the Cause of God by actively participating in teaching projects. Yvonne's efforts in the past fifteen years have greatly contributed to the establishment of several new localities and Local Spiritual Assemblies in north-eastern Colorado.'

'The Cuellars were planning to return to Bolivia as pioneers in 1977,' reads an account in the February 1984 issue of *The American Bahá'í*, 'but Mr. Cuellar died before their plans were completed and Mrs. Cuellar, who even then was in failing health, was unable to go alone. Instead, she remained active in teaching the Faith in Colorado.' The account states that in 1981 Mrs. Cuellar cancelled her pilgrimage to the World Centre preferring, as she wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, 'to help our brethren', the persecuted Bahá'ís of Írán, and contributing 'all I could to the Universal House of Justice'.

'Her mortal body', writes Dorothy Stewart, 'lies in the Littleton, Colorado, Cemetery next to her husband ... Both gravesites share an obelisk monument which identifies them as Bahá'ís ... the cemetery is situated on a low hill south of the small town of Littleton and is planted with stately evergreen trees and beautiful roses. Looking westward one views the magnificence of the Colorado Rockies.'

Her exemplary devotion prompted the Universal House of Justice on 14 December 1983 to cable the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia:

SADDENED LEARN PASSING YVONNE CUELLAR STALWART STEADFAST HANDMAIDEN BAHAULLAH TO BE EVER DISTINGUISHED AS FIRST

DECLARED BELIEVER BOLIVIA OFFERING PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

(Adapted from an article submitted by the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF BOLIVIA and translated from the Spanish by KATHIA NARAGHI [NARÁQÍ])

## MARGARITE IOAS ULLRICH
1898–1984

Margarite Hope, the ninth child of Charles and Maria Ioas, was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 7 July 1898, the day her parents wrote their letters to 'Abdu'l-Bahá seeking permission to become Bahá'ís.

As the Ioas children were growing up, their father would gather them each week around the large table. He spoke of religious subjects and interpretations of the Bible, which he had read in Greek, showing them how the prophecies were fulfilled in the Bahá'í Faith. Although the children were active in other churches when young, they all became followers of Bahá'u'lláh, Leroy being appointed a Hand of the Cause and serving on the International Bahá'í Council.

In 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá came to Chicago. Mr. and Mrs. Ioas went many times to see Him, taking one or two of the children along. Margarite (better known as Marge) described her visit in these words:

'I can remember distinctly the first time my mother took me to a meeting where He was going to speak. The people were all waiting for Him to arrive, and when He entered the room and came close to me, I wanted to fall at His feet, but instead I did what all the others did, and that was to arise.

'On one particular day Mother went, I went along. There were other children there that day, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá called us all into His sitting room and seated Himself on the divan. We children grouped ourselves around His knees, and He covered us with His outstretched arms, His mantle falling over us like two wings, shielding and protecting us from all harm. I was thirteen at the time and had been attending the Methodist Sunday School. We used to sing a song that impressed me very much. I had thought how wonderful it would be if such a thing happened to me. This song ["I think when I read that sweet story of old ..." about Jesus enfolding the children in His embrace] is what came to me as we knelt at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's feet, and I thought "It's really happening to me!"

*Margarite Ioas Ullrich*

'Mother said it reminded her of a quotation from the Bible: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." *Luke* 18:16.'

This meeting had a profound effect on Marge's life, which became one of service to the Cause she espoused.

In 1920, in response to a letter Marge wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in which she pleaded, 'Help me to always follow Thy noble commands and be one of Thy servants, who guided by Thee, manifest Thy wonderful teachings in my actions, thus bringing the truth of Thy words to those who are ready to hear them,' she received from the Master this Tablet dated 2 December 1920:

*He is God!*

*O thou who art attracted to the Truth!*

*To the affectionate Lord do I pray to bestow upon thee assistance and confirmation so that thou mayst be occupied in service to the Kingdom of God and like unto a candle be enkindled with the fire of the love of God.*

*Upon thee be the Glory of the All-Glorious!*

In 1922, Marge married Clarence Ullrich.[1] Her husband, although reared a Catholic, had left the church when he was quite young and later became a Freemason. Despite his objecting strenuously, at first, to all Marge's activity for the Faith, she continued her service, at this time giving talks and serving as secretary of the Program Committee at the Wilmette House of Worship, where she spent at least one day a week as a guide. When their children, Marjorie and Florence, were old enough, they went along on days when school was not in session. For many years Marge could be found at the Chicago Bahá'í Center assisting with the weekly afternoon lecture-teas and at the Annual Convention, where she often served as a delegate. Clarence's attitude softened after his mother's passing, and he himself served on the Maintenance Committee for the House of Worship. In 1940, when a ninth member was needed to form a new Local Spiritual Assembly for which Marge had been working diligently, Clarence signed his declaration card, officially acknowledging his belief in the Bahá'í Faith. Marge was chairman of this new Local Assembly in Oak Park, Michigan, for one year, then its secretary, until the family's departure in September 1941 for Mansfield, Ohio.

The arrival of the Ullrich family created a group in Mansfield where there had been only an isolated believer. Every week in the Ullrich home a fireside was held, even if the only attendees were the members of the family. Marge frequently invited friends over for a bridge game, advising them they would hear a Bahá'í talk before the game began. The first person who became a believer came for the bridge, being completely uninterested, initially, in the religious aspect of the evening.

During the years in Ohio Marge served on the Regional Teaching Committee for Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, part of the time as its secretary; as advisor to the National Youth Committee, of which Marjorie was a member; as teacher at two senior youth sessions at Louhelen Bahá'í School; as delegate to the Annual Convention; and as speaker in many cities in Ohio and the mid-West.

In 1945, the family was planning to move to New Jersey. Because Florence needed medical attention after an accident sustained on the way to a junior youth session at Louhelen, they instead moved back to their home in Oak Park. This permitted Marge to continue and expand her service in the Temple area as speaker, guide, member of the Jubilee Committee, delegate to the Annual Convention, secretary of the Regional Teaching Committee of Illinois and Iowa, and chairman of the Temple Guides Committee. The following year she made a teaching trip to four cities in the southern United States, with her daughters and Bob Miessler providing music for the meetings.

At the International Conference which took place in 1953 in conjunction with the Temple dedication, both daughters decided to pioneer to virgin territories, for which service they were named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi.

About the time the girls were leaving for their pioneer posts, Clarence and Marge went on pilgrimage, together with Marge's sister, Viola Tuttle and her daughter, and met their beloved Guardian who gave them a very warm welcome.

Marge was severely injured in an accident in October 1955. Even in a comatose state, she asked the nurse to contact Horace Holley, the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, who subsequently cabled the World Centre for prayers in the Shrines. Although absent from the Holy Land, the Guardian added his prayers to those of Leroy and Sylvia Ioas and others in Haifa. It took a long time for Marge to regain the use of her limbs. First Marjorie and then Florence flew home from their pioneer posts and for seven months helped during Marge's recuperation. In February 1956 a letter from Sylvia stated that the Guardian was 'assuring you of his prayers for your complete recovery' and 'of his prayers for the success of every effort you will exert ... for the promotion of our beloved Faith'. As late as April 1957 a letter written on the Guardian's behalf stated: 'The Guardian continues his prayers for your healing, which he hopes from now on, will be quite rapid. Your spirit of service is an example to all—how you are actively serving in spite of your sufferings and difficulty. The wisdom will become apparent later. The Guardian sends you both his loving greetings.'

Marge and Viola made a teaching trip to Venezuela, Colombia and the islands of the Caribbean in 1958. After Clarence's retirement

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 465.

in 1959, they sold their homes in suburban Chicago and moved to Camaguey, Cuba, to help establish the first Spiritual Assembly in that community in April 1960, preparatory to the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of Cuba at Riḍván the following year.

Marge and Clarence left Cuba for Curaçao for the birth of a grandchild in December 1960. They were looking forward to their return to Camaguey when they learned that the United States Government would not allow them to return to Cuba. Consequently, they went to Jamaica in early 1961 and were subsequently elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of that country, Marge becoming its secretary. She and Clarence each took on the task of raising to Assembly status a goal community in the mountains, and with the assistance of the Supreme Concourse they were able to do so. As members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Jamaica, they participated in the election of the first Universal House of Justice in Haifa in April 1963, and then attended the World Congress in London.

After the Congress, Marge's health required their leaving Jamaica, so they returned to the United States, settling in Manatee County, Florida. Marge became secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly there in 1966 and remained in that position until she resigned because of poor health in 1975. She and Clarence continued to travel for the Faith and were asked to conduct Summer School sessions on pioneering. After Clarence's passing in 1969, another Bahá'í showed the slides which he had used to accompany Marge's talks on the Holy Land.

Marge was a prolific letter writer. In addition to the letters she wrote regularly to cheer her daughters, there were the special ones written when advice was needed, or sent in response to questions about the Faith to which the girls needed answers. She sent them programs for various occasions and news of the Bahá'í world community. She maintained an extensive correspondence with her brother, Leroy. She wrote letters of welcome to new believers and to pioneers. There were invitations to firesides and public meetings, letters arranging speakers, to the religious editors of newspapers, cards to those who were ill, letters to shut-ins to keep them in touch with the outside world, and letters to family members to keep the family close after their mother's passing.

In the 1970s, Marge felt very strongly that the experiences of the Ioas family with 'Abdu'l-Bahá should be recorded for posterity, and decided to undertake this task herself. She contacted each of the remaining members of her generation of the family for their experiences and compiled the information, along with the Tablets received from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. After obtaining the approval of her brothers and Viola, the work was put in final form by Monroe Ioas and distributed to all the family.[1]

In April 1983, Marge fell and broke her hip. She clung to life for some months, but infections, shingles, and the feeling of not doing anything for the Faith made life so miserable that she prayed to be released from her physical frame. She was granted her wish on 7 January 1984, when her radiant soul flew to join the members of her family who had gone on before.

Auxiliary Board member Ben Levy spoke for many when he wrote to one of the Manatee County Bahá'ís: 'The passing of Margarite Ioas Ullrich is a great loss to the Bahá'í world, for this noble maidservant distinguished herself in those many decades of Bahá'í service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and makes her deserving entry into the Paradise of Abhá. She will be sorely missed by so many who were the recipients of her tender love and who basked in the warmth of her radiant personality.'

The Universal House of Justice cabled to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States on 10 January 1984:

> SADDENED PASSING FAITHFUL MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH MARGARITE IOAS ULLRICH WHOSE LIFE REFLECTED BOUNTY HER ATTAINMENT PRESENCE BELOVED MASTER. HER DEVOTED PIONEERING SERVICES WITH HER DEAR HUSBAND TO CUBA AND JAMAICA ENHANCE BRILLIANT ANNALS HER DISTINGUISHED FAMILY. LOVINGLY SYMPATHIZE SURVIVING RELATIVES. ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES JOYOUS WELCOME HER RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

With love and appreciation from her daughters,
MARJORIE IOAS KELLBERG and
FLORENCE MARIA KELLEY

[1] The booklet *Part of the Bahá'í History of the Family of Charles and Maria Ioas*, by the five living children of Charles and Maria Ioas (Berwyn, Ill.: Monroe Ioas, 1978, 36 leaves, was sent to the Bahá'í World Centre Library in 1978.)

## EDITH MAY MILLER DANIELSEN
1909–1984
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

*Edith Danielsen*

Edith May Miller (Danielsen) was born 25 October 1909 in Deer Park, Washington, U.S.A., and was the youngest daughter born to Rawlins Adam Miller and LuEmma Estella Donaldson. Edith's family were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Her father worked as a carpenter and was also a partner in a general store in Deer Park.

When Edith was just one and a half years of age, her mother passed away. Edith and her two older brothers, Delbert and Lester, were sent to live with relatives in Missouri where they remained until October 1915 when her father married Anna Faith Hopkins. Edith later attended Deer Park High School from which she graduated *circa* 1929, and then studied at Washington State College in Pullman for approximately two years. On 17 October 1933, she married Theodore Raymond Danielsen in a Methodist ceremony in Bremerton, Washington.

Alice Anne Miller, a niece of Edith's, has written, 'Edith was always interested in a large number of things. She had tremendous knowledge of the world, of history, of religions, and of space. She was fascinated by the potential of the mind and consciously searched for something in her life that wasn't self-limiting.'

Edith Danielsen first heard about the Bahá'í Faith while living in Alaska from one of the early Alaskan Bahá'í pioneers, Janet Whitenack Stout, whose 'In Memoriam' appears elsewhere in this volume. Although Edith did not initially respond to the Bahá'í teachings, she heard about the Faith again years later from a Bahá'í—possibly Bea Haley—in Washington State. Hearing of the Faith on the second occasion, she wrote a letter to Janet Stout and said, 'Send me everything you have about the Faith.' Janet sent Edith Bahá'í books which she read avidly; being sincerely in search of answers, Edith was given the gift of recognizing the truth of the Bahá'í Revelation. On 18 February 1949, Edith became a member of the Bahá'í community.

Theodore (Ted) Danielsen, Edith's husband, embraced the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh on 20 April 1951. Shortly thereafter, on 24 August 1951, he was killed when a United Airlines plane crashed. The loss of her husband and the Guardian's call for pioneers at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade prompted Edith to sell her home and offer herself as a pioneer. She was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi for her service in opening the Cook Islands to the Faith, her arrival at her post (in Rarotonga) being conveyed to the Bahá'í world by the Guardian in a cablegram dated 11 November 1953, the text of which appears on page 52 of *Messages to the Bahá'í World.*

Edith spent her first year in the Cook Islands at the Hotel Rarotonga and then was able to move to the Maori village of Muri, some time in 1954. A young girl, Rima Nicolas White, moved in with Edith to help her. Rima became the first Cook Island woman to become a Bahá'í. Edith was instrumental in having Writings of Bahá'u'lláh translated into the Maori language, and as a pianist drew people to her through her music. Rima Nicolas White stated that 'Dani [as Edith was often called in the Islands] was a real teacher of the Faith.'

Edith returned to the United States for medical reasons half-way through the Ten Year Crusade. While in her home country, she met and married Keith Craig; however, this mar-

riage was later annulled. Edith returned to the Cook Islands. From there, she travelled to Taipei, Taiwan. She also served the Faith in New Zealand for several years, helping to form and serving on the first National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand. Much of her work centred around working with public relations and with youth.

Mrs. Jean Simmons of Auckland provides this tribute: 'Edith Danielsen was a remarkable lady, and to my mind her "instant, exact and complete obedience"—to quote a well-known prayer—was her most outstanding virtue. She instantly responded to calls for assistance by going to the Cook Islands, to Taiwan, and, when the need arose, to "my beloved New Zealand"—her words. At the request of the National Spiritual Assembly, on which she served a term, she settled in Hamilton, purchasing a large home with special facilities for firesides. Everything Edith undertook was done with the Faith foremost in her mind. She loved beauty and was very artistic. She designed unusual and attractive greeting cards and a unique ringstone symbol medallion, and produced much display material. She was clever at organizing displays. She played the organ and belonged to an organ society. Edith took delight in fun and hospitality, and many people benefited from her kindness. Her ability to teach and communicate with youth was great, and many now-adult Bahá'is owe much to her guidance in their youth years. When calling to mind this Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, one remembers with admiration her steadfastness in, and devotion to, the Faith of the Blessed Beauty.'

Edith Danielsen returned to the United States due to ill health but she continued to serve the Bahá'í community as she was able until her death in Kirkland, Washington, on 29 January 1984. Mrs. Naomi L. Robinson, writing on behalf of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Bellevue, Washington, in which community Edith served for a time after her return from the South Pacific, stated: 'Always active within her capacity, Edith Danielsen took obvious enjoyment in her association with the Bahá'í friends and in her hobbies which included nature walks and the collecting of all manner of natural things such as rocks and leaves. Her warm, affectionate and spiritual presence contributed greatly to the communities of Bellevue and Kirkland. It was a bounty to have known such a beautiful person. At the time of her passing, friends of all faiths and races gathered to offer a last tribute to Edith, lovingly relating anecdotes and reminiscences of their contact with her.'

When confirmation of the death of Edith Danielsen reached the World Centre some months after her passing, a letter was written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice and sent to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States on 28 June 1984, which said, in part: 'The House of Justice regrets that it had not been informed earlier of the death of this outstanding Bahá'í but wishes nonetheless to assure her relatives and friends of its loving sympathy and that it will pray fervently in the Holy Shrines that her soul may be richly rewarded in the Abhá Kingdom for her manifold services to the Cause.'

Adapted from an article by
ALICE ANN MILLER and
SUSAN STARK CHRISTIANSON

## ETHEL COWAN REVELL
14 April 1897–9 February 1984

DEEPLY GRIEVED ANNOUNCE PASSING ETHEL REVELL SAINTLY STEADFAST SELFSACRIFICING PROMOTER CAUSE GOD. BLESSED BY ASSOCIATION ABDULBAHA COURSE HIS VISIT AMERICA AND RECEIPT TABLETS FROM HIM. HER TIRELESS LABOURS STERLING QUALITIES EARNED ADMIRATION SHOGHI EFFENDI WHO APPOINTED HER INTERNATIONAL BAHAI COUNCIL AS ITS WESTERN ASSISTANT SECRETARY. THIS CROWN HER SERVICES CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP ELECTED COUNCIL SUBSEQUENT SERVICES MANY CAPACITIES WORLD CENTRE INCLUDING SECRETARY HANDS HOLY LAND. URGE NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERINGS HER HONOUR IN ALL MASHRIQUL-ADHKARS OTHER CENTRES. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

With these words the Universal House of Justice on 9 February 1984 announced to the Bahá'í world the passing of one who lived her life of dedicated service as though no alternative existed and who would have been amazed to be accorded such accolades.

The Revells were a devout Christian family living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. The father, Edward, was a weaver, who passed away, after years of illness, in 1900, leaving his forty-one-year-old wife Mary with six young children, though Ethel herself mentions there being eight children in the family. Mary Revell, though tiny in size, was a pillar of strength, possessed of phenomenal courage. Before her husband died, foreseeing the difficulties of her situation, he told her she would never be able to keep all the children with her, but she assured him he need not worry, she would do so; she got employment in a factory and with the assistance of the older children, who valiantly got jobs at an early age, she preserved her home and kept her family together. Ethel's own employment certificate shows she was fourteen when she went to work; most of her working life she was listed as 'stenographer'. Like her mother, she was small and delicate in build.

*Ethel Revell*

Annie McKinney, Mary Revell's sister, was one of America's early believers and interested Mary and her daughters, Jessie and Ethel, in the Bahá'í teachings; they attended meetings in 1906 taught by Mrs. Isabella Brittingham, a renowned and erudite Bahá'í, and as a result Mary Revell, Jessie, not yet fifteen, and Ethel, not yet ten, accepted the Faith. Gradually the whole family became Bahá'ís and the Revell home became the hub of activities in Philadelphia for many decades. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had a great love for this family, particularly its most distinguished members Mary, Jessie and Ethel, who received a number of Tablets from Him; in one written to Mary Revell in 1908 from the prison-city of 'Akká He foreshadows His teaching mission to the West: '*Thy letter was received and was of the utmost sweetness for it began: "O Thou Ensign of Peace and Salvation!" It is the hope of this imprisoned one to become the cause of Peace and Salvation in the world and summon the inhabitants of the globe to love, kindness, righteousness, uprightness and the adoration of Truth . . .*'

We are fortunate to have the first letter Ethel herself wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, dated 22 September 1909: 'To my dear Master, I rejoice in the thought that I am a Bahai. I am the eight [sic] child, and am twelve years of age. Since mamma has come into this faith I haven't gone to Sunday School. I would rather learn the primary lessons of today. I hope I may be a great helper in this great cause and show by my life what I am. Help me to by deeds of kindness be a great service to mankind. I am your humble servant. Ethel Cowan Revell.' Whether this was ever answered directly to her we have no record; however, a copy of a Tablet to her from 'Abdu'l-Bahá dated 8 October 1921, evidently replying to matters she had raised concerning others—so typical of her self-effacing nature!—begins: '*O Thou maidservant of God!*' and ends, '*Upon thee be the glory of the Most Glorious.*' The orientation to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant, from 1906 till His ascension in 1921 was never interrupted.

During 'Abdu'l-Bahá's travels in the United States and Canada in 1912, Ethel lost no opportunity to see Him whenever this was possible, meeting Him on more than one occasion, in more than one place, and recording these wonderful occasions in terse and vivid language, including His visit to her own home on 10 June. After He left, she recalls, 'I went to the room where He had been—and wept.' In November, with her sister Mary, she travelled to New York to see Him; on that memorable day He received them alone in His room and called them His 'good daughters'. 'I sat opposite Him', Ethel

writes, 'and tried to get every opportunity I could to fix the picture of Him in my mind—for eternity—although He was always looking straight at me and I knew He knew all I had done and would do.' He gave her sister a box of candy and told her to share it with the friends, but He gave Ethel a jar of preserves and said, 'Keep this yourself.' Then Ethel adds: 'My sister wept—I did not exactly feel like weeping—I felt more like telling everyone what we had—but I looked at her and wept, too.' Through His interpreter 'Abdu'l-Bahá's last words to them as they left His presence were: '*Tell them I will always be with them.*' I think Ethel accepted this as a simple reality—as did so many early believers—which went with her all through her life.

Ethel was never a person to pester anyone for attention; a few times in her life she wrote to the Guardian. Her first letter from him seems to have been in February 1928; she had sent him the gift of a calendar with her letter of 19 December 1927, for which his secretary thanks her and Shoghi Effendi appends warmly in his own hand: 'My dear Bahá'í Sister: Your constancy in service, your unshaken loyalty and unsparing efforts greatly hearten me in my work and sustain me in my arduous task. I will continue to pray for you from the bottom of my heart that you may receive the Master's richest blessings and guidance in all that you do, Your true brother, Shoghi.' Again, in another letter, in his own hand, he wrote: 'May the Beloved bless, sustain and protect you and cause you to establish firmly the foundations of His Faith in the hearts of the newcomers, and assist you to fulfil your heart's cherished desire, Your true brother, Shoghi.'

In 1936, when Shoghi Effendi had recently strongly appealed to the North American Bahá'í community to arise and teach the Cause of God, his secretary wrote: 'The Guardian's advice is that you, as well as your dear mother and sister, should labour in those towns and cities in Pennsylvania where there are no residing believers ... your immediate objective ... should be the formation of a nucleus of believers who, in their turn, will endeavour to further enlarge their community and extend the sphere of their local Bahá'í activities.' Shoghi Effendi appended: 'Dearest Co-worker: My heart is deeply touched by your noble resolution. The Revell family is winning fresh laurels in their service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Perseverance and persistence will crown your efforts with success. My prayers will ever accompany you. Rest assured. Gratefully, Shoghi.'

The tone of this postscript is unusually warm. I believe it must have been in connection with this letter that the Revell family's epic motoring exploits took place. Ethel told me that they realized they could not carry out these teaching activities in neighbouring towns unless they had a car—so they (it must have been out of Jessie and Ethel's skimpy wages) bought one, probably second hand. Who was to be chauffeur? Ethel. Ethel sat in the front seat and drove, Mrs. Revell and Jessie sat in the back, and Jessie directed operations from there. On one of these excursions, Ethel told me, she drove up a hill on a street that had no outlet and was completely paralysed by the prospect of turning the car around and going back down the hill, so she stopped. She said a man had been watching her from the window of his house and finally called out, 'Lady, do you want me to turn your car around for you?' 'Yes, please,' said Ethel. The three Revell ladies were so prostrated by this whole terrible ordeal they could not face the drive back to Philadelphia and spent the night in a hotel! Nothing, however, stopped their teaching efforts.

Mary Revell died in 1943, many of her children surviving her as Bahá'ís, but Jessie and Ethel were unique, active in all kinds of endeavours, particularly the teaching work, both locally and through national events. Their devotion and loyalty to Shoghi Effendi he was well aware of; in December 1949, Horace Holley, secretary of the National Assembly, wrote to them jointly: 'The Guardian has directed us to send you a copy of his statement ... covering recent cases of Covenant breaking in his family. This information he states is for you to have as old believers who "remember the past and know what Covenant-breaking is", but is not for circulation or publication.'

Very historic circumstances brought the Revell sisters, Jessie and Ethel, to Haifa: In a cable to the Bahá'í world, 9 January 1951, the Guardian stated, 'PROCLAIM NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES EAST WEST WEIGHTY EPOCH MAKING DECISION FORMATION FIRST INTERNATIONAL BAHAI COUNCIL, FORERUNNER SUPREME ADMIN-

ISTRATIVE INSTITUTION DESTINED EMERGE FULNESS TIME . . .' Shoghi Effendi went on to explain, 'PRESENT ADEQUATE MATURITY NINE VIGOROUSLY FUNCTIONING NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS THROUGHOUT BAHAI WORLD COMBINE INDUCE ME ARRIVE THIS HISTORIC DECISION . . .' No names appeared in this message but Shoghi Effendi had already begun, about two months previously, to summon its members to the World Centre, the first was Dr. Lotfullah Hakim (Lutfu'lláh Ḥakím), then in Britain, through a cable on 14 November 1950, addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles, which simply stated: 'KINDLY ARRANGE DEPARTURE LOTFULLAH HAKIM HAIFA FOR NECESSARY SERVICES'; the second cable, of the same date as I recall, was addressed to the American National Spiritual Assembly and with equal brevity and simplicity stated: 'APPRECIATE EXTEND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REVELL SISTERS COME HAIFA REQUIRE THEIR SERVICES.' On 22 November they themselves received a confirming cable: 'REVELL SISTERS, WELCOME YOUR PRESENCE HAIFA. SHOGHI.' Early in December, Mason Remey and Amelia Collins were likewise summoned by the Guardian to the Holy Land; both planned to arrive later that month. By 2 March 1951 Shoghi Effendi was able to cable the Bahá'í world: 'GREATLY WELCOME ASSISTANCE NEWLY FORMED INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL PARTICULARLY ITS PRESIDENT MASON REMEY AND VICEPRESIDENT AMELIA COLLINS THROUGH CONTACT AUTHORITIES DESIGNED SPREAD FAME CONSOLIDATE FOUNDATIONS WIDEN SCOPE INFLUENCE EMANATING TWIN SPIRITUAL ADMINISTRATIVE WORLD CENTRES PERMANENTLY FIXED HOLY LAND CONSTITUTING MIDMOST HEART ENTIRE PLANET.' A year later the Guardian, in his Naw-Rúz 1952 message to the Bahá'í world, cabled: '. . . ANNOUNCEMENT ENLARGEMENT INTERNATIONAL BAHAI COUNCIL. PRESENT MEMBERSHIP NOW COMPRISES AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM CHOSEN LIAISON BETWEEN ME AND COUNCIL. HANDS CAUSE MASON REMEY, AMELIA COLLINS, UGO GIACHERY, LEROY IOAS, PRESIDENT, VICEPRESIDENT, MEMBER AT LARGE, SECRETARY GENERAL, RESPECTIVELY. JESSIE REVELL, ETHEL REVELL, LOTFULLAH HAKIM, TREASURER, WESTERN EASTERN ASSISTANT SECRETARIES.' Three years later, on 4 May 1955, the Guardian announced to all National Assemblies, '. . .NUMBER MEMBERS INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL RAISED NINE THROUGH APPOINTMENT SYLVIA IOAS.' When one contemplates the above shaping of Bahá'í history and realizes that two of the nine ultimate members of the Council were the modest, humbly employed, relatively uneducated Revell sisters, it gives one pause to think and causes one to rejoice.

It is very easy to recapitulate salient historic events but what passes in the hearts of those concerned is another matter! The Revell sisters were stunned by this succinct summons to Haifa; they wrote to the National Assembly on 21 November—in reply to their letter of 15 November transmitting the Guardian's message: 'We feel every once in a while that we must be dreaming about all this. At the Feast Wednesday, we plan to read your letter to us. We have told no one yet about it, hoping we would have further word about our plans. So you can know how pent up we feel with this information inside of us.' On 15 January 1951 they sailed direct, on the *S.S. LaGuardia*, from New York to Haifa, via Gibraltar, Palermo, and Naples; typical of these indomitable women, they persuaded the purser to let them hold a World Religion Day meeting for passengers of all classes, and to himself preside as chairman; they also arranged to meet the captain and inform him of the Faith!

Shortly after their arrival in Haifa Shoghi Effendi told them he believed it was because of their mother that they were here. Mary Revell had indeed attracted rich rewards on the heads of those two beloved daughters, who never married and whose entire lives were consecrated to serving the Faith. Ethel told me, when in a hurry her mother often would, instead of calling 'Ethel! Jessie!', call 'Jethel!' Of the many marks of personal kindness and trust shown them by the Guardian perhaps the most touching was the gift of a small pair of silver vases from the innermost Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, which had stood for a long time over the place where He is laid to rest; Shoghi Effendi gave one to each of them.

Going back over my diaries I see how little Lotfullah, Jessie and Ethel figure in them, the reason being that usually turbulent and distressing crises were recorded and these three, Lotfullah, Jessie and Ethel—who served day after day, night after night, seven days a week, year after year—were no source of distress to our beloved Guardian! For us, as for him, there was no weekend; except for the nine Holy Days we worked right through, our example being

Shoghi Effendi himself; we were truly consecrated to his service.

I could name the 'angels' I have known in my life on the fingers of one hand; Ethel is certainly one of them. She was totally dedicated to the Cause of God; pious, unselfish, self-effacing. The Revell family were richly endowed with the native American humour; this characteristic made it very easy to work with both sisters. They were good sports, full of fun and told jokes, one of Ethel's favourites being: 'Generally speaking women—are generally speaking!'

Jessie—six years older—was lively, friendly, and assertive; Ethel was also friendly but quiet, unassuming, and retiring. Both sisters, however, were extremely capable, sensible women, Ethel being the more domestic and a better cook! From the time she came to Haifa until Shoghi Effendi passed away, Ethel acted as my secretary and I was his private secretary. She continued always to help me with my letters and typed my manuscripts until she was too old and frail to do so. During the six years when the Hands of the Cause were responsible for running the affairs of the Faith until the election of the Universal House of Justice in 1963, she acted as our English secretary. Every confidential thing was safe with Ethel. Her deep faith enabled her to surmount the bitter deprivation and upheaval of the Guardian's passing and to give the loyalty of her heart first to the Hands and then to the Universal House of Justice.

In June 1961, when the International Bahá'í Council, of which she was a member appointed by Shoghi Effendi, was, according to his own plan, to be superseded by an elected Council, Ethel wrote to the Hands in the Holy Land: 'For my part, I am deeply grateful for the gift the beloved Guardian gave to the Bahá'í world—the body of the Hands of the Cause of God, and, closer to home, the Hands in the Holy Land. Often I pray in the holy Shrines that Bahá'u'lláh may continue to guide, strengthen and sustain you in solving the difficult problems with which you are constantly faced as you direct the steps of the believers in carrying forward our World Spiritual Crusade.'

Ethel was a consistent contributor to the Bahá'í International Fund. In a letter acknowledging a contribution, the Hands in the Holy Land wrote to her: 'The Hands of the Cause wish you to know how much they appreciate your ceaseless efforts to assist with the work at the World Centre of the Faith. Surely the Beloved Guardian is pleased with you and will richly reward you spiritually for all you are doing.'

All who knew Ethel valued her. The Universal House of Justice wrote to her in 1973, 'As we review the many advances of the Cause of God during the past decade our thoughts turn towards you and the role you have played in the advancement of the Faith since the early years of its establishment in the United States, culminating in your service as Western Assistant Secretary of the appointed International Bahá'í Council and as a member of the elected Council. Your presence among us in Haifa is a continual inspiration to us all ...' From her childhood the whole philosophy of Ethel Revell was to give rather than take; to serve, to contribute in every way she could to the Cause of God. Not only did she always support the Fund, but when her sister Jessie died she insisted on erecting her tombstone out of her own very limited resources, and contributions a few friends had sent towards Jessie's grave she requested the Universal House of Justice to place in the International Fund.

In the thirty-three years of my close friendship and association with Ethel I cannot remember ever finding her out of sorts, disagreeable, or impolite. Part of her nature was not only her sweet character, but, like a lot of mild, quiet, good-tempered people, she could be very obstinate in small personal matters; she went her own way and lived her own way while being totally self-effacing. One example of this comes to mind: at the back of the Western Pilgrim House, across the street from the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in which Ethel and Jessie each had a room from the time they arrived in Haifa and became members of the International Council, there was a large yard with a place for drying laundry. However, Ethel had strung a clothes line diagonally across her bedroom which, like all those in the Pilgrim House, was not very big. Of course no one intruded on her privacy, but I was so close to her that I often went in to speak to her and I used to remonstrate with her and say that this was neither necessary nor good for her health because it increased the humidity; but for some reason I never could fathom, she refused to hang her clothes outside!

When she came to Haifa Ethel's hair was short; one day, after she had been to the barber it was really difficult to see what benefit she had derived from his ministrations. So I told her that as long as that was the way her hair was going to look every time she went to the barber, I would henceforth cut her hair free of charge as I could certainly do as good a job! For a long time I did cut her hair; later she let it grow long and when we went to Europe together in 1958 to order the monument for the beloved Guardian's grave and buy certain things in Paris for the Archives, I often dressed her hair in the morning before we went out, amidst considerable repartee on her part! We were also, I remember, uneasy bed-fellows in a double bed in a respectable but very modest hotel in Montmartre.

In 1952 when the beloved Guardian sent me to America to dedicate on his behalf the Mother Temple of the West in Wilmette for public worship, I was very concerned about who was going to personally wait on him, because no one but me had access to him directly in his private apartments; he would always send his messages through me, who then transmitted them to various people. My absence, therefore, for some weeks in North America was going to be very inconvenient for him. I asked him what he would do? Without the slightest hesitation he said, 'Ethel will wait on me.' There was not any question in his mind who in Haifa he intended to answer his bell when he rang it! And so Ethel, the quiet one, intelligent and devoted, submissive and obedient, was the one who answered the Guardian's bell. As she lived across the street in the Western Pilgrim House, someone had to go call her whenever the Guardian rang his bell; she told me that one day early in the morning he did so and she hurried over and upstairs; the Guardian called her into our sitting room at the front of the house and told her that in the night he could not sleep and had gotten up and looked out of the window and seen a white horse tied to a tree on the empty plot of ground which belongs to us across the street, and that she should go and find out what was going on and why this person had brought a horse there, and he added, '... you can see the evidence' and pointed to some droppings as proof that there actually had been a horse there! Of course, the owner of the horse was found and informed he could not graze his horse on our property.

For many years all the members of the International Bahá'í Council guided at the Shrine—including the Hands—and Lotfullah, Ethel, Jessie, and Sylvia. Of course everybody had many stories of things that happened. I remember one of Ethel's: In those days there were relatively few visitors; a man went into the Shrine and when he came out said to Ethel, who had been standing by the door, 'Do you feel God closer in there?' Ethel said, 'Yes, I do.' He said, 'So do I,' and walked off.

One of the functions of Ethel and Jessie, particularly in the years after the beloved Guardian passed away, was to serve the pilgrims in the Western Pilgrim House. Later, when the Universal House of Justice increased the number of pilgrims, Ethel guided the English-speaking ones when they visited the Holy Places. This was one of her functions for a number of years and won her the hearts of many people. She was so unassuming that I think few people realized how efficient and shrewd she was. I remember when I was buying in Germany a large supply of dishes for use in Bahjí; some plates were greatly reduced in price because the patterns were different, so I bought these rather than a set. This bothered me and I asked Ethel, who was with me, if she thought it would create a bad impression on the pilgrims? 'Rúḥíyyih Khánum,' she said, 'if they notice the difference in the pattern they should not be on the pilgrimage!' I have never forgotten this profound, perceptive observation!

Ethel was a most lovable and delightful companion as well I know, and my father had every reason to know this too and was very attached to her; during his convalescence from a very serious illness she came nearly every day across the street to our house and took him for a walk; as he was wobbly on his legs and very frail she would hold his arm to help him through the front door, whereupon, invariably, as she reported, there would be quite an incident because she did not want to let go and he refused to precede her, a lady, through the door!

After the election of the Universal House of Justice (who for twenty years used the Western Pilgrim House as its headquarters), Ethel and Jessie, at its request, went to live next to the Oriental Pilgrim House, where both Western and Eastern pilgrims were now being received, and acted as hostesses. They served in this

*The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and member of the Universal House of Justice 'Alí Nakhjavání with Ethel Revell (centre) in the House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1973.*

capacity for some time, Ethel continuing also to act as secretary to the Hands of the Cause. Later on, the Universal House of Justice decided the work at the Pilgrim House was too much of a burden for these devoted sisters, now getting on in years and Jessie not in very good health, so an apartment was rented for them. Jessie was particularly anxious to visit the Holy Places in Persia, Shoghi Effendi having assured her in writing that he hoped some day she would, so the two sisters took their vacation in 1965 and visited many historic Bahá'í sites in Bahá'u'lláh's native land where they were warmly and lovingly welcomed by a community which appreciated and treasured the services they had rendered in the Holy Land for so many years.

Upon their return we found that Jessie's failing health was due to cancer, which swiftly and painfully ended her life. Ethel, her life-long companion, nursed and cared for her with the greatest devotion. When Jessie died I felt it was wrong for Ethel to live far from the House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which for her had so many associations in the lifetime of the beloved Guardian and afterwards, so with the permission of the House of Justice, I made a small apartment for her at the entrance of the property, where she lived until she died. Knowing her intensely independent nature, we agreed she would be quite free to live her own life as she pleased. With this arrangement she was content and happy in her little home, where she often entertained friends (including me!) and pilgrims she knew; her association with others was always for them a rich and wonderful 'deepening' experience, bringing people closer to the Guardian through her reminiscences, always increasing their knowledge, understanding and love.

In the end there was nothing left of the frail little Ethel but a wisp—but it was the same old wisp! Her mind and her sense of humour never failed till the last day of her life. As I sat with her the day before she died I remarked that as her teeth were very bad it was lucky she did not have toothache; out came the old flash of humour: 'You're telling me,' she said! Towards the end of her illness there was a great longing

to be released from the misery and incapacity of her body, prone to falling and difficult to control, which now needed day and night care. She endured her pains, misery, and dependence on others with the same fortitude and sweetness she had shown in the face of a long life full of work, cares and sorrows. Her end was made easier by the constant care of her devoted Bahá'í nurse, and the help of many other friends who served her. I remember when one night I called in our nice, wise doctor who had been attending her and said: 'Doctor, I want you to know I do not want Miss Revell to go to a hospital, I want her to stay right here and be nursed in her own home'; he said, 'I do not want her to go to a hospital either; I want her to stay here, too'; like us all he developed a deep respect and esteem for his patient. We were recalling, the day before she died, how she had been chosen above all others to serve Shoghi Effendi during my absence. She said, 'Well, I tried to obey and to do what he wanted me to.' The day she died we had coffee together—though she had been eating nothing—and chatted; in the evening, she passed away; like a little breath going out of the window her heavenly spirit departed. It was here she passed away; here in the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that she had the great honour of a beautiful funeral in the main hall; from here that she was carried forth by loving hands to be laid at rest in the Bahá'í cemetery under the shadow of all the places she had served for over thirty years, the Shrines, the Archives, the home of the Master, the two Pilgrim Houses. She rests in company with four other members of the International Bahá'í Council—precursor of the Universal House of Justice—Amelia Collins, Leroy Ioas, Lotfullah Hakim, and her dear sister Jessie Revell.

I had the feeling at Ethel's funeral that when she died she had just gone straight up like a rocket! As far as I am concerned, she went to the highest heaven, to the right hand of the Throne of God—because I think that is where Ethel deserved to be, and personally, I think that is where she is.

RÚḤÍYYIH

## RENÉE SZANTO-FELBERMANN
1900–1984

Renée Szanto-Felbermann (Szántó-Felbermann) was the first Hungarian to embrace the Bahá'í Faith. Her declaration occurred in 1936, three years after she first heard of the Bahá'í Cause at a lecture given in Budapest by Martha Root.

Renée was born on 21 June 1900 into a Jewish family, the second daughter of Heinrich and Aranka Felbermann (*née* Haás). She absorbed considerable information about the Jewish faith from her parents and at age thirteen she was sent to a Christian boarding school in Weimar, Germany. Thus, at an early age, she acquired respect and tolerance for various religious points of view.

Deeply attached to her father, a distinguished international journalist, Renée was introduced by him to the leading Jewish intellectuals of Europe and many of its artistic, literary and social circles. She worked as a journalist in Budapest and, through her membership in the P.E.N. Club, she was in contact with many of the leading writers of the period.

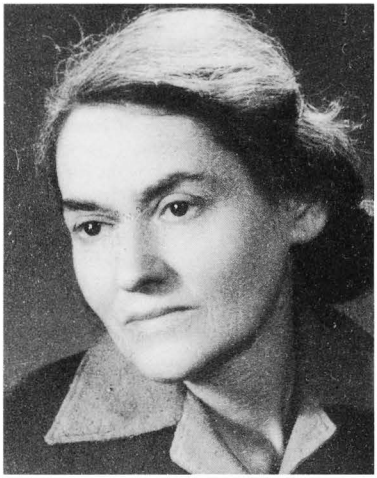
From 1933 until 1936, Renée lived in London where she arranged the publication of her father's memoirs[1] which she had edited. In London she had the opportunity to deepen her knowledge of the Faith through meeting many Bahá'ís. When she returned to Budapest she grew depressed by the fact that there was not a single Bahá'í in Hungary at that time. But soon afterwards she received a letter from two American believers, Mrs. Randolph Bolles and her daughter, Jeanne, who had just arrived in Budapest and had begun to hold Bahá'í meetings. Renée participated in these gatherings regularly and became absorbed in the Bahá'í Writings. In her memoirs she recalls:

'... I read and reread the books and Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá ... and the more I read the more I felt that the time had come to sever myself from former convictions, principles and prejudices and have the courage to answer the call of Bahá'u'lláh ...'

In December 1940 Renée met Dénes Bálint Szántó, a Unitarian, who was interested in the Bahá'í Faith and its spiritual principles. They married in the summer of 1941, only a few months before Hungary was swept into the horrors and fears of World War II. In September 1942 Renée gave birth to their only child, a son whom they named Marius.

Soon after their marriage, Hungary was

[1] Heinrich Felbermann, *The Memoirs of a Cosmopolitan.* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1936.)



*Renée Szanto-Felbermann*

invaded and occupied by the Nazis. Years of oppression, persecution, fear and suffering followed during which the Bahá'í Faith was Renée's only solace. She and her socially prominent mother were in extreme danger. It was only by chance that they escaped the fate which befell so many Hungarian Jews in this period. To protect the life of her little son, Renée secretly entrusted the care of the child to her husband's parents.

Even after the end of the war Renée and her family were not allowed to live in peace and security. Indeed, their situation worsened under Communist rule in Hungary, so that they were forced to flee the country two months after the uprising of December 1956. After having been compelled to remain in Vienna for a short time they finally reached London. Renée became an active and dearly-loved member of the British Bahá'í community and was able to fulfil her literary aspirations through the publication in 1980, by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of the United Kingdom, of her book *Rebirth—The Memoirs of Renée Szanto-Felbermann.* This work, telling the interesting story of her life, her acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith and her sufferings through the tragedies which befell the Hungarian Jewish community during the Nazi occupation, has become a means of teaching and proclaiming the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, exactly as she intended.

Mrs. Lina DeSmithson who came to know Renée well during the period she lived in Croydon, England, has written:

'Renée used every opportunity which came her way to teach the Faith, and was always very courageous and cheerful.

'In 1981, when her health began to fail and she was unable to live alone any longer, her husband having died, she moved to Germany to live with her son. On 28 February 1984 Renée died in Freiburg, Germany after a lifetime of service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. She was a living example of Bahá'í love, and her warmth and gentleness were felt by all who had the great fortune of coming into contact with her.'

When advised of the passing of Renée, the Universal House of Justice on 29 February 1984 sent the following cable to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING RENEE SZANTO FELBERMANN. FUTURE GENERATIONS BAHAIS HUNGARY WILL CHERISH MEMORY HER DEVOTION CAUSE GOD HEROIC PERSEVERANCE PATH BAHAULLAH KEEPING ALIGHT FLAME HIS FAITH PERILOUS YEARS. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. KINDLY CONVEY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY MEMBERS FAMILY.

INGEBORG FRANKEN

## GEORGE RUSSELL TRUE
1911–1984
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

George was born into one of the outstanding families of Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A., on 2 March 1911, his grandfather having been American Consul in Madeira under President Abraham Lincoln. His parents had spiritual natures and, in addition, his father was an artist and a deep thinker. He used to read continually to his son, developing in him a love of books, and an inquisitive mind.

George was orphaned at the age of twelve, after which he was raised by various aunts and uncles. He took a Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell University and on the day of his graduation, 18 June 1934, he married Mar-

guerite (Peggy) Trauger. The couple lived in Detroit while building a home in Grosse Pointe Farms.

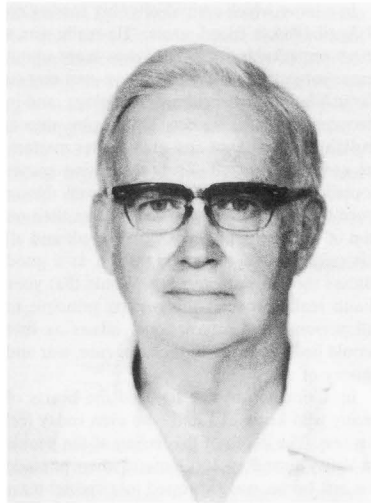
George often said that when he was a child in Sunday School, he thought, 'If Christ came to people so many years ago, why not now?' Thus it was not a great surprise to him to learn through his employer, Mr. Lou Eggleston,[1] who held firesides in his home, that Bahá'u'lláh was the return of Christ. On or about 26 October 1936, he and his wife enrolled in the Bahá'í community in Detroit, and later moved as home front pioneers to Grosse Point Farms. George was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Detroit, and later a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Grosse Pointe Farms when one was formed there. He also served for some time on the Regional Teaching Committee of Michigan.

In late September of 1953, in response to the Guardian's call for pioneers, he and his wife and son, Barry, left Grosse Pointe Farms. They had planned to go to Nigeria where they had friends—among them, Prince Orizu, who had visited them in Grosse Pointe Farms and invited them to Nigeria. But when they arrived in London, the Guardian cabled that there was already one Bahá'í in Nigeria, and that it would be more meritorious to settle in a virgin territory. *En route* to some of these places, they landed on Tenerife in the Canary Islands at 4:00 a.m. on 18 October 1953, and cabled the Guardian that there were no Bahá'ís there. The Guardian cabled back SETTLE CANARIES, which they did.

In spite of not knowing the language, Mr. True, with his engineering training, mounted a cinder block factory, the first of its kind on any of the islands. It proved to be very successful.

In 1955, the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Santa Cruz de Tenerife was formed, Mr. True being elected as chairman. He continued to serve on that body until 20 April 1979 when he and his wife moved to Valle Gran Rey on the island of La Gomera, thus opening another island to the Faith.

Mr. True, in his college days, was known as 'Trusty' because of his honesty, reliability and humanitarian services. In La Gomera, some have called him 'Jorge, el justo'—George, the Just—for the same reasons. His capacity to conciliate and arbitrate fairly and without prejudice was recognized by his relatives who in 1958 recalled him to the United States to assist in settling a disputed matter. Among the letters of recommendation he was given when he left America is one referring to his integrity, loyalty, reliability and sound judgment. It also cites his creative intelligence and adaptability.



*George Russell True*

George was always considerate and kind, remaining silent instead of making a comment which would give offence. He read continually on a wide variety of subjects. He also had a great love of music and collected and recorded hundreds of hours of the classics, although he enjoyed light operettas and popular songs as well.

He firmly believed the Bahá'í principle that work performed in the spirit of service is worship, and constantly put aside his own affairs to be of service to others. Even today, friends and neighbors comment that he has left them many 'remembrances'. The villagers knew him as one who would willingly help them with repairs on everything from watches to plumbing, locks, electricity, shoes, glasses, or other items. For his own amusement he was experimenting in his shop with solar energy.

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 713.

In a letter which arrived after his passing on 9 April 1984, a friend wrote: 'He really was a most remarkable man. He knew more about more subjects than anyone I have ever met so far in life. From agriculture to zoology, and in between, religion, science, philosophy, music, building, art, finance and many other matters, he covered them all. Truly a walking encyclopedia, and a great humanist as well. Never once did I ever know him to be other than on top of the world, at peace with himself and all his neighbors of the world, which as a good Bahá'í took in just everyone. Would that your Faith really becomes the guiding principle to all personal and international affairs as that would be "goodbye" to the arms race, war and misery of every kind.'

In a similar way, he touched the hearts of many who knew him and who even today feel his loss. The depth of the feeling of the people in Valley Gran Rey, La Gomera, where he made his last home, was expressed in a special mass which was held for his soul, requested by a neighbor who believes in God and Christ but not in the church. This was tendered as the 'highest expression' of her appreciation. Although I was unable to attend, I have been told that the church was packed with George's many friends from the mountain to the beach. And it was Palm Sunday!

His influence will continue for years, no doubt, as his favorite prayer, *O God, refresh and gladden my spirit . . .*, was read at the funeral and has been chosen to be engraved on his tombstone. Innumerable people have requested copies of the prayer, which perhaps will awaken and guide them.

Although I had the joy of knowing George True for over fifty years, and of being his wife for forty-nine years and ten months of that time, I still never knew the depths of his soul. He was always inquiring, questioning, investigating—hundreds of steps ahead of me. I am sure he must be gloriously happy in the next world where he can comprehend things from another dimension and converse with the many people he read about or knew of through books and music and science, who can guide him on to greater heights.

On 12 April 1984, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED PASSING STALWART KNIGHT OF BAHAULLAH GEORGE TRUE EVE ESTABLISHMENT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY TOWARDS ACHIEVEMENT OF WHICH HE LABOURED SO SELFLESSLY.[1] SUPPLICATING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM COMFORT HEARTS BELOVED WIFE AND FAMILY.

PEGGY TRUE

## SHIRIN NOORANI
## (SHÍRÍN NÚRÁNÍ)
## 1918–1984
## Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

The picture presented by the life of the maidservant of Bahá'u'lláh, Shírín Núráni, is one of selfless servitude against a sacrificial background. When the Universal House of Justice was informed of her passing, the National Spiritual Assembly of India received the following message dated 28 May 1984:

SADDENED PASSING STEADFAST DISTINGUISHED DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT GOD SHIRIN NOORANI. HER PERSEVERANCE IN KEEPING BANNER FAITH ALOFT IN KARIKAL IS UNFORGETTABLE AND WORTHY HER DESIGNATION AS KNIGHT BAHAULLAH. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES.

I distinctly recall the day thirty-one years ago—29 August 1953—when Shírín came to Poona from Hyderabad to join me and proceed to Karikal. This was in response to the call of the Guardian in launching the Ten Year Crusade. For her service in arising to establish the Faith in this virgin territory, Shírín was named by Shoghi Effendi a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. She further distinguished herself by steadfastly remaining in her chosen pioneering post.

Shírín was born in Bombay on 19 April 1918 into a Bahá'í family of Zoroastrian origin. She was married in Bombay and had two sons. Her husband passed away three years after their marriage. This first crisis in her personal life only served to reveal her spiritual strength. After the death of her husband she was responsible for the household and was required to take care of her two children, her two brothers, and her aged parents. She valiantly and lovingly dis-

[1] The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Canary Islands was formed at Riḍván 141 of the Bahá'í Era (21 April 1984), with its seat in Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

*Shirin Noorani*

charged her duties, was never heard to grumble or complain, and always exuded a contented radiance.

The family later moved to Hyderabad and Shírín dedicatedly served them while she completed a course in nursing and training as a midwife in the hope of serving humanity. When she went to Karikal, she wanted to put her training in nursing to use, but she was unable to find a job and her offer to serve as a volunteer hospital worker was not accepted. Undismayed, she devoted her energies to the task of raising up a community of the Greatest Name in a virgin land. And this was no ordinary task, for it took no less than six years to form a Local Spiritual Assembly in Karikal.

Although she never wanted to leave her pioneering post, Shírín had a deep sense of responsibility towards her parents, particularly when they became aged and ailing. The balanced manner in which she devoted her services to her parents and to Bahá'u'lláh was truly exemplary. She returned to Bombay for brief periods and sustained two more tragic blows, the deaths of her younger son and her father. She returned to Karikal with her mother whom she nursed until she, too, passed away. Her brother, a bedridden diabetic, then joined the family in Karikal and Shírín now showered her immense love and affection upon him, her spiritual strength remaining undiminished even after his death. But the strain of bearing all these ordeals began to tell on the heart of this spiritual giant. She struggled on for two years, always actively serving the Faith, in spite of her heart ailment, without regret or remorse, always lively and cheerful till the last when, on 25 May 1984, a stroke brought to an end the physical life of this indefatigable maidservant of Bahá.

SALISA KERMANI (KIRMÁNÍ)

## GENEVIEVE E. VOELZ
1886–1984

Mrs. Genevieve E. Voelz passed to the Abhá Kingdom in Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A., on 5 June 1984 at the age of ninety-seven. She had been a dedicated and devoted follower of Bahá'u'lláh for more than eighty years. She was born in the city of Chicago on 7 December 1886, the only child of the marriage of Knude and Laura Thime. Genevieve received her early religious training from her maternal grandmother, who, though not belonging to any church, clung steadfastly to the Bible to ease the burdens of a difficult life. As a young girl, Genevieve attended many different churches: she would attend one church in the morning, another in the afternoon, and still another in the evening. She played the piano for singing and helped with the children. Although she was often asked to join the churches she attended, she would not.

Genevieve was just six years old when the first mention of Bahá'u'lláh was made in America at the Congress of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 in conjunction with the World Fair. She remembered attending the Fair and nearly being crushed to death by the crowds. The Bahá'í Faith spread quickly. It was only ten years later, when she was sixteen, that she learned of it and became a Bahá'í, along with her parents. They were introduced to the Faith by Benjamin Jacobson, who was the husband of her aunt on her father's side. He had learned about it at the factory where he worked as a machinist. Both Mr. and Mrs. Jacobson also became Bahá'ís and, shortly thereafter, they moved to Kenosha,

Wisconsin, which became the second Bahá'í community in America.

One year later, when Genevieve was seventeen years old, her mother passed away. The funeral was believed to be the first Bahá'í funeral to be held in America. Mr. Thornton Chase, the first American believer, conducted the service, and Mr. Albert Windust, another very early Bahá'í, sang a hymn.

Following her mother's death, Genevieve went to Kenosha for a short time to assist her aunt, Mrs. Jacobson, who had a sick child which later died. During her stay, she met Louis J. Voelz, son of Mrs. Emma Voelz, who later married Henry Goodale, a member of the first Spiritual Assembly of Chicago, with whom she subsequently settled in Kenosha. Both mother and son were Bahá'ís, having joined the Faith *circa* 1902–03.

Genevieve Thime and Louis Voelz were married on 25 December 1905, at which time Genevieve was nineteen years of age and Louis was not quite twenty-one. Five children were born to them: Eldon, Genevieve, Paul, Lauretta and Vernon. Eldon and Genevieve (Kraai) are now deceased. All five children became Bahá'ís and have served and are serving diligently as pioneers, either abroad or on the home-front. All three living children are members of Local Spiritual Assemblies and one has served the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States for more than forty years. Grandchildren of Genevieve and Louis are active in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and great-grandchildren are also serving in various capacities or preparing for service.

One of the significant events in the life of Genevieve Voelz was the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Kenosha on 15 and 16 September 1912. He had accepted an invitation from Mrs. Emma (Voelz) Goodale to be a guest in her home. Mrs. Goodale occupied the second floor of this dwelling (she would stay with relatives during the Master's visit), and the first floor was occupied by Genevieve and Louis and the three children who by then had been born to them.

Not knowing when 'Abdu'l-Bahá would arrive, and assuming that He would be escorted directly to the apartment upstairs, for which there was a separate entrance, Genevieve, who was then twenty-five years old and occupied with the care of her children, was startled to glance up and see 'Abdu'l-Bahá enter her living room and sit down. He was followed by a large group of people, including His entourage and other Bahá'ís who had gone to meet Him. It was a very hot day and the door was open, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá chose to enter and be seated. Genevieve recalled that He asked for a drink of water. She felt in a daze by the suddenness of His appearance, as she went to get the water. She had difficulty in finding a suitable glass for Him; since she had small children and was also of limited means, she mostly had only jelly glasses. She was also concerned that the water was not cold enough. There were no refrigerators in those days, and she did not even have an icebox. It seemed to her that she would never get the water for her unexpected guest.

*Genevieve E. Voelz*

'Abdu'l-Bahá spent a day and one-half in that household. During His stay, He gave a string of opal prayer beads to daughter Genevieve, who was two years old. Paul, aged nine months, sat at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's feet looking up at Him, and He placed a similar string of beads on the infant's head, like a crown. Mrs. Voelz was impressed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's energy, constant movement and acts of giving.

Earlier that year, on 1 May 1912, Mrs. Voelz was present when 'Abdu'l-Bahá laid the cornerstone for the House of Worship in Wilmette.

She and her husband, Louis, served the Temple faithfully in various capacities from its inception. Together they made four Temple models, one of which was exhibited in the Bahá'í booth located in a prominent place in the center of the Hall of Religions at Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition, 1933–34. Another was made and sent to Shoghi Effendi, upon his request. The other two were exhibited at various fairs around the country. From 1944 through 1950, a period of seven years, Genevieve and Louis came to Wilmette from Kenosha on weekends, a distance of forty miles, to serve as guides. In those days, a guide would escort each individual visitor or small group through both the upstairs and downstairs of the unfinished edifice, consequently making many trips during the day. When they were through, they would take the electric train back to Kenosha, often having to stand up for the entire hour-long journey home.

Mrs. Voelz served the Kenosha Bahá'í community for more than fifty years. Many meetings were held in her home and she entertained numerous visiting Bahá'í teachers. She conducted children's classes and helped to maintain the Bahá'í Center by cleaning, making and washing curtains and lamp shades. She served for a time as a member of the Spiritual Assembly. Louis Voelz was elected secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of Kenosha for thirty-six of the total of forty-one years that he served on it. In March 1922, he inaugurated the Kenosha Nineteen Day News Letter which, during the six years of its existence, was sent to all Bahá'í Centers in the world.

In 1956, owing to the declining health of Mr. Voelz, the couple left Kenosha for Florida to be near their daughter, Genevieve, and son, Vernon; there they became members of the first Spiritual Assembly of Sarasota. Following the death of her daughter, Genevieve (Kraai), in 1960, and the death of Mr. Voelz in 1963, Mrs. Voelz moved to Wilmette to live with her daughter Lauretta, who serves at the National Center. Mrs. Voelz was a member of the Wilmette Bahá'í community for fourteen years, during which time she served on several committees and welcomed visitors, young and old, inspiring them with her knowledge both of the Teachings and of the early history of the Faith in America.

LAURETTA E. VOELZ

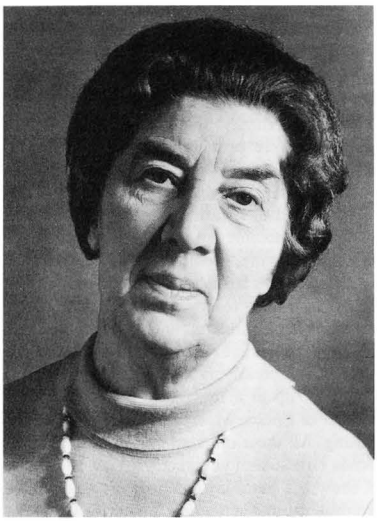
## ANNA GROSSMANN
1905–1984

Anna Grossmann was born on 16 August 1905 in Pirmasens, a small provincial town in Southern Germany. She was the eldest of three girls who were brought up in a middle class home typical of pre-war Germany: order, accuracy, reliability and uprightness were cherished virtues, and her father's sincerity and perseverance became soon apparent in Anna Grossmann's life, even though the influence of the mother was stronger. From her mother she inherited a deep feeling for others, love, compassion, understanding, and the willingness to help and encourage. The need for tolerance and unity was increasingly made obvious to her, as she grew up in a town that was close to the border of France when national animosity was strong. All these different components formed Anna Grossmann's character in such a way that it showed a harmony of thinking and acting, a spirituality and a sense for reality, sympathy and strength, energy and patience, insight and steadfastness which should be the distinct features of the character of any Bahá'í.

These outstanding characteristics were blended with grace and sweetness and a remarkable willingness to be different and open to everything new. When still a schoolgirl, she fell in love with Hermann Grossmann who no doubt impressed her with his tolerance, his readiness to assist others and to put aside his own aspirations. Above all, she would have been attracted by his unusual sense for beauty and art, science and religion. They married in 1924 and had two children, Susanne Bahíyyih and Hartmut Harlan.

In 1920–21, still within the lifetime of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Hermann Grossmann became a Bahá'í, and a little later, at the age of sixteen, Anna Grossmann accepted the Faith which she served all her life with unshakeable confidence and loyalty. This became especially obvious during the time of Hitler when the Bahá'í Faith was banned. Fearlessly she upheld the truths of Bahá'u'lláh's Cause before the Gestapo, kept in touch with the believers, encouraged and strengthened them, and became an example and refuge to many through her absolute trust in the guidance and protection of Bahá'u'lláh.

After the war, Anna Grossmann served the Faith and its institutions in various ways,



*Anna Grossmann*

mainly as a member and secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany and Austria. She was instrumental in the re-establishment of the Administrative Order in these countries, but above all she became a great teacher of the Cause through her deep knowledge, spirituality, clarity, simplicity, purity of motive, selfless devotion and heartfelt sympathy. In talks, deepening classes and conversations, she impressed because of her confidence, her conviction, her personality and her humaneness.

Twice she went on pilgrimage, and the long conversations between the Guardian, her husband and herself left a deep and lasting impression on her. In 1937, Shoghi Effendi dwelt on the unfoldment of the embryonic Administrative Order of the Faith; in 1957, he presented the vision of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Drawing on her obedience and ties of loyalty to Shoghi Effendi, and her friendship with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Anna saw it as her task to familiarize the believers with the greatness and significance of our God-given institutions, and to spur the friends on in their work for the Cause.

In 1954, Anna was appointed by the Hands of the Cause of God as one of the first Auxiliary Board members for the protection of the Faith. Again she met all the demands made upon her with exemplary zeal: she enjoyed the love and confidence of all the believers; she advised, encouraged and inspired institutions and individuals. Without rest she helped to raise the good reputation of the Faith; she deepened and strengthened the believers, invigorated the institutions, and spread the call of God in many European countries.

Anna Grossmann also worked as an assistant and secretary to her husband who served as a Hand of the Cause for many years in Europe and South America, from the time of his appointment by Shoghi Effendi on 24 December 1951. She accompanied him in 1960, 1961 and 1962 on teaching trips extending from Venezuela to Tierra del Fuego, to strengthen the light of God in those parts of the globe.

Servitude, sacrificial spirit and detachment were characteristics she displayed to her very last days. She was in her late seventies when she left her home in Neckargemünd, the much-loved German Bahá'í community, to pioneer and join her son's family in Finland. On 12 June 1984 she died in Savonlinna, Finland after having served for some years on the easternmost Local Spiritual Assembly of Europe.

The purity of her heart is beautifully expressed in her own words: 'I wish to be buried where I die. Should I die within one hour's journey from Neckargemünd or in Neckargemünd I should like to be buried in the same grave as my husband. As an epitaph I wish my name, the year of birth and death only.

'I wish to be buried as a Bahá'í; if need be, a prayer read from my prayerbook will do.

'I thank my children, my son- and daughter-in-law, the members of my family, my grandchildren and all the friends for their love, kindness and friendship. My deepest gratitude goes to the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause of God, they were extremely kind to me.'

From the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith came a lasting tribute to the life and deeds of Anna Grossmann. The Universal House of Justice telexed her family on 14 June 1984:

EXTEND WARMEST SYMPATHY PASSING YOUR ESTEEMED AND MUCH LOVED MOTHER WHOSE

SOUL UNDOUBTEDLY REJOICING SERVICES CAUSE HER CHILDREN GRANDCHILDREN ESPECIALLY YOUR OWN DISTINGUISHED LABOURS. HAVE TELEXED NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY GERMANY QUOTE GRIEVED LEARN PASSING ANNA GROSSMANN OUTSTANDING PROMOTER FAITH. RECALL WITH PROFOUND EMOTION HER LOVING ANGELIC CHARACTER HER STALWART UPHOLDING FAITH AT SIDE HER ILLUSTRIOUS HUSBAND DURING DARKEST YEARS CAUSE GERMANY HER INSPIRING SERVICES TEACHING FIELD INCLUDING EXTENSIVE TRAVELS SOUTH AMERICA HER TIRELESS LABOURS AS MEMBER AND SECRETARY NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY AND AS MEMBER AUXILIARY BOARD. FINLAND BLESSED BY HER PIONEERING THAT LAND EVENING HER EARTHLY LIFE. CONVEY MEMBERS BEREAVED FAMILY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY ASSURANCE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. URGE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL MEETING MASHRIQULADHKAR UNQUOTE HAVE ALSO TELEXED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FINLAND.

HARTMUT GROSSMANN

*Suzette Hipp*

## SUZETTE HIPP
1901–1984

*The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds.*

Bahá'u'lláh

A long life of loving service is not distilled into one word, but of all the qualities which spring to heart in thinking of Suzette Hipp, loyalty is, doubtless, in the forefront. Her family could recount examples of her practical aid—material, moral and spiritual. Suzette's larger family, the Bahá'ís, might tell even more.

Suzette Hipp was born in Esch-sur-Alzette, in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, on 16 September 1901, into a family of five daughters and three sons. She chose to become a nurse and worked in this profession in England, from 1925 to 1936. Upon her return to Luxembourg she opened her own practice as masseuse, podiatrist and physiotherapist, soon becoming well known, since her skill and devotion brought her clients from all walks of life, including some of the most noted public personalities.

During World War II the occupiers of the Grand Duchy had experience of Suzette's courage and independent spirit when she spoke up for family and friends who were too cowed by the Gestapo to defend themselves. For Suzette, principles were to be followed under all circumstances. This quality lent lucidity later to Bahá'í consultations, where Suzette often cut through verbiage to the core of some subject. It also made her friendships rock-solid. Yet, her gravity was spiced with humor and, when principle obliged her to present some hard truth to a friend, her kindly regard let him know upon whom he might rely to face it.

All of Suzette Hipp's qualities came to focus in 1947 when she learned of the Faith while treating a pioneer, Honor Kempton,[1] who went to her, footsore from walking through Luxembourg chanting the Greatest Name to herself and seeking those whose hearts Bahá'u'lláh had prepared for His Cause. In December of that same year Suzette responded, becoming the first resident Luxembourg Bahá'í. Thus began a profound friendship and collaboration in service to the Faith.

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, p. 748.

In 1949, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg-Ville was formed, the first Bahá'í institution in the Grand Duchy. From 1953 to 1957, the Benelux Regional Committee served the interests of the Faith in the Benelux countries, evolving into the Benelux Regional National Spiritual Assembly and so continuing until 1962. In that year the Luxembourg National Spiritual Assembly was formed. Through these historic developments, Suzette served on all these bodies and on many of their committees. She made the first translations of Bahá'í literature into the language of Luxembourg—by her choice, a prayer book. She organized children's classes in her home: present members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg and Bahá'ís serving in other lands recall her lessons and example. That home became the first National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of Luxembourg.

With Honor Kempton, Suzette pioneered within her country to Ettelbruck, where they maintained a home that was a center of Bahá'í activity for many years. In 1973, they moved to Kopstal-Bridel to form the last Local Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg's Nine Year Plan goals. In 1982, this time alone, Suzette again arose, at the age of eighty-one, to assure the formation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Walferdange.

On that golden, flower-scented afternoon in 1963, when the roll call of the nations reached Luxembourg, Suzette stood to cast her ballot in the first election for the Universal House of Justice, fully aware of the immensity of the moment and, thereafter, wholly oriented to the directives of the supreme body of the Faith.

In 1976, when Honor Kempton was invited to the International Teaching Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, Suzette accompanied her. Traveling by way of Chicago, they were able to visit the Mother Temple of the West in Wilmette and to talk with former members of the European Teaching Committee, to whom Suzette expressed her heartfelt gratitude for the Committee's having sent, in the lean years just after the war, pioneers to Europe bearing Bahá'u'lláh's message of hope for the world.

The thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg, held with appropriate festivities in 1979, gathered about Suzette several generations of Bahá'ís from many lands. Her remarks on that occasion again bespoke her deep-felt gratitude that the Bahá'í world view had reached the smallest of the member countries of the United Nations.

From that small, verdant land Suzette entered the heavenly realm on 22 June 1984, after a long illness. She rests in the lovely little cemetery of Bridel, side by side with Honor Kempton, two shining examples in the annals of the Faith in Luxembourg.

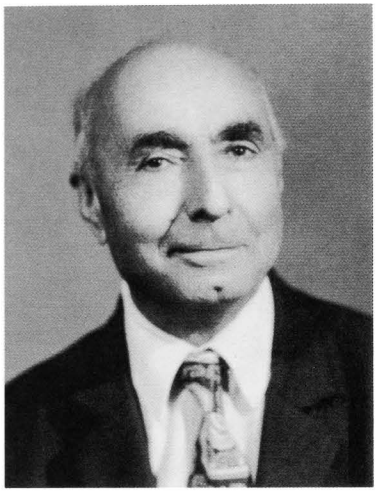
To the cable announcing her passing, the Universal House of Justice replied on 24 June 1984:

> ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL BELOVED SUZETTE HIPP. HER DISTINCTION AS FIRST NATIVE LUXEMBOURG BAHAI GAINED ADDED LUSTRE HER NOBLE CONSTANT SACRIFICIAL DEVOTION INTERESTS CAUSE GOD. HER LIFE OF SERVICE ENRICHES ANNALS FAITH LUXEMBOURG PROVIDES CHALLENGING EXAMPLE SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS BELIEVERS. HER BURIAL SIDE ILLUSTRIOUS HONOR KEMPTON HIGHLY APPROPRIATE. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICES. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY RELATIVES FRIENDS GRIEVOUS LOSS.
>
> DAVID NED BLACKMER

## AZIZULLAH SOLEIMANI ('AZÍZU'LLÁH SULAYMÁNIY-I-ARDAKÁNÍ)
1901–1984

'Azízu'lláh Sulaymániy-i-Ardakání was born on 11 November 1901 in the town of Sabzavár, Írán, the youngest of eight children, only three of whom survived infancy. 'Azízu'lláh's father, a farmer called Sulaymán, who had embraced the Bahá'í Faith in his youth and was active in teaching its principles and promoting its interests, was favoured by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who, in His own hand, addressed several Tablets to him. On one occasion 'Abdu'l-Bahá, on one page, addressed several Tablets to Maryam Sulṭán, the wife of Sulaymán, and to their children, including 'Azízu'lláh, extolling their services and exhorting them to continue their efforts.

'Azízu'lláh was seven years old when his father, in search of a better livelihood, moved with his family to 'Ishqábád, Russian Turkistán, where the Bahá'í community, its numbers swelled by believers from various parts of Írán



*Azizullah Soleimani*

but especially from Yazd and Ádhirbáyján, enjoyed complete freedom and were able to gather daily for dawn prayers in the beautiful Mashriqu'l-Adhkár where Ustád Sulaymán was engaged as caretaker.

'Azízu'lláh began attending the Bahá'í school where, in addition to the usual curriculum of science, mathematics and study of Arabic, Persian and Russian, the book *Lessons in Religion* was taught. He achieved excellent grades in all subjects, especially Arabic. During the summer holidays he used to accompany his father to the Temple grounds each day where, from the portico, he would chant in a loud voice verses from the *Hidden Words,* the whole of which he memorized as directed by his father. His father also insisted that he transcribe a few pages of Tablets every day, and in this way he acquired good penmanship. Some of the friends asked him to transcribe for them all the verses of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas,* a task to which he devoted four or five hours each evening for a week. He was paid for each copy a sum adequate to cover the cost of paper and ink and to provide a small profit from which he purchased shoes and socks for himself. During his school years 'Azízu'lláh transcribed more than one hundred copies of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and, as a result, memorized all the verses. In time he became an accomplished scholar.

When he had a few free hours in the evening, he would beg his mother to tell him stories. Although illiterate, she knew and could recount in a delightful manner, tales found in famous books. A similar narrative skill was acquired by 'Azízu'lláh as amply demonstrated in his compilations of the accounts of the lives of early believers which were published under the title *Masábíh-i-Hidáyat* (Lamps of Guidance). Nine volumes were produced before the Islamic revolution and were highly appreciated by the friends; a tenth volume was at press when the upheaval began.

When the sad news of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá reached 'Ishqábád a number of the Bahá'ís decided to go to Írán and serve as travelling teachers. With the approval of the Local Spiritual Assembly, 'Azízu'lláh and his business partner travelled for eleven months through various towns in the northern provinces of Mázandarán and Khurásán, meeting the Bahá'í communities and teaching the Faith. They were in Sárí when the first letter from the beloved Guardian, together with the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was received.

A few months after returning to 'Ishqábád, 'Azízu'lláh, accompanied this time by Siyyid 'Abbás 'Alaví, made a second journey to Írán, spending a year and seven months there. When he returned to 'Ishqábád he found it necessary to discontinue his trading business due to Government restrictions on private enterprise. For seven years he occupied himself with various engagements, including two years devoted to teaching in the Bahá'í school in 'Ishqábád, until it was confiscated by the Government. Finally, in the spring of 1930, he and his mother and his family emigrated to Írán. Here he spent several years in Mashhad and Sabzivár as an accountant in Sipah Bank before settling in Ṭihrán where he opened a business office in partnership with a friend. Throughout these years all his spare time was dedicated to the service of the Faith. In 1945, on the advice of the National Spiritual Assembly, he disposed of his business and served as director and teacher of the Bahá'í study class, a three-year course of advanced studies sponsored by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán. He taught Arabic, Persian literature, logic and the history of Islám.

Upon completion of the course in 1948 he went to Tabríz as the resident Bahá'í teacher for Ádhirbáyján. He continued this pattern, travelling to various towns and villages in that province, until 1955 when, as a result of an instruction given to him during his pilgrimage by the Guardian, he started travelling to other cities in Írán. In 1961, with the approval of the National Spiritual Assembly, he made Ṭihrán his residence and continued his previous activities. From 1966 to 1974 he travelled on five missions for the Cause in Eastern and Western countries, the shortest journey lasting nineteen days and the longest one year. In 1975 he was invited by the Universal House of Justice to work in the Research Department of the World Centre of the Faith in Haifa.

At the beginning of the Islamic revolution 'Azízu'lláh's residential flat in Ṭihrán, which was to have been donated to the Faith upon his death, was confiscated. Although he was not arrested, his life was in danger, and he had to keep out of sight. He was saddened greatly by the torments inflicted upon the believers.

Life was lonely for him after the death of his spouse in 1972, although he enjoyed good health and kept active. He suffered a stroke in 1983 and on 26 October 1984 he passed away in his daughter's home in Gunbad-i-Qábús. The day before his passing friends came to visit him throughout the day, and in spite of being in pain, and suffering from shortness of breath, he spoke with them all. He was the last believer to be buried in the Bahá'í cemetery before the property was confiscated by the Government. He was married twice and is survived by four daughters and two sons.

On 22 November 1984 the Universal House of Justice sent the following telex to the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy:

> KINDLY CONVEY PARVIN SOLEIMANI GRIEVED PASSING AZIZULLAH SOLEIMANI DEVOTED PROMOTER FAITH IRAN. HIS SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS LIFELONG SERVICES TEACHING FIELDS MADE HIM AN OUTSTANDING SERVANT CAUSE CRADLE FAITH. ASSURE FRIENDS RELATIVES ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL.
>
> KIUMARS SULAYMANI ARDAKANI
> (KÍYUMARTH SULAYMÁNIY-I-ARDAKÁNÍ)

(Adapted from a memoir translated from the Persian by FU'ÁD ASHRAF)

*Teresa Pia Taffa*

## TERESA PIA TAFFA
1915–1984

On 10 November 1984, after a long period of poor health, during which hope often alternated with resignation, our very dear friend, Miss Teresa Taffa, passed to the other world. Her heart stopped simultaneously with the end of a prayer being read by friends sitting at her bedside, a great comfort in her transition to eternity.

Sorrow and praise were expressed by the Universal House of Justice in a telex sent to the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy on 14 November 1984:

> HEARTS GRIEVED LOSS OUTSTANDING DEVOTED BELIEVER TERESA TAFFA. HER MANIFEST LOVE FOR FRIENDS UNFLAGGING MERITORIOUS SERVICES PIONEER TEACHING ADMINISTRATIVE FIELDS ADD LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH ITALY PROVIDE SHINING EXAMPLE ALL FRIENDS. ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Her honoured resting-place is in the little town of Marino, in the area known as the 'Castelli Romani' which rises on the picturesque slopes

of the Albani Hills. She was born in the tiny village of Pomponesco near Mantua, a city which the beloved Guardian once visited and the news of whose opening to the Faith brought him much joy. This area today has the highest number of Bahá'í centres in Italy.

Teresa was an only child. Her father, Camillo Taffa, was an Army Veterinarian Officer; her mother, Lina Peverati, was a Venetian of noble lineage, a pianist. After completing her classical studies, Teresa began studying piano, and received a diploma from the Conservatory of St. Cecilia in Rome. She took voice training with the famed baritone, Riccardo Stracciari, a contemporary and close friend of Caruso's. Her artistic talents injected a delicate note of beauty into the meetings with the friends. In her Will and Testament she expressed the wish that her piano be donated to a promising music student.

With her father, then a Colonel, Teresa used to attend meetings in the Officers' Club in the Barberini Palace, a well-known seventeenth century structure in Rome. Patrons and personnel of this charming building often saw arriving a diversity of guests, eager to make interesting new acquaintances. It was here, during the opening years of the Ten Year Plan, that Teresa heard of the Bahá'í Faith which soon conquered the citadel of her heart. A letter written on behalf of the Guardian by his secretary on 29 March 1956 acquaints us with the auspicious beginning of Teresa's life as a Bahá'í: 'He is very happy to have this opportunity of welcoming you personally into the service of our beloved Faith and hopes that you will be a means of attracting many other souls to the Cause of God.'

In that same year, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy and Switzerland appointed her a member of the European Teaching Committee, and it was through the Translation and Publishing Committees that she met and profited from association with Angeline Giachery and her husband, the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery.

Miss Taffa was one of the first Italian pilgrims to visit the Holy Land after the work of teaching the Bahá'í Faith in Europe gained momentum following World War II. Her pilgrimage, which occurred in February 1957 and which opened new vistas to her, was crowned by the privilege of meeting the beloved Guardian, whose secretary wrote on his behalf on 12 March 1957: 'It was a great pleasure to him to have you here as his guest ... He feels sure that the fruit of your pilgrimage will be manifest in your services in the future.'

During her first evening in Haifa the Guardian asked of the friends in Rome and upon learning how many they were he said they must scatter. He also spoke of some important cities in Italy, including Venice, where Teresa settled towards the end of the 1950s, after giving up her position at the National Centre of Atomic Research in Rome.

On the eve of the close of the Ten Year Crusade, in 1962, there appeared one of the most significant fruits of that campaign, the birth of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy. Teresa was elected to that body in that year—its only female member—and in thirteen subsequent years, during five of which she served as its secretary.

In 1963 she was in the Holy Land as a delegate to the first International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice, and as a thrilling prelude visited the almost-completed Mother Temple of Europe on her way to Haifa.

A stirring message from the Universal House of Justice outlining the goals of the Nine Year Plan for Italy intensified dear Teresa's longing to pioneer. After beseeching prayers of the House of Justice she received a cable reading: DELIGHTED YOUR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE ASSURE PRAYERS ACHIEVE HEARTS DESIRE SERVICE BAHAULLAH. After Naw-Rúz 1966 she settled in Lipari, thus opening to the Faith the Aeolian Islands, a significant goal assigned to the Bahá'ís of Italy. That initial spark of light has now become a Local Spiritual Assembly.

Appointed to the committee for the first oceanic conference of the Bahá'í world which was held in Palermo, Sicily in August 1968, Teresa served with great ability and perseverance. Drawn by a deep desire, she travelled to Turkey and in Adrianople visited the historical sites associated with the Blessed Perfection. A photograph she took of the dwelling of Riḍa Big may be seen in the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Rome. Appointed an assistant to the Auxiliary Board, she served with distinction. Her declining health did not prevent her from offering yet another service—this to be the last—that of contributing, with maturity and

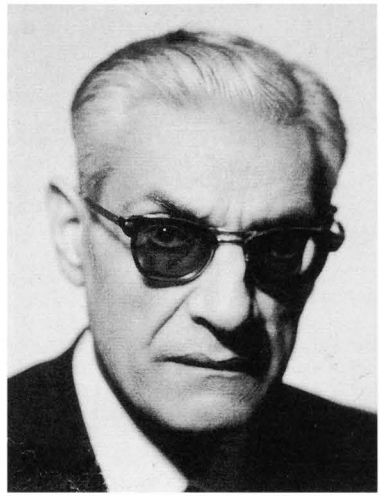
wisdom, to the special teaching project at Portici, in the area of Naples.

An Italian pilgrim in June 1983 was suddenly asked by the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, 'How is Teresa? Is she in Rome?' Teresa had not been forgotten! May we also not forget her!

In her generosity, Teresa left her apartment to the Cause, expressing the hope that it be maintained in dignity, and become a place of inspiration and activity in service to the aims of the Cause—an opportunity for the present and future generations to demonstrate their gratitude and loving remembrance of such a distinguished and beloved sister.

Teresa fulfilled the hope expressed in the letter of 12 March 1957 written on behalf of the Guardian that the fruit of her pilgrimage would be manifested in her future services; and it would seem that in fulfilment of a wish expressed by Shoghi Effendi in his own hand in a postscript to that letter, 'the Almighty graciously' assisted her 'to promote, at all times, the vital interests of His Faith . . .'. The nobility of her ancestry was always clearly apparent in her character and her deep devotion to His threshold.

MARIO PIARULLI



*Abbas Wakil ('Abbás Vakíl)*

## ABBAS WAKIL ('ABBÁS VAKÍL) 1911–1984 Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Abbas Wakil ('Abbás Vakíl), whose family was closely associated with the growth and development of the Bahá'í Faith in both 'Iráq and Írán from the time of Bahá'u'lláh, was born in Iskenderun, Turkey in 1911. A tall, quiet and outwardly reserved man, 'Abbás was a tower of faithfulness with his sights constantly focused on serving the Cause he loved so deeply and whose interests he placed at the very centre of his existence.

When he was still a young man, he and his family left Turkey to settle in Baghdád, 'Iráq where they visited the pioneers who had located in various parts of that country, encouraging them and providing whatever assistance they could.

In 1952, 'Abbás Vakíl married Samírá, a member of a devoted Bahá'í family, who became his partner in service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Soon after their marriage they returned together to Turkey. While there, they were moved by the appeal of the beloved Guardian at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade for pioneers to open various virgin territories to the nascent Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Shoghi Effendi had indicated that sacrifice was the hallmark of this enterprise which, although in its immediate effect, might involve separation and suffering, would nevertheless inevitably be the harbinger of untold victories for the Faith, particularly for future generations who would reap the fruits of the labours of those who arose with total obedience to play their part.

The call of the beloved Guardian increased their ardour, desire and determination to pioneer, despite Samírá's being in the eighth month of her pregnancy. Against the recommendation of the doctor, and in anticipation of settling as pioneers in a new and challenging environment, they undertook an arduous four-day train journey to the Mediterranean coast of Turkey. Cyprus had become the sole focus and goal of their endeavours.

'Abbás arrived in Cyprus in August 1953 and was joined three months later by his dear wife

and their new-born son, Leroy. They made their home in Nicosia. For their service in opening Cyprus to the Faith, Shoghi Effendi bestowed upon them the accolade Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. The arrival of 'Abbás was followed within a month by the arrival of two valiant pioneers from the British Isles, Hugh McKinley and his mother, Violet,[1] who were also named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh.

It was to Cyprus that Ṣubḥ-i-Azal, the faithless half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, together with his feeble band of followers, had been banished by Sulṭán 'Abdu'l-'Aziz in 1868. The prospect of building a Bahá'í community in an area with such a heritage was daunting, but with enthusiasm, wisdom and patience the pioneers pursued their task. Their hearts were uplifted and fortified on receiving from Shoghi Effendi a loving and encouraging cable assuring them that he would pray at the Holy Shrines for their tranquillity and success. In time, as a result of sustained efforts, a burgeoning Bahá'í community was raised up composed of Bahá'ís of Greek and Turkish background, as well as native Cypriots. Many pioneers and travelling teachers passed through Cyprus contributing to the teaching work and illustrating the diversity of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh.

For a period of approximately ten years, 'Abbás and his family served the Faith diligently in their adopted goal contributing greatly to the firm establishment of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in Cyprus. The family was ultimately obliged to return to Turkey due to the deteriorating political situation in the island. For a time, 'Abbas Vakíl served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey.

'Abbás passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 5 December 1984, survived by his wife, Samírá, and their three children. Learning of the passing of this staunch believer, the Universal House of Justice cabled his family on 10 December:

> ... GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED PROMOTER CAUSE KNIGHT BAHAULLAH ABBAS WAKIL HIS LIFELONG SERVICES CAUSE MANY FIELDS UNFORGETTABLE PRAYING HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL.

The imposing figure of 'Abbás Vakíl was commensurate with his firm faith, steadfast heart and deeply-rooted belief in the power of divine assistance at all times and under all conditions. With self-effacement, true humility and distinction, he served the Threshold of his Beloved in three countries.

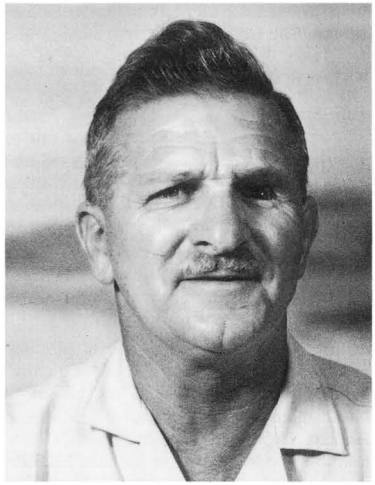
RIDVAN MOQBEL (RIḌVÁN MUQBIL)

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 512.

## ERIC MANTON
1911–1984

Towards the end of the Second World War, in which he served with credit in the British Army, was wounded and lost his left eye, Eric Manton, who was born on 17 December 1911, in his search for permanent world peace, was serious in his consideration of the merits of Communism. However, he saw a notice of a Bahá'í public meeting to be held in the Library in Northampton, where the speaker was Marion Hofman. He went to this meeting and his attention was caught. In 1946 he declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh and was a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Northampton—the first Local Spiritual Assembly formed during the Six Year Plan of the British Isles (1944–1950). This was the beginning of a series of 'firsts' for Eric. He pioneered to Edinburgh and was a member of its first Local Spiritual Assembly—the first in Scotland.

In preparation for the opening of the Ten Year Crusade, the beloved Guardian in his Convention 1950 message called on the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles to prepare to embark, after a year's respite, on a Two Year Plan 'CONSTITUTING PRELUDE INITIATION SYSTEMATIC CAMPAIGN DESIGNED CARRY TORCH FAITH TERRITORIES DARK CONTINENT WHOSE NORTHERN SOUTHERN FRINGES WERE SUCCESSIVELY ILLUMINATED COURSE MINISTRIES BAHÁ'U'LLÁH 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'. Eric took action on the announcement appearing in the *Bahá'í Journal* and wrote to Shoghi Effendi on 14 October 1951. The reply written on Shoghi Effendi's behalf conveyed his happiness at hearing of the plans to go to Africa and assured him of prayers that God would strengthen him in His Faith with a foundation of love and devotion 'which nothing can ever shake'. At the foot of the letter was a message in his own hand, signed 'Your true brother, Shoghi' which read: 'May the Almighty bless and guide you in your new field of service to His Faith, and aid you to win great victories in the days to come.'



*Eric Manton*

With the approval of close family members (Eric was a widower), he left by sea on 29 December 1951, with his 13-year-old son Terrence, on a five-week journey through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal, then down the east coast of Africa, reaching Dar es Salaam on 24 January 1952. There he was met and welcomed by Mr. Jalál Nakhjavání, and stayed in the home of Hassan and Isobel Sabri. He had served with Isobel on the historic first Local Spiritual Assembly of Edinburgh. Eric and Terry proceeded to Beira where they disembarked and went overland by rail to Livingstone, then to Lusaka, the capital of Northern Rhodesia (as Zambia was at that time known) on the morning of 8 February 1952. Not only was Eric the first pioneer in that country; he was the first pioneer in southern Africa.

An electrician by trade, he secured a position with the Government's Public Works Department in Livingstone. Some months later he was transferred to the Copperbelt, where he lived in Kitwe although his area included other nearby towns, and he became a familiar figure as he moved about training and supervising his workmen. He once told me how his watchword became 'Do a good job'. Some years later, when he was living and working in Luanshya in his own electrical contracting business, he was reminded of this when his foreman, with whom he was discussing the work programme and to whom he suggested a short cut, replied, 'Remember, boss, always do a good job.' Eric told the tale with relish and a degree of pride.

From Kitwe, he was able to teach the Faith and Miss Jessie Frankson, a nurse at the Government Hospital in Luanshya, became a Bahá'í in April 1955. In October of that year, Eric and Jessie were married and shortly after this, in February 1956, the couple and Terry transferred to Fisenge where they had a smallholding, raising vegetables and poultry for the Luanshya market, while Eric established himself as an electrician. Jessie had an adopted daughter, Mary, so the family of four were involved in the teaching work on the Copperbelt. This area had already been opened to the Faith by Eleanor and Lyall Hadden and their family who had gone to South Africa in December 1953 and moved to Luanshya, Northern Rhodesia, in August 1955. It was here that at Riḍván 1956 the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Northern Rhodesia was formed and a neighbouring village of Fisenge, where the first local woman embraced the Faith, was opened. After the departure of the Hadden family in October 1956, the Mantons filled the gap and proceeded to work with and encourage the believers to erect the first local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Zambia in Fisenge. Teaching was also done in Kitwe, the principal town of the Copperbelt, where the second Local Spiritual Assembly was established.

In the course of a visit to the remote North Western Province of Northern Rhodesia in 1962, Eric and Jessie observed the potential there for the spread of the Faith and called the attention of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South and West Africa to the possibilities. A project was planned and proven teachers such as Florence Muruma, William Masehla, Max Seepe and his wife, Rudolpho and Angelica Duna from South Africa, and George Mpayila from Nyasaland all spent time in the area assisting in the achievement of the one outstanding goal of the Ten Year Crusade for the Southern Africa region 'to begin the process of large scale enrolments'. By Riḍván 1963 there were 1,000 believers in the Mwini-

lunga area. Eric and Jessie were the backbone of the campaign, making many hazardous journeys of 500 miles over roads hardly worthy of the name and almost impassable in the rainy season, to reach the friends, who were themselves accepting responsibility for the spread of the Faith.

In 1964 the first National Spiritual Assembly of South Central Africa was formed. Previously this area had been under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa. The new National Spiritual Assembly was responsible for Southern and Northern Rhodesia, Bechuanaland and Nyasaland. Eric was Chairman of this Assembly until 1967 when the Universal House of Justice called for the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of Zambia (as Northern Rhodesia had become known in 1964). Eric was its first chairman, in which capacity he served for nine consecutive years, and then on several more occasions until Riḍván 1982.

During the last two years of his life, his activities were perforce curtailed, but his interest in the progress of the Cause, and his encouragement to all, never faltered. In the early hours of 12 December 1984 he passed away peacefully in his sleep, five days before his seventy-third birthday. The Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to the National Spiritual Assembly:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING FAITHFUL SERVANT DEDICATED PROMOTER FAITH ERIC MANTON. HIS OVER THREE DECADES OF DEVOTED SERVICE ON AFRICAN SOIL UNFORGETTABLE. CONVEY ALL MEMBERS HIS DEAR FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. ADVISE REQUEST ALL ASSEMBLIES ZAMBIA HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS TO HONOUR HIS NAME.
>
> ETHNA ARCHIBALD

## NIKOLAS PRINTEZIS
1921–1984

Nikolas Printezis, known to his friends as 'Nikos', was born on 17 July 1921 in Greece. In 1984, when asked how he became a Bahá'í, he dictated the following reply to a member of the History Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of Greece:

*Nikolas Printezis*

'I was working as a manager at the Delos Hotel in Athens in 1958. A beautiful lady named Ramona Brown,[1] from Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. rented a room in this hotel for a few days. At this time, Erik Blumenthal, now a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, was a pioneer in the Athens area. Erik came to visit Ramona at the hotel and their spiritual radiance impressed me. On the day she left, I asked her "What is your Faith?" and was told that she was a Bahá'í. I wanted to know about the Bahá'í Faith but she was on her way out and could not pause to explain it to me. She apologized and gave me a pamphlet which I put in the drawer of my desk. Some time later, Annie (Änni) Langenhorst and a friend of hers entered the hotel. When I saw them, I had the feeling that they had come to see me. They asked me whether Ramona had left a forwarding address and I answered that she had not. However, because of the radiance of their countenances, I felt moved to ask them if they knew about the Bahá'í Faith. They spoke to me for hours about it. After a few weeks they brought me to Erik's house and there I met Miss Ketty Antoniou, Mr. George Krustis and

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 399.

Dr. Nikolas Mavromatis, the rather new Greek Bahá'ís living in the Athens area. Three months later, at Naw-Rúz 1960, after meeting with Bahá'ís from time to time and learning more about the Faith, I became a Bahá'í.'

Later, as a result of a fall, Nikos lost entirely the sight of one eye and retained only partial vision in the other.

There were very few Bahá'ís living in Greece then, and only Dr. J. E. Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* had been translated into Greek. Nikos yearned to know more and more of the Holy Writings of the Faith and to be able to read them in his own language, and he believed that other Greeks would feel the same way. He had many Tablets and prayers translated into Greek and would write them out by hand, to read for himself and to give to his friends. He made, by hand, little prayer books and gave them as gifts. He memorized many prayers in several languages and felt just as comfortable reciting a Bahá'í prayer in Persian or Arabic as in his native Greek. Later he was given a typewriter and spent hours typing translated Writings. This was difficult work because his eyesight was so seriously impaired, but he performed the task joyfully until the end of his life.

At the beginning of the Nine Year Plan (1964–1973) some Iranian pioneers came to settle in Greece. He helped many of them to learn the Greek language. The children, who are now adults, still remember him as their loving Greek teacher. The Five Year Plan (1974–1979) brought many pioneers to Greece because its goals called for the establishment of six Local Spiritual Assemblies in order that the National Spiritual Assembly could be formed.

Nikos was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Athens for many years after its re-formation during the Nine Year Plan, and before the National Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1977 he served on the National Co-ordination Committee which functioned for three years under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany, 'mother' of the Greek community. He was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of Greece in 1977 and frequently in subsequent years. He attended the International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice in Haifa in 1978. He was elected as a delegate for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of Greece many times throughout the years and was a member of several national committees.

Nikos travelled all over mainland Greece and to the islands to sow seeds. Twice he went as a travelling teacher to Cyprus. He was very concerned with filling the goals set for Greece by the Universal House of Justice, and tried to help in every way he could.

In 1983, Nikos became the first Bahá'í born in Greece to have his Greek registration card state that his religion was Bahá'í.

Around the beginning of December 1984, Nikos suffered a sudden stroke which partly paralyzed him for a short time but from which he appeared to recover sufficiently to permit his being discharged from hospital. However, on 14 December at about 5 a.m. his heart stopped. He was buried in the third cemetery in Athens the following day with Bahá'ís from all over Greece in attendance because all knew and loved him.

On 17 December the National Spiritual Assembly received the following cable from the Universal House of Justice:

> GREATLY DISTRESSED NEWS PASSING NIKOS PRINTEZIS DEPRIVING GREEK BAHAI COMMUNITY ONE OF ITS MOST OUTSTANDING MEMBERS. CONVEY PROFOUND SYMPATHY BEREAVED FAMILY ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.
>
> NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF GREECE

## MOGAMAT ROESHDI DAVIDS
1936–1984

Mogamat Roeshdi Davids—known as Rushdi—was born in Cape Town, South Africa on 7 November 1936 into a Cape Malay family. His father, Cassiem, was a tailor and a leading layman in the local Muslim community, and he reared his children to be broadminded as he was. As a child, Roeshdi, through his warm personality, made many friends, particularly among rugby enthusiasts of whom he was one.

Roeshdi declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh in October 1961, about a month after his father had embraced the Faith. Fanatical elements in the population threatened the family and stoned

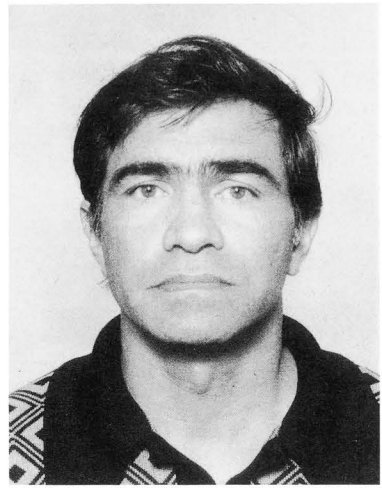
their dwelling. Cassiem was advised by the Spiritual Assembly of Cape Town to move his tailoring business to a quiet suburb. At their new home, *Al-Bayán,* the persecution continued, and business was much reduced. Roeshdi was expelled from his favourite rugby club and ostracized by many of his friends. But these experiences only strengthened the faith of these new Bahá'ís. Cassiem soon found himself secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of Cape Town, and later he served for a year on the National Spiritual Assembly.

In December 1961, Roeshdi married Gabeba Ahmed in the first Bahá'í wedding in Cape Town. He was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly in the same year, and served on that body until he and his family moved to Johannesburg in 1967. There Roeshdi continued working in the building trade, and he and his family became staunch members of the community. Their home was a centre of Bahá'í activity.

In 1971, when his father's health began to fail, Roeshdi agreed to return to *Al-Bayán* to help support the large family of two women and nine children. Cassiem passed away in January 1972, and Roeshdi and family were soon settled back at *Al-Bayán.* He took various jobs to meet these responsibilities, and eventually set up his own business so as to be freer to serve the Cause. *Al-Bayán* was a hub of Bahá'í activity, with visitors, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í, constantly coming and going. Then, as now, many happy firesides, study classes and prayer meetings took place in that house.

While ably serving on the Spiritual Assembly of Cape Town, Roeshdi assisted with the erection of the local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, and participated in the many local and extension teaching activities in the area. His resilience in the face of set-backs was remarkable.

The Continental Board of Counsellors appointed Roeshdi an Auxiliary Board member in 1976. Now, in addition to the substantial role he played in the Cape Town community, Roeshdi travelled widely, as circumstances permitted. His area of service extended over most of the Cape Province, and included the island of St. Helena. He spoke at summer schools, participated in conferences or represented the Continental Board of Counsellors at National Conventions in Botswana, Bophuthatswana, Lesotho, South-West Africa/Namibia as well as South Africa. His simple, firm and loving approach made him a popular speaker.

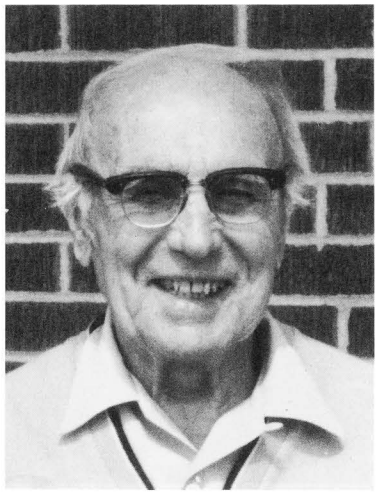


*Mogamat Roeshdi Davids*

After many months of careful saving, Roeshdi and Gabeba were able to fulfil a long-cherished desire. In October 1984, they went on pilgrimage together, and returned radiant. Then, on 15 December 1984, Roeshdi was suddenly gone. After a heart attack at a Bahá'í fund-raising occasion, he passed from this world, leaving a community saddened by his loss, but remembering his example of steadfastness and love.

Learning of his passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled on 19 December:

> SADDENED NEWS PASSING AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBER RUSHDI DAVIDS. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL. CONVEY FAMILY FRIENDS LOVING SYMPATHY.
>
> NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF SOUTH AND WEST AFRICA



*Irving Geary*

## IRVING GEARY
1887–1984
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

SADDENED LEARN PASSING KNIGHT BAHAULLAH CAPE BRETON ISLAND IRVING GEARY WHOSE DEVOTED LONGSTANDING SERVICES CANADIAN MARITIMES AND ESPECIALLY PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND EPITOMIZE TRUE DETACHMENT STEADFASTNESS PATH GOD. ASSURE FAMILY PRAYERS SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

Universal House of Justice
21 January 1985

Irving Geary was born in England on 2 February 1887. He emigrated to Canada in 1906. In Toronto, Ontario he and Grace Harmon were married in 1912. Irving was employed in the accounting office of a large department store and mail order house, the T. Eaton Company, and was transferred to Moncton, New Brunswick in 1919 to assist in the opening of the company's first mail order operation in Atlantic Canada. A son was born there in 1920 and was named George Eaton; he is now a member of the Bahá'í community of Scotland.

Mabel Ives made a teaching trip to Moncton in October 1937 to establish a Local Spiritual Assembly there. A study class she inaugurated attracted Grace and, when meetings were held in the Geary home, Irving became involved. After several months both Irving and Grace embraced the Faith and this began their life of devotion to Bahá'u'lláh.

The Spiritual Assembly of Moncton was formed in April 1938, greatly assisted by the teaching effort of Dorothy Baker, whose dedication created a lifelong impression upon Irving. That first Assembly of the Atlantic region elected Irving as its chairman. He immediately resigned from the church where he sang in the choir, and where he had so thoroughly enjoyed using his rich baritone voice to sing the anthems of praise to God. Throughout his life he continually testified to the fact that for him, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* was sufficient proof of Bahá'u'lláh's claim to be a Manifestation of God.

The first Seven Year Plan (1937–1944) was about to end and Canada's smallest province, Prince Edward Island, still had no Assembly. The National Teaching Committee asked the Gearys and others to move there just months before the plan was to end. Irving resigned an excellent and secure position many years before normal retirement age and moved to the island early in January 1944. The Assembly was formed but at great sacrifice to all those who pioneered there. Irving and Grace Geary, and Doris and Willard McKay who had pioneered from the United States, joined forces and bought a small farm to supplement their meagre savings as regular employment was unavailable.

By 1951 the Gearys were asked by the National Spiritual Assembly to move to Halifax, Nova Scotia to assist with the Assembly there. They responded immediately. While in Halifax, Irving was able to secure employment with a construction company, although he was now approaching sixty-five years of age.

Although Irving was not present with his wife when the Guardian's call for pioneers was announced at the All-America Intercontinental Teaching Conference in Chicago in 1953, Grace offered their services to pioneer to the unopened territory of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The Gearys arrived there in October 1953, and for this service were awarded by Shoghi Effendi the title Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. There was a shortage of housing at Baddeck, where they

settled, and the only available shelter during that first winter was a summer cottage inadequately insulated against the bitter cold.

Irving had learned the art of printing in old English script and over the years many of the Bahá'í friends were recipients of quotations from the Writings executed in this script and beautifully illuminated with water-colour sketches. While he was in Baddeck, Irving was asked by the local yacht club to make a permanent display of historical significance for the club.

By 1961 the call again came to the Gearys to return to Prince Edward Island, because the Spiritual Assembly of Charlottetown needed reinforcement. They moved within a short time of receiving the appeal and the Assembly was made secure.

Grace died in 1965[1] and during the period of adjustment, Irving was encouraged to apply for pilgrimage. He was invited to Haifa in 1966 and the visit brought him great joy. For many years afterwards he travelled to Summer Schools and National Conventions and visited many communities sharing his slides and tapes.

In 1970 Irving married Hilda Burgin, a devoted servant of the Faith. They offered to pioneer overseas but Hilda's infirmities proved to be too great an obstacle and they settled in Prince Edward Island. Hilda passed away in 1973.

Irving continued to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Charlottetown, of which he was for many years the able and efficient treasurer, until he entered hospital in November 1984. He died on 30 December 1984, within a few weeks of his ninety-eighth birthday.

From the day that Irving declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh he dedicated his life to the Faith. The Bahá'í community loved him dearly and he was known to everyone, young and old, just as 'Irving'. He responded with enthusiasm and warmth to the affection spontaneously showered upon him by the Iranian Bahá'í immigrants as they arrived to become part of our community.

R. D. DONNELLY

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 310.

## CLAIRE GUNG
## (CLAIRE KLEINE-GUNG)
1904–1985

DEEPLY GRIEVED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT GOD KNIGHT OF BAHAULLAH CLAIRE GUNG. HER DISTINGUISHED RECORD SERVICES HOLY CAUSE AS FIRST PIONEER LEAVE HER HOME COMMUNITY SIGNALIZING INAUGURATION AFRICAN CAMPAIGN IN RESPONSE BELOVED GUARDIANS CALL WON HER ACCOLADE MOTHER OF AFRICA. HER NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN PIONEER FIELDS IN UNITED KINGDOM TANZANIA KENYA ZIMBABWE MALAWI AND UGANDA DESERVE HIGH PRAISE PARTICULARLY HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION CHILDREN IN SPIRITUAL HEART AFRICA. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. MAY VALIANT SOULS ARISE FROM AFRICAS FERTILE SOIL FOLLOW IN HER FOOTSTEPS.

Universal House of Justice
7 February 1985

Miss Claire Kleine-Gung, a woman of frail constitution and humble worldly attainments, arose all alone and with leonine courage to pioneer for Bahá'u'lláh nine times over a period of thirty-nine years, five in the British Isles and thirty-four in Africa. Staunch in the Covenant, a lover of the Guardian, in 1950 she became the first British believer to meet his call for pioneers for Africa during the Two Year Plan (1951–53), which the Guardian had termed the first international collaboration plan in Bahá'í history.

Inspired by a deep love for the children of Africa and a lifelong dream of nurturing them, she became, in 1958, the founder and headmistress of one of Uganda's first and foremost pre-primary institutions, its first interracial nursery school and kindergarten, now being administered by the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda, to which she lovingly willed the school and all of her personal assets.

Claire was possessed of an unusual blend of qualities. Loving, motherly, and generous—especially to those in want—energetic, imaginative, unsparingly hard-working, dauntless in the face of difficulties and dangers, self-sacrificing, she was radiantly childlike in the quality of her faith, her reliance on God, her dependence on prayer and spiritual guidance, the sensitivity of her nature, her impish readiness for

*Claire Gung*

laughter, and her capacity for joy. And yet in her long years of isolation and perseverance during the cruel period of Uganda's successive military regimes, she suffered deeply through a profound and mounting sense of insecurity and personal loneliness, horror at the carnage surrounding her, and advancing ill health and age.

Claire Gung was born on 3 November 1904, in Gladbeck, Ruhrgebeit, Germany, the third of fourteen children and the only girl amongst the seven who survived to adulthood. Her birth was three months premature, at which time she weighed only three pounds. Her development was so slow that she started walking only at the age of four. Her father was an official in a coal mine; and save for the chronic 'ill-health' of her mother and the deep effect which this had on her, her childhood was not unpleasant. She was educated at a Catholic convent school and briefly at a domestic science college.

When World War I ended and Germany was plunged into economic depression, the family fortunes declined as their worldly goods were sold to meet the extreme inflation. Claire was disturbed and frightened by the troops occupying Germany; and in August 1924, at the age of nineteen, she, by her own testimony, 'ran away from home', returning thereafter only for a few brief visits.

For twenty-two years she worked either as a children's nurse or as a housekeeper, first on the continent, in Switzerland, Austria, the Italian Tyrol, Belgium, and Holland, and finally in England, the country to which she moved in 1930. She retained a deep love of the Alps throughout her life and always had pictures of the mountains and their wild flowers in her home.

Claire first heard of the Bahá'í Faith in September 1939, at the outbreak of World War II, while working for a Bahá'í, Mrs. Muriel Ward of Torquay, Devon. Mrs. Ward was dying of cancer, and her radiant acquiescence and reliance on prayer greatly impressed Claire. She became a Bahá'í in December of that year.

During the war years, Claire moved from place to place in England, evacuated several times from coastal areas as an enemy alien, an experience which deeply offended her: first to Eastleigh, Devon, then to Cheltenham where she was part of a tiny Bahá'í group, and finally to the Manchester area, where for a period she served long, hard hours in the wartime children's nurseries. Wherever she went she actively taught the Faith and served the Bahá'í community.

It was in October 1946 that Claire began her long pioneer odyssey when she moved to Northampton and became a member there of the first Local Spiritual Assembly formed during the British Six Year Plan (1944–50). Later in the Plan she pioneered to Cardiff, Wales, where she was again on the first Local Spiritual Assembly, then to Brighton, England, and Belfast, Northern Ireland. In 1947 she was naturalized as a British subject.

In Northampton Claire learned dressmaking at the French firm, Borgue. Her sewing machine was several times her sole means of support as a pioneer. Sewing opened the doors of many homes to her and enabled her to travel and teach the Faith widely. She was also most generous in caring for the children of busy Bahá'í parents and in sewing for them.

At Riḍván 1950 the Guardian announced that the British community would spearhead a two-year teaching plan for the opening of three countries in Africa (Gold Coast, Tanganyika,

and Uganda). 'Auntie' Claire, as she was to be known, was the first believer to obtain employment in Africa, as the matron in a boys' boarding school in Lushoto, Tanganyika. It was a difficult and indeed frightening decision for her to venture alone to such a distant, little developed and unknown continent, largely unopened to the Faith. She sold most of her possessions, including her precious sewing machine, to raise the money for the fare. Setting sail in December 1950, she spent virtually the entire voyage seasick in her bunk aboard the *Warwick Castle,* arriving in Tanga on 25 January 1951. To make the transition from the icy winter of Britain to the sultry heat of East Africa placed a considerable strain on her. Her spirits and determination were greatly buoyed, however, when, on arrival at the school where she was to work, a letter dated 11 January 1951, was handed to her, written by his secretary on behalf of the Guardian.

'You have voiced the same suffering, the sign of the same mystery, as has been voiced by almost all those who have been called upon to serve God. Even the Prophets of God, we know, suffered agony when the Spirit of God descended on them and Commanded them to arise and preach. Look at Moses saying "I am a stutterer!" Look at Muhammad rolled in His rug in agony! The Guardian himself suffered terribly when he learned *he* was the one who had been made Guardian.

'So you see your sense of inadequacy, your realisation of your own unworthiness, is not unique at all. Many, from the Highest to the humblest, have had it. Now the wisdom of it is this: it is such seemingly weak instruments that demonstrate that God is the Power achieving the victories and not men. If you were a wealthy, prominent, strong individual who knew all about Africa and looked upon going out there as fun, any services you render, and victories you have, would be laid to *your personality,* not to the Cause of God! But because the reverse is true, your services will be a witness to the Power of Bahá'u'lláh and the Truth of His Faith.

'Rest assured, dear sister, you will ever-increasingly be sustained, and you will find joy and strength given to you, and God will reward you. You will pass through these dark hours triumphant. The first Bahá'í going on such an historic mission could not but suffer—but the compensation will be great!'

In his own handwriting Shoghi Effendi had added: 'May the Almighty abundantly reward you for your exemplary response, guide every step you take, bless every effort you exert, and enable you to win great and memorable victories in this new field of Bahá'í activity, and thus ennoble the glorious work you have initiated in the service of His precious Faith.'

Claire spent two years as an isolated believer in Tanganyika; two years in Nairobi, Kenya, where she became a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of that country; approximately eighteen months in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, where she was a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly and was designated by the Guardian as a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh;[1] about one year in Limbe, Nyasaland; and finally, some twenty-eight years in Kampala, Uganda, where she arrived in August 1957.

In January 1955 Claire made the first of two joy-filled pilgrimages to the Holy Land; the second was in November 1971. Her meeting with her beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and his wife, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, was unquestionably the high point of her life. Her keen interest in Shoghi Effendi's gardens, her many eager questions, her delightful sense of humour, and her entirely humble attitude concerning her services to the Faith must have warmed his heart greatly. When she lamented that she had been unable to teach the Faith to anyone in Africa, he countered by stating that, on the contrary, she was the 'Mother of Africa'.

And a Mother of Africa she was to become. In 1958, entirely through her own meagre funds, personal planning, ingenuity and effort, she opened 'Auntie Claire's Kindergarten' in a rented house near the Palace of the Kabakas (Kings) of Buganda on Mengo Hill, Kampala. Starting with a handful of children, she assiduously built it up until there were eventually 190 pupils. Many were the children of distinguished parents, including the Kabaka himself, government ministers, diplomats, and other leaders in public life. Only for relatively short periods did she have the valuable help of other pioneers as employed teachers, but nonetheless the children were always taught Bahá'í prayers, standards, and principles of character through her personal efforts.

[1] See Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World* (1950–57), p. 173. Claire Gung arrived in Southern Rhodesia in October 1953.

In 1968 Claire undertook to build a large, new school, entirely with her own personal savings—the result of a blend of financial astuteness and frugal living. She took a bare minimum from the school fees in salary for her personal needs. She made many attractive and colourful toys for the school herself, from inexpensive locally obtainable materials. A timber merchant contributed unusable cut-ends of wood and a printshop its waste paper. Her many friends saved cotton reels, egg boxes, tin cans—anything which could be transformed into toys or teaching materials. She and her staff of ten Ugandans, mainly ayahs whom she had personally trained as teachers, did most of the cleaning, repairs and painting of the school. These economies gradually added up over the years and finally provided the means for erecting the new building.

Eventually the school was legally incorporated, with several Ugandan believers serving on the Board of Directors. Claire became so well known and respected that she was granted lifetime residence status by the Uganda Government, and the school remained in her hands when most other foreign enterprises were confiscated during the Amin regime. During fifteen difficult, dangerous years of civil strife, from 1971 until her death, Claire lovingly mothered and cared for both her often frightened children and distraught staff.

Claire also bought five acres of land, near the Mother Temple of Africa, and contributed them to the Faith. Part of this land was incorporated into the Temple gardens, part into the Bahá'í cemetery nearby where she is now laid to rest, and part was used for the building of a small house to which she could retreat on weekends. This building and its land she later equipped and developed into the Kikaaya Bahá'í Kindergarten, which she then gave to the Faith.

During the many years of her services to the children and parents of Africa, Claire also took a keen interest in the activities of the Faith. She carefully increased her personal Bahá'í library; attended the international conferences in Kampala, Mauritius, and Nairobi, also the World Congress in London; did travel teaching in Uganda, Rwanda, and Kenya; and deputized Ugandan believers to teach on her behalf.

Claire was known to have remarked that she was not a speaker and that at Nineteen Day Feasts she always had stage fright when she

*'Auntie Claire's Kindergarten' in Kampala, Uganda; 1970.*

wanted to say something or address the friends. However, as soon as she felt that she loved the friends just as she loved her own children at school, her inhibitions were dispelled, and she discovered she could speak forth easily and fluently.

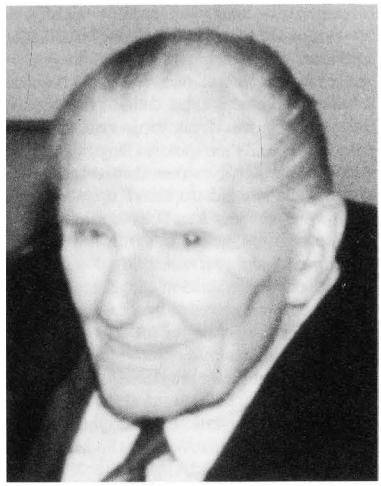
In September 1979 the Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga, his wife Elizabeth, and three of his children were brutally murdered in their Kampala home. Claire, who shortly before, after an extraordinarily accurate dream, had warned Mr. Olinga of his danger, was the only remaining pioneer in Kampala and bore a heavy burden in that grievous situation. Several times during those troublous years her own life was placed in danger, but she steadfastly refused to abandon her children or her school when the war and looting had forced all other pioneers to go.

Such reminiscences of this dear and precious soul would not be complete without reference to her sometimes highly imaginative and tenuous hold on reality, her propensity for exaggeration, and her long 'conversations' with Bahá'u'lláh during which she 'explained' to Him her problems and needs and 'received' His advice. Likewise, her delightful personal brand of English, a language which she never fully mastered, is lovingly remembered, by her many correspondents—'her fascinating malapropisms and wonderful eccentric spelling'—none of which held her back from her destined course for more than fleeting moments of self-doubt nor from her daily diary, faithfully kept for over twenty years. Her deep love of German classical music served often to cheer, comfort, and inspire her.

'Auntie' Claire passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 6 February 1985, in her eighty-first year. She had spent some months in Nairobi, Kenya, for a much needed and well deserved rest and had broken her hip in a fall from the steps of a bus. She recovered sufficiently to return to Kampala but shortly thereafter had a massive stroke which left her almost totally unconscious, paralysed, and unable to speak. She survived for only a fortnight—surely an answer to her frequent prayer not to be deprived of her physical capacities.

Her beautiful funeral was attended by a large gathering of her Bahá'í friends, her former pupils and their parents, and various Kampala dignitaries. The tenderness and indeed reverence with which she was laid to rest, and the memorial service and meeting at the House of Worship one year later, testify to the love which the people of Africa bore for this long-suffering, indomitable, caring pioneer woman.

ISOBEL SABRI



*Edward Belcher*

## EDWARD BELCHER
1900–1985

Edward B. Belcher was born in Binghampton, New York, U.S.A. on 27 January 1900. Asked by a friend how he had learned about the Bahá'í Faith he replied: 'There was a time when great and difficult family problems had brought me to a desperate state. One night I had a dream that I was standing on a street corner and a man, whose face was hidden by his tremendous spirituality and beauty, passed by me and left me overwhelmed. His beard was white. When I enrolled in the Faith and saw the photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, it was incredible—I recognized the face as that of the man in my dream!' Not long after, through a social club, he met

Howard Colby Ives—well known to Bahá'ís as the author of *Portals to Freedom*— whom he had heard speak on a number of topics of universal scope. At a club picnic Mr. Ives revealed for the first time that the themes he had spoken on were drawn from the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, and then spoke at length about the Bahá'í Faith. Mr. Ives then invited those who accepted Bahá'u'lláh to stand up. 'We were twenty-five persons,' Mr. Belcher said, 'and all of us stood up. That day was truly a wonderful day for me.' The year was 1931.

Mr. Belcher remained in Binghampton until 1938 when he pioneered to Syracuse, New York to assist in the formation of that city's first Local Spiritual Assembly which came into being the following year. He pioneered again in 1943, this time to Sioux Falls, South Dakota and later settled in Los Angeles. Learning of the need for pioneers in Latin America, he offered his services and reached Uruguay on 21 March 1955. Although he arrived in Montevideo, he immediately went to reside in Salto as the first pioneer to the interior of Uruguay. Later, he returned to the capital, remaining there until 1958 when he left to pioneer to Minas, Department of Lavalleja. There he lived with his wife, Margarita, for eight years until the first Local Spiritual Assembly of that city—the second Assembly in the country—had been firmly established. When the strength of this community was assured, he went as a pioneer to Pando, Department of Canelones, together with his wife and son, forming the first Local Assembly in that city and remaining from 1966 until his death on 11 February 1985 in his eighty-fifth year.

Mr. Belcher's close associate, Mr. A. Mandegari (Mándigárí), who came to Uruguay as a pioneer in August 1960, has written: 'My beloved friend was a teacher of English and by that means made friends with people from different social strata; he was always known as a "Bahá'í". In his left shirt pocket he always carried some Bahá'í pamphlets, which were clearly visible. We held firesides and other teaching activities in which he always participated with great enthusiasm ... My dear and well-remembered friend finally ascended to the Abhá Kingdom after serving as a pioneer for thirty years in Uruguay. He was a true example of perseverance. I had the great privilege of knowing him and he had my total admiration. I will never forget his great sense of humour; it was characteristic of him—his spirit was full of jubilation and happiness. I spent much time by his side serving on both the Local Spiritual Assembly of Minas and on the first National Spiritual Assembly of Uruguay, and I will always remember him with great fondness.'

Learning of the death of this steadfast servant, the Universal House of Justice cabled on 14 February 1985:

SADDENED PASSING EDWARD BRONLEY BELCHER DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH. PRAYING PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

(Adapted from tributes by A. MÁNDIGÁRÍ and MARGARITA B. DE BELCHER)

## ESKIL J. LJUNGBERG
1886–1985
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

PASSING DEARLY LOVED STEADFAST VALIANT KNIGHT BAHAULLAH ESKIL LJUNGBERG BRINGS CLOSE EXEMPLARY LIFE DEDICATION FORTITUDE SINGLEMINDED DEVOTION BLESSED BEAUTY. HE STAYED AT HIS POST MEETING EVERY OPPOSITION WITH LOVE AND PATIENCE WINNING HEARTS AND LAYING SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION CAUSE GOD FAROE ISLANDS. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
26 February 1985

Eskil Joachim Ljungberg was born on 20 May 1886 in the small town of Filipstad, Sweden. While still a young man he made his way to England where he was employed for more than three decades in various capacities by families belonging to the British aristocracy. He spent most of his time in London where he had ample opportunity to study his favourite subject, religion, in the reading-rooms of the British Museum. His years in England imbued him with great respect and love for English culture, and he became himself the epitome of the English gentleman, refined in his manners and impeccably courteous. Referring to that time, Eskil told of the day he was walking in a garden with the young lady to whom he was engaged to be married. They saw a distinguished-looking,

*Eskil J. Ljungberg*

greyhaired lady and he asked his fiancée who the lady was. He was told that she was an aunt who was probably 'a bit crazy', because she had 'fallen in love' with an old Persian gentleman who lived in the Holy Land. The young lady died before Eskil and she could be married; the aunt was Lady Blomfield.

Eskil's introduction to the Bahá'í Faith, however, did not take place until late in 1947 when he was staying in Stockholm, earning his living as a language teacher. It was the redoubtable Swedish pioneer, Mrs. Jennie Ottilia Anderson, who originally taught him the Faith and invited him to a meeting which was also attended by Mrs. Alice Dudley and Mrs. Beatrice Ashton. These ladies became Eskil's diligent penfriends after he arrived at his pioneering post in the Faroe Islands. In his unpublished autobiography, Eskil states that it was the Hand of the Cause Dorothy Baker, who was in Stockholm at the time he declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh, who received him into the Faith, anointing his face and hands with attar of rose. This was an unforgettable event for Eskil.

Eskil served on the newly-formed Local Spiritual Assemblies of Stockholm and later Gothenburg; but for him, as for so many other Bahá'ís, the international conference in Stockholm in 1953 proved to be the great turning point. Eskil often told the story of how, when the call came for pioneers, he felt he was literally pushed by invisible hands to the podium where he was welcomed by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery.

'I wanted to go to a warm place,' Eskil relates in his memoirs. As early as 1949 he had decided to pioneer to Casa Blanca and this move had received the approval of Shoghi Effendi. This plan did not materialize, and later on Eskil considered going to the Canary Islands. However, as so often happens with plans that seem sensible and well-conceived, Eskil, instead of going to a warm place, went to a subarctic region, the Faroe Islands, arriving there in late August 1953 and having bestowed upon him by Shoghi Effendi the honorific 'Knight of Bahá'u'lláh'. Eskil had reached the ripe age of sixty-seven, an age when most people start thinking of retiring. In September 1953 he received from the European and Asian Committee of the British Isles a letter informing him that the committee had received from Shoghi Effendi a communication reading 'Assure Ljungberg appreciation, prayers.' In another letter, through the secretary of the International Bahá'í Council, Mr. Leroy Ioas, Shoghi Effendi once again showered Eskil with words of encouragement and appreciation.

The Faroes, originally a Danish colony, is a group of islands in the North Atlantic, between Iceland and Scotland. It must have been a considerable shock for someone who had known nothing else but cultured surroundings and soulful Bahá'í gatherings, to come to what must have seemed such a desolate spot in the North Atlantic. Eskil's stately bearing and refined manners did not accord with the customs and habits of the Faroese. Many of them treated him with suspicion, and there were even rumours of his being a spy. But gradually he won the respect—even the admiration— of the population and, at the end of his life, was known as 'the venerable old Bahá'í', greatly loved by the many Faroese who had enjoyed his hospitality and become his friends.

Eskil wrote and received letters from all corners of the world. His collection comprises uncounted thousands of letters which no doubt will be an invaluable source of information to future Bahá'í historians, especially when the

history of the Faith in the subarctic regions of the North Atlantic will be written.

He rendered memorable and outstanding services to the early Icelandic Bahá'í community. He made several trips to Iceland, the first one during the summer of 1957, when he held firesides and deepenings in the apartment of Miss Marguerite Allman, the first Canadian pioneer to Iceland. Those meetings attracted an attendance of up to ninety people, an incredible number of seekers in those early years of the Faith in Iceland. The many enthusiastic entries by various seekers, in Eskil's personal guest book, is an ample testimony to his natural gift for attracting souls to the Faith. People were inspired and deeply struck by his consuming love for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

In the summer of 1961, Eskil again went to Iceland as a temporary pioneer, at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, which supported and encouraged him through its New Territories Teaching Committee, which at that time supervised and co-ordinated the teaching work in Iceland. He met with all the Icelandic believers and held private sessions and deepenings at their homes. He also came into contact with people of German origin who had settled in Iceland, some of whom became the first believers in Iceland. Among them were Miss Liesel Becker and Erica Pétursson, Eskil's dear and faithful penfriends of more than two decades.

Eskil met with many other Icelanders, most notably Mr. Kristján Eldjárn, who later became Iceland's President. Mr. Eldjárn, then a museum director, was greatly impressed with 'the old Swedish gentleman', as he fondly remembered him later, and he used to ask about Eskil whenever Icelandic Bahá'ís made presentations to the President's Office. Eskil had already presented him with a copy of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* by Dr. John E. Esslemont, which Mr. Eldjárn graciously received. In this period, probably one of the happiest and most rewarding in his life as a pioneer, Eskil also met with other notables in Iceland.

When he came to the Faroes in 1953, Eskil brought with him a vast reservoir of spiritual joy, happiness and enthusiasm, which he drew on during the long and lonely years in the islands. Reading his many letters containing spontaneous outbursts of joy and wonder, one frequently catches glimpses of ecstatic spiritual states, brought about by constant prayers and meditation. He had led a very full and active life before he came to the Faroes, and he often remarked how happy he had been in 'the olden days'; it was as though he had been thoroughly prepared for years of almost unrelieved solitude and isolation. Among the Bahá'í guests he welcomed were the Hand of the Cause Hermann Grossmann and Mrs. Marion Hofman whom he remembered in his memoirs and spoken accounts with particular fondness. Following her visit, Mrs. Hofman promptly sent to Eskil a copy of every book published by George Ronald, and these books became his constant and treasured companions in his loneliness, an invaluable source of comfort and knowledge. In addition, he occupied himself with writing his memoirs and translating Bahá'í Writings into Swedish, notably Bahá'u'lláh's *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf.*

In 1956, Eskil made contact with Mrs. Emma Reinert, the first Faroese to become a Bahá'í, an event which sustained and reassured him for many years. The arrival of the first British pioneer, Mr. Richard Bury, in 1970, gave Eskil a sense of support and the two became fast friends. Towards the end of the Nine Year Plan other Bahá'ís pioneered from England, including two families, each with a young child. Being joined by some of his Bahá'í family brought great joy to Eskil and the consequent formation, in April 1973, of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Tórshavn, the capital of the Faroe Islands, was the crowning event in his life as a pioneer. In the years that followed, more children were born to the pioneers; some pioneers left and new ones came, including more children. Eskil's love for them was wonderful to behold. Sitting with a new baby in his arms, or in the midst of a lively children's party, brought a special light to his eyes. He loved to laugh with them. The children were his dear friends, trusting him and enjoying his warm embraces.

The pioneers, the travel teachers, the visitors and the many who corresponded with him, all have special memories of the loving-kindness he poured on them. He was a true pillar of the tiny Bahá'í community in the islands, attending all its gatherings. He remained independent, living alone and looking after himself. Those who had the pleasure of visiting his simple home

treasure the memory of receiving his loving hospitality, each made to feel he was a special guest.

Eskil enjoyed good health most of his life, and kept his stately, almost regal bearing, to the end. He died on 23 February 1985 at the age of ninety-eight. During the last two weeks of his existence he had to remain in bed, his strength fading, but there were still flashes of his warm humour. He enquired about the health and well-being of everyone, and spoke about the Faith to a nurse who attended him. Friends who sat with him during his last hours describe their impression of his being received into the Abhá Kingdom by strong and loving hands. At the time of his death Eskil had served the Faith in the Faroe Islands for almost thirty-two years, all that time manifesting exemplary devotion, patience and steadfastness.

Bahá'u'lláh has written: *I swear by Him Who is the truth! Erelong will God adorn the beginning of the Book of Existence with the mention of His loved ones who have suffered tribulation in His path, and journeyed through the countries in His name and for His praise. Whoso hath attained their presence will glory in their meeting, and all that dwell in every land will be illumined by their memory.*

EDVARD T. JÓNSSON
ROY PHILBROW

## JANET WHITENACK STOUT
1907–1985

The following message sent by the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska to the World Centre on 23 February 1985, announced the passing of a most remarkable woman:

> DEARLY LOVED JANET WHITENACK STOUT FIRST ENROLLMENT ALASKA FOLLOWING OPENING TERRITORY HONOR KEMPTON 1939 PASSED AWAY THIS MORNING. OVER FORTY FIVE YEARS DEDICATED SERVICE DISTINGUISHED BY MEMBERSHIP FIRST LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY ALASKA FIRST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY FIRST PIONEER ESKIMO VILLAGE AND TOGETHER HUSBAND FIRST PIONEERS MATANUSKA VALLEY. SHE WAS FIRST EDITOR ALASKA BAHAI NEWS DEVOTEDLY SERVING THIS CAPACITY MANY YEARS. REQUEST PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL COMFORT FAMILY.

The following response was received on 26 February:

> PASSING JANET STOUT DEARLY LOVED FIRST ALASKAN BELIEVER SETS SEAL UPON DEDICATED LIFE OF UNWAVERING LOYALTY CONSTANT SERVICE BELOVED FAITH. HER RECOGNITION BAHAULLAH WAS FIRST FRUIT VALIANT PIONEER SERVICES HONOR KEMPTON AND INITIATED HISTORIC PROCESS ESTABLISHMENT GODS KINGDOM ALASKA. ANNALS THAT VAST TERRITORY ENRICHED BRIGHTENED HER LIFE. ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICES THROUGHOUT ALASKA. PRAYERS OFFERED HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL WORLDS GOD. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY FAMILY GRIEVOUS LOSS.

Nothing about Janet, who was born on 24 November 1907, was ordinary. She neither conformed to the expectations of others nor rebelled against convention. She was that rare soul, a truly independent thinker.

Even her early life was unusual. She was raised in wealth in Pelham, New York, U.S.A. While a young girl, her mother took her to Europe three times. As a teenager in the 1920s she had her own motor car and a generous allowance of which $2,000 a year was allocated to clothing alone. Janet completed finishing school and later graduated from Syracuse University. Out of her clothing allowance, she surreptitiously paid for typing and other clerical lessons in order to acquire some practical skills. She became the executive director of the New York Chapter of the American Birth Control League. While serving in that capacity, her private secretary introduced her to the Bahá'í Faith, but Janet had no serious interest in pursuing it at that time.

In her excellent and well-written article, 'In Search of a New Way of Life', which appeared in *World Order*,[1] Janet described the decision which led her to move to Alaska in 1939:

'I had lived in and near New York City all my life but gradually became very dissatisfied with the high pressure tension, the hustle and bustle, the dirt and noise, and the swarms and swarms of people ... But above all, I was fed up with the feverish intensity of "keeping up with the Joneses", with the general acceptance of false standards of worth governed by money, social position, ancestry, etc. Inspired by stories

[1] Vol. IX, No. 11, February 1944, pp. 383–88.

*Janet Whitenack Stout*

of Alaska, I set out alone for America's last frontier to find a "new way of life" . . .'

Honor Kempton had pioneered to Alaska in that same year in response to the Guardian's plea for 'nine holy souls' to arise to settle the nine remaining virgin areas of the first Seven Year Plan (1937–44). She had grown discouraged about her teaching work and wondered whether it had been a mistake for her to come; she concluded that 'miracles don't happen in Alaska.' Then she met Janet.

Janet said that she was not consciously looking for a religion. However, she records that 'On August 6th, just nine days after meeting Honor, and only five days after Honor first mentioned the Bahá'í Faith to me, I told her I wanted to be a Bahá'í.' Honor reported that she regarded Janet as her miracle.

In 1943, Janet moved to Anchorage from her pioneering post in the Eskimo village of Tulaksak in order to form the first Spiritual Assembly in Alaska. It was there that she met and married Verne Stout. Their two children, Dorothy (Arab) and Richard, were both born while they were living in Anchorage. Janet was busy with her home and children, and multitudinous Bahá'í activities, but still found time for her many other interests. With the assistance of her black friend, Blanche McSmith, she succeeded in having both the Anchorage Woman's Club and the Pioneers of Alaska become racially integrated.

Janet was secretary of the Alaska Teaching Committee in all the important years preceding the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly in 1957 and played a strategic role in the preparations for that first National Convention at which she was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly. She and Verne were two among the five members of that body who pioneered in that first year. They sold their home in Anchorage and settled first in Palmer, then five miles outside of Palmer to open up the Matanauska Valley. A Spiritual Assembly was formed there for the first time in 1960.

As the cable sent by the National Spiritual Assembly to the Universal House of Justice attests, Janet achieved an impressive array of 'firsts'. But even more impressive than her achievements was her character. She had intense and wide-ranging interests; her involvement in all Bahá'í affairs was exemplary; she had undeviating reliability; and genuine and unusually deep concern for others distinguished her relationships.

In twenty-eight years, Janet never missed a National Convention. She was one of the oldest Bahá'ís actively involved with mass teaching during the 1970s. After recovering from hip surgery a few years ago she resumed vigorous activity as a travelling teacher. In the remote village of Venetie, north of the Arctic Circle, a local resident seeing her hobble down a dirt path took pity on this woman in her seventies and cut a diamond willow walking stick for her. It became a prized possession.

Janet had a heart attack in September 1983. She realized what was happening to her and reported her thoughts during that crisis: 'I can't die now; I have too much to do!' For the next year and a half, she struggled with all her might to accomplish as much as she could. Her deteriorating physical condition and failing eyesight made it difficult, so she tried harder. On Friday, 22 February 1985, she attended a deepening class, discussed some events planned for the weeks ahead, went home to make a final entry in her diary and retired to bed. A breathing problem wakened her in the middle of the night. She called an ambulance, got dressed, woke

Verne and got into the ambulance under her own power. By 9:55 the next morning, she consummated her 'new way of life' and had finished all that she could do.

JOHN E. KOLSTOE

## LLOYD G. GARDNER
1915–1985

DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING ESTEEMED LLOYD GARDNER STALWART DEFENDER INTERESTS FAITH AMERICAS. HIS DISTINGUISHED LONGTIME SERVICE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CANADA AND MEMBERSHIP BOARD COUNSELLORS AMERICAS SINCE INCEPTION MARKED BY INDEFATIGABLE LABORS ALL ASPECTS TEACHING WORK AND COMMUNITY LIFE NOTABLY YOUTH ACTIVITIES. HIS STERLING CHARACTER HIGH INTEGRITY WARMHEARTED NATURE TOTAL DEDICATION FAITH WORTHY EMULATION. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS LUMINOUS SPIRIT ABHA KINGDOM AND SOLACE HIS SORROWING FAMILY. ADVISING ALL COMMUNITIES AMERICAS OFFER PRAYERS IN HIS NAME. REQUESTING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY UNITED STATES HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERING TEMPLE WILMETTE.

Universal House of Justice
7 March 1985

Following a meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas, held in Bolivia, and a very successful teaching trip in St. Lucia and Barbados in the Caribbean, Lloyd was hospitalized for what seemed a not unusual case of hepatitis, apparently contracted during that journey. After a month's stay in hospital his condition suddenly worsened and on the morning of 5 March 1985, with his wife and son praying at his side, he passed away.

Lloyd Gardner was born in Toronto, Canada on 16 December 1915, the youngest of four. His father, Ernest, was a talented jeweller and Lloyd began his apprenticeship in the jewellery industry at the age of fourteen, emerging highly skilled in his craft of diamond setting. He would go on in later years to establish a successful jewellery business.

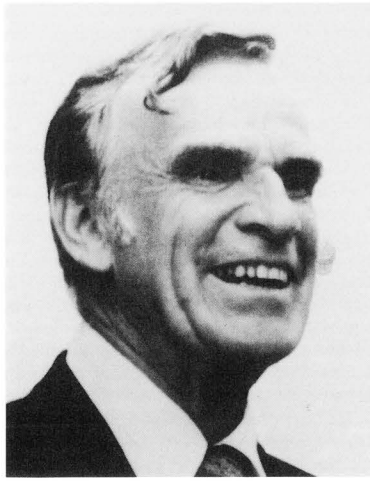
Lloyd enjoyed a lifelong love of sports and the out-of-doors. He was an avid skier and a champion tennis player. In 1937 he travelled with his best friend and tennis partner, Douglas Evans, to Camp Franklin, a young people's camp on Georgian Bay, Ontario, and it was here they first encountered the Bahá'í Faith. The owner and a staff member of the camp who were Bahá'ís introduced the two young men to the Faith and put them in contact with the small Toronto Bahá'í community which for a time included two travelling teachers, Howard Colby Ives and his wife, Mabel. With the encouragement of Doug, who tragically was to give his life in the war, Lloyd began attending the Ives's regular firesides and, as he often said, 'was loved into the Faith' by Momma Ives, whom he considered his 'spiritual mother', enrolling in 1938. The Faith very quickly became the focus and chief priority in Lloyd's existence and remained so to the end of his life.

He began his administrative service on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Toronto soon after his declaration and was instrumental in the holding of the first Canadian Bahá'í Summer School, at Rice Lake, Ontario in 1938. As one of the youngest members of the community, Lloyd played a key role in encouraging and organizing youth activities. He would combine teaching with recreational outings, taking a carload of youth skiing during the day and then to a Bahá'í lecture in the evening.

World War II brought compulsory military service to Canada's young men. In response to the directives of the Guardian, Lloyd requested non-combatant duty. He enlisted in the medical branch of the Navy and was trained as a shipboard medic. For most of the war years he was stationed in Halifax, Nova Scotia where he was able to help establish and serve on the first Local Spiritual Assembly, then an important goal of the first Seven Year Plan (1937–44).

In 1945 Lloyd was transferred to St. John's, Newfoundland and had the privilege of introducing the Faith to that new territory which, with Labrador, became part of Canada in 1949. He held a public meeting in St. John's and, being the only Bahá'í, arranged the advertising and pre- and post-publicity, acted as chairman and gave the talk. The Guardian cabled his assurance of prayers.

In the postwar years, Lloyd returned to Toronto where he resumed service on the Local Assembly and was appointed to the Canadian National Youth Teaching Committee, also continuing his close involvement with Summer and



*Lloyd G. Gardner*

Winter Schools. Jameson Bond, longtime member of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly and a close friend to whom Lloyd had introduced the Faith, recalled a canoe trip they took together at that time in the Ontario lake country. They invited along a number of young male contacts on what was perhaps the first Bahá'í teaching trip by canoe.

During this period Lloyd was a member of the Canadian Radio Committee which aired weekly Bahá'í programmes on a Toronto radio station. He served one year as a delegate to the National Convention of the United States and Canada, held in Wilmette, Illinois.

The year 1948 marked the birth of Canada's own National Spiritual Assembly which was elected in Montreal at the country's first Bahá'í national convention. Lloyd had the honour of being elected to that new body and of serving with such distinguished believers as Fred Schopflocher and John Robarts, both destined to become Hands of the Cause of God. As a member of the Canadian National Assembly in 1963, Lloyd served as a delegate to the international convention in Haifa and had the privilege of acting as a teller for the election of the first Universal House of Justice. With the exception of one year, he remained on the National Assembly for twenty consecutive years, functioning at various times as chairman, vice-chairman and treasurer, until 1968 when he was called to international service.

In the early winter of 1949 Lloyd Gardner married Helen Smith, a Bahá'í he had helped teach and with whom he had fallen in love. Thus began a spiritual union and teaching partnership, dedicated to Bahá'u'lláh, which would lead many souls to the Faith.

After their marriage, Helen and Lloyd pioneered to North York, Ontario and then in 1951 to Oshawa, Ontario helping to form those cities' first Local Spiritual Assemblies. The family home remained in Oshawa where they were living when their children, Nancy and David, were born. For many years the Gardners' weekly Saturday evening firesides were a centre of teaching in the Oshawa area, with hundreds attending, particularly youth, and many declarations resulting.

Lloyd's pioneering in Bahá'í administrative service entered a new chapter in 1968 when he was appointed by the Universal House of Justice to the newly-established Continental Board of Counsellors in North America and continued with his appointment in 1980 as Trustee of the Continental Fund for the Americas. His responsibilities for the Board of Counsellors took him to many parts of the Americas, from Greenland to South America, but most of all required countless days and evenings of paper work which he continued from his hospital bed until three days before his passing.

Lloyd Gardner's life was one of tireless labour—as a young man acquiring his skills as a craftsman, later struggling to build a successful business, but most of all in his dedicated service to Bahá'u'lláh. Lloyd was known by his friends, business associates and the Bahá'ís as a true gentleman. He led a balanced life—a love for his Faith complemented by a love for his family, the depth of which I feel helpless to describe.

Lloyd's friend and colleague, Jameson Bond, has written: 'Forty years after we met, Lloyd unexpectedly ascended to the Abhá Kingdom. The deeply moving tribute about his life and services from the Universal House of Justice moved all hearts. What his many friends and admirers had long recognized in its various aspects, was now summarized in a single magnificent statement. The full significance of his

services will only become known by future generations. This glorious soul, after almost half a century of exemplary, distinguished labours for the Cause he loved so well, is now released to continue, from his exalted station in the next world, his blessed influence on the development of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.'

DAVID L. GARDNER

*Julius A. G. Edwards*

## JULIUS A. G. EDWARDS
1902–1985
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Julius Augustus George Edwards was born on 2 January 1902 in Cannon Hall District, St. Mary's, Jamaica. He was very active in Jamaican national life and energetically associated with groups whose aim was to increase and improve social opportunities for the black people of his country. Married three times, he had five sons and two daughters.

'This distinguished gentleman,' says a report about Mr. Edwards in the April 1985 issue of *Bahá'í News* published by the National Spiritual Assembly of Grenada. 'before becoming a Bahá'í, had founded the Jamaica Economic-Socio Society, acted as chairman of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), served as an adviser to two Prime Ministers of Jamaica and had twice represented Marcus Garvey, for whom he was personal secretary. But after accepting Bahá'u'lláh, he distinguished himself in service to the Bahá'í Faith.' On one occasion, Mr. Edwards accompanied Dorothy Baker, who at the time was secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and was later appointed a Hand of the Cause of God, to a regional teaching conference in El Salvador at which he was requested to act as chairman. He is well-known for his teaching activities for the Cause in his country, particularly in Spanishtown.

On 29 August 1953, Mr. Edwards left Kingstown to answer the call of the Guardian for pioneers to settle in virgin territories in the Ten Year Crusade, a service for which he was named by Shoghi Effendi a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. His assigned area was Northern Territories Protectorate on the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and he arrived at Tamale on 29 September 1953. Mr. Edwards was able to establish the first Bahá'í group of Tamale and he also did considerable teaching in Kumasi. However, due to government restrictions he was forced to leave Tamale from whence he proceeded to Liberia where he resided until 1977. It should be mentioned that on 7 January 1956, Mr. Edwards was awarded a special citation by His Excellency William V. S. Tubman, President of Liberia, in recognition of his service to that country, and that he influenced the President to include a visit to the Bahá'í Centre in Haifa on the occasion of his official visit to Israel in June 1962. A photograph of President Tubman and Mrs. Tubman taken with the Hands of the Cause Residing in the Holy Land following their visit to the Shrines of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá on 28 June 1962 is found on page 250 of vol. XIII of *The Bahá'í World.* President Tubman subsequently received the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum during her safari in Africa in 1971.

Mr. Edwards was prominent in his teaching efforts for the Faith, holding public meetings

and special gatherings. In 1960 he married his third wife, Vera Keens-Douglas,[1] of Grenada, whom he had taught and enrolled in the Faith while she was visiting Monrovia with her aunt. She was a wonderful support to him in the subsequent seventeen years that he spent teaching in Liberia, and travelling for the Cause to other West African countries. He will be remembered for his valued efforts to assist in the construction of the Bahá'í Centre of Dolo's Town, Liberia.

On 20 December 1979, with his wife, Vera, Mr. Edwards left Liberia and settled in her native Grenada, arriving in February 1980. Here they continued their active service to the Bahá'í Faith, particularly in the St. Andrew's area. Vera Edwards died on 19 November 1981 and Julius Edwards on 17 March 1985. In its cable of 20 March the Universal House of Justice bestowed the following accolade:

> GRIEVED PASSING JULIUS A. G. EDWARDS EARLY BELIEVER JAMAICA KNIGHT BAHAULLAH NORTHERN TERRITORIES PROTECTORATE AND PIONEER TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS LIBERIA. HIS LONG RECORD SERVICES AFRICA CARIBBEAN HAVE ENRICHED ANNALS CAUSE. KINDLY CONVEY FAMILY CONDOLENCES ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.
>
> (Adapted from a memoir by the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF GRENADA)

## ORPHA DAUGHERTY
1912–1985

Orpha Maud Hiller was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado, U.S.A., in 1912, one of seven children. Although she was raised as a Christian, she became a firm atheist at age fourteen when her teacher told her it was impossible to reconcile science with the Bible. Later, during a troubled period in her life, she found several Bahá'í books in a Honolulu library. She studied the Faith by herself before ever meeting a Bahá'í. Orpha was accepted into the Faith in 1944 and for the next forty-one years served it indefatigably.

*Orpha Daugherty*

When she was a young girl, Orpha's family moved to Seattle, Washington where, while still in her teens, she married Will Daugherty, a man thirty years her senior, and moved with him to Hawaii. A son, Marc, was born of this union. After a few years, irreconcilable differences forced Orpha to leave her husband and she returned to Seattle in 1945.

Agnes Alexander was Orpha's first Bahá'í teacher. They spent many hours together during the first year of Orpha's life as a Bahá'í in Hawaii. Later on she met Dorothy Baker whose advice and example set the tone for Orpha's services to the Faith until the end of her life.

For sixteen years Orpha served the Cause in the United States in various localities including Seattle, Washington; Little Rock, Arkansas; Chicago, Illinois; and Durham and Raleigh, North Carolina. She gave innumerable public and fireside talks, and supported herself and her young son, most often by writing advertising copy for radio stations.

In 1960, heeding the call for pioneers for the Ten Year Crusade, Orpha settled in the Philippines, living on the island of Cebu and finding employment at a radio station. She also hosted two television programs during the infancy of television broadcasting in Cebu City

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, p. 778.

and although she could not directly mention the Faith while on the air, she always sought to address higher principles on her programs. In the autumn of 1962, with the encouragement of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, Orpha, then fifty years of age, left Cebu to join the mass teaching work in the villages of central Luzon, valiantly enduring every hardship and deprivation. The villagers would often remark that she was as persevering as a water buffalo, a beast she sometimes rode on her teaching trips. Today there are many young women throughout the tribal and village regions of central Luzon named after Orpha.

Orpha was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Philippines which was formed in 1964. Then she was struck by lymphatic cancer and with the help of friends returned to the United States where she underwent experimental treatment and was cured. After making her pilgrimage to the World Centre she returned to the Philippines and not long after was appointed by Dr. Muhájir as his Auxiliary Board member for Eastern Asia.

She moved to Thailand in 1965 and while there ventured into the uplands of Laos, visiting the hill tribes of that country. She traveled to Sarawak and Brunei where she would journey by canoe up rivers that flow from the great rain forests, teaching the Faith in the longhouses of the Iban people. She also lived in Ceylon for a time, and traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia. In October 1967, while Orpha was attending the Intercontinental Teaching Conference in New Delhi, it was decided that she would move to Taiwan where she remained until 1969 when, in response to the request of the Continental Board of Counsellors, she moved to Macau in order to promote the teaching of the Faith there. But she had long since felt the urge to return to her work in radio, in keeping with a letter she had received written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by his secretary in April 1949 encouraging her to use her writing abilities in proclaiming the Faith through mass media. After much soul searching, she resigned her position as Auxiliary Board member in 1970 and returned to the Philippines. Here, and later in Hiroshima, Japan where she settled in 1974, she wrote forty-five one-minute mini-dramas and nineteen fifteen-minute midi-dramas which were produced by a good friend and later distributed to many National Spiritual Assemblies.

In 1982 Orpha moved to Korea where she wrote feature articles for a Korean English-language wire service. Until the end of her life she continued writing dramas and creating children's material on her rusty old typewriter.

During the last year of her life, Orpha became very tired and every movement was an effort. Nevertheless, in October 1984, when she was in her seventy-second year, she once more climbed a mountain to bring the message of Bahá'u'lláh to the Chong Hak Dong—the People of the Pure White Crane—a community of people who, about half a century ago, isolated themselves on a Korean mountaintop to await word of a great prophet. Orpha's presence, and the effort she had made to bring them this word, greatly impressed the elders of that gathering. Many became Bahá'ís. She was a unique teacher, generous of spirit, curious, open-minded, loving, without prejudice and keenly aware of the greatness of the Cause. Bringing people to Bahá'u'lláh was what she lived for.

Orpha's last months in Korea were filled with severe difficulties. A Korean newspaper had hired her and she went to Japan to await a visa to enter Korea. But she was refused a working visa on the grounds of advanced age. She returned to Korea to determine her next move and welcomed an invitation from the Bahá'ís of Taiwan to come and share her knowledge of mass teaching. Her spirits were further renewed by receipt of a cable from the Universal House of Justice saying DELIGHTED PROSPECT SERVICES TAIWAN ... She left Korea on 17 April 1985.

The last two weeks of her life in Taiwan were filled with activity. She met with the National Spiritual Assembly at their request to discuss teaching; she gave a fireside talk to which forty people came; and she moved to Hsin Tien before Riḍván to become the ninth member of a Local Spiritual Assembly. Then suddenly, during preparations for the national convention, she suffered a stroke. Practically her last conscious words were addressed to her doctor, a Seventh Day Adventist, to whom she said, 'Do you know that Bahá'u'lláh is the awaited return of Christ?' Orpha had always wanted to die 'with her boots on'. Three days later, on 30 April 1985, she passed away. Her earthly frame was buried in Chungli on the twelfth day of Riḍván, 142 B.E. Counsellor Vicente Samaniego, who first heard of Bahá'u'lláh from Orpha, delivered the

eulogy. Orpha had often stated that the Chinese were her 'greatest love', and she longed to return to them. And so she did. A new teaching campaign in Taiwan was dedicated in her name.

From the United States to the tribal areas of the Philippines and Sarawak, from Korea and Japan to India and Sri Lanka, Orpha Daugherty had served her Lord in seventeen countries. Upon her passing the Universal House of Justice cabled on 1 May:

> HEARTS SADDENED NEWS PASSING ORPHA DAUGHERTY LONG TIME PIONEER TEACHER PHILIPPINES EASTERN ASIA. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL WORLDS GOD.
>
> JAMES MANGAN, MARC DAUGHERTY, JACK DAVIS

*Samson Knowlton*

## SAMSON KNOWLTON
1902–1985

The Bahá'ís of Canada were grieved to learn of the passing of Samson Knowlton on 28 April 1985, in his eighty-third year. Samson and his wife Rosie, who died in 1982, were among the first six members of the Peigan Nation, one of the three branches of the Blackfoot tribe, to proclaim their faith in Bahá'u'lláh. Their acceptance of the Faith in 1958 resulted from a visit to southern Alberta of the Hand of the Cause John A. Robarts. The Knowltons quickly became effective Bahá'í teachers, assisting in the formation in April 1961 of the first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Peigan Reserve.

Samson was also a member of the Band Council, and was instrumental in the passing of a resolution to permit Bahá'ís to visit and teach the Faith on the Peigan Reserve. He made many teaching trips throughout North America, fostering a spirit of harmony between native and non-native communities.

In 1960, Samson accompanied Canada's first native Senator, James Gladstone, a Blood Indian, to Ottawa to present to the federal Government a proposal urging it to extend to native people the right to vote in federal elections. He was also instrumental in having eliminated the 'permit system' which prevented Indians from leaving the reserve.

The Knowlton home quickly became known as a centre of Bahá'í activity. In the spring of 1960 it was blessed with a visit from the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum who, in a moving ceremony, was given the Blackfoot name *Natu-Okcist* (Blessed Mother) by the Peigan Elder, Charlie Crow Eagle. Samson considered her visit a most significant part of his experiences as a Bahá'í, and enjoyed sharing his memory of it with all who came to enjoy the hospitality of his home.

The Hand of the Cause Ḥasan M. Balyúzí visited the Knowlton home in 1961. Many other well-known Bahá'ís, including members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly, also enjoyed the warm atmosphere of Samson's home.

Samson was greatly concerned about the well-being of his community and felt deep love for its members, especially the elders. He took care of the old people by keeping them supplied with firewood and fresh water.

The Bahá'ís will miss the annual picnic held at the Knowlton home. These were occasions when friends came from near and far to share friendship, music and spiritual enrichment. Always, upon departing from regular Feasts,

weekly firesides and study classes, the friends received a sincere invitation to come back soon, and they knew that Samson's door, as well as his heart, was always open.

The Bahá'í community has lost the physical presence of a strong pillar of the Faith, but his added force in the Abhá Kingdom will be urging us onward with his steadfastness, courage, patience and love.

(Adapted from *Bahá'í Canada,* Vol. 7, No. 3, August–September 1985)

*Daniel Randrianarivo*

## DANIEL RANDRIANARIVO
1924–1985

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DANIEL RANDRIANARIVO. MAY DEVOTED SERVICES HIS FELLOW COUNTRYMEN ADD JOY AND PRIDE HIS SPIRIT ABHA KINGDOM. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL. ASSURE RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY.

Universal House of Justice
3 June 1985

Daniel Randrianarivo was born to a Christian family on 16 December 1924 in Ambovombe Tulear, Madagascar, and was one of seven children. After attending elementary school and taking business training he was employed in a bank and then worked as an accountant for the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Measures.

In April 1953 Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff arrived as a pioneer in Madagascar. Among the people she attracted to the Faith was Daniel Randrianarivo. He did not, however, immediately declare his acceptance of the Cause. 'But', writes Gilbert Robert, who was also resident at that time in Madagascar, 'I can never forget the miraculous time when Daniel came on foot, at midnight, to knock at the door of my flat where Mrs. Munsiff was staying. This event took place on 17 January 1954. I remember that before going to bed that night, Mrs. Munsiff had explained to us that the sadness we had noted on her face was not due to her imminent departure. Of course, our acceptance of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh had made her happy, she said, but she could not forget that she had come to Madagascar not only to share her spiritual treasure with French people, but especially with the Malagasy people. Since she had not been able to convince any of them, she felt sad because she had not fully accomplished her mission.

'Bahá'u'lláh heard the sighs of His devoted servant, for that night she was awakened by the knock of a shy young Malagasy man who was convalescing from an illness. Her visitor had come to return the book *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* by Dr. John E. Esslemont that she had lent him during a visit to a hospital, and also to ask her what he had to do to become a Bahá'í. Daniel signed his declaration card the next day, twenty-four hours before the departure of his spiritual mother.

'This courageous young man beautifully exemplified five virtues: punctuality, patience, courtesy, gentleness and humility. His two passions in life were studying the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith and sharing them with others. He was a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Tananarive which was formed on 21 April 1955, and he served on it for many years.' In addition, he served as assistant secretary on various committees and participated in the re-formation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Mangatany. He was married to R. Jeanne d'Arc in 1978 at the National Bahá'í Centre. Two children were born to them, a son

who passed away in his second year, and a daughter, Razafinoro Lalatiana Marie Jeanne.

'Upon learning of the passing of Daniel Randrianarivo,' Mr. Robert continues, 'I rejoiced for him and for the distinction that was his. Bahá'u'lláh chose him to be the first Malagasy to guide the inhabitants of Madagascar to the royal path that leads to the Light. And thus, Daniel Randrianarivo wrote his name on the first blank page of the new history of his island. May the light of the Abhá Kingdom illumine forever this courageous, sincere and humble soul.'

## EVE B. NICKLIN
1895–1985

On 10 June 1985, after forty-four years of pioneering service, Eve Blanche James Nicklin, the spiritual mother of Peru and one of the first Bahá'í pioneers to South America, abandoned this earthly life at her post in Lima, following a long illness.

Eve was born in Illinois on 25 January 1895. She trained at a Methodist Missionary School in Kansas City, Kansas and then was stationed as a deaconess in New Castle, Pennsylvania. She attended a Bahá'í talk given in a public library by Howard Colby Ives. Subsequent visits to the Ives' farm for discussion of the Faith reinforced her initial favorable impression and she soon was a Bahá'í. Inspired by Martha Root, she entered the vanguard of those who answered the call of the beloved Guardian for pioneers to arise in the first Seven Year Plan (1937–44).

'My first experience as a pioneer began long before the Crusading years,' Eve wrote, referring to Shoghi Effendi's subsequent Ten Year Crusade. In 1937, she made her initial attempt to pioneer to South America, the city of Bahia, Brazil being her assigned goal. Her efforts to secure a visa were frustrated by local political disturbances and after a brief period of service she was reluctantly forced to return home where she impatiently awaited another opportunity for pioneering service. 'Finally I received word from the National Spiritual Assembly that as Peru was virgin territory for the Faith, would I consider going there. To me it made no difference where I went when it meant I could go. So in the year 1941 I went to Peru, which has become my "other country" ...'

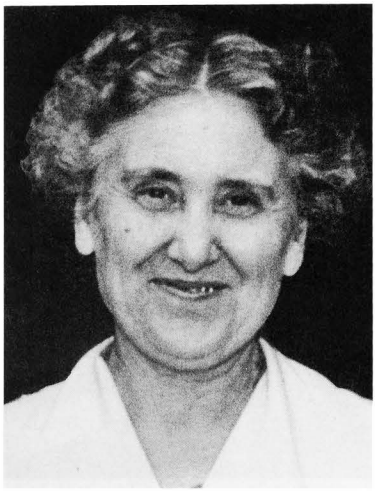
She arrived in Lima as a shining example of courage: she was forty-six years of age, unable to speak Spanish, without friends in Peru, and with very little money. Later she was to say of the Peruvians, 'They have become my people.'

Eve soon began teaching English and with her students formed the 'Club Universal' to promote the Bahá'í principles which she exemplified so admirably in her own life. The first Peruvian to become a Bahá'í was Mrs. Isabel Barrera. She was soon followed by others, and on 20 April 1944, the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Peru was formed in Lima. 'This has been a very happy year for me as it has seen the birth of the first Peruvian Assembly,' she wrote to a friend. 'The Guardian wrote me that it was a very historical date. I have what I've always dreamed of—a lovely little two-room apartment—with people dropping in for tea and talking about the Faith ...'

In 1948, with the approval of Shoghi Effendi, Eve went to Punta Arenas, Chile to strengthen the work there. The Guardian wrote to her through his secretary before her departure, appending in his own hand, 'May the Almighty abundantly reward you for your outstanding services, remove all obstacles from your path, assist you to extend continually the range of your historic accomplishments, and enrich the record of your magnificent activities in Latin America.' Returning to Peru, she resided in Callao where a Local Assembly was formed in 1949. Thereafter, she helped to establish and/or consolidate Bahá'í communities in the Peruvian cities of Arequipa, Cuzco, Trujillo and Ica.

In 1949 Eve helped form 'CEBSA', the first continental teaching committee in South America, and in 1950 she was invited to Wilmette to attend the Centenary observance of the Martyrdom of the Báb.

In 1951 Eve was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of South America at the National Convention in Lima. This was the consummation of her efforts. She wrote of it, 'The hotel where this great event took place was right on the same street where I had first lived upon arriving in Lima. Naturally my thoughts went back to those days of struggle with the language, the climate, the loneliness, when I was trying to make contacts; back to all those things that a pioneer has to confront



*Eve B. Nicklin*

in the field. But what a difference it made on that day! I could regard all those tests as pure happiness ...'

Eve spent a year in Uruguay (1952–53) and two and a half years in Paraguay (1953–55). None of these uprootings was easy for Eve or the local believers. Eve confided that in view of her affection for the Peruvian friends who were new in the Faith, and her concern that in her absence they might fall away from it, she would not have found it possible to go to Punta Arenas in 1948 had it not been, as she recorded, that 'the beloved Guardian understood my fears and wrote me a beautiful letter in which he said that I shouldn't be afraid and that he would pray for Peru while I would be gone.'

In 1953, after attending the public dedication of the House of Worship in Wilmette, Eve accompanied the Hand of the Cause Valíyu'lláh Varqá on his visit to several South American countries.

When she returned to Peru in 1955, Eve lent assistance to the work of teaching the indigenous peoples around Arequipa. In 1958 she was asked to return to Paraguay where she remained until 1962 when she again returned to Peru, this time to help with indigenous teaching around Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incas. Ever eager to be in the thick of teaching, even though she was then past eighty, Eve went in February 1977 to Ica, Peru to help with the teaching work there. She spent her final years at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Lima, surrounded by her spiritual children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all of whom loved and admired her. Ellen Sims who served with Eve in Paraguay wrote of her, 'Eve Nicklin has the special quality of imbuing new pioneers with her love and understanding of the Latin Americans. Her immediate efforts to orient me taught humility, insight, patience and, above all, esteem and love for the Latin peoples. That orientation sustained me throughout the Ten Year Crusade.'

Eve Nicklin lived for teaching the Cause, and her manner of teaching was exemplary. She always taught with visual aids, teaching books that she herself prepared by cutting out colored pictures from magazines to illustrate the Bahá'í principles. In a tribute paid to Eve towards the end of her life, Mario Laón stated, 'Not with words or with visual aids alone does Eve teach, but through her presence she continues to inspire future generations of Bahá'ís in service to the Cause, being a living example residing there in the National Bahá'í Center. She is an example of self-sacrifice, one who it would clearly seem has tried to live the exhortation of the Master, *Look at me, follow me, be as I am ... You must die to yourself and to the world ... Behold the candle, how it gives its light. It weeps its life away, drop by drop, in order to give forth its flame of light.*'[1]

Her life was centered in the Faith and the Bahá'ís were her family. In 1952 she wrote to a friend, 'If you will permit me, I shall tell you that I have known loneliness that could not have been borne but for the knowledge that this work was above one's personal sufferings or feelings. What has happened now? In every country where I may travel, there is my family, a family that can't be compared with any physical one ...' Her travels were wide-ranging, and often were undertaken in relation to her work as a member of the Auxiliary Board on which she served from 1965. In 1971 she wrote from

[1] Recorded by May Maxwell in her pilgrim notes published as *An Early Pilgrimage* (George Ronald, Publisher).

Paraguay, 'I'm planning to attend some meetings in Lima, Peru in December which will take me back to my old "stomping ground" ... I have lived in six different cities in Peru ... I have been back three times to live in Peru. And this is the third time I've lived in Paraguay. I've lived in Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, and have made visits to all the other South American countries, including some of the islands and the Guianas. Just an "auld gadabout", *no es verdad* [isn't it the truth]?'

Eve's was the first voice to pronounce the greeting 'Alláh-u-Abhá in Peru; she witnessed the first Bahá'í funeral there in 1944, and the first Bahá'í wedding in 1946. She helped establish the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Peru, and when she died, forty-four years later, there were almost 600 Spiritual Assemblies in that country.

Her grave is in the British Cemetery in Callao, near the resting-places of such other Bahá'í heroes as Counsellor Raúl Pavón, John Stearns and Fidel Flores. More than one hundred people, young and old alike, attended the service, lovingly reciting prayers. Dr. Guillermo Aguilar and Auxiliary Board member Mercedes Sánchez, eminent alumni of the 'Club Universal' who were among the first of Eve's spiritual children, presented stirring eulogies.

Informed of her passing, the Universal House of Justice on 12 June 1985 cabled:

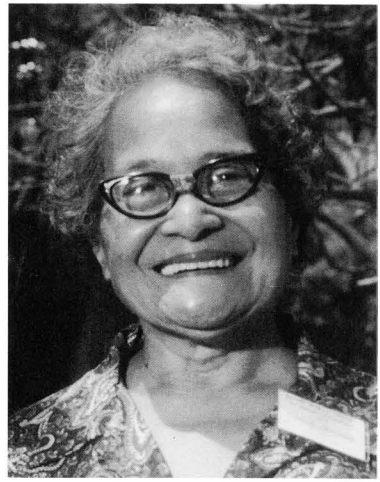
> SADDENED LEARN PASSING AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBER EVE NICKLIN DEVOTED STEADFAST HANDMAID ABDULBAHA HER MANY YEARS DISTINGUISHED SUCCESSFUL SERVICES SOUTH AMERICA ARE BEFITTING MEMORIAL HER TOTAL CONSECRATION CAUSE BAHAULLAH. CONFIDENT LOVING WELCOME ABHA KINGDOM. PRAYING SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS SOUL.

Adapted from a memoir by THOMAS LYSAGHT

## ROSE MAKWELUNG
1912–1985

Her unswerving devotion to the Bible led Rose Makwelung directly into the Bahá'í Faith.

Born on 18 August 1912 at Tabituea, Kiribati (formerly Gilbert Islands) of Gilbertese parents—her father a Mission-educated Protestant minister—Rose Kaumai was adopted at age three by a member of the American Board of Foreign Missions, 'Mother' Jessie Hoppin, whose surname she acquired. Upon her marriage in 1945 on Kosrae (formerly Kusaie) to Tulensa Makwelung of that island in the Eastern Carolines, she became Rose Makwelung, and was known by this name for the rest of her life.



*Rose Makwelung*

Rose was educated in mission schools, first on Kosrae, later on Jaluit in the Marshall Islands, and finally at Forsythe Memorial School in Los Angeles, U.S.A. where she spent ten years and from which she graduated in 1932. Upon invitation of the American Board to assist a missionary family who were assuming Miss Hoppin's post at Jaluit, Rose returned to the islands of Micronesia in 1933 and began her work as a Mission school teacher, unaware that she was embarking upon a forty-year career in education and related fields that would bring her renown both within and beyond Micronesia. She continued teaching at Mission schools on Jaluit and Kosrae until the start of World War II when the occupying forces placed her in charge of Japanese classes for children of war labourers in Kosrae. After the war she organized a school system for Kosrae and was at its head until 1952 when she moved to Pohnpei

(formerly Ponape), also in the Eastern Caroline Islands, where she continued in government service. Gradually her involvement in education broadened to include women's interests and community development. She worked continuously to raise the status of women and the family. She promoted various measures including better nutrition and sanitation to improve the life of her fellow citizens. Over the years she represented the Trust Territory Government, of which Micronesia was a part, at various conferences, particularly in Asia. In 1961 she was awarded a United Nations Fellowship grant to observe community programs in the Philippines, India and Ceylon.

At the time of her death on Kosrae on 16 June 1985, newspapers of the area made reference to 'beloved Rose Makwelung'. In a cable sent to other Heads of State of the Federated States of Micronesia, Governor Yosiwo P. George described her death as 'AN IRREPARABLE LOSS' and continued '... ALL KOSRAE GRIEVES AT PASSING OF KOSRAE'S FOREMOST AND PIONEER EDUCATOR ... HER LIFELONG DEDICATION ... EDUCATION AND CIVIC ACTIVITIES GRATEFULLY RECOGNIZED.' Governor Resio S. Moses of Pohnpei stated, 'She was before her time ... If all of us were like her, I don't think the world would ever know war.' Bahá'ís with whom she was associated described her qualities of character as 'unfailing courtesy, humility, generosity, forbearance, understanding—and a love of God shown in her acts of service to her fellowmen.' Wherever she went, her manner was mild and gentle.

Rose first encountered the Bahá'í Faith in 1955 when she was shown passages from the Bahá'í Writings which had been selected for translation into Kusaiean. This was the single Micronesian language goal of the Ten Year Crusade, and one of three of the island languages spoken by Rose, along with English and Japanese. A preliminary Kusaiean version had been made; at the request of the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Eastern Carolines, Virginia Breaks, Rose put the translation into final form, thus making possible the early fulfillment of an important task of the Crusade. She continued to show a moderate interest in the Cause, but was not yet ready to embrace it. Some time after the above-mentioned event, Rose renewed her interest in the Bahá'í Writings while recuperating from eye surgery on Guam. Not yet allowed to use her eyes, she listened intently, night after night, as her hostess, Cynthia R. Olson, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Mariana Islands, read from William Sears' *Thief in the Night*. With her thorough knowledge of the Bible, Rose would consider each reference, then nod her head in assent. This continued until one evening as they were about mid-way in the book, she suddenly raised her arms and exclaimed, 'Enough! I believe!'

From that time forward, Rose studied and taught the Bahá'í Faith with all her heart and soul. To become identified as a Bahá'í in that part of Micronesia demanded courage and complete conviction. Rose did not waver, in spite of opposition from family and friends, and extended her Bahá'í teaching beyond the Eastern Carolines to include special projects in the Marshalls.

As a consequence of being elected in 1972 to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the North West Pacific Ocean, serving the Caroline, Marshall and Mariana Islands, Rose attended, in 1973, the third International Bahá'í Convention in Haifa, the first Micronesian to visit the Bahá'í World Centre, pray at the Shrines and participate in the election of the Universal House of Justice. Upon her return, she spoke before Bahá'í gatherings in various centers of Micronesia. During these talks she commented that she had come to realize what a challenge it is for the Bahá'ís to have their lives become as beautiful as the Holy Places on Mount Carmel which had moved her so deeply.

Retiring from government service in March 1973, Rose set for herself a daily schedule of translating the Writings as well as teaching the Faith. In 1980 she moved from Pohnpei, the locale of most of her career activity, to Kosrae, the island she called home. In a life summary written by request at that time, she recounted her personal goals as she had outlined them early in life: 'Ten years or more for the Mission, ten years or more for the government—and the rest of my years on my own.' 'But,' she concluded, 'it seems that Bahá'u'lláh has other plans for me. I'm more than happy to let Him make use of me for the rest of my years! I only regret that it has to be the last ten years and not the first years.'

And she did indeed devote her final years to Bahá'u'lláh. Joined on Kosrae by a Bahá'í pioneer, they worked persistently to establish

the Faith on that island. As a result of their efforts and the previous teaching there, the Spiritual Assembly of Malem, Kosrae came into being at Riḍván 1984. Rose was still a member when she departed from this earth the following year.

Said pioneer Clint Frierson upon her passing, 'Some day Kosrae will recognize this lady's greatness. Bahá'u'lláh will not allow her to be forgotten.'

CYNTHIA R. OLSON

*Nadereh Nabil-Akbar Toufigh*

## NADEREH NABIL-AKBAR TOUFIGH (NÁDIRIH NABÍL-I-AKBAR TAWFÍQ) 1902–1985

*O Companion of My Throne!*
*... Live then the days of thy life, that are less than a fleeting moment, with thy mind stainless, thy heart unsullied, thy thoughts pure, and thy nature sanctified, so that, free and content, thou mayest put away this mortal frame, and repair unto the mystic paradise and abide in the eternal kingdom for evermore.*

This beautiful passage from the Persian *Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh most eloquently describes the life of Nádirih Khánum Nabíl-i-Akbar Tawfíq and, befittingly, it adorned the opening page of the little memorial pamphlet, that was distributed by her family to the many who attended her solemn funeral. She had gained the love, respect and admiration of everyone who knew her, and had enriched the lives of those with whom she had come into contact. Her name, 'Nádirih', means 'rare' or 'precious', and her maiden name, 'Nabíl-i-Akbar'—the title Bahá'u'lláh bestowed upon her grandfather, the recipient of the Tablet of Wisdom[1]—embodies the meaning 'noble'. In her life, Nádirih was true to her name: she was noble in character and unique in many ways. Her life was devoted to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and she had a resolute commitment to serve it, especially through spreading its healing message. She was both a good student and a good teacher, and throughout her life she continued to broaden her knowledge not only of the Bahá'í Faith but of other religions, as well as art, crafts, music, science, gardening, cooking and languages. She took pleasure in sharing her knowledge with others.

Nádirih, the eldest of seven children, was born on or about 26 December 1902 into an illustrious Bahá'í family in Ṭihrán. Her father, Shaykh Muḥammad-'Alí-i-Qá'iní, an eloquent and learned champion of the Faith, was one of the nineteen Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh.[2] Her mother, Ḍíyá'íyyih Khánum, was the only daughter of the erudite Áqá Muḥammad-i-Qá'iní, surnamed Nabíl-i-Akbar, who in addition to being named an Apostle of Bahá'u'lláh was referred to by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as a Hand of the Cause of God.[3] One cannot help thinking of the great influence, by association and example, that those holy souls must have had in shaping the character and the aspirations of Nádirih as she grew up in 'Ishqábád, Russian Turkistan, where, as directed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, her father had moved to take

[1] See 'Lawḥ-i-Ḥikmat', *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, pp. 135–52.

[2] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. III, pp. 80–81.

[3] See *Memorials of the Faithful*, pp. 1–5; *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 446.

charge of the education of children in the Bahá'í school. Nádirih finished her formal education in that school and later taught there.

In 1924, while still in 'Ishqábád, she married Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Tawfíq, a devoted and distinguished Bahá'í, and eventually they moved to Ṭihrán where they combined their efforts to raise the banner of Bahá'u'lláh in Írán. They had four children: Anúshíraván, Ríyáḍ, Dánish and Rúḥí. Dánish died in infancy and the sudden loss of that beautiful child was a shattering experience to Nádirih Khánum.

In 1940 she had the privilege of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and attaining the presence of the beloved Guardian. Upon her return from Haifa, one of her earliest appointments was to the National Committee for the Progress of Women in Írán. She took up this work with great zeal. She was in the forefront in pursuing one of the aims of the Four Year Teaching Plan of Írán (1946–50), that of creating 'educational opportunities for Bahá'í women[1] with a view to preparing them to eventually participate in the administration of the Faith', a matter which the beloved Guardian had mentioned to Nádirih during her pilgrimage. She travelled to many cities and villages in order to meet and work with Bahá'í women, often visiting remote mountainous areas during the harsh winter months when blizzards would result in the cancellation of regular means of transportation. With the help of local friends, Nádirih would avail herself of a ride as a passenger in an oil tanker or some other emergency vehicle in order to reach her destination. Her services were unstinting. Although she was very wise and thoughtful she sometimes seemed oblivious of the physical dangers and obstacles, and it was a sense of duty and her faith in God that prevailed. In 1954 Bahá'í women in Irán were 'elected to membership on Assemblies for the first time, thus overcoming a long historic disability.'[2]

One of her outstanding services during this very busy period was the compilation and editing of a comprehensive book on the life and works of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The scope and accuracy of her book, as well as the style and quality of her writing, drew words of praise and admiration from her co-workers and from the committee on Bahá'í literature. Although approved for publication, due to the circumstances obtaining at that time the book was never published in its entirety. However, responding to the request of the National Committee for the Progress of Women, Nádirih produced a masterful, condensed version of her work for use in Bahá'í deepening classes throughout the country.

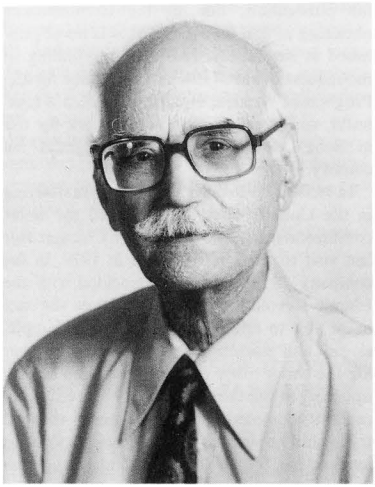
In 1958 she visited her sons who were studying in the United States and attended the intercontinental teaching conference in Chicago. Her last visit to the United States in 1979, in the company of her husband, coincided with the Islamic Revolution in Írán and thus she was never able to return to her homeland. Simple, elegant and gracious, to the last moment of her life she was a tower of strength and an eternal optimist. In the face of adversity she displayed radiant acquiescence, but she never stopped trying and hoping, and never was idle. She was loyal to her friends and kind and considerate to all. She had a special love for children. Her seemingly inexhaustible energy was used to help others and to discharge her own duties and obligations. She was generous, perceptive and meticulous, and her 'inner life and private character' mirrored forth 'the splendour of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh',[3] which condition the Guardian set forth as the sole means for securing the triumph of the Cause.

In the final years of her life Nádirih and her husband lived with and near their children in Orange, California. Although she had her full share of hardships, trials and tribulations she remained undaunted. She passed away suddenly in the morning of 19 June 1985 as the result of a heart attack. Her funeral and interment took place in the nearby Fairhaven Memorial Park in Santa Ana. These kind and comforting words were cabled by the Universal House of Justice to her grief-stricken family on 27 June:

> DEEPLY SADDENED PASSING DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH NADEREH NABIL AKBAR TOUFIGH. HER OUTSTANDING SERVICES CRADLE FAITH UNFORGETTABLE. ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Adapted from an article by RIAZ TOUFIGH (RÍYÁḌ TAWFÍQ)

[1] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XI, pp. 34–36.
[2] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 65.
[3] Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 66.



*Abbas Kazimpour Amri*

ABBAS KAZIMPOUR AMRI
('ABBÁS KÁẒIMPÚR AMRÍ)
1895–1985

DEEPLY SADDENED PASSING STEADFAST COURAGEOUS DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH ABBAS KAZIMPOUR AMRI. HIS MANIFOLD SERVICES CRADLE FAITH AND PIONEERING FIELD UNFORGETTABLE. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS SOUL.

Universal House of Justice
1 July 1985

Mr. 'Abbás Káẓimpúr Amrí, who received from the Universal House of Justice the appellations 'steadfast, courageous, devoted', was born in 1895 into a Bahá'í family in Yazd, Írán. After a life of devoted service to the Threshold of the Blessed Beauty, he passed away in his ninetieth year.

He spent his childhood years in Yazd, but following an uprising against the Bahá'ís in that city his family went to Sháhrúd and from there to 'Ishqábád where they stayed for some time. 'Abbás Káẓimpúr was a young man at the time, and he attended Bahá'í study classes under the tutorship of eminent Bahá'í teachers. When the family returned to Sháhrúd, he and his father started a commercial business; at the same time they made their home a centre for teaching the Faith and for the reception of Bahá'í teachers arriving in Sháhrúd from other parts of the country. The success of their enterprise and the increasing number of Bahá'í teachers being received by the family aroused feelings of jealousy and ill will among the enemies of the Faith who invaded the business premises, attacked 'Abbás, his father and his brother with rocks and sticks, and after severely lacerating them dragged them to their home. With intensive care and long treatment their wounds healed and they recovered. After this incident, 'Abbás Kázimpúr was again attacked by opponents of the Faith and the family was forced to depart for Ṭihrán. He contributed to the Bahá'í community for use as a centre his well-equipped home in Sháhrúd.

'Abbás Káẓimpúr was endowed with unusual bravery and audacity in teaching the Faith; he loved to teach and his house was open to the friends for firesides and large gatherings.

Of the various historic and significant services he rendered, one which will be recorded in the history of the Faith was his delivering to Sháh Riḍá, the father of the late Muḥammad Riḍá Sháh, in 1932, the petition of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán against the closing of Bahá'í schools by the Ministry of Education because the schools had observed the Bahá'í Holy Days. He accepted the delicate assignment gladly and discharged his responsibility with courage and honour and without regard for his personal safety. Normal channels of communication being closed to him, he stationed himself along a route generally taken by the Sháh's driver and after waiting for long hours was rewarded by glimpsing the approaching royal vehicle. He stood on the sidewalk holding the petition in his raised hand and was noticed by the Sháh who had the vehicle stopped in order to inquire what his purpose was. Thus the Sháh received the appeal. The following day 'Abbás Káẓimpúr was detained and questioned by the police, but was released when the authorities had satisfied themselves that his purpose in confronting the Sháh was innocent.

In 1956, 'Abbás Káẓimpúr, together with his wife, Ṭáhirih, had the privilege of making their pilgrimage to the Holy Land and visiting the beloved Guardian. It was in the vicinity of the

Holy Shrines that they decided to offer their services as pioneers to Japan. This decision was submitted to Shoghi Effendi who approved it, urged the couple to persevere, pledged his prayers and assured them of success in their undertaking.

With the promise of the prayers of the Guardian as their provision for the journey they proceeded to Japan from Haifa. The rest of the family joined them after a while. Soon the effects of Shoghi Effendi's prayers were witnessed. In a short time the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ashiya was formed by the pioneers. The home of 'Abbás and Ṭáhirih became a centre for firesides and other Bahá'í meetings. He spared no effort in conveying the message of Bahá'u'lláh to all the people of the city by rising early in the morning to distribute literature. Enrolment of the first Japanese Bahá'í brought a great deal of joy to the eager heart of 'Abbás Káẓimpúr who wished to remain in Japan till the end of his life. But after a number of years he found it necessary to return to Írán on business. Unfortunately, during this trip he twice sustained heart failure and was bedridden in hospital for some time. This occurred during the time of the Islamic revolution and the news of the ordeals and oppression the Bahá'ís endured greatly aggravated his condition.

On 30 June 1985 he passed away. Although he did not attain his heart's desire to end his life in Japan, his mother, Sakínih Khánum, after pioneering for ten years in that country, passed away and was buried there.

(Adapted from a memoir by MULÚK KÁZIMPÚR AMRÍ translated from the Persian by FU'ÁD ASHRAF)

## EMMA MANDELL RICE
1898–1985
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

DEEPLY SYMPATHIZE RELATIVES FRIENDS IN LOSS STAUNCH SELF EFFACING RELIABLE MAIDSERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY EMMA RICE. HER EXEMPLARY LIFE TIRELESS SELFLESS UNFORGETTABLE SERVICE DISTINGUISHED BY PIONEERING SICILY WHICH EARNED HER BELOVED GUARDIANS ACCOLADE KNIGHT OF BAHAULLAH. ARDENTLY SUPPLICATING HOLY SHRINES

*Emma Mandell Rice*

HER RADIANT SOUL MAY FOREVER PROGRESS THROUGHOUT HEAVENLY REALMS.

Universal House of Justice
12 July 1985

Emma Mandell Rice was born on 24 February 1898 in Boston, Massachusetts. Described by Marzieh Gail as 'a great lady of New England, in the fine traditional sense', Emma was the daughter of Emily Proctor and George S. Mandell, owner of the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

After attending schools in Boston and Maryland, Emma was introduced to society as a debutante. In 1916, at the age of eighteen, she married her cousin, Neil W. Rice. Three children were born of this union, a son and two daughters. The family lived in Hamilton, Massachusetts, where Emma was known as a fine tennis player and horsewoman.

While convalescing from two serious injuries sustained *circa* 1940, Emma derived much consolation from the Bahá'í teachings with which she became acquainted at that time, but she did not declare her belief in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh until 1942, in part through fear of the response of her husband. Regrets concerning Mr. Rice's

'grave misapprehensions as to the aim and meaning of the Bahá'í Faith' were expressed in a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by his secretary on 22 December 1941, one of the earliest received by Emma from the Guardian. In 1942 Emma took courage from words written to her by Shoghi Effendi to declare herself a Bahá'í and, as she put it, to 'always stand for the Faith'. Yet he cautioned her not to antagonize her family through her activities. Because of her interest in the Faith, her husband had hardly spoken to her for two years. After a time of serving abroad in the army, he returned, but the relationship worsened, and in 1945 they divorced.

Inheriting the Hamilton property upon her mother's passing, Emma turned it into a Bahá'í center and focused her energies on the teaching work. By 1948 there was still no Spiritual Assembly in Hamilton, and the Guardian, through his secretary, urged Emma in a letter dated 6 March 1948 to 'remain in Hamilton but make trips farther afield and aid weak centers in New England'. In his next letter he expressed delight at hearing of six new believers in Wenham as well as of Emma's work on the regional teaching committee. For several years she represented her area as a delegate to the national convention and also enjoyed participating in activities at Green Acre Bahá'í School. She made pilgrimage to the World Centre in 1952 and was among those privileged to bring to the Holy Land gold leaf for use in gilding the balustrades of the octagon of the Shrine of the Báb.

The following year, 1953, after having attended several of the intercontinental teaching conferences, Emma left her home in Hamilton to serve as a pioneer in Sicily, for which service she was named by the Guardian a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Her first impressions of Sicily were horrifying, for she was confronted with poverty, insanitary conditions, illiteracy and what she felt to be cruelty, previously unknown to her. But she adjusted by repeating the Greatest Name and the Tablet of Aḥmad, delving into the history of the country, and learning to appreciate Sicilian ways.

In a summary of her experience, she writes, 'I also had to learn their dances and their songs in order to dance and sing with them; and I was obliged to pray aloud ... in Italian (a language entirely foreign to me); greet them as they came down their donkey trails from school and from work; eat what they had to offer, on their doorsteps and in their homes; admire their babies; visit the sick; sew with them; draw pictures for them; translate Bahá'í stories and share my hand-typed excerpts copied from the only Italian Bahá'í book that could be had; show slides and photographs of our Temple and of our people; go to their *festas,* churches, christenings, graduations, pageants, etc.' And she adds, 'The tourists and Bahá'í visitors (where there were any) helped maintain my equilibrium and release the solitude of a homesick heart.'

Her first teaching experience occurred in Taormina on the morning after her arrival when the English-speaking Sicilian chambermaid caught sight of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's picture on the bureau in Emma's hotel room. Within two months the chambermaid and the hotel laundress became Bahá'ís; with their assistance and through their enthusiasm, others also embraced the Cause. Before she left Taormina to renew her visa, twenty-seven native residents 'suddenly, most unexpectedly "bowed down before God," and declared their belief in "Bahá."' Emma's description of these victories characteristically left out any mention of her own effect on those with whom she had contact.

After waiting for her visa in Geneva, she spent the next three years in Sicily's capital, Palermo. Unlike her experiences in Taormina, it was only after four years' continuous work that the first people accepted the Cause. After the first students enrolled as believers, others followed successively every few months. During this time Emma served on the European Teaching Committee, attended annually the Italo-Swiss Convention, traveled to various Summer Schools and teaching conferences, and visited the grave of Shoghi Effendi whose passing had devastated his faithful servants.

In 1958 Emma returned to the United States to restore her health. She had sold her home in Hamilton while she was at her pioneering post because of the urgent need of the Bahá'í Fund, but she returned to Massachusetts where for two years she served on the Spiritual Assembly of Boston and gave weekly radio broadcasts in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and several interviews over a Boston station. Her summers were spent at Green Acre where she was in charge of book sales and served as hostess

at Fellowship House, an assistant teacher at the nursery school, and was an active member of the Green Acre Institute Building and Improvement Committee.

In 1961 she moved to Fellowship House, winterizing and making other improvements to the deteriorating building. This was her home until 1984 when she moved to Oakwood Nursing Home in Manchester, Massachusetts. During her residence in Eliot she was active in the Garden Club and continued to participate in Green Acre programs and to maintain the bookstore; she also served on various national committees. In 1979 she was the recipient of the Reimer Award for distinguished service rendered to Green Acre. She died on 11 July 1985.

Emma is remembered for her gentle, loving spirit, her poise, her fondness for children, and her generosity. Marzieh Gail recalls that both her parents when severely ill were provided care by Emma whose 'far-reaching services', in Marzieh's words, 'were quiet, unassuming, unobtrusive'.

Perhaps the best tribute to Emma's spirit is found in her own words about her labors: 'Without any doubt, it was the power of "The Greatest Name," the clear, vivid dreams and visions of the Master, and Shoghi Effendi's eternal promise to me, April 1952, when I was leaving him—"When in a predicament, think of me, and I will be with you."—that eased the pain of loneliness, anxiety, and inadequacy, and sustained and guided me to do the things I felt he wanted me to do.'

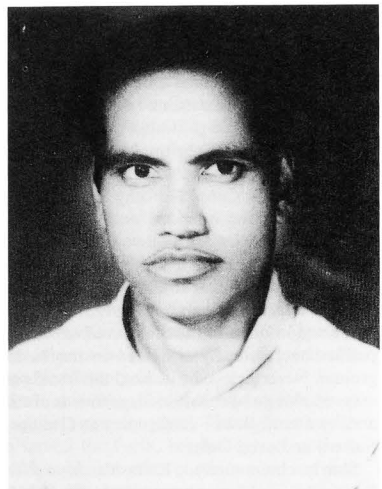
Her willingness to arise selflessly in this service has no doubt shed imperishable luster upon her soul.

ANNE GORDON ATKINSON

## KAILASH SHRIVASTAVA
1925–1985

GREATLY SADDENED UNTIMELY TRAGIC PASSING DEVOTEE BAHAULLAH PROMOTER FAITH KAILASH SHRIVASTAVA. HIS EXEMPLARY ACHIEVEMENTS MASS TEACHING PARTICULARLY IN BHIND AREA UNFORGETTABLE. BESEECHING SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. PRAYING HIS RELATIVES FRIENDS SPIRITUAL CHILDREN WILL FOLLOW HIS HEARTS DESIRE SERVICE CAUSE GOD MAKE HIS BLESSED SOUL REJOICE ETERNAL ABODE. ADVISE ARRANGE MEMORIAL GATHERINGS PROVIDE FRIENDS ACCOUNTS HIS SUCCESS ESTABLISHING FAITH UPON SOLID FOUNDATION BHIND.

Universal House of Justice
15 July 1985



*Kailash Shrivastava*

Bhind, a small yet densely populated district of India situated in the Chambal Valley, known as the Valley of Terror, has a dual character. Although it has the highest rate of literacy in the State of Madhya Pradesh, it is also notorious for its bandits and highwaymen. This duality is also reflected in its inhabitants, the Rajputs, who are short-tempered, irrascible and fearless warriors, yet very pure-hearted.

Kailash Shrivastava, who was born in 1925 in Bhind, was the son of one of the wealthiest and most influential landlords of the district. His father was well known for his generosity and concern for the welfare of the people, hence they called him Babujee, a title that is usually earned by one who has worked towards the betterment of his fellow men. After his father passed away, Kailash continued the good work, and he also came to be known as Babujee.

After acquiring a Master's degree and graduating in law in 1960, Kailash opened a practice

in Bhind and soon became the leading criminal lawyer of the town. He was a very active politician associated with the All-India Congress Committee and was also a member of several non-political organizations and Charitable Trusts.

Some time in 1953, before he was a Bahá'í, he attended a meeting held in Gwalior at which the Hand of the Cause Dorothy Baker spoke; then, in 1960, he attended another meeting where he heard Mrs. Shirin Boman. He became attracted to the Faith on this occasion and invited Mrs. Boman and the other Bahá'ís to visit his area. He fostered interest in the Faith in the region but because of his involvement in politics he personally remained in the background. Nevertheless, he assisted the friends in mass-teaching and enabled village friends of the area to attend Bahá'í conferences at Gwalior, Sussera and even Delhi.

Slowly but surely, Kailash's love for Bahá'u'lláh and his commitment to the Bahá'í Faith deepened. In 1972 he refused an offer from the ruling party to contest a seat in the State Legislature. He gave up politics and dedicated himself to service to the Bahá'í Cause.

Soon after his appointment to the Auxiliary Board in March 1984, Kailash launched a teaching project in memory of the late Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. It was carried out through the combined efforts of Mr. Shrivastava, two hundred youth volunteers and the Bhajan Mandalies, a group of eighteen youth who were inspired by the Dawn-Breakers and who, with their songs, captivated the villagers of the area. The results were outstanding: approximately 100,000 people enrolled in the Faith and 1,300 Local Spiritual Assemblies were established.

The personal credo espoused by Kailash Shrivastava was that one must have complete faith in Bahá'u'lláh and surrender one's will to Him. This conviction was the driving force behind his ceaseless services to the Faith. In a letter addressed to Mrs. Shirin Boman, Kailash described the rapid progress of the Faith in Bhind and concluded by recording his recognition that only the will of Bahá'u'lláh could enable such victories to be won. At the time this memoir is being written, Bhind has a larger concentration of believers than any other area of India.

Kailash Shrivastava passed away in the early hours of 13 July 1985 in a hospital at Gwalior, as a result of the injuries he sustained in a motorcycle accident.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

## CATHARINE E. NOURSE
1904–1985

Catharine Elizabeth Nourse, Hawaii's treasured last direct connection to the Master and the Heroic Age, ascended to the Abhá Kingdom on 16 July 1985, in Hilo, following a lengthy illness.

Only if one insisted would Catharine, ever self-effacing and not inclined to take herself seriously, speak of her illustrious family which traced its descent back to Charlemagne. One of her ancestors, Rebecca Nurse, was the most famous of the nineteen falsely accused 'witches' who were hanged on Gallows Hill in Salem, Massachusetts in 1612. Her immediate forebears came to America with land grants from the King of England in 1769 and settled in Virginia.

Catharine was born in Washington, D.C. in 1904, the only daughter of the early American believer, Elizabeth Nourse, who was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's hostess on a number of occasions during His visit to the United States in 1912. At one such gathering the Master beckoned eight-year old Catharine to sit on His lap and, stroking her hair, said 'Good daughter, sweet daughter.' He expressed his appreciation for Mrs. Nourse's hospitality by sending her a robe of Bahá'u'lláh's, which Catharine later sent to the archives of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States for safekeeping.

As a young girl, Catharine attended classes conducted by Stanwood Cobb, with young Paul E. Haney who was later appointed a Hand of the Cause of God, and an even younger Mary Maxwell who was destined to become the wife of Shoghi Effendi.

Catharine was just seventeen when, in 1921, her family obtained permission from 'Abdu'l-Bahá to travel to the Holy Land on what was to be the first of three pilgrimages for Catharine. When she and her mother, accompanied by Catharine's older brother Boyce and younger brother Philip reached Europe, they were informed of the passing of the Master. They proceeded on their journey and were thus among

*Catharine E. Nourse*

the first group of Western pilgrims to visit the Holy Land after His passing. They were present as the young Shoghi Effendi chanted prayers in the Shrine of the Báb on the fortieth-day commemoration of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. As she witnessed, admiringly, the Greatest Holy Leaf assume the many duties that had been 'Abdu'l-Bahá's in order that Shoghi Effendi would have time to prepare himself for his responsibilities as Guardian, there was imprinted on her mind and spirit the model of selfless service which she adopted as her own.

Naturally very shy and diffident, Catharine never quite believed how charmed the Bahá'í friends were by her recollections of the Holy Family and of the early believers, but if prevailed upon she would oblige with priceless stories.

After remaining in her mother's home for many years, Catharine came to Hawaii in 1937 to work for the State Board of Health. She served as chief occupational therapist for the department concerned with crippled children and she soon established the first therapy departments on each of the islands. While on Oahu she served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Honolulu where, for many years, she gave the Bahá'í Center her tasteful, fastidious care as unsung 'housekeeper', sewing curtains and cushions, providing floral decorations, performing many housecleaning duties and making the Center inviting as a well-kept, warm and beautifully appointed home.

In 1957, with Gertrude Garrida to whom she had taught the Faith, and another friend, Catharine settled in Hilo for a year to assist in the establishment of the first Spiritual Assembly on the Big Island. Catharine and Gertrude moved back to Oahu in 1958 and remained there until Catharine's retirement in 1970. They relocated again—this time as homefront settlers—to Kamuela on the Big Island, and an Assembly was soon formed in fulfillment of a Nine Year Plan goal.

Such was the quality of life of this 'good daughter, sweet daughter'. Throughout her life she served the Faith, her family, her patients and her friends with good humor and true humility. We shall miss the light of her bright candle.

Following is the text of the message sent by the Universal House of Justice on 18 July 1985:

> HEARTS SADDENED LEARN PASSING DEARLY LOVED STEADFAST SERVANT CATHARINE NOURSE. HER EXEMPLARY RECORD SERVICE DATING FROM EARLY DAYS FAITH IN AMERICA HER ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER AND GUARDIAN AND HER OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS PROGRESS CAUSE IN HAWAII LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER IMMORTAL SOUL ALL WORLDS GOD.
>
> (Adapted from *Light of the Pacific,* No. 183, June–July 1985)

## HERBERT PARKER
1911–1985

Mr. Herbert Parker, an Aboriginal Elder, originally from the Pundjuma tribe in Western Australia, passed away in Carnarvon, Western Australia on 23 July 1985. Although he had been a Bahá'í for only a brief time, the services Mr. Parker performed for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh were unique and significant.

He was greatly loved and respected for his work with Aboriginal people. Among his accomplishments was his work to engender

respect for Aboriginal family life and tribal law in a period of rapid disintegration of traditional values. In the year he died he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal and had just completed ten years of service as a delegate to the National Aboriginal Conference. Earlier in 1985, in his search for new values and laws that were consistent with his highest aspirations for his people, he, together with his wife and close family, embraced the Bahá'í Faith. Up to the time he died he urged his people to turn to the Bahá'ís. At a meeting of elders before his death he had begun the important task of reviewing the ancient law with a view to retaining its essential elements while making provision for precepts relevant to the new age.

In the mid-1970s Herbert Parker made a unique contribution towards establishing dialogue between the Government and tribal Aborigines by introducing the 'bush meeting', a practice that he considered should be continued in order to introduce and foster full discussion with Aboriginal people on the Bahá'í Faith and the laws of the new era.

Before making his decision to become a follower of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Parker had requested the Bahá'ís to conduct burials and marriages for Aboriginal people in his region. To this end, the Carnarvon Spiritual Assembly had arranged for the purchase of a Land Rover and the National Spiritual Assembly had agreed to the appointment of a marriage celebrant. The burial of Mr. Parker, on 30 July 1985, was the first conducted by the Bahá'ís in response to his request. The ceremony was dignified, beautiful and allowed for full expression of the deepest feelings of the numerous mourners, many of whom had come long distances. His funeral was an eloquent testimony to the significance of his new-found belief, and to the ancient traditions of his people.

On 29 July 1985 the Universal House of Justice telexed:

> DEEPLY SADDENED LEARN PASSING DEARLY LOVED BELIEVER HERBERT PARKER. OFFERING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINE PROGRESS HIS SOUL WORLDS GOD.

## EHSANOLLAH REZVANI (IḤSÁN'U'LLÁH RIḌVÁNÍ) 1929–1985

Mr. Iḥsán'u'lláh Riḍvání was born into a Bahá'í family in the village of Ḥasanábád, near Ṭihrán, on 27 August 1929. He completed his studies in the town of Rayy and, in 1953, when the Ten Year Crusade of the beloved Guardian was launched, he arose to go pioneering. Unable to settle in an Arabian country as he wished to, he pioneered, on the advice of the National Pioneering Committee, to the town of Nawshahr, in northern Írán. The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Nawshahr was formed the same year with Mr. Riḍvání as a member. He became known as an active Bahá'í and met with opposition from fanatics among the townspeople, but he succeeded in opening a food store which served also as his living quarters.

When the Bahá'í community of Nawshahr was sufficiently large and strong, Mr. Riḍvání decided to pioneer abroad, and after correspondence with a Bahá'í friend went to Morocco in 1957, the year in which the National Spiritual Assembly of Morocco was formed. Later, accompanied by the Auxiliary Board member, Mr. 'Abdu'lláh Miṣbáḥ, he travelled to the Canary Islands where he settled in Las Palmas. Here, in spite of language difficulty, he did his best to teach the Faith and he met with some success. Later, he pioneered to Portugal where preparations were being made to form the National Spiritual Assembly, one of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade. Moving from one place to another, in response to the needs of the Cause, was not too difficult for Mr. Riḍvání since, in his own words, all his belongings could be carried in one suitcase. Although he had some difficulties in securing a visa that would permit him to remain in Portugal, his success in the teaching work kept him happy and content. In 1961 he married a Portuguese Bahá'í, Eulalia Albuquerque, and the couple settled in the northern town of Porto.

In 1963, after attending the World Congress in London, Mr. Riḍvání went to Ṭihrán, and at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly of Portugal prepared to return to that country. However, at the airport in Lisbon he was denied entry to Portugal under the ruling of the Salazar Government when all Bahá'í pioneers were deported. Mr. Riḍvání was

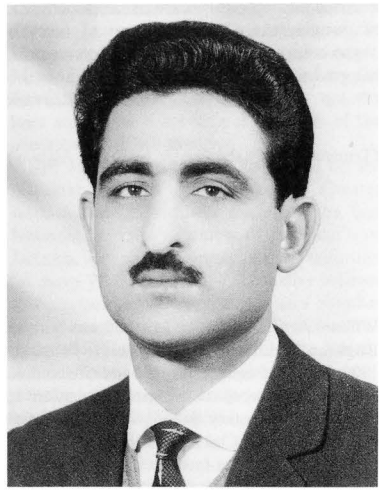
routed through Spain to Tangier, Morocco. From there he made contact with his family, and through a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán he requested that a pioneering post be assigned to him.

With his family he embarked on the long sea voyage to Bolivia, arriving in La Paz in June 1964. He spent the first week as a travelling teacher in the district of Meguilla, south of La Paz, and then settled with his family, at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly, in the town of Oruro where he immediately became engaged in the teaching work, holding firesides regularly in his home and, accompanied by Bolivian friends, visiting neighbouring villages as a travelling teacher. Some of these trips lasted more than fifteen days and, due to lack of transportation facilities, the participants had to ride on trucks or go on foot.

Later, on the recommendation of the Hand of the Cause Jalál Kházeh, Mr. Riḍvání returned to La Paz, charged with the duty of taking care of the National Bahá'í Centre. The rest of his life was spent in Bolivia, a country to which he was greatly devoted. Once in Germany, where he had gone for medical treatment, he refused to undergo heart surgery lest he should pass away outside the borders of his adopted homeland. His last teaching trip coincided with the launching of the Khamsí-Costas teaching project in February 1985, in the area near the site of Radio Bahá'í. He returned from the trip filled with joy and gratitude to the Blessed Beauty for enabling him to witness the fulfilment of his long-cherished wish, the successful establishment of Radio Bahá'í. He had, from his earliest days in Bolivia, served on the national committee related to Radio Bahá'í.

On 3 March 1985 Mr. Riḍvání suffered a heart attack and was taken to the hospital where he rallied after twelve days. A more severe attack occurred on 24 July and even treatment by specialists was not effective: he passed away on 28 July 1985. Even while lying in hospital, in spite of his weakness, Mr. Riḍvání attempted to convey the message of Bahá'u'lláh to the doctors and nurses. To one of them he said, 'The wisdom of my heart attack was that you be given the opportunity to hear about this blessed Cause.'

About one thousand individuals of different religious backgrounds and from all classes of society attended the memorial meeting held in the Riḍvání's home. The meeting, with the beautiful bouquets of flowers and the loving tears of the friends, resembled a unity feast which had brought together in harmony the followers of various religions including Christians, Jews and Muslims. At the funeral, attended by approximately five hundred mourners, prayers were offered in Aymará, Arabic, English, Persian, Quechua and Spanish. Mr. Riḍvání's body was laid to rest across from the National Bahá'í Centre where a memorial service was held by the National Spiritual Assembly. At this gathering were extolled the devoted services of one who had with distinction served on the National Assembly for many years. Upon instructions from the National Assembly, memorial meetings were held in other towns and villages of Bolivia, and a number of teaching projects were launched in his memory.



*Ehsanollah Rezvani*

Mr. Riḍvání has left four children, all of whom are devoted believers, and who with their mother continue to serve the Cause in Bolivia.

The following cable was received from the Universal House of Justice on 30 July 1985:

GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED STEADFAST PIONEER PROMOTER FAITH EHSANOLLAH REZVANI. HIS GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS TEACHING ADMIN-

ISTRATIVE FIELDS PAST DECADES BOLIVIA UNFORGETTABLE. SUPPLICATING SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS.
EULALIA RIḌVÁNÍ

(Translated from the Persian by FU'ÁD ASHRAF)

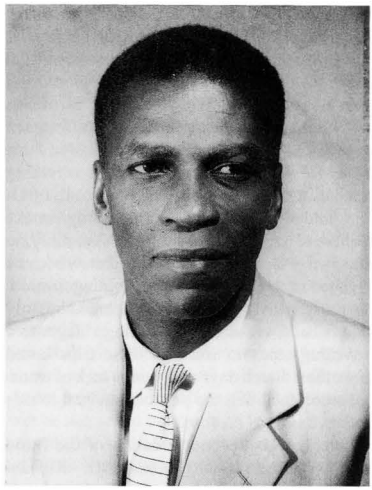
## WILLIAM MITCHELL
1907–1985

William Arthur Wellesley Mitchell was born in Brighton, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica on 16 February 1907. His parents were Wilfred and Clementine Mitchell. He received his early education at Clapham Elementary School in Brighton, and later at Kingston Commercial College. He was blessed with a sharp intellect and served as an assistant instructor at Clapham from 1922 to 1925.

His aptitude for figures served him in good stead when he embarked on his career as an accountant. His beloved nephew, Glenford Mitchell, recalls how mesmerized he was as a child while watching his uncle make swift, accurate computations of large figures. *Who's Who in Jamaica: 1941–1946* records that William Mitchell was accountant for the Universal Negro Improvement Association between 1930 and 1932, and secretary to the All-Jamaica Exhibitions in 1932 and 1934. Also mentioned in the profile are his marriage to Olive Lurline (*née* Lewis) on 5 October 1938, his business address at 48 Church Street in Kingston, and his religion, the Bahá'í Faith.

We do not know, at present, how his romance with Olive blossomed, or precisely when he moved to Kingston. But we do know that the union produced two daughters, and that it was in Kingston that Mr. Mitchell declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh. His first daughter died at a tender age and was given the first Bahá'í funeral in Jamaica.

The circumstances of his first introduction to the Faith, which are both informative and amusing, reveal something of his integrity and forthright nature. In 1942 Dr. Malcolm King,[1] a Jamaican who embraced the Faith in the United States, was visiting Jamaica as a Bahá'í travelling teacher. He loaned a Bahá'í book to J. C. Mitchell, a parson from British Guiana, who was also visiting Jamaica. The parson, in turn, loaned the book to William Mitchell. When Dr. King went to collect the book from J. C. Mitchell he was told that William Mitchell was in possession of it. Dr. King then called on William Mitchell, only to be told that he could not give it to him as it was not lent to him by Dr. King, but by J. C. Mitchell, and that, in any case, there were some questions he wanted to ask him about the book.



*William Mitchell*

It was arranged that Dr. King should come to William Mitchell's office every Tuesday to discuss the Faith, and all sixteen employees attended the classes. Mr. Mitchell recalled that Dr. King was very sincere and that on several occasions, when expounding the Bahá'í teachings, tears streamed from his eyes, which affected Mr. Mitchell greatly. Dr. King dealt extensively with various aspects of the teachings, and with Biblical prophecy and its fulfilment by Bahá'u'lláh. Of the group of sixteen, two became Bahá'ís, William Mitchell and Charles Duff Porter. Mr. Mitchell's acceptance

[1] Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for British Guiana. See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 316.

of the Faith was announced but two days after that of Marian Lord Maxwell,[1] the first native Jamaican to declare her belief in Bahá'u'lláh in Jamaica, who attended classes held by Dr. King at the home of Miss Marie Brownie on Orange Street. This group continued to meet every Wednesday after Dr. King's departure from Jamaica late in 1942. By April of the following year there were eleven members in the group and the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Jamaica was formed in Kingston, Mr. Mitchell served as its first chairman. In 1944, he represented Jamaica at the historic Bahá'í Centenary Conference held in the United States.

Mr. Mitchell was a pillar of the Faith in Jamaica from the time of his declaration and a pivot of a great deal of the administrative work carried out in the island thereafter. In the words of one of the friends, 'he was a manifestation of steadfastness'. Another believer recalls that particularly between the 1940s and 1960s 'he played a very central role in the affairs of the Kingston community and helped keep alive the Faith, especially in an administrative sense'.

This devoted servant of Bahá'u'lláh worked unremittingly: children's classes were held in his office; he travelled to virgin areas alone, or with other believers, to teach the Faith, and to areas where the Cause was established to assist in the consolidation work; a veritable stream of letters concerning administrative and other matters flowed from his pen—one could go on and on. It is impossible, within the confines of this brief article, to adequately assess the scope of his activities which would fill a book. But it is useful to record the poignant fact that, having been taught by a Jamaican who was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Mitchell was privileged to be instrumental in introducing the Faith to the only other Jamaican to be named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Julius A. G. Edwards, who was awarded the title by Shoghi Effendi for his service in opening to the Faith the Northern Territories Protectorate of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in September 1953, and whose 'In Memoriam' appears elsewhere in these pages. Mr. Mitchell was responsible for teaching the Faith to scores of other Jamaicans; not the least among them are several members of the illustrious Mitchell family.

Mr. Mitchell served with distinction on the National Spiritual Assembly of the Greater Antilles and in 1961 was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Jamaica, serving as chairman of that institution for many years. He was the first native believer to be appointed an Auxiliary Board member for Jamaica (from 1956 to 1969) and served under the Hands of the Cause Horace Holley, William Sears and Dr. Ugo Giachery. For many years he was simultaneously a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Jamaica, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kingston, and several national and local committees, in addition to travelling very frequently to rural communities to assist in the teaching and consolidation work. Anyone who had the privilege of serving on administrative institutions with Mr. Mitchell will recall his complete reliability in attending meetings, his unfailing punctuality and his vigorous advocacy of the need for adherence to the administrative guidelines provided by the beloved Guardian and the Universal House of Justice. The spirit of devotion and steadfastness which animated his life was truly remarkable. One of his most frequently stressed themes at gatherings of the friends was the need to place the Cause of God first, and he never missed an opportunity to underline the need for sacrifice in order to promote the Faith. Indeed, he was himself a living example of sacrifice; his was a life of daily martyrdom. Nothing prevented him from giving his all in the path of service.

He visited the Holy Land for the first time in 1983 to participate in the international convention and witnessed the re-election of his nephew to the supreme administrative body of the Bahá'í Faith, the Universal House of Justice. In April 1985, on the occasion of the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of Jamaica, he received the accolade of the entire Jamaican community.

Laden with the fruits of over forty years of sacrificial service to the Cause of God, this great

[1] Mr. Glenford Mitchell in a letter to the author dated 7 March 1987 has written: 'My uncle said that after reaching his conviction about the Faith, he signed, a declaration card which he held for two days awaiting Dr. King's visit; upon that visit, Dr. King informed him that Miss Maxwell had just signed her card. Therefore, my uncle always felt, although he may not have said so publicly, that he was actually the first Jamaican to declare his belief in Bahá'u'lláh.' Miss Maxwell's 'In Memoriam' appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 429.

soul passed away on 30 July 1985, his efforts crowned by the following tribute cabled by the Universal House of Justice on 31 July, which beautifully summarizes his outstanding achievements:

SHARE YOUR DEEP SORROW PASSING WILLIAM MITCHELL STALWART SERVANT BAHAULLAH. HIS LONG YEARS UNSTINTING IMPERISHABLE SERVICES AS PILLAR FAITH INDELIBLY INSCRIBED BAHAI ANNALS CARIBBEAN AREA. KINDLY CONVEY OUR LOVING SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL THROUGHOUT DIVINE WORLDS.

PETER SENIOR

(Reprinted from *Bahá'í News of Jamaica,* Nos. 96–97, September/December 1985)

## JOSÉ C. XAVIER RODRIGUES
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh
1931–1985

GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT OF BAHAULLAH JOSE XAVIER RODRIGUES. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY RELATIONS ASSURE PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
23 August 1985

Xavier was born on 17 February 1931 in Lisbon, Portugal. His maternal grandfather was from Pangim, India and his father from Lisbon. After completing his education he joined the Portuguese Merchant Navy as an electrician. At age nineteen he was taken to his first Bahá'í meeting which was held in the home of Mrs. Valeria Nichols (whose 'In Memoriam' appears elsewhere in these pages) and Miss Charlotte Stirrat, two Americans who were serving as pioneers in Portugal, and shortly thereafter he embraced the Faith. He married Hilda Summers in 1951 and they had two daughters, Sitárih and Stella, who were born in Portuguese Guinea, and a son, Kim, who was born in Angola.

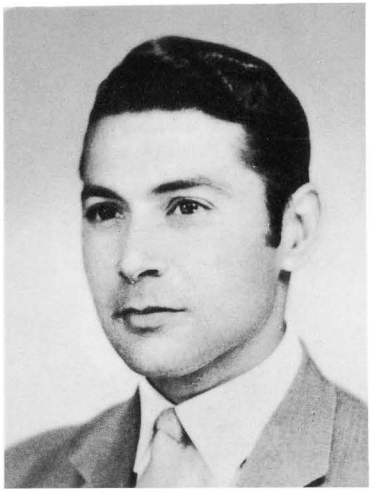
In July 1953 Xavier was present at the Stockholm Intercontinental Teaching Conference where he caught the flame of pioneering and offered to open Portuguese Guinea to the Faith. In September 1953 he and Hilda arrived in the capital city, Bissau, for which service they were named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi. They remained in Bissau till March 1955 when they were refused an application for residence and served with a police summons ordering them to leave by the next boat. During his rounds of official departments while trying to obtain residence authorization for Guinea, Xavier spoke of the Faith and was heard by Duarte Vieira who later embraced the Faith in Portugal.

After spending one year in Lisbon with their infant daughters, Xavier and Hilda were able to obtain employment in Africa. They arrived in Luanda, Angola on 6 June 1956. Here they joined Angelica and Rodolfo Duna and the five resident African Bahá'ís to form the first Local Spiritual Assembly. Activities in Luanda were thrilling and after Rodolfo's departure to his native Mozambique two visitors, Harry Ford and John Robarts (later appointed a Hand of the Cause), brought encouragement and love. This was badly needed as the activities of the Bahá'ís were again under surveillance by the police. At that time, Joaquim Sampaio arrived from Malange, in the interior, to make his declaration, after having dreamt about the Báb and recognized this Figure when he was given the Message by António Francisco Ebo, the first Angolan Bahá'í.

Xavier and his family left Angola in August 1960 just after a wave of refugees arrived from the then Belgian Congo and just before hostilities broke out in Angola. Back in Portugal, Xavier, Hilda and their three children served the Faith in Amadora where the first National Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1961 with the much-valued help of foreign pioneers. It was discovered at this time that Xavier suffered from mitral stenosis and he underwent open-heart surgery for the first time.

The family then moved north, first to Foz do Douro, near Porto. From 1965 until 1982 they resided in Minas da Panasqueira, near Fundão.

In 1973, Xavier responded to a pioneering call from Australia and flew to Dili, Portuguese Timor on 24 April. Throughout his ten-month stay he was under constant police scrutiny. He returned to Portugal through Australia where, in February 1974, he met with the National Spiritual Assembly and received expressions of loving appreciation for his service in Dili. He was much helped by the Bahá'ís and regained some of his lost strength before returning to



*José C. Xavier Rodrigues*

Portugal. Needing constant medical attention, he left his job in Panasqueira where he worked for a wolfram mine, and setttled in Lisbon with his mother who nursed him with loving care. He underwent his second heart surgery at year's end 1981.

He then spent most of his time serving the Faith by making beautiful translations of Tablets and prayers of the Central Figures, and messages, letters and compilations received from the Universal House of Justice. He had a natural gift for translation and took great pleasure in this service.

He bore stoically the pain he suffered during his last four years. He passed away in hospital as a result of pulmonary emphysema on 10 August 1985. He was buried the next day, accompanied by the radiant presence of many Bahá'ís, family and friends, in the cemetery of Alto de S. João in Lisbon. May Bahá'u'lláh reach for his staunch spirit!

HILDA S. XAVIER RODRIGUES

## GRETA LAKE
1906–1985

Mrs. Greta Lake, a stalwart member of the Australian Bahá'í community since 1945, passed away on 6 September 1985 and was laid to rest at Woronora Cemetery near the resting-place of the Hands of the Cause John Henry Hyde-Dunn and Clara Dunn who brought the Faith to Australia in response to the Tablets of the Divine Plan. It seemed significant that she passed on to the next world while attending a meeting of the United Nations Association in whose ideals of peace and the betterment of humanity she passionately believed and for which she tirelessly worked.

Greta Lake's grandparents and their children came to Australia from Germany about 1884, and settled in Sydney where Greta grew up. She married Aubrey Lake—known to his friends as 'Aub'—during the difficult years of the Great Depression. Four sons were born to the couple. Greta was a devoted wife and mother. Her hospitality and propensity for succouring anyone who needed help, her smiling friendly face and warm and loving nature, won her numerous friends. She was idealistic, yet practical; her life was geared to service to her family and to humanity.

In 1942 the family moved to Miranda where Greta became very active in local community affairs. She always reached out for new goals, searching for truth, and when she heard of the Bahá'í Faith she embraced it joyfully, wholeheartedly and without reservation. From then until the end of her life, she worked with all her powers for the establishment of its principles and its administrative order. She became a foundation member of the Spiritual Assembly of the Sutherland District and was later elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia. Over the years she undertook numerous travelling teaching projects in Australia and the islands of the Pacific. Years of devoted service were also given to projects for helping Aboriginals and for the development of the Yerrinbool Bahá'í School. One of her most significant contributions was her major participation in the search for and finding of the site for the Bahá'í House of Worship at Ingleside. She worked unstintingly for its dedication in 1961 and, in the following years, served on committees arranging programmes for services

and dealing with other matters relating to the Temple.

In 1968 Greta and Aub pioneered to Western Samoa where they remained for five years working unceasingly for the establishment of strong Bahá'í communities. They bought the old Savoy Hotel and opened its doors to anyone who wished to visit them. Visitors from all over Samoa were warmly welcomed and a meal shared. Day after day, Bahá'ís from the villages, and their friends, were to be found at the Lakes' home, discussing the Faith and also seeking guidance for their problems. They basked and blossomed in the warmth, love and friendship so freely given them. The first South Pacific Youth Conference was held at the Savoy in 1970 with youth from many islands of the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand participating.

Greta and Aub also travelled extensively in the villages of Western Samoa and were instrumental in establishing the first and strongest Local Assembly on the island of Savai'i. Through their devotion, constant effort and service, the National Office, Teaching Institute and Summer School properties were developed and maintained. In 1970 the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa was formed and Greta became a member of that body and of several of its committees. Failing health forced their reluctant return to Australia. The memory of their achievements and unconditional service to the Faith burns brightly in the hearts of the Bahá'ís of Samoa.

Although the debilitating after-effects of the rigorous climate of the tropics had permanently undermined Greta's health, she and Aub, upon returning to Australia, once again directed their thoughts and energies towards the Mother Temple of the Antipodes. Their battered grey station wagon would quietly appear at the Temple grounds in Ingleside every Thursday. Out would step Greta and Aub, she with her basket of food that would later be shared with everyone, and her large handbag bulging with an interesting book, pamphlets or an article to stimulate conversation among those who were present. After a cup of tea and some pleasant conversation she would start guiding at the Temple and teaching in the information centre. It is difficult to speak of Greta without mentioning Aubrey, because these two very special people were truly like the wings of a single bird, and their flights were flights of service always teaching the essence of the Faith.

*Greta Lake*

'I learned much from Greta and her interaction with her "wing-mate",' one of the friends said. 'She taught me what optimism, steadfastness and constancy are all about.'

Always the needs of the Faith were of paramount importance to Greta Lake, and until the day she died she never managed to find the time to unpack the few things she had brought back from pioneering in Samoa. She gave us a most beautiful example: a courageous lady who lived life fully to the very end.

Informed of her passing the Universal House of Justice on 9 September 1985 cabled:

> HEARTS SADDENED LEARN SUDDEN PASSING DEARLY LOVED MAIDSERVANT GRETA LAKE. HER STERLING SERVICES CONNECTION MOTHER TEMPLE ANTIPODES AS MEMBER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AUSTRALIA AND AS PIONEER SAMOA WELL REMEMBERED. OFFERING SUPPLICATIONS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ALL WORLDS GOD. KINDLY CONVEY CONDOLENCES HER DEVOTED HUSBAND AUBREY AND MEMBERS FAMILY.
>
> NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF AUSTRALIA

## SHAPOOR ASPANDIAR ROWHANI (SHÁPÚR ISFANDÍYÁR RAWḤÁNÍ)
1931–1985
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Born in Bombay, India, on 15 August 1931, Shápúr was one of a family of seven sisters and two brothers. His father had come to India as a young boy from a village in Írán and, from scratch, had built a successful business in Bombay. In 1953, Shoghi Effendi's clarion call for pioneers to arise during the Ten Year Crusade was echoed in Bombay. Shápúr and another youth, Ardeshir S. Forudi (Ardishír S. Furúdí), volunteered to open to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh the Kingdom of Bhutan, in the eastern Himalayas. As Shápúr would often recall later, he hadn't the vaguest idea where Bhutan was; he went home that night and discovered its location from an atlas.

In early 1954, Shápúr and Ardishir set out for Calcutta, from whence they proceeded to Kalimpong, and finally to Bhutan. It was not easy for them to enter the country; permission was refused. Then, by fortunate chance, they met the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Jigme Dorji, brother of the Queen, who was intrigued to know why these two young boys had travelled the length of a subcontinent to come to his tiny, and largely unknown, country. He heard of the Bahá'í Faith from them and ultimately granted them permission to enter. As they were being admitted as guests of the Prime Minister, a special pack of mules and provisions were made available to them.

Neither of the young men was prepared for what the journey entailed. They crossed sheer ravines and traversed dense forests, encountering, for the first time in their lives, snakes and blood-sucking leeches. Shápúr recalled that he clung desperately to his copy of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* during that terrifying journey.

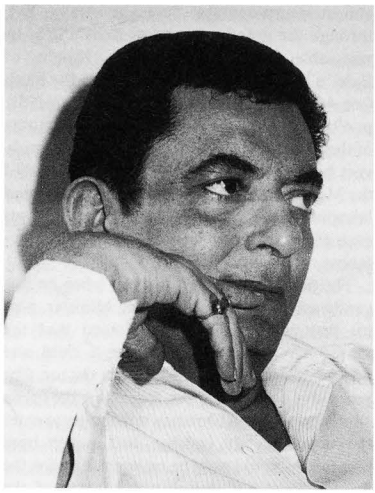
When they finally entered Bhutan, in June 1954, they found themselves confronted with age-old traditions and orthodoxy that had remained unchanged during centuries of Buddhist practice and belief in that remote Himalayan Kingdom. Shortly after their arrival, Ardishír received an urgent communication asking him to return to Bombay, and so he had to leave. Shápúr was now alone, facing hostile local monks, a suspicious populace and an almost insurmountable language barrier. Yet, through the unfailing grace of Bahá'u'lláh, he was able to earn his laurel 'Knight of Bahá'u'lláh' and open that country to the Faith (see *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950–1957*, p. 69.) Simple villagers, having heard rumours of the purpose of his visit, would surreptitiously visit his wooden hut at night to hear more of the Message he had come to convey and to read laboriously the Bahá'í books in Hindi. He was even enabled to present the Faith to the Bhutanese royal family.

The time soon came, however, when he was gently asked to leave. The Prime Minister, now his fast personal friend, explained that the Queen was soon due to deliver a child and her gynaecologist was a European doctor. For years, this doctor had been requesting the Prime Minister to allow a Christian missionary to enter the country, but consent had never been granted. It would now be embarrassing for the Prime Minister if the physician heard of the presence of this Bahá'í youth in Bhutan. Shápúr had no option but to prepare to leave.

The rivers bordering Bhutan were in full spate at the time of his departure. All his belongings, food and other provisions were swept away during the dangerous crossing and he nearly lost his life, too. His eventual arrival in Calcutta was greeted with relief by the brothers of the Prime Minister who had received from the Prime Minister himself several enquiries about his safety.

On his return to Bombay, Shápúr joined his father in business and settled into the city's Bahá'í activities. Soon after, he was elected to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly, and was re-elected every year until the time of his death. He was elected chairman of the Spiritual Assembly in each of the last twenty-seven years of his life. He served the Faith in a great many other capacities, too, amongst the last of which was as a member of the National Funds Committee of India.

Shápúr had a powerful personality and made a deep impression on all who met him. His geniality was infectious and won him a large number of friends, many of whom would do anything for him. The most striking example of these lifelong bonds of friendship he forged was seen in what turned out to be the last service he performed for the Bahá'ís of Bombay—the acquisition of a new cemetery for the com-



*Shapoor Aspandiar Rowhani*

munity. As destiny would have it, Shápúr is the first Bahá'í to be laid to rest there.

His death was smooth and swift. An unexpected cerebral stroke laid him up in hospital where he had the opportunity of meeting—in some instances for the first time in many years—his large number of friends, relatives and Bahá'í colleagues. Less than a week later, on 11 November 1985, a sudden cerebral haemorrhage took him away. He was buried on 12 November, the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh, which that year coincided with the Hindu festival of Diwali—the festival of lights—and thus his burial took place amidst joy and light on all sides. Approximately two hundred persons, Bahá'ís and others, were present to pay their last respects to him.

Letters of condolence and news of memorial meetings held for him poured in from such diverse places as far-off Samoa to the villages of the Dang tribe in India. Informed of his passing, the Universal House of Justice telexed on 14 November:

SADDENED UNTIMELY PASSING SHAPOOR ROWHANI. ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL CONFIRMATION FAMILY'S CONTINUING SERVICE FAITH.

MRS. MEHRU S. ROWHANI
(MIHRÚ S. RAWḤÁNÍ)

## VALERIA LAMB NICHOLS
1903–1985

Valeria Lamb Nichols was born on 8 June 1903 in Clinton, Iowa, U.S.A. where she lived until 1923, although she spent most winters with her family in Pasadena, California. In her early years she was taught by a private tutor, then later attended the Intercollegiate School in Los Angeles, and Knox School in Tarrytown, New York. In 1923 she went to New York City to study ballet and acrobatic dancing. With her first husband, John W. Thornton, she transferred to Southern California in 1927.

She first heard of the Bahá'í Faith in California from a former classmate and immediately became deeply interested, reading avidly the Bahá'í Writings and attending the study classes of Beulah Storrs Lewis[1] with whom she developed an intimate friendship. She entered the Faith officially in 1937 in Los Angeles. Although not a regular churchgoer, Valeria had attended Episcopalian Sunday School as a child, and was somewhat drawn to mystical subjects. I remember that often she meditated on 'infinity' but would become so disturbed that she would have to stop.

From the moment she embraced the Cause until the end of her earthly life, Valeria devoted all her time to the service of Bahá'u'lláh. In her early years in the Faith she served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Los Angeles, was secretary of the Regional Teaching Committee for Nevada and California, and a member of the Inter-American Committee. In 1940 she became a member of the first Spiritual Assembly of Beverly Hills, California. In about 1942 she moved to Salt Lake City, and from there she went as a home front pioneer to Laramie, Wyoming where she helped to form the first

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XI, p. 503.

Spiritual Assembly. During the second Seven Year Plan (1946–53) she pioneered in Europe, going first to Holland in September 1947 and remaining there for three months, and then to Portugal where she remained until 1951 and where she assisted in the formation of the first Spiritual Assembly of Lisbon.

In 1953, at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade (1953–63), Valeria began her pioneering service in Latin America where she stayed until the end of her life. Initially she went to Costa Rica with her husband, Hayden Nichols, then to Mexico, settling first in Mexico City and then, in 1964, in Merida, Yucatan. In Mexico she served for many years on the National Spiritual Assembly and the Regional Teaching Committee of Yucatan.

In Yucatan, Valeria dedicated herself almost entirely to her deepest love, the teaching of the descendants of the Mayans, the major population group in the Yucatan Peninsula. Since her husband was not yet a Bahá'í, Valeria had to make great sacrifices in order to be with him and help him in his work, and yet travel almost daily to the villages and haciendas where most of the Mayans live. Most nights she had to get along with four or five hours of sleep. This finally brought on a state of complete exhaustion which undoubtedly hastened her demise. However, all who knew Valeria are certain that she would never have exchanged her sacrifices for all the material world has to offer. And, shortly before his own passing, Hayden Nichols formally entered the Faith.

We are told in the Bahá'í Sacred Writings that the soul, after leaving the physical body, will evince tremendous spiritual power. After Valeria's passing, Mayan Bahá'í communities which had been visited by her but had become relatively inactive, suddenly and mysteriously came to life, and many of the Bahá'ís admitted that it was due to their remembrance of Valeria's deep love for Bahá'u'lláh and for them.

Valeria died on 15 November 1985 in Yucatan. On 18 November the Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to the National Spiritual Assembly of Mexico:

SHARE YOUR GRIEF PASSING COURAGEOUS MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH VALERIA NICHOLS. HER LONGTIME SERVICE YOUR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND ADVANCEMENT CAUSE YUCATAN PENINSULA ADD LUSTRE BAHAI HISTORY MEXICO CROWNING SELFLESS PIONEER ENDEAVOURS HOMEFRONT UNITED STATES. KINDLY CONVEY HER BROTHER COUNSELLOR LAMB ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS HER PURE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

ARTEMUS LAMB

*Valeria Lamb Nichols*

## VIRGINIA ORBISON
1902–1985
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY GRIEVOUS LOSS VIRGINIA ORBISON KNIGHT BAHAULLAH BALEARIC ISLANDS. RECALL WITH PRIDE ADMIRATION HER OUTSTANDING DEDICATED LIFE CAUSE GOD MORE THAN HALF CENTURY PIONEER TRAVELLING TEACHER LATIN AMERICA FIRST PIONEER IBERIAN PENINSULA SACRIFICIAL SERVICE LUXEMBOURG RETURN SPAIN BECOMING RECOGNIZED MOTHER SPANISH COMMUNITY. HER SINGLEMINDED DEVOTION OFFERS HEARTWARMING EXAMPLE CONFIRMING POWER

*Virginia Orbison*

BAHAULLAH TO ANY SOUL WHO ALONE UNAIDED ARISES SERVE HIM. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICES.

Universal House of Justice
22 November 1985

'Dear Friends, If you receive these words, it is to let you know that I have not been feeling well lately, and that my soul has taken flight into the other worlds of God, wherever and whatever they are!

'I am deeply thankful for so many friendships and privileges while *trying,* at least, to serve the Cause of God in this Day, so important to the destiny of the Human Race. I pray that every one may be helped and guided on the long journey towards the Best Beloved, Bahá'u'lláh, and that He will accept any efforts large or small made for the Creator of all the Universe, and the progress of His loved ones.'

With these words the spiritual mother of the Bahá'ís of Spain bade farewell to her much-loved Spanish children and friends near and far. From the hour of her arrival in Madrid in December 1946, except for a nine-year interlude of pioneer support in Luxembourg, she had offered to Bahá'u'lláh, with utter confidence in His sustaining power, her every thought, her uncertain health, her unceasing service and activity to awaken this land of achievement, promise and vitality to God's Revelation for this age. One can see in the events of Virginia's early life her preparation for this mighty task.

She was born on 16 February 1902, in Overbrook, Philadelphia, U.S.A. to a distinguished neuro-psychologist and pioneer in psychiatry, Dr. Thomas J. Orbison, and Virginia Gile Orbison, also educated as a doctor. Thus, by inheritance and her surroundings, Virginia acquired an intelligent and searching mind, unwavering standards of character, dedication of will, and wide cultural interests and appreciation. In 1907 her parents moved to Pasadena, California, where soon, through a patient of her father's, Claudia Stuart Coles, they first gained an acquaintance with the Bahá'í Faith; it was not pursued, but Virginia never forgot Mrs. Coles nor the name of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

In 1912 her mother entered Virginia in a school for girls in Paris, but when war came her education was continued at home with a tutor of Latin and then in a Roman Catholic convent in Alhambra. Later her knowledge of French and Latin eased her study of Spanish and Portuguese. It was through her devotion to music, and particularly singing which she studied in California, that she received her first introductions in Spain. In 1932 she again encountered the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, examined and struggled with it for a year, and reached unwavering acceptance in 1933. As a research librarian at Paramount Studios in Hollywood, from 1933 to 1942, she gained financial independence and was disciplined to the care and accuracy required for her remarkable history of the Bahá'í Faith in Spain. In those same years she matured in active service as a Bahá'í, studied deeply its Scripture and the writings of the Guardian, and developed from a timid and apprehensive speaker and teacher to one who was assured and extraordinarily confirmed. Thus Virginia was ready when her heart responded to the call for pioneers in South America during the first Seven Year Plan.

'Shall we ever be given the cue', she wrote in December 1940, 'to become pioneers?' And in May 1941, 'Only the will to do it have I but that is not enough.' She was on the threshold of her role in the Divine Plan launched in 1937 by the 'champion builders' of Bahá'u'lláh's

World Order. Already they were on the march in North America, laying the foundation for the advance into Latin America, and Virginia had witnessed their first entry into that field when there 'came the Guardian's soul-stirring calls for more pioneers ..., no matter how inadequately prepared they might be. So I began to supplicate ... I studied Spanish, worked at my job and did my committee work and Assembly duties ... Suddenly ... I found myself appointed to go to Chile ... What then churned inside of me—spiritually, psychologically and mentally—... is a whole chronicle ...'. ('Pioneer Journey', *The Bahá'í World,* vol. IX, p. 896.) It was 'a spiritual uprooting, and a detachment from things which I have never before achieved ... It has to do in reality, not in theory, with being detached from all save God,' for only with His promised assistance 'can anything be done by a poor mortal anyway!' (12 July 1942) Throughout the coming forty-three years of pioneering Virginia served in that spirit, a 'humble, submissive soul', (8 April 1985) 'thankful for every one of the happy or sad things', (24 April 1945) motivated to strive unceasingly, and thus to earn the good favour of the beloved Guardian who best described her life's activity as 'your constancy in the service of the Faith, your zeal in diffusing its spirit, your determination to consolidate its institutions and your self-sacrifice in promoting its best interests.' (24 October 1949)

And so for Chile she departed on 24 August 1942 'from an Army airport at three in the morning,' on a 25-day journey stopping in Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Columbia and Peru. In Chile she was cast into a current of dynamic movement and confirmation. While the Second World War mounted in destructive power in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Bahá'u'lláh's benign Teachings were being swiftly implanted in centres crucial to the re-creation of Latin America. She was rushed from country to country to hasten the harvest in fields already tilled. There were only months in which to do it. It was a saga whose place names and dates alone must be the witness, though the call upon her every resource of mind, body and spirit in the straining to fulfil the Guardian's hopes for Riḍván cannot even be indicated except to the reader's imagination. 'How many times', she wrote in recollection, did the Guardian's counsel to 'exercise patience' and his promise of prayers for success, '[throb] in my heart and [enable] me to persevere and to withstand things which appeared all too formidable. In memory the marvels of obstacles removed are preserved one after the other, removed by the magic Name of the Beloved.' ('Pioneer Journey', ibid., p. 897)

| *Place* | *Arrival* | *Departure* | *Formation of Local Assembly* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Santiago, Chile | 17 Sept. 1942 | 7 Aug. 1943 | 20 Apr. 1943 |
| Buenos Aires, Argentina | 7 Aug. 1943 | 23 Aug. 1943 | |
| Asuncion, Paraguay | 23 Aug. 1943 | 9 Dec. 1943 | 20 Apr. 1944 |
| La Paz, Bolivia* | 10 Dec. 1943 | 25 Jan. 1944 | 1945 |
| | 4 Sept. 1944 | 28 Oct. 1944 | |
| Lima, Peru | 25 Jan. 1944 | 4 Sept. 1944 | 20 Apr. 1944 |
| | 28 Oct. 1944 | 6 Nov. 1944 | |
| Quito, Ecuador | 7 Nov. 1944 | 27 Dec. 1944 | |
| Guayaquil | 27 Dec. 1944 | 17 May 1945 for hospitalisation and rest in Wilmette | 21 Apr. 1945 |
| Rio de Janeiro, Brazil | 8 Nov. 1945 | 15 Dec. 1946 | 21 Apr. 1946 |
| and São Paulo | 12 Aug. 1946 | 2 Dec. 1946 | |

* In Bolivia she also served in Sucre and Potosí and visited Cuzco and Macchu Picchu.

Such is the bare record of her victorious effort, in partnership with the few pioneers and new believers, 'not to fail the trust that the Guardian has put in our ability to finish this mighty work.' (ibid., p. 900) Nor did they fail, for they 'greatly rejoiced his heart', while to Virginia he wrote: 'Assuring you of my profound admiration and abiding gratitude for the splendid services you have rendered, and of my constant, my loving, and fervent prayers for the extension of your activities ...' (26 July 1946)

It was in the same letter that Shoghi Effendi expressed his hope 'that you will be able to visit Spain, and help in the work of the opening of that great country to the Faith ...' (through his secretary). Already, with his stirring call for American pioneers to hasten to Europe, now that the war had finally ended, Virginia had cabled her wish to do so. His reply came in these words, and the invitation of the European Teaching Committee soon after. By mid-December she was in flight to the Iberian Peninsula, spending Christmas Day in Lisbon and reaching her post in Madrid on December 26th. Some seven months later came this news from a Committee member: '... she is thin and tired but ... *what* a job she has done in Spain—*seven* declared believers—and under the most difficult, not to say dangerous circumstances!' (Katherine True, 14 August 1947)

Spain, when Virginia arrived there, had lived under the shadow of despotism since 1939 and in the grip of economic stringency. From the airport, she writes in her history, she entered this beautiful capital through an unattractive district, passing the remains of trenches, destroyed houses, and heaps of rubbish ... She checked in at the Palace Hotel—sad, cold, without enough light or heating; the food, impeccably served, was nearly invisible because of rationing, as Spain still suffered from the terrible wounds of the Civil War and, with all of Europe, those of the Second World War. She knew no one and was faced with the great problem of introducing a new and unknown religion. Nor would she be able to speak openly of the Faith except to those she could trust, since both Government and the State religion suspected all liberal thought. Mails were censored, both public and private discussion hampered, travel abroad prevented. All citizens suffered, but the intelligent and young most of all. Even five years later Virginia would write: '... keeping one's courage up and faith intact is the big task ... also communicating these feelings to others if possible—all are hopeless and resigned to the worst—it is horrible.' (19 November 1951)

To read Virginia's account of the incredible events leading to the establishment of Spain's first Local Spiritual Assembly in the capital city, Madrid, in 1948, and to the second Assembly in the important city of Barcelona in 1949, creates such excitement, wonder and admiration as one cannot describe. Her immediate steps were to present an introduction to a gentleman of high position, then to apprise the U.S. Consulate of her arrival and mission, and next to meet the master teacher of a musical friend in California. Through these influential contacts, within the first ten days she was welcomed into Spanish families and cultural circles of Madrid and would in future receive protection and assistance from American diplomatic friends. Because her credentials from the Consulate gave her purpose as fuller study of the language and customs of Spain, it was not until the police investigation of 1954 that the existence of the Faith was officially known. By then there were Assemblies in Murcia and Tarrasa as well.

Within a month she was studying singing with the celebrated teacher, Carmencita Vivó, whose two brothers, José María and Manuel Bazo Barea, became Bahá'ís on 23 June 1947—'Historic day ... Truly, a day beginning a new era for this suffering and blessed country'— and she herself and her mother doña Carmen Vivó (Bazo Barea) on July 14th. Two days later, seeing Esslemont's book in the Vivó home, doña Juana Ortuño López de Mascareñas felt compelled to cross the city to meet Virginia and then daily for a week, accepting the Faith on July 23rd. Meanwhile, Manuel García Vázquez, led to Virginia through an Esperantist contact, and his friend Nicolas Avivar Fazio, became Bahá'ís on July 5th. Here then, in less than seven months, were seven devoted Bahá'ís. They were joined in the spring of 1948 by three more, doña Teresa de Hernández and her young daughter Violante on March 11th and Miguel Abajo Hojas on April 18th, assuring the election on April 20th of Madrid's Spiritual Assembly, including Virginia as corresponding secretary. Then great activity began, committees were formed, and each one served on several.

In December 1948 the unique pioneer, Marion Little, came for seven months, and it was her financial support which enabled Juana Ortuño, accompanied by Marion and Virginia, to fulfil her impulse to form a Spiritual Assembly in Barcelona. Their ten-day visit in February, when Juana made contact with several family members and friends, enabling them before departure to speak openly of the Faith, resulted in its acceptance within three weeks by Luis Ortuño Puche. Once more, on April 3rd, Juana was moved to go to Barcelona; she returned with nine declarations. Thus, the first Assembly of Barcelona, all Spanish, came to birth on 20 April 1949; four members were of Juana's family and its chairman was Luis Ortuño. Among this community's dedicated members, from 1950, were Sara and María Tiffon Ramonet, who were to experience many proofs of Bahá'u'lláh's promised aid. Of Virginia they wrote in 1986: She 'was for us the ideal of a woman, since she did not only bring to our life the spiritual awakening of a New Revelation, but by her example and dedication, she illumined and guided our steps in the new path we had embraced ... Her culture and deep understanding of the Teachings cemented the foundations for the establishment of our administrative institutions.' (17 June 1986)

The Ten Year Crusade brought wider horizons to Spain with the opening of the Balearic Islands and Andorra. At the Stockholm International Teaching Conference in July 1953, William Danjon offered for Andorra, Virginia for the Balearic Islands. By August 11th she was at her post in Palma de Mallorca. On December 30th Tove and Jean Deleuran arrived, and in January 1954 Charles Monroe Ioas; all were Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. 'It was amazing', the Deleurans wrote in June 1986, 'how well she had established herself as a pioneer during these few months ... Immediately she had joined the association Amigos de Mallorca, a very popular meeting place for Spaniards who wanted to meet foreigners ... She was well known to many people and had a wonderful ability to make friends and to keep them.' And Charles Ioas also remembered those early days: 'Her life was typical of those who have sacrificed themselves completely for the sake of spreading the message of Bahá'u'lláh ... But her spirit was ever happy, and as others around her succumbed to the trials and tests which always confront a pioneer, she remained a beacon of optimism ... Unfortunately', he continued, 'her stay in Mallorca lasted only one year. In August 1954 she was one of those imprisoned during a police intervention [at an Iberian Teaching Conference] held in Barcelona. After her release she proceeded to Madrid to help with initiating steps for legal recognition of the Faith.' (30 August 1986) This was the occasion famous in Spanish Bahá'í history when, at this conference of sixty Bahá'ís, a complaint to the police led to the arrest in the early morning hours of ten who were interrogated and held for eighteen hours. 'Thanks to the courage and serenity of Virginia, who asked to speak with her Embassy in Madrid, surprising the police, ... they freed everyone ... each believer returned to his locality, ... having experienced the meaning of Bahá'í unity in such difficult moments and the protection given by Virginia to all the friends.' (Sara and María Tiffon, op. cit.) It was on the Guardian's instruction that Virginia returned to Madrid on September 20th. Two years later she was sent to Lisbon as a pioneer.

This was the close of Virginia's initial pioneer work for Spain. Although space forbids mention of the many cities she visited, some as the first Bahá'í, conferences and study gatherings to which she contributed, administrative work she carried, the recurring illnesses she suffered (including a period of five months in 1949 in a sanatorium in Switzerland after total exhaustion), perhaps enough has been said to show both her methods and spirit. In this last decade it had been her joy, not only to attract new souls, but to deepen their knowledge and steadfast commitment and to witness their flowering as cohorts of Bahá'u'lláh. In Madrid alone she had spoken of the Faith to three hundred and sixty-one persons, and of these fifty-four had accepted His Revelation. 'Your heart must rejoice—you and those faithful friends who have served with you—to see at last a rich harvest coming in!' the Guardian assured her, after her pilgrimage in January–February 1956 (lengthened to twenty-seven days by her pneumonia). 'The potentialities of the Faith in the Iberian Peninsula are evidently very high and their future very great.' (through his secretary, 3 May 1956)

Virginia had first seen Lisbon in 1946, had spent two weeks there with the pioneers in 1948, and in 1952 had visited Porto on March 29th

for ten days to support the successful effort to establish a Spiritual Assembly, attended the second Iberian Regional Conference in Lisbon, and exchanged pioneer posts with Charlotte Stirratt for a month in November. Her assignment in 1956 was to replace Charlotte on her departure. 'I am now among the dear Portuguese since the 15th of July', she wrote; they had safely gone through many tests but needed deeper knowledge and experience. They had acquired a Centre—a 'little house ... with gaping neighbours ... wondering just what is going on ... Well, plenty will go on there as long as the police will allow ...' (22 October 1956) Riḍván 1957 marked the achievement of a great goal, the election of the first Iberian Regional Spiritual Assembly, to which Angelo Silva Carneiro of Porto and Virginia were elected. But the situation was precarious as the two Assemblies had only nine and twelve members each and the goal for Portugal was eight Assemblies by 1963. When the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds was bought that October 1957, it was in Virginia's name for the protection of the Faith. In May 1959 the police ordered her expulsion, giving as reasons her Bahá'í activities, holding property and having a telephone! She left at the end of June, never permitted to live there again. There had been many problems during those years, but the Guardian felt assured of 'marked progress' once they were overcome and hoped that 'you will come to be as proud of Portugal as you are justifiably proud of Spain.' (through his secretary, 23 February 1957)

It was to Luxembourg that she was sent by the Committee, where both Bahá'ís and Local Assemblies were lacking for the Ten Year Plan goals. The nine years she spent in Dudelange were probably the most frustrating of her pioneer service, for 'this stubborn little country ... wants to stay as it is ... the slogan of Luxembourg ... and they seem to be doing just this ...' (19 December 1961) Despite years of teaching and an 'invasion of pioneers' in 1960, at the end of 1961 there were only four Luxembourg Bahá'ís and the Dudelange Assembly had fallen to five, all pioneers. It was not for want of effort, for they 'are seeing the name Bahá'í in their papers, on their poster kiosks ... and in public and fireside meetings ... No wonder we are all worn out ... *But*', she added, 'there are some real live Luxembourgers who are nibbling ... May Bahá'u'lláh confirm them quickly!' (ibid.) In fact, the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg was scheduled for election in just four months. And so it happened, but chiefly with pioneers. Five members, including the first Luxembourg Bahá'í, Suzette Hipp, and Virginia, were in Haifa in 1963 for the election of the first Universal House of Justice. That and the World Congress in London were a welcome respite for Virginia from her small mining town, where the red dust affected so badly her bronchial weakness.

Unhappily, the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly did not, and could not, alter the tempo of the country. Some time in late 1964 Virginia offered to serve elsewhere, but with three of the four Assemblies below nine she could not be spared. By 1965 she was alone in Dudelange, but still she persevered. 'There are still miracles in action, and maybe some of them will be confirmations among these dear traditional people ... I leave all my affairs in His hands.' (29 December 1965) And so it was that her future was determined by doctors on whose insistence she returned in January 1968 to a more benign climate, back to Spain—to Malaga.

It was no longer the Spain she had left nearly twelve years before. From 1962 the Bahá'í community, by then increased to two hundred and nineteen believers, mostly Spanish, with ten Local Assemblies and Bahá'ís in fourteen other places, received the wise and energetic guidance of its own National Spiritual Assembly. The long-sought legal recognition came on 13 July 1968, with the registration of non-Catholic religious organizations. Public teaching was now possible and the first public meeting in Spain was held in Malaga in 1971, publicized by posters and radio. Spain's first Bahá'í exhibition, arranged by the youth, followed in 1973, also in Malaga. But their greatest victory came in May 1976, with a series of four lectures in the University of Malaga, under the patronage of the Director of the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature; given by Virginia, they were the first presentation of the Faith in a Spanish University and attracted outstanding newspaper and radio publicity.

Malaga had attained its Assembly in 1972 and Virginia, although in her 70s, continued her varied Bahá'í services including travel teaching as far afield as the Azores, Madeira and

the Canary Islands, and pioneering in Marbella from January to June 1979. She was also translating many documents for the National Assembly, and in 1972 they requested her to write a history of the Faith in Spain—a prodigious task completed in May 1980 despite increasing fatigue, failing eyesight and eye surgery in New York in 1979, followed by a mild heart attack. In Malaga, where a majority of the Bahá'ís were young, Virginia, looking upon them as her own children, increasingly spent time with them in extending their knowledge of the Faith, its literature and its development in Spain. Her joy was to see them active in public teaching and pioneering, serving on new Assemblies in Córdoba and Jaén and even on the National Spiritual Assembly. She was thrilled, too, to 'see so many of the very firsts, still active and so developed and faithful. The Persians are almost all very special too ...' (29 May 1978) Ramón Escartín, who had served with Virginia on the first Regional Spiritual Assembly, had described her at this time: 'When we listened to her impressions of the development of the Faith in Spain, all of us felt very happy. It was easy to see that her very delicate physical condition would be transformed upon seeing all hearts beat in unison, listening to the music of her voice.' (6 May 1986)

Exhausted by the final stages of her History, by her long struggle with recurrent and serious illness (pneumonia for the eighth time in 1981), and with the nearly complete loss of vision in one eye, her thoughts turned more and more to her future. Death she had never feared, for it would reunite her with those she loved, nor would she consider leaving her pioneer post. 'The Guardian sent me here,' she told Dorothy Behar, 'and here is where I'm going to lay my bones.' In 1982, unable to live any longer alone in her little flat in Casita Rosa, she moved to the Hotel California, then to Residencia Marymar in Benalmadena for six months but, finding it too isolated, returned to the Hotel until, in need of greater care, she entered the Clinica del Pilar next door in early 1985. In early August she suffered two mild strokes and from that time her 'light' was slowly fading, although 'her mind, thoughts and memory are perfectly sound and alert, and [she] hasn't lost her subtle sense of humor ... she is in very good hands and ... the members of the Malaga community are *extremely* thoughtful and assist her in every possible way. I really have never seen such an expression of love and concern ...' (Dorothy Behar, 6 September 1985) When, in the early morning of November 20th, her soul took 'flight into the other worlds of God', the Assembly prepared her funeral with utmost delicacy and beauty. She was buried next afternoon in the International Cemetery, her coffin carried by the nine members, with others bearing flowers. It was, they said, despite their sadness, 'a day of celebration' for the fulfilment of her heart's dearest wish.

'Virginia was, one might almost say, unique', wrote Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. (1 June 1986) 'I loved and admired her very much ... We all know she really established the Faith in Spain and, faithful to her last breath died there still as a pioneer!'

MARION HOFMAN

NOTE: All letters quoted from Virginia and others were addressed to Marion Hofman, except those from Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Cause of God, which were addressed to Virginia.

## MELBA WHETUNG LOFT

*'Kinaaj-Kwe'*

1912–1985

GRIEVED PASSING MELBA LOFT SHINING EMBLEM NATIVE PEOPLES NORTH AMERICA. HER LONG TEACHING SERVICE MARKED HARDSHIPS ILLNESS ULTIMATELY EARNING RESPECT RECOGNITION HER BELOVED FAITH AND ENRICHING ANNALS CAUSE FOSTERING CLOSE TIES BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND OTHER BELIEVERS CANADA. KINDLY CONVEY FAMILY FRIENDS ASSURANCE PRAYERS SHRINES PROGRESS HER NOBLE SPIRIT ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
25 November 1985

Sarah Melba Whetung was born on the Curve Lake Indian Reserve, near Peterborough, Ontario, Canada on 24 December 1912. Curve Lake is an Ojibwa Reserve. Melba was the eldest daughter of Arthur Whetung, a trapper, and his wife, Bella.

Melba finished grade school at twelve years of age and, with her mother's help and encouragement, completed her high school education

in Peterborough. At seventeen years of age she met Alfred James (Jim) Loft, a Mohawk. They married several years later and lived in Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A. where Jim worked at the Chrysler automobile plant. Their two sons, James Gordon (Sam) and Arthur Edwin were born in Detroit. In 1936, Jim was transferred to the plant in Marysville, Michigan where he bought a home. In 1938 a daughter, Evelyn, was born to Jim and Melba. It was shortly after this that Melba became restless and searching. She missed the Indian way of life. She became close friends with her neighbour, Emma Lenk. Returning from church service one day Melba said, 'There's got to be something besides this!' Shortly after that Melba and Emma learned of the Bahá'í Faith and embraced it.

Melba described herself as having been, in the years before Jim became a believer, 'an armchair Bahá'í'. She read and studied, attended meetings, and sent the children to the Louhelen Bahá'í School at Davison, Michigan. Jim became a Bahá'í in 1948 and was at once moved to write to Shoghi Effendi asking for guidance in the service he might perform. The Guardian's reply, written by his secretary on his behalf, said, 'He would greatly welcome your returning to your own tribe, and giving them this great message you and your dear wife have accepted.'

A postscript in the Guardian's own hand stated, 'Your most welcome letter rejoiced my heart, and I hasten to assure you of a most hearty welcome into the Bahá'í fold, as well as of my loving and fervent prayers for any and every effort you may exert for the promotion of the Faith and the conversion of your fellow Indians and their acceptance of its verities. May the Beloved bless, protect and sustain you always and aid you to realize your heart's cherished desire.'

Winter was setting in but arrangements were made immediately to move to the Tyendinaga Reserve in Ontario where the family endured great physical hardships. Their house had no heat or electricity; animals had been living in it when they moved in; and it had only three rooms. Jim and Melba were unable to find any work, and in 1950, at a time when they did not know where the next meal was coming from, Jim wrote another letter to Shoghi Effendi. The reply said that the Guardian 'does not feel it is right for you and your family to impoverish yourselves further in order to remain on the Reservation; on the other hand your being there and living amongst the people is undoubtedly the best way to teach them.'

*Melba Whetung Loft*

The Guardian's letter, which included, in his own hand, 'assurance of my abiding and deepest appreciation of your services to our beloved Faith, of my heartfelt admiration for the spirit that animates you, and of my ardent prayers for the success of every effort you exert for its promotion and consolidation', and which was signed 'Your true and grateful brother, Shoghi', marked yet another turning point in their lives. Jim was able to set up an auto body shop on the Reserve as a means of livelihood, though they still had no running water or indoor plumbing, and almost all of Melba's good furniture had to be sold to buy equipment for the garage. The Lofts had visits from many Bahá'ís in those early years, many of them on their way to pioneering posts all over the world. The first people Melba and Jim brought into the Faith were Bert and Elizabeth Curtis, in 1950; and the next year, the first Indian believers in Tyendinaga were May and Russell Hill. The Lofts supported the teaching work in the nearby towns of Kingston and Belleville by offering encouragement

and attending meetings. Peggy Ross, who was called by Melba 'my spiritual mother', spent much time on the Reserve and was like one of the family.

Jim died suddenly on 22 May 1973.[1] Melba continued to live alone for the next eight years. An occasion for rejoicing occurred in November 1976 when Indian Bahá'ís from Ontario to the Maritimes gathered at Tyendinaga Reserve for the first Canadian Native Council. Although the Indian Band Council had been generally unsympathetic towards the Faith over the years, not permitting public meetings to be held and denying the Bahá'ís access to the village meeting hall, a victory came in February 1977.

Just prior to attending the Bahá'í International Conference in Mérida, Melba approached the Chief and the Council to ask whether they wished to send a message through her to the Mayan Indians of Mexico and, to her deep joy, the Chief responded by writing a letter. Not only did this message reach the Mayans but it reverberated all through the Caribbean, for Melba was invited, along with other Canadian Indian participants at the conference, to be interviewed on television, and she responded by reading the Chief's letter, thus enabling the greeting to span the continents. The patience with which she had for so long endured rejection and suspicion won, in the end. At Naw-Rúz 134 (21 March 1977) permission was granted by the authorities for the holding on the Tyendinaga Reserve of a public New Year observance which was attended by one hundred and fifty guests.

The remaining years of Melba's life were highlighted by her participation in many historic Bahá'í events, such as 'the Gathering'; native councils; a teaching trip in 1978 to Denmark, England, Ireland, Austria and Switzerland, which she viewed as one of the crowning events of her life; the formation in 1979 of the first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Tyendinaga, the reward of her long years of steadfastness; and the invitation to be a special guest at the 1981 'Vision Quest—Bahá'u'lláh', National Native Council, near Rawdon, Quebec. To that gathering she sent a touching message in which she wrote, 'One must pray every day ... for we must remember, all we are going to take with us to the Abhá Kingdom is our spiritual knowledge of God through Bahá'u'lláh ... we must go forward, put on our spiritual armour for Bahá'u'lláh, as He never leaves us alone. I know I never feel alone; I am happy to be living in this Day to see how our Faith has grown over the years and to have the prayers and guidance, and I know I have been fully blessed and I am thankful.'

The news of the formation of the first Spiritual Assembly of Tyendinaga in 1979 brought the Universal House of Justice great happiness. A letter written on behalf of the House of Justice to Evelyn Loft states, 'The steadfastness of your parents in remaining at their post is indeed exemplary and fully demonstrates the spirit of true pioneering.'

Melba also had a non-speaking role in the music video film 'Mona with the Children' honouring the young martyr, Muná Maḥmúdnizhád.

Melba's outstanding contributions as a Bahá'í were given special recognition when the hall of the Yukon Bahá'í House in Whitehorse was named after her, *Kinaaj-Kwe*—the Indian name meaning 'good, kind and gracious lady' bestowed upon her when she was little by her father.

In September 1985, a native council was held but Melba could not attend due to poor health. Two pine trees were planted beside the driveway leading to the Bahá'í Centre next to Emily General's home on the Six Nations Reserve. The first pine tree was planted for Emily General, and was dedicated 'To one who devoted all her life to the cultural development of her people.' On the other side Evelyn Loft planted a tree dedicated 'To Melba Whetung Loft, the first native Bahá'í of Canada—our spiritual mother.'

Melba and Jim Loft are buried side by side on the Tyendinaga Reserve. The beautiful marker over their grave contains the symbol of the nine-pointed star and the native symbol of the Thunderbird, and reads:

'Alfred Jim Loft
and Melba Whetung Loft
The Guardian's Obedient Servants'

EVELYN LOFT

(Adapted from an article in *Bahá'í Canada*, Vol. 8, No. 2, April 1986)

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 514.

*Daw Thoung Khin*

## DAW THOUNG KHIN
1912–1986

The death of Daw Thoung Khin on 10 January 1986, in her seventy-fourth year, was a great loss to the Burmese Bahá'í community to which she was—in the words of her cousin—'like the central axis; her dedication and services were unequalled.'

Daw Thoung Khin was born on 1 August 1912 in Mandalay, a third-generation Bahá'í, her grandparents having embraced the Faith about 1879 through the teaching efforts of Jamál Effendi and Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rúmí. Her parents, U Ba Tin and Daw Tint, were well educated. They founded an English private school and a printing firm that published the *Taing Chit* newspaper as well as some Bahá'í books, including the Burmese translation of Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*; her father also produced films. After his death in 1925, Daw Thoung Khin's mother carried on her husband's business and raised her three sons and two daughters; she died in 1966.

Daw Thoung Khin was an active and bright youngster. At an early age she took an interest in the Bahá'í Cause and from her pocket money contributed to the fund for the construction of the House of Worship in Wilmette. She attended the American Baptist School where she distinguished herself by standing first or second in every class; she was awarded scholarships from Standard 7 to Standard 10. She had a great love of music and mastered several instruments.

After completing high school Daw Thoung Khin attended Rangoon Teachers' Training College where she obtained her Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education degrees. She taught in various schools in the towns of Mawlike, Yamethin, Myingyan and Mandalay and took part in Bahá'í community affairs. A leader of the Girl Guides who achieved the rank of Assistant Commissioner, she established or reactivated groups at each school where she taught and in 1962 was sent by the Government of Burma to the Malaysia Girl Guides' Conference. During World War II she taught Burmese to Japanese traders who could speak English, and despite the risk she did not fail to mention the Faith. After the war, Daw Thoung Khin was promoted to Head Mistress, a post in which she served until she resigned in 1963 to found a boarding house for girls and to tutor in English. By this means she increased her income and the time she had available to serve the Faith. She taught classes for women and children, presented courses at summer and winter schools and at youth conferences, and was chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Mandalay from 1959 until her death.

At age forty she married U Thoung Nhue. Their union was without issue and tragically her husband died in 1976 as a result of a car accident. In April 1959 when the first National Spiritual Assembly of Burma was elected, Daw Thoung Khin and her aunt, Daw Hla Hla, were its only women members. Daw Thoung Khin took a very active part in the centenary celebrations of the Bahá'í community of Burma in 1978, and those of Mandalay in 1979 which were attended by three hundred guests including the Religious Affairs Officer.

Throughout her life Daw Thoung Khin was loved by those who knew her. She was always generous to the poor, she took care of children, she extended assistance to the aged and sheltered the displaced regardless of colour, class or creed. After the great fire of Mandalay in

1985 some homeless Bahá'í friends as well as others were placed in her home; she assisted them for a long time until they were able to resettle. She lived the life of a true believer in Bahá'u'lláh, and in addition to her personal assistance to others she was generous in supporting the Bahá'í Fund. Many Bahá'í institutions benefited under the provisions of her will. Her translations of Bahá'í literature into Burmese include, in addition to a collection of Bahá'í prayers and numerous notes and compilations, excerpts from the *Kitáb-i-Íqán,* excerpts from *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh,* the *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory,* and excerpts from *Release the Sun,* her earlier completed translation of which perished in Mandalay's great fire. She also provided an improved translation of *Paris Talks* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

In March 1985 her health began to fail. Although her spirit remained very strong, in July her condition worsened. On 1 January 1986 she was admitted to hospital and passed away on 10 January. Nearly one thousand people attended her funeral on 12 January including members of her family, Auxiliary Board members, members of the National Spiritual Assembly, other Bahá'í friends and former students. A cortege of seventy-four motor vehicles transported the mourners to the graveside in the Bahá'í cemetery of Mandalay. Memorial meetings were held throughout the country in her honour.

On 13 January 1986 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED STEADFAST PROMOTER FAITH DAW THOUNG KHIN. HER LIFELONG SERVICES TEACHING ADMINISTRATION FIELDS HER RESOLVE PROTECT ENCOURAGE FELLOW BELIEVERS IN DIFFICULT TIMES AND HER GENEROSITY AND EXEMPLARY CONDUCT IMMORTALIZE HER ANNALS FAITH BURMA. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERING. ASSURE FRIENDS PARTICULARLY IN MANDALAY ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HER NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

(Adapted from tributes by the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF BURMA and Auxiliary Board member DAW TIN TIN YI)

*Teo Geok Leng*

## TEO GEOK LENG
1907–1986

On 17 January 1986, news of the passing of Mr. Teo Geok Leng, a dedicated servant of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh for over thirty years, was relayed to the World Centre in a telex sent by the National Spiritual Assembly of Singapore:

> PASSING OF MR. TEO GEOK LENG FIRST CHINESE BELIEVER SINGAPORE ON 13 JANUARY 1986. HE SERVED ON FIRST LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF SINGAPORE ELECTED IN 1952. WAS MEMBER NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF SINGAPORE FOR NINE YEARS SINCE FORMATION IN 1972 AND SERVED FOR EIGHT YEARS AS TREASURER. HE WAS APPOINTED BY GOVERNMENT TO SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGES AND HAD BEEN OUR SOLEMNIZER OF BAHAI MARRIAGES FOR MORE THAN ELEVEN YEARS SINCE 1973. IN 1978 MR. TEO VISITED HOLY LAND FOR INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION. HE ALSO SERVED ON LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF TANGLIN. ASSEMBLY GREATLY APPRECIATES HIS DEVOTED SERVICES RENDERED TO THE FAITH IN SINGAPORE AND HUMBLY BESEECHES PRAYERS OF BELOVED HOUSE OF

JUSTICE AT HOLY SHRINES FOR PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

In response, the following message, dated 17 January, was received from the Universal House of Justice:

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING TEO GEOK LENG DEVOTED DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BAHAULLAH FIRST CHINESE BELIEVER SINGAPORE. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL WORLDS GOD.

Born on 4 April 1907, of parents who were rather influential, he was educated at Raffles Institution, Singapore's premier secondary school, and obtained his Cambridge School Certificate in 1923. But throughout this period and as he grew more mature, although his family supplied him with all the best that life at that time could offer, he felt that something was missing from his life. Seeking to fill the vacuum, and with the hope of finding an answer, he began an arduous study of religion. He also devoted himself to the study of accountancy, a skill ably manifested when he started a family business dealing in office equipment and no less ably when he was elected treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly of Singapore.

Although his business prospered his spiritual longings were unsatisfied, and he felt that his study of religion had been fruitless. Nevertheless, in an effort to further his search and broaden its scope he joined the Theosophical Society through which, in time, his quest was unexpectedly fulfilled. In 1950, Dr. K. Fozdar and his wife, Shirin, arrived in Singapore, as directed by the Guardian, to teach and propagate the Faith. Dr. Fozdar's attendance at public gatherings sponsored by the Theosophical Society led to his meeting Mr. Teo. Their friendship deepened and, in early 1952, after attending some Bahá'í functions, Mr. Teo embraced the Faith, the first Chinese to do so in Singapore. It was the end of his search to fill the vacuum and the beginning of his new life under the shelter of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. Increasingly he grew frustrated in attempting to share his new beliefs with members of the Theosophical Society and gradually severed ties with it in order to devote all his free time to service to the Bahá'í Cause.

For more than thirty years Mr. Teo served the Blessed Beauty, first as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Singapore, and later, when the country formed its own National Spiritual Assembly, as chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Queenstown, and in various capacities on the National Spiritual Assembly of Tanglin. To the community, local and national, he was affectionately known as 'Uncle Teo' and was noted for the meticulous way he prepared the national accounts, and for his punctuality at meetings and other gatherings, especially Bahá'í weddings where he served as the official solemnizer appointed by the government. Many couples remember the philosophical yet witty advice he offered them as they crossed the threshold of married life.

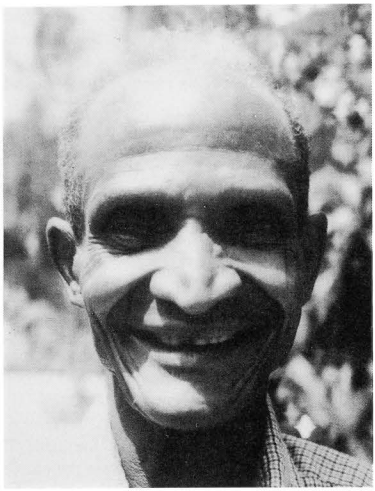
A highlight of Mr. Teo's spiritual life, as he would often express it, was the few precious days he spent in the Holy Land for pilgrimage and the 1978 International Convention. With the encouragement of friends he was persuaded to conquer his inherent distaste for travelling, and especially his deep-seated fear of flying, and make the long journey to Israel. The happy result, virtually a miracle, caused the entire community of Singapore to rejoice.

Sad to say, in his mid-eighties, with failing health, Mr. Teo was called to make the final journey of his life: he passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 13 January 1986. He was laid to rest in the Bahá'í cemetery at Choa Chu Kang on 17 January in the presence of a large gathering of relatives, and Bahá'í and other friends, with the added bounty of having the Hand of the Cause of God Collis Featherstone recite the Prayer for the Dead.

FREDDY TAN

## ARNOLD WELLS
?–1986

On 15 February 1986 Arnold Wells ascended to the Abhá Kingdom. He was born some time between 1900 and 1905 at Dead Man's Cay, Long Island, the Bahamas, the son of Mary and Dody Wells. He had the distinction of being the second Bahamian Bahá'í, having embraced the Faith but two weeks after it was accepted by the first indigenous believer, Molly Newbold, in the early 1950s, as a result of meeting Gerald and Gail Curwin, Knights of Bahá'u'lláh for the Bahamas.



*Arnold Wells*

Arnold attended school in Haiti and trained as a plumber and tinsmith. For more than twenty years he was employed in the maintenance department of the Nassau International Airport. He spoke French, Spanish and English. In 1956 he married Winnifred Paul. Although no children were born to them, in the words of Karin Leonard, 'every child close at hand became "their grandchild", especially Beryl McSweeney's. And although Winnie never announced officially her belief in Bahá'u'lláh, she treasured the prayers and took delight in the many Bahá'í meetings held in their humble home.' Arnold became well known for his steadfast devotion to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. He served on the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Nassau, formed at Riḍván 1955, and took pride in witnessing the coming into being of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahamas in 1978.

Beryl Quamie McSweeney, another early believer of the Bahamas, recalls: 'For about five years, Arnold and I met every Sunday and said prayers and read from his cherished copy of *Bahá'í World Faith.* We were soon found by Ellsworth Blackwell who was visiting for a week. He introduced us to the Leonard family and we became a Bahá'í group. Arnold was never ashamed to stand up and speak about Bahá'u'lláh and he always traveled with his copy of *Bahá'í World Faith.*'

Karin and Robert Leonard who pioneered in the Bahamas from August 1967 until July 1976, had enlisted the aid of Ellsworth Blackwell in making contact with the Bahá'í community of Nassau, where houses are not numbered, eager to meet those who had learned of the Faith through the first pioneers, the Curwins, and Mr. Andrew F. Matthisen and his wife, Nina. Mrs. Leonard wrote that Beryl and Arnold 'had "kept the Faith" during the years after the pioneers of the Ten Year Crusade had to leave,' and commented that 'The dinner party held to celebrate our meeting was joyous. We could have eaten oatmeal that night and it would still remain the most outstanding dinner party of my life. As for Arnold Wells, the adjectives with which we would describe him are "steadfast", "dedicated", "stalwart", "generous" and "loving". Happily, he lived to see one of his cherished dreams come true. How many times we heard him say, "The Bahá'ís must have a *place*! Then the people will listen." Maybe that's why we were given the opportunity to purchase the property on one of the two main thoroughfares of the city for the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds.'

In the March 1986 issue of *Bahá'í Sunshine,* published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Bahamas, tribute was paid to Arnold Wells, and recognition accorded the place of honour he holds in the annals of the Faith in the Bahamas. A beautiful and uplifting service was held at the National Centre on 22 February 1986 to honour the memory of one who loved his Lord and held fast to the cord of His Covenant.

## ANGUS WELDON COWAN
1914–1986

The Bahá'í World was saddened by the passing of Angus Cowan on 9 March 1986 in Invermere, British Columbia, Canada, after a long struggle with cancer. Angus was particularly loved by the native peoples of North America to whom he devoted a large part of his time teaching the Faith.

Angus, who was born on 12 September 1914, received his primary school education in Bishopton and West Bolton, Quebec. He then attended high school in Knowlton, Quebec, following which he attended Macdonald College in St. Anne de Bellevue. From 1938 to 1942 he sold life insurance, a field to which he returned from 1956 to 1960. In 1946, he was released from the Air Force where he had served for two and a half years as an air frame mechanic, and after taking classes at the University of Toronto for a few months, he was hired by IBM for whom he worked in sales first in Toronto and later in Winnipeg (1950 to 1955) where he managed the Electric Typewriter Division. He took an active interest in sports, serving as captain of hockey and baseball teams, and was at various times a member of the Big Brothers association, president of the John Howard Society, and Saskatchewan representative of the national committee of the Canadian Corrections Association.

Asked about the circumstances of his becoming a Bahá'í, Angus stated that in 1946 when he had returned to university he was selling books in a book store to earn a little money. 'A customer by the name of John Robarts came in twice while I was on duty. I became his babysitter. I met his daughter, Nina, aged about four, who taught me my first Bahá'í lesson. John and Audrey Robarts became friends to me and had lots of patience for three years ... Then Bobbie and I were ready to turn to Bahá'u'lláh. The happy day was 30 March 1949.'

Angus was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada in a by-election in December 1953 after a vacancy had been created when John Robarts, whom Angus called his spiritual guide and Bahá'í father, and who was in October 1957 appointed a Hand of the Cause, had pioneered with his family to Africa. After serving on the National Spiritual Assembly for a period of fourteen years, Angus was appointed Auxiliary Board member for Saskatchewan, Manitoba, North Dakota and Montana. Always an extremely humble man, he liked to tell the story of how he became a member of the Auxiliary Board. 'One of my greatest tests', he said, 'was that I couldn't consult, I always felt like a fifth wheel on the National Spiritual Assembly because I wanted to be out in the front lines of the Faith teaching, not consulting.' So, in 1968, when the Counsellors asked the National Spiritual Assembly to recommend members of the Bahá'í community to serve on the Auxiliary Board, adding that the National Assembly should not overlook its own membership, Angus enthusiastically volunteered.

The following six years were described by Angus as the most exciting period of his Bahá'í life. Although he was given direction by Counsellor Lloyd Gardner, he said he was able to go about teaching largely in his own way and at his own speed and was never slowed down by the need for consultation. 'Lloyd probably wanted to consult with me at times,' he would chuckle when relating the story, 'but, you see, I always tried to keep a few steps ahead of him so he couldn't catch up to me.'

During those years Angus intensified his teaching activity among the indigenous peoples. The deep love that he had borne for them all his life began to bear fruit in 1958 in the native communities of Saskatchewan. He came to be so loved and respected by the native people of Canada and the United States that the Tlingit tribe adopted him into the Eagle band and bestowed upon him the name *Yik-Gah* (Great Greatgrandfather) during a ceremony which took place at the 1978 Alaskan national convention and which was described in the *Alaska Bahá í News* as the 'most unifying event of the convention'.

On a previous occasion Angus had been entrusted with the most treasured possessions of a native Elder, Ed Poorman, of the Poorman Reserve in Saskatchewan. Following his first meeting with Ed Poorman, the Elder gave him a sacred medicine pipe and a Queen Victoria treaty, written on parchment and dated 1885. Angus had the treaty document framed and returned it to Ed, but it was not until years later that he fully realized the significance of the rare honour that had been bestowed upon him when the sacred pipe was entrusted to his care.

Angus's personal good-humoured and informal style of teaching endeared him to many. He constantly praised the efforts of others, and he would tell amusing stories about his own 'blunders' in order to demonstrate the principles of the Faith. He said that when Bahá'u'lláh presents us with a test, and we fail, we are not punished but are simply given the test again. As an example, he told how he had been tested

*Angus Weldon Cowan*

in the fire of consultation during the fourteen years he served on the National Spiritual Assembly, but because he had still not learned to consult after all that time, he was appointed a Counsellor in October 1976, after having been given some years of freedom on the Auxiliary Board. He served as a Counsellor for the next decade. The true test of his consultative skills came when, at the first meeting he attended of the Continental Board of Counsellors, while he was still stunned by his appointment, he was called upon to chair the meeting in the presence of the Hand of the Cause of God William Sears. Angus's humility, combined with the reverence in which he held the Hands of the Cause and his deep respect for the Counsellors, made this a real test.

Angus's enthusiasm to serve the Faith sometimes led him to make hasty decisions. At an international conference in 1968, after listening to a plea expressed by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum for pioneers to arise to fill goals, Angus was so inspired he pledged to pioneer to Venezuela, and only on his way home did the sobering thought occur that he had not consulted with his family! He did not act upon that offer, which he felt to have been a solemn commitment, and for some years carried a burden of guilt until it was good-naturedly dispelled by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and Mr. Amoz Gibson. It was Canada's good fortune that Angus did not pioneer to Venezuela at that time; however, he enjoyed telling this story as an illustration of the need to balance audacity of initiative with realistic expectations of ourselves and our loved ones.

Angus demonstrated what it meant to comply with Bahá'u'lláh's exhortation to be *generous in prosperity and thankful in adversity*. At the last major conference he attended, he told the friends that in a way he was thankful for all the tests that he had been given, even the cancer that was destroying his body. He had often spoken over the years of 'reliance on God', he said, but it was only through the pain and suffering he was enduring that he felt he came to a clear understanding of what that phrase meant.

When Angus Cowan died on 9 March 1986 tributes came from every quarter. PROFOUNDLY GRIEVED TO ANNOUNCE PASSING OUR BELOVED COUNSELLOR ANGUS COWAN, the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly telexed the World Centre, HIS REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUALITY SERVICE DETACHMENT HUMILITY HIS PASSIONATE LOVE FOR THE ORIGINAL PEOPLES OF CANADA AND ELSEWHERE COMBINED WITH HIS TIRELESS TEACHING EFFORTS AND YEARS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE WILL BE DEARLY REMEMBERED IN THE ANNALS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD ... The February/March 1986 issue of *Bahá'í Canada* carried a supplement entitled 'A Special Measure of Love: A tribute to the native teaching work of Angus Cowan'.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum cabled KINDLY CONVEY DEAR BOBBIE COWAN MY HEARTFELT LOVING SYMPATHY LOSS MUCH LOVED ADMIRED DEVOTED ANGUS WHOSE LONG OUTSTANDING SERVICES CANADIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY UNFORGETTABLE ... Rúḥíyyih Khánum participated in the memorial services held for Angus Cowan and Melba Loft during her visit to Canada in July 1986.

Describing Angus as LOVED and MUCH ADMIRED, the Continental Board of Counsellors in their message stated HIS DEDICATION NATIVE PEOPLE IMMENSE LOVE FOR ALL UNFORGETTABLE.

Counsellor Donald Rogers wrote of Angus, 'He has always epitomized service in all aspects of his life. For example, I remember that travelling in winter, Angus would invariably be the

one to jump out and scrape the snow and ice off the car even though he was the passenger. His kindness, his non-judgmental approach towards other people and his ability to treat everybody as equals serve as an example and encouragement to many of us and have shown us what it really means to be a Bahá'í.

Dorothy Francis, a well-known native Bahá'í, said of him, 'The native people love Angus, not only because he taught us the Bahá'í Faith, but because he is one of us. He learned about the native people, took part in our ceremonies and has the greatest respect for our traditions.'

Another long-time Bahá'í, Alice Dusty Horn, recalling Angus's teaching work on the Poorman Reserve, tells how he had the habit of bringing candy and other treats to the children on special occasions. She remembered how one of her children reacted to Angus's gift—'I'll never eat this,' he said, '*Angus* gave it to me.'

On her cassette recording *Ordinary Girl,* released subsequent to Angus's death, Carolina Mackay dedicated to his memory her setting of a Bahá'í prayer.

From the Universal House of Justice, on 12 March 1986, came the final and crowning honour—a message encapsulating the life and service of this humble, gentle and sweet-natured man:

> HEARTS GRIEFSTRICKEN PASSING OUTSTANDING PROMOTER CAUSE ANGUS COWAN. HIS SERVICES AS PREEMINENT BAHÁ'Í TEACHER OF INDIAN PEOPLES HIS UNCEASING LABOURS THROUGHOUT LONG YEARS DEVOTION RANGED FROM LOCAL AND NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES TO AUXILIARY BOARD AND BOARD COUNSELLORS. HIS COMPASSION COURTESY HUMILITY MAGNANIMITY UNFORGETTABLE. BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY CANADA ROBBED OF A DEDICATED NOBLE WORKER WHO BORE HIS SUFFERINGS TO THE VERY END WITH EXEMPLARY FORTITUDE. CONVEY LOVING CONDOLENCES HIS BELOVED WIFE AND FAMILY AND ASSURANCES ARDENT PRAYERS HIS RADIANT SOUL'S PROGRESS THROUGHOUT WORLDS GOD.

(Adapted from an article by GORDON MCFARLANE)

*Georgine A. Moul*

## GEORGINE A. MOUL
1924–1986

The Hawaii Bahá'í community has been missing a dear and devoted believer since the passing of Georgine Arnold Moul on 21 March 1986 in Honolulu, following a long illness.

Georgine was born on 17 January 1924 in Peru, Indiana, U.S.A. She attended Purdue University and graduated from the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts where she soon became a faculty member while also working as artist in residence for the Maurice L. Rothschilds apparel store in Chicago, concentrating on fashion illustration. She became a Bahá'í in 1949 while still in school and apprenticed to Mrs. Betty de Araujo (then Scheffler), after attending firesides at the home of Ruth and Ellsworth Blackwell. For the next thirty-seven years the Bahá'í Faith was always her first priority.

Georgine married Robert 'Pat' Moul, a devoted Bahá'í, in 1952 in Evanston, Illinois. They responded to the Guardian's Ten Year Spiritual Crusade call for pioneers to Alaska during the first year of their marriage, moving to a new post only after the previous one was secured by new believers: Anchorage in 1953,

and the virgin goal cities of Ketchikan in 1954, and Douglas in 1957. During their seventeen years in Alaska, three children were born to them: Vicki, Doug and Larry.

In 1970, Georgine and Pat became the first pioneers to fill a foreign goal for the National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands by relocating the entire family to American Samoa. Here they operated a print shop and stationery and printing supply store, with Georgine as graphic artist, Pat as manager and printer, Vicki as clerk, Doug as cameraman, and Larry as binder. They remained in Samoa for four years, until Pat's deteriorating health forced them to sell the shop and move to Guam where they remained for a further period of almost four years.

In 1978—Vicki having married and Doug being on his own—Georgine and Pat and Larry moved to Hawaii where Georgine and Pat served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Honolulu until Georgine's illness prompted their resignations in the summer of 1985. Hawaii benefited from the Mouls' masterful teamwork in many respects and also from their individual contributions, notably through Georgine's many art projects for the Faith such as Aloha Week Parade floats, designs for the national Bahá'í calendar, book jacket designs including two solicited by the Hand of the Cause William Sears, television program backdrops and a variety of posters. Georgine's business acumen transformed the National Bahá'í library into a successful enterprise, offering a multinational clientele a stock of books and other Bahá'í material virtually unrivalled elsewhere in the world for volume and variety.

Georgine was that rare combination—an artist who was also an efficient organizer. Although marvelously creative, she never overlooked a detail, never forsook a responsibility. Perhaps because she took to heart the Guardian's instructions about setting goals and making plans, Georgine (an inveterate maker of lists!) could be counted on to remember the tasks left undone—from dripping taps needing repair, to writing thank-you letters—often assuming these responsibilities herself. She sought guidance through prayer and research of the Writings before beginning any project and her work reflected that inspiration and wisdom. Her children also demonstrate her commitment to Bahá'í ideals—each is a firm believer, educated as a Bahá'í from birth. She was also a thoughtful friend, generously providing hospitality to a continual flow of international Bahá'í travelers as houseguests, and remembering each Assembly member's birthday with a homebaked cake and candles.

The body of our talented, hardworking friend was laid to rest in the Bahá'í 'Garden of Light' at Hawaiian Memorial Park on 24 March 1986, following a brief service of prayers and devotions which concluded with the reading of the following cable received that day from the Universal House of Justice:

> HEARTS SADDENED NEWS PASSING DEARLY LOVED GEORGINE MOUL. HER DEVOTED SERVICES AS PIONEER ALASKA SAMOA GUAM AND HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO WORK HAWAIIAN BAHAI COMMUNITY ADD LUSTRE HER LONG AND DEVOTED RECORD SERVICE FAITH. OFFERING LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER IMMORTAL SOUL. KINDLY CONVEY PAT MOUL AND OTHER MEMBERS FAMILY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES.

ELIZABETH D. HOLLINGER
LYNNE ELLEN HOLLINGER

(Reprinted from *Light of the Pacific,* No. 188, March/April 1986)

PART FIVE

# DIRECTORY, BIBLIOGRAPHY, GLOSSARY

# I
# BAHÁ'Í DIRECTORY 1983–1986
# 140, 141 AND 142 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA

## 1. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Address: 16 Golomb Avenue, 33 392 Haifa, Israel (P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa)

## 2. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE

Address: 7 Haparsim Street, 35 055 Haifa, Israel (P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa)

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum

| | |
|---|---|
| Dr. Ugo Giachery | Dr. 'Ali-Muḥammad Varqá |
| 'Ali-Akbar Furútan | William Sears |
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# 6. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

At Riḍván 140 (21 April 1983) there were 135 National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world, and at Riḍván 143 (21 April 1986) there were 148—43 in Africa, 41 in the Americas, 27 in Asia, 17 in Australasia and the Pacific Islands, and 20 in Europe. Current addresses are available from the Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa, Israel.

# 7. BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUSTS

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* Address communications to Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa, Israel.

# II
# BAHÁ'Í BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Chihár-Vádí (Four Valleys).
Haft-Vádí (Seven Valleys).
Halih-Halih-Yá-Bishárát.
Ḥúr-i-'Ujáb.
Ḥurúfát-i-'Állín.
Ishráqát (Splendours).
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Kalimát-i-Maknúnih (Hidden Words).
Kitáb-i-'Ahd (Book of Covenant).
Kitáb-i-Aqdas (Most Holy Book).
Kitáb-i-Badí'.
Kitáb-i-Íqán (Book of Certitude).
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Lawḥ-i-'Abdu'l-Vahháb.
Lawḥ-i-'Abdu'r-Razzáq.
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Lawḥ-i-Rafí'.
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Lawḥ-i-Salmán I.
Lawḥ-i-Salmán II.
Lawḥ-i-Ṣámsún.
Lawḥ-i-Sayyáḥ.
Lawḥ-i-Shaykh-Fání.
Lawḥ-i-Sulṭán.
Lawḥ-i-Tawḥíd.
Lawḥ-i-Ṭibb.
Lawḥ-i-Tuqá.

Lawḥ-i-Yúsuf.
Lawḥ-i-Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín.
Lawḥ-i-Ziyáriḥ.
Madínatu'r-Riḍá.
Madínatu't-Tawḥíd.
Mathnaví.
Munájátháy-i-Síyám.
Qad-Iḥtaraqa'l-Mukhliṣúna.
Qaṣídiy-i-Varqá'iyyih.
Rashḥ-i-'Amá.
Riḍvánu'l-'Adl.
Riḍvánu'l-Iqrár.
Ṣaḥífiy-i-Shaṭṭíyyih.
Ṣalát-i-Mayyit (Prayer for the Dead).
Sáqí-az-Ghayb-i-Baqá.
Shikkar-Shikan-Shavand.
Subḥána-Rabbíya'l-A'lá.
Subḥánaka-Yá-Hú.
Súratu'lláh.
Súriy-i-Aḥzán.
Súriy-i-Amín.
Súriy-i-Amr.
Súriy-i-A'ráb.
Súriy-i-Aṣḥáb.
Súriy-i-Asmá'.
Súriy-i-Bayán.
Súriy-i-Damm.
Súriy-i-Dhabíḥ.
Súriy-i-Dhikr.
Súriy-i-Faḍl.
Súriy-i-Fatḥ.
Súriy-i-Fu'ád.
Súriy-i-Ghuṣn (Tablet of the Branch).
Súriy-i-Ḥajj I.
Súriy-i-Ḥajj II.
Súriy-i-Haykal.
Súriy-i-Ḥifẓ.
Súriy-i-Hijr.
Súriy-i-'Ibád.
Súriy-i-Ism.
Súriy-i-Ismuna'l-Mursil.
Súriy-i-Javád.
Súriy-i-Khiṭáb.
Súriy-i-Ma'ání.
Súriy-i-Man'.
Súriy-i-Mulúk.
Súriy-i-Nidá.
Súriy-i-Nuṣḥ.
Súriy-i-Qadír.
Súriy-i-Qahír.
Súriy-i-Qalam.
Súriy-i-Qamíṣ.
Súriy-i-Ṣabr.
Súriy-i-Sulṭán.
Súriy-i-Vafá.
Súriy-i-Ziyárih.
Súriy-i-Zubur.
Súriy-i-Ẓuhúr.
Tafsír-i-Hú.
Tafsír-i-Ḥurúfát-i-Muqaṭṭa'ih.
Tafsír-i-Súriy-i-Va'sh-Shams.
Tajallíyát (Effulgences).
Ṭarázát (Ornaments).
Ziyárat-Námih (The Tablet of Visitation).
Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Awlíyá.
Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Bábu'l-Báb-va-Quddús.
Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Bayt.
Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Maryam.
Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá.

(*Note:* the works of Bahá'u'lláh, translated into English by Shoghi Effendi, are listed on p. 718 under the subheading 'Translations' by Shoghi Effendi.)

### COMPILATIONS IN ENGLISH

*Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*

## 2. THE BÁB'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

The Arabic Bayán.
Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih.
Epistles to Muḥammad Sháh and Ḥájí Mírzá Áqásí.
Khaṣá'il-i-Sab'ih.
Kitáb-i-Asmá'.
Kitáb-i-Panj-Sha'n.
Kitábu'r-Rúḥ.
Lawḥ-i-Ḥurúfát.
The Persian Bayán.
Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'.
Risáliy-i-'Adlíyyih.

Risáliy-i-Dhahabíyyih.
Risáliy-i-Fiqhíyyih.
Risáliy-i-Furú'-i-'Adlíyyih.
Ṣaḥífatu'l-Ḥaramayn.
Ṣaḥífiy-i-Ja'faríyyih.
Ṣaḥífiy-i-Maknzunih.
Ṣaḥífiy-i-Raḍavíyyih.
Súriy-i-Tawḥíd.
Tafsír-i-Nubuvvat-i-Khásṣih.
Tafsír-i-Súríy-i-Kawthar.
Tafsír-i-Súriy-i-Va'l-'Aṣr.
Zíyárat-i-Sháh-'Abdu'l-'Aẓím.

(*Note:* The Báb Himself states in one passage of the Persian Bayán that His writings *comprise no less than 500,000 verses.*)

### COMPILATIONS IN ENGLISH

*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*

## 3. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

### IN PERSIAN AND ARABIC

Ad'íyih va Munáját.
Alváh-i-Tablíghíy-i-Imríká.
Alváh-i-Vaṣáyá.
Khiṭábát dar Urúpá va Imríká.
Lawḥ-i-Aflákíyyih.
Lawḥ-i-'Ahd va Míthág (Imríká).
Lawḥ-i-'Ammih.
Lawḥ-i-Áyát.
Lawḥ-i-Du-Nidáy-i-Faláḥ va Najáḥ.
Lawḥ-i-Dr. Forel.
Lawḥ-i-Haft Sham'.
Lawḥ-i-Hizár-Baytí.
Lawḥ-i-Khurásán.
Lawḥ-i-Láhih.
Lawḥ-i-Maḥfil-i-Shawr.
Lawḥ-i-Muḥabbat.
Lawḥ-i-Tanzíh va Taqdís.
Lawḥ-i-Tarbíyat.
Madaníyyih.
Maqáliy-i-Sayyáḥ.
Mufáviḍát.
Sharḥ-i-Faṣṣ-i-Nigín-i-Ism-i-A'ẓam.
Sharḥ-i-Shuhadáy-i-Yazd va Iṣfahán.
Síyásíyyih.
Tadhkiratu'l-Vafá.
Tafsír-i-«Bismi'lláhi'r-Raḥmáni'r-Rahím».
Tafsír-i-«Kuntu Kanzan Mákhfíyyan».
Zíyárat-Námih.

(*Note:* The majority of the works listed above have been collected in the eight-volume series *Makátib-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá*, the first three volumes of which were initially published under Bahá'í auspices in Cairo, and the subsequent volumes in Írán by the National Spiritual Assembly which also reprinted the first three. Developments since 1979 in Írán have intervened to halt further progress of the intended project of collecting and publishing under this title all of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's important Tablets.)

### 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 Organization 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 Narative 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.
*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá;* compiled from His correspondence with individual believers, groups and Assemblies of the East and West. World Centre Publications, 1978.
*Tables 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, THE BÁB 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.
*Selections from the Writings of the Báb.* World Centre Publications, 1976.
*Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.* World Centre Publications; 1978.

(*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.715).

*The Dawn-Breakers*, by Muḥammad-i-Zarandí, surnamed Nabíl-i-A'ẓam. 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.
*High Endeavours: Messages to Alaska.* National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Alaska, 1976.
*Call to the Nations.* World Centre Publications, 1977.
*The Light of Divine Guidance: The Messages from the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith to the Bahá'ís of Germany and Austria.* Bahá'í-Verlag, 1982.
*The Light of Divine Guidance, vol. II; Letters from the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith to Individual believers, Groups and Bahá'í Communities in Germany and Austria.* Bahá'í-Verlag, 1985.
*The Unfolding Destiny of the British Bahá'í Community: The Messages from the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith to the Bahá'ís of the British Isles.* Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1981.

# 6. LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE ACHIEVEMENTS

21 April 1983 to 20 April 1986

PREVIOUS volumes of *The Bahá'í World* list more than 725 languages, major dialects and scripts into which the Sacred Writings and other literature of the Bahá'í Faith have been translated; the total number has now reached 782. The promotion of translation has been an important objective of the international teaching plans conducted by the Bahá'í world community over the years, so that Bahá'í Scriptures and other works may be read by the peoples of the world in their own tongue. Information about the languages in which Bahá'í literature is currently available may be obtained from the Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, 31001 Haifa, Israel.

Listed below, in alphabetical order by continent of origin, are the languages, dialects and scripts into which translations of Bahá'í literature have been made, whether for the first time or as an enrichment of available literature, during the period between Riḍván 1983 and Riḍván 1986. These accomplishments include translations, publications and recordings on tape, although not all have been achieved in each of the languages named. Literature in each different script of each dialect has been treated as a separate achievement, as they are all assumed to reach a different public.

The usage and spelling chosen for primary listings and the indication of dialect relationships, follow, where possible, C. F. and F. M. Voegelin, *Classification and Index of the World's Languages*,[1] even when this differs from generally recognized usage or that of the speakers themselves. *Ethnologue, Tenth Edition*,[2] was used as a secondary reference. Some variant names and spellings, including variants previously reported, appear in parentheses.

The major countries, islands or territories where the languages are spoken, including the country having reported an achievement in the language, are shown in italics. Where no such entry is given, the language is spoken in so many widely scattered territories that to list them would be unwieldy. Languages officially used in more than one continent are grouped separately at the head of the list.

The number of languages, dialects and scripts listed here as achievements of the final three years of the Seven Year Plan total 336. Of these, 55 are languages, dialects or scripts never before reported, and 280 are enrichments of literature in languages for which previous translations can be found.

[1] Foundations of Linguistics Series; Elsevier, New York and Amsterdam; 1977.
[2] Wycliffe Bible Translators, Dallas, Texas; 1984.

## A. LANGUAGES IN INTERNATIONAL USE

*Literature Enriched:*

1. *Arabic
2. *Dutch
3. *English
4. *French
5. *Portuguese
6. *Spanish

## B. INVENTED LANGUAGES

*Literature Enriched:*

1. Interlingua

## C. AFRICA

*First Translations Made*

1. Amba (Rwamba) (*Uganda*)
2. Baba (*Cameroon*)
3. Baule (Baoule) (*Ivory Coast*)
4. Bete: Wobe dialect (*Ivory Coast*)
5. Boko (Busa) (*Benin*)
6. Bube (Bubi) (*Equatorial Guinea*)
7. Crioulo (Portuguese Creole) (*Cape Verde: Sénégal*)
8. Dagara (Dagara-Nura) (*Burkina*)
9. Gére (Guere) (*Ivory Coast*)
10. Kanyoka (Kanioka) (*Zaire*)
11. Konkomba (*Togo*)
12. Lobi (*Ivory Coast*)
13. Moba: Ben dialect (Government standard) (*Togo*)
14. Puguli (Pougouli, Buguli) (*Burkina*)
15. Shengwe (Tongo, Inhambane) (*Mozambique*)
16. Sira (Shira, Eshira) (*Gabon*)

*Literature Enriched:*

1. Adja (*Benin; Togo*)
2. Afrikaans (*South Africa; Namibia*)
3. Akan: Fante (*Ghana*)
4. Akan: Twi (*Ghana*)
5. Amharic (*Ethiopia*)
6. Baka (Pygmy) (*Cameroon*)
7. Bambara (*Ivory Coast; Mali*)
8. Bamoun (*Cameroon*)
9. Banda (*Central African Republic*)
10. Bargu (Bariba) (*Benin*)
11. Basa (Bassa, Koko) (*Cameroon*)
12. (ici-)Bemba (Wemba) (*Zaire; Zambia*)
13. Bihari: Mauritian Bhojpuri (*Mauritius*)
14. Bobo (Bwamu) (*Burkina*)
15. *(ulu-)Bukusu (Lubukusu) (*Kenya*)
16. Bulu (Boulou) (*Cameroon*)
17. Ciokwe (Tshokwe, Chokwe) (*Zaire*)
18. Creole, Indian Ocean: Seychelles dialect (*Seychelles*)
19. Dagbane (Dagbani) (*Ghana*)
20. Dai (Daye) (*Chad*)
21. Diola (Jola): Fony (Fogny) dialect (*The Gambia; Sénégal*)
22. Duala (Douala) (*Cameroon*)
23. * Dyula (Jula) (*Burkina*)
24. Efik (*Nigeria*)
25. Éwé (*Ghana; Togo*)
26. Ewondo (Yaounde) (*Cameroon*)
27. Fa d'Ambu (Pagalu, Annoban) (*Equatorial Guinea*)
28. Fang (*Cameroon; Equatorial Guinea*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the second and third phases of the Seven Year Plan.

29. * Fõ (Fon, Dahoméen) (*Benin*)
30. Ful (Fula, Peulh) (*Benin; Cameroon; Gabon; The Gambia*)
31. Gbaya (Baya) (*Cameroon; Central African Republic*)
32. * Gu (Goun) (*Benin*)
33. * Gurma (Gourmantché) (*Burkina; Togo*)
34. Guro (Gouro, Kweni) (*Ivory Coast*)
35. Hausa (*Nigeria*)
36. Herero (Otjiherero) (*Namibia*)
37. Igbo (Ibo) (*Nigeria*)
38. Kaba (Sara-Kaba) (*Chad*)
39. Kabyé (Kabre) (*Togo*)
40. * Kasem (Kasena) (*Burkina*)
41. Kikuyu (*Kenya*)
42. Kipsigis (*Kenya*)
43. Kombe (Ngumbi) (*Equatorial Guinea*)
44. (ki-)Kongo (*Zaire*)
45. (ki-)Kongo: Kimaniango (*Zaire*)
46. (oci-)Kwanyama (*Namibia*)
47. (ici-)Lamba (*Zambia*)
48. * Leyle (Lele) (*Burkina*)
49. Logooli (Maragooli) (*Kenya*)
50. Losengo: Lingala (Mangala) dialect (*Zaire*)
51. Luba-Katanga (Kiluba, Luba-Shaba) (*Zaire*)
52. Luba-Lulua (Ciluba, Tshiluba) (*Zaire*)
53. Luganda ((olu-)Ganda) (*Uganda*)
54. Lugbara (*Uganda*)
55. (ci-)Lunda: Ndembu dialect (*Zaire; Zambia*)
56. Lwo (Luwo) (*Sudan*)
57. Lwo (Luo, Lango) (*Uganda*)
58. Maka (Makaa) (*Cameroon*)
59. * Malagasy (Malagache) (*Madagascar*)
60. Mandinka (Malinke) (*Gabon; The Gambia*)
61. Masa (Massa) (*Cameroon; Chad*)
62. Mbai (Mbaye) (*Chad*)
63. Mende: Kpa dialect (*Sierra Leone*)
64. Mono (*Liberia*)
65. * Moré (Mossi) (*Burkina*)
66. Nama: Damara dialect (*Namibia*)
67. * Nankanse (Nankana) (*Burkina*)
68.* (isi-)Ndebele (*Zimbabwe*)
69. (oci-)Ndonga (*Namibia*)
70. Nguni: (isi-)Swati dialect (*Swaziland*)
71. Nguni: (isi-)Xhosa dialect (*South Africa; Transkei*)
72. Nguni: Zulu dialect (*South Africa; Swaziland*)
73. Nyang (Kenyang) (*Cameroon*)
74. * Nyanja (Chinyanja) (*Zimbabwe*)
75. * Nyanja: ci-Cewa (Chichewa) (*Malawi; Zambia*)
76. Nyoro/Toro (Runyoro/Rutoro) (*Uganda*)
77. Oromo (Oromigna) (*Ethiopia*)
78. * Rundi (Kirundi, iki-Rundi) (*Burundi*)
79. Rwanda (Kinyarwanda) (*Rwanda*)
80. * Sango (*Central African Republic*)
81. Sara: Majingai dialect (*Chad*)
82. Sara: Ngama dialect (*Chad*)
83. Serer (Serere) (*Sénégal*)
84. * Shona (*Zimbabwe*)
85. Sidamo (Sidamigna) (*Ethiopia*)
86. Somali (*Kenya*)
87. Sotho, Northern (Pedi) (*South Africa*)
88.* (se-)Sotho, Southern (*Lesotho; South Africa*)
89. Susu (*Sierra Leone*)
90. (ki-)Swahili (*Kenya; Tanzania; Zaire; Zambia*)
91. Teso (Ateso) (*Uganda*)
92. Themne (Temne, Timen) (*Sierra Leone*)
93. Tigrigna (*Ethiopia*)
94. Tiv (Tivi) (*Nigeria*)
95. Tobote (Bassar, Busari) (*Togo*)
96. (ci-)Tonga (*Zambia*)
97. (shi-)Tsonga (Shangaan) (*South Africa*)
98. (se-)Tswana (*Bophuthatswana; Botswana; South Africa*)
99. (se-)Tswana:(se-)Kgalagadi dialect (*Botswana*)
100. (ci-)Venda (*South Africa*)
101. Wescos (Cameroons Pidgin) (*Cameroon*)
102. Wolof (Jolof: Gambia dialect) (*The Gambia*)
103. Wolof (Ouolof) (*Senegal*)
104. Yoruba (*Benin; Nigeria*)

AFRICAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

English
French
Portuguese
Spanish

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the second and third phases of the Seven Year Plan.

## D. THE AMERICAS

*First Translations Made:*

1. * Creole, Lesser Antilles French (Patois): Dominican dialect (*Dominica*)
2. Fulniô (Forniô, Iaté, Yiathé) (*Brazil*)

*Literature Enriched:*

1. Aymara (Oruro) (*Bolivia; Peru*)
2. Carib, Black (Garifuna) (*Belize*)
3. Chinanteco, Usila (*Mexico*)
4. * Creole, Haitian (*Haiti*)
5. Creole, Lesser Antilles English (Patois) (*Grenada*)

   Creole, Lesser Antilles French:
6. * Guadelupéen dialect (*Guadeloupe*)
7. Martiniquais dialect (*Martinique*)
8. * St. Lucia dialect (*St. Lucia*)
9. Cuna (Kuna) (*Panama*)
10. Dakota (Sioux): Lakota dialect (*United States*)
11. Guaymi (*Panama*)
12. Ica (Arhuaco) (*Colombia*)
13. Inuit (Eskimo, Inukitutuk) (*Canada*)
14. Mapuche (*Chile*)
15. Mayan: unspecified dialect (*Mexico*)
16. * Miskito: Honduran Miskito (*Honduras*)
17. Miskito: Nicaraguan Miskito (*Nicaragua*)
18. Mixteco: unspecified dialect (*Mexico*)
19. Navajo (*United States*)
20. Papiamento (*Venezuela*)
21. Paya (*Honduras*)
22. Quechua: unspecified dialect (*Bolivia*)
23. * Quechua: unspecified dialect (*Ecuador*)
24. Rama (*Nicaragua*)
25. Saramaccan (*Suriname*)
26. Sranan (Sranan Tongo, Taki-Taki) (*Suriname*)
27. Sumo (*Nicaragua*)
28. Totonaco: unspecified dialect (*Mexico*)
29. Tupi: Guarani dialect (*Paraguay*)
30. Yaruro (Llaruro) (*Venezuela*)
31. Yupik: Central Alaskan (*Alaska*)
32. Zapotec del Valle: Baltazar Chichicapan (*Mexico*)
33. Zapotec: unspecified dialect (*Mexico*)

AMERICAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

Chinese
Danish
Dutch
* English
* French
German
Japanese
Khmer
Laotian
Miao (Hmong)
Persian
* Portuguese
Spanish, Braille
Vietnamese

## E. ASIA

*First Translations Made:*

1. Gangte (Gante, Kuki) (*India*)
2. Lushai (Mizo) (*India*)
3. Punjabi: Dogri-Kangri (Dogri-Jammu) dialect (*India*)
4. Urdu, Devanagari script (*India*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the second and third phases of the Seven Year Plan.

*Literature Enriched:*

1. Balochi (Balouchi, Baluchi) (*Pakistan*)
2. * Bengali (Bangala-Bhasa) (*Bangladesh; India*)
3. Bengali: Assamese dialect (*India*)
4. Bihari: Nagpuri dialect (*India*)
5. Brahui (Brahuidi, Brohi) (*Pakistan*)
6. Burmese (*Burma*)
7. Cebuano (Sebuano, Visayan) (*The Philippines*)
8. * Chinese, Mandarin (*Malaysia*)
9. * Chinese, standard
10. Chinese, Yue (Cantonese) (*Hong Kong*)
11. Dyak, Land 'Bidayuh': Jagoi (Biratak) dialect (*Malaysia*)
12. Dyak, Sea (Iban) (*Malaysia*)
13. Gujarati (Gujrathi) (*India*)
14. Hindi (*India*)
15. Ilocano (Iloco) (*The Philippines*)
16. Ilonggo (Hiligaynon) (*The Philippines*)
17. * Japanese (*Japan*)
18. Javanese (Java): unspecified dialect (*Indonesia*)
19. Kannada (Kanarese) (*India*)
20. Kashmiri (*India*)
21. Khasi (Kahasi) (*India*)
22. Khmer (*Thailand*)
23. Konkani (Goanese) (*India*)
24. * Korean (Chaoxian) (*Korea*)
25. Kurukh (Kurux, Oraon) (*India*)
26. * Lao (Laotian) (*Laos: Thailand*)
27. * Lepcha (Leptśa) (*Sikkim*)
28. Malay: Bahasa Indonesia dialect (*Indonesia*)
29. * Malay: Bahasa Malaysia dialect (*Malaysia*)
30. Malayalam (Malayarma) (*India*)
31. Marathi (Maharati, Maharashtra) (*India*)
32. Meithei (Manipuri) (*India*)
33. Miao (Hmong): Black Hmong dialect (*Thailand*)
34. Miao (Hmong): White Hmong dialect (*Thailand*)
35. Mundari (Mundra) (*India*)
36. * Nepali (Nepalese) (*Nepal; Sikkim*)
37. Oriya (Orissa) (*India*)
38. Pampangan (Pampango) (*The Philippines*)
39. Pashto (Pushto) (*Pakistan*)
40. Punjabi (*India*)
41. Punjabi, Gurmukhi script (*India*)
42. Semelai (*Malaysia*)
43. Sindhi (*Pakistan*)
44. * Sinhalese (Sinhala) (*Bangladesh; Sri Lanka*)
45. Tagalog (Filipino) (*The Philippines*)
46. * Tamil (*India; Malaysia; Sri Lanka*)
47. Telugu (Telegu) (*India*)
48. Thai (Siamese) (*Thailand*)
49. * Tibetan, Central (*Sikkim*)
50. Urdu (*India; Pakistan*)
51. Vietnamese (*Hong Kong; Thailand*)
52. Waray-Waray (Leyte, Samar) (*The Philippines*)

ASIAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

* Arabic
* English
Persian
Pidgin, New Guinea (Neo-Melanesian)

## F. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC

*First Translations Made:*

1. Bakovi: Kove dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
2. Baluan: Baluan dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
3. Baluan: Lou dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
4. Baluan: Pam dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the second and third phases of the Seven Year Plan.

5. Boiken: Yangoru (Yengoru) dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
6. Bwaidoga (Bwaidoka) (*Papua New Guinea*)
7. Bwin (Terei, Telei) (*Papua New Guinea*)
8. Central Raga (Pentecost Island): Apama dialect (*Vanuatu*)
9. Gadsup: Agarabi dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
10. Gadsup: Aiyura dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
11. Gahuku: Gahuku dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
12. Gedaged (Bel) (*Papua New Guinea*)
13. Gimi (Gono) (*Papua New Guinea*)
14. Gunantuna (Tolai) (*Papua New Guinea*)
15. Iduna (Vivigani) (*Papua New Guinea*)
16. Kabadi (Gabadi) (*Papua New Guinea*)
17. Medlpa (Hagen): Gawigl (Kauil) dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
18. Motu, True Motu (*Papua New Guinea*)
19. Mussau: Emira dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
20. Orokolo (West Elema) (*Papua New Guinea*)
21. Panaras (Kuot) (*Papua New Guinea*)
22. Panayali: Misima dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
23. Sursurunga (Tanglamet) (*Papua New Guinea*)
24. Tanna, North (Enui Area) (*Vanuatu*)
25. Tanna, Southwest (Port Resolution Area) (*Vanuatu*)
26. Telefol (Telefool) (*Papua New Guinea*)
27. Tirio (*Papua New Guinea*)
28. Tongan: East Uvean (Wallisian) (*Wallis and Futuna; New Caledonia and Loyalty Islands*)

*Literature Enriched:*

1. Areare (*Fiji Islands; Solomon Islands*)
2. Binandere (*Papua New Guinea*)
3. Carolinian (*Mariana Islands*)
4. Chamorro (*Guam; Mariana Islands*)
5. Chimbu (Kuman) (*Papua New Guinea*)
6. Chimbu: Gumine (Golin) dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
7. Ellicean (Tuvaluan) (*Tuvalu*)
8. Enga: Laiap (Layapo) dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
9. Fijian (*Fiji Islands*)
10. Gadsup: Omauro dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
11. German, Rabaul Creole (Unserdeutsch) (*Papua New Guinea*)
12. Gilbertese (Ikiribati) (*Fiji Islands; Kiribati*)
13. Iliaura (Alyawarra): East Aranda dialect (*Australia*)
14. Iliaura (Alyawarra): West Aranda dialect (*Australia*)
15. Kara (Lemusmus): Lemakot dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
16. Kosrean (Kusaiean) (*Eastern Caroline Islands*)
17. Lamalanga (North Raga, North Pentecost) (*Vanuatu*)
18. Lau (*Fiji Islands; Solomon Islands*)
19. Manubara (Marina) (*Papua New Guinea*)
20. Maori, Cook Islands (Rarotongan) (*The Cook Islands; Fiji Islands; New Zealand*)
21. Maori, New Zealand (*Fiji Islands; New Zealand*)
22. Marina (Big Bay, Tolomako) (*Vanuatu*)
23. Marshalese (*The Marshall Islands*)
24. Mengen (Marnge) (*Papua New Guinea*)
25. *Motu, Hiri (Police Motu) (*Papua New Guinea*)
26. Mussau: Mussau dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
27. Nalik (Ligagun) (*Papua New Guinea*)
28. Omo (Tigak) (*Papua New Guinea*)
29. Palauan (*Western Caroline Islands*)
30. Pidgin Creole, English: Bislama (Beach-la-Mar) (*Fiji Islands; Vanuatu*)
31. *Pidgin, Neo-Melanesian (New Guinea Pidgin, Tok Pidgin) (*Papua New Guinea*)
32. Pidgin, Neo-Solomonic (Solomon Island Pidgin) (*Solomon Islands*)
33. Ponapean (*Eastern Caroline Islands; Fiji Islands*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the second and third phases of the Seven Year Plan.

34. Samoan (*Fiji Islands; New Zealand; Samoa*)
35. Siane (*Papua New Guinea*)
36. Tabar (*Papua New Guinea*)
37. Tanga (Tangga, Amir) (*Papua New Guinea*)
38. Tanna: Lenakel dialect (*Vanuatu*)
39. Tongan (*Fiji Islands; New Zealand; Tonga*)
40. Tongoa (Efatese, North): Tongoa dialect (*Fiji Islands; Vanuatu*)
41. Trukese (Truk) (*Eastern Caroline Islands; Mariana Islands*)
42 Yabim (Jabem) (*Papua New Guinea*)
43. Yapese (*Western Caroline Islands*)

AUSTRALASIAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

English
French
Persian
Vietnamese

## G. EUROPE

*First Translations Made:*

1. German: Braille text (*Austria; Germany; Switzerland*)
2. *Macedonian: Southern Slavic, unspecified dialect (*Austria; Yugoslavia*)
3. Portuguese: Galician (Gallego) dialect (*Spain*)
4. Romany, Calo (Calo, Gypsy) (*Spain*)
5. Same (Inari Lapp) (*Finland*)

*Literature Enriched:*

1. *Albanian (*Albania; Germany*)
2. Arabic: Maltese dialect (*Malta*)
3. * Basque (*France; Spain*)
4. Breton (*France*)
5. * Bulgarian (*Bulgaria; Germany*)
6. Catalán (*Spain*)
7. * Czech (*Austria; Czechoslovakia*)
8. * Danish (*Denmark*)
9. * Estonian (*Estonia; Finland*)
10. * Faeroese (*Faeroe Islands; Iceland*)
11. * Frisian, Western (Frysk) (*Frisian Islands; Netherlands*)
12. * Finnish (*Finland*)
13. Gaelic, Irish (Erse, Irish) (*Ireland*)
14. Gaelic, Scottish (*Scotland*)
15. German (*Austria; Germany; Switzerland*)
16. * German: Luxemburgian (Letzeburgische) (*Luxembourg*)
17. * Greek, Modern (*Cyprus; Greece*)
18. * Hungarian (*Austria; Hungary*)
19. * Icelandic (*Iceland*)
20. Inuit: Western Greenlandic (*Denmark; Greenland*)
21. Inuit: Central-Western Greenlandic (*Denmark; Greenland*)
22. * Italian (*Italy*)
23. Ladin (*Italy; Switzerland*)
24. *Latvian (Lettish) (*Latvia; Finland; Sweden*)
25. * Lithuanian (*Lithuania; Finland; Sweden*)
26. * Norwegian: Riksmål (Bokmål) (*Germany; Norway*)
27. * Polish (*Germany; Poland*)
28. * Romansch: Engadine dialect (*Switzerland*)
29. * Rumanian (Romanian) (*Germany; Romania*)
30. * Rumanian Moldavian dialect (*Germany; Moldavia*)
31. * Russian (*Germany; Russia*)
32. Same (Lapp): Lule (*Norway*)
33. Same (Lapp): Ruija (Nordsamiska) (Northern) (*Norway*)
34. Same (Lapp): Sydsamiska (Southern) (*Norway*)
35. * Serbocroation (Serbic) (*Austria; Czechoslovakia; Hungary; Yugoslavia*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the second and third phases of the Seven Year Plan.

36. Slovac (*Austria; Czechoslovakia; Hungary; Yugoslavia*)
37. * Slovene (Slovenian) (*Austria; Hungary; Italy; Yugoslavia*)
38. * Swedish (*Sweden*)
39. * Turkish (*Cyprus; Turkey*)
40. * Welsh (Cymraeg) (*Wales*)

EUROPEAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

Malagasy (Malagache) (*Belgium*)
Persian

## H. TOTAL BY CONTINENTS

| | *First Translations* | *Literature Enriched* |
|---|---|---|
| World Languages | — | 6 |
| Invented Languages | — | 1 |
| Africa | 16 | 104 |
| The Americas | 2 | 33 |
| Asia | 4 | 52 |
| Australasia | 28 | 43 |
| Europe | 5 | 40 |
| | 55 | 279 |

# 7. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THESES RELATING TO THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

THIS bibliography is an attempt to bring together all theses and dissertations relating to the Bahá'í Faith which have been required for obtaining university degrees, whether Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral. Entries are arranged alphabetically by author's last name. Each thesis is assigned a number in sequence which begins with TH. This volume of *The Bahá'í World* continues the first installment included in *The Bahá'í World*, Vol. XVIII, (1979–1983). In future volumes, additional theses will continue this numbering, and any corrections will likewise refer to the unique number assigned in this and the first installment.

TH66. Åkerdahl, Per-Olof. (1986). *Förföljelse av Irans Baha'ier under åren 1844–1955*. Stockholms Universitet, Religionshistoriska Institutionen.

TH67. Banani, Amin. (1959). *Impact of the West on Iran, 1921–1941: A Study in Modernization of Social Institutions*. Ph.D., Stanford University. pp. 39–43.

TH68. Bartlett, Jean Eleanor. (1984). *Baha'i World Faith: A Case Study in Adult Socialization*. Ph.D., University of California, Riverside.

TH69. Beckwith, Francis J. (1984). *Baha'ism: A Presentation and Critique of Its Theological Tenets and Apologetic Use of the Christian Scriptures*. M.A., Simon Greenleaf School of Law.

TH70. Bethel, Fereshteh Taheri. (1984). *A Psychological Theory of Martyrdom: A Content Analysis of Personal Documents of Baha'i Martyrs of Iran Written Between 1979 and 1982*. Ph.D., United States International University, San Diego.

TH71. Beya, Kabuebue Kambote. (1984). *L'Étude des Possibilités D'Intégration des Pygmées dans l'Agriculture: Cas des Pygmées Bahá'i de Mubambiro, Zone de Masisi dans la Sous-Région de Nord-Kivu*. Enseignement Superieur, Universitaire et Recherche Scientifique, Institut Superieur de Developpement Rural.

TH72. Bill, James Alban. (1968). *The Iranian Intelligentsia: Class and Change*. Ph.D., Princeton University. p. 154.

TH73. Bujold, Paul M. (1983). *The Development of Community through the Religious Covenant: A Bahā'ī Case History*. M.A., University of Alberta.

TH74. Christensen, Philip Roland. (1969). *The Unity-Diversity Principle and Its Effect on Creative Group Problem Solving: An Experimental Investigation*. B.A., Dept. of Social Relations, Harvard University.

TH75. Deuschle, Hedwig. (1976). *The Secular Gospel in Literature and in the Science of Man According to Thoreau, Whitman, and Fromm*. B.A., College of the Virgin Islands. pp. 36–40.

TH76. Faghfoory, Mohammed Hassan. (1978). *The Role of the Ulama in Twentieth Century Iran with Particular Reference to Ayatullah Haj Sayyid Abul-Qasim Kashani*. Ph.D., University of Wisconsin—Madison. p. 112.

TH77. Fischer, Michael M.J. (1973). *Zoroastrian Iran Between Myth and Praxis*. Ph.D., University of Chicago. pp. iii. viii. xi. xiii. xvii. 5. 68, 159, 245, 321, 325, 335–370, 408, 409–418, 428, 429, 433, 436, 441–445, 449.

TH78. Gemmell, Jennifer Kay. (1985). *Pure Souls in the Siyah Chal*. M.A., University of Tulsa.

TH79. Hassall, Graham R. (1984). *The History of the Baha'i Faith in Australia, 1920–1963*. B.A., University of Sydney.

TH80. Hein, Kurt. (1985). *Community Participation in Radio for Rural Development: Radio Baha'i, Otavalo, Ecuador*. Ph.D., Northwestern University.

TH81. Hoffman, Frederic Gordon. (1977). *The Art and Life of Mark Tobey: A Contribution Towards an Understanding of a Psychology of Consciousness*. Ph.D., University of California, Los Angels.

TH82. Kelley, Edward Rulief. (1983). *Mark Tobey and the Baha'i Faith: New Perspectives on the Artist and His Paintings*. Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin.

TH83. Mash, S. David. (1985). *An Examination of Baha'i Christology*. M.Th., Dallas Theological Seminary.

TH84. Milani, Rahim Baradaran. (1981). *Frontenac United Methodist Campus, Frontenac, Minnesota*. Master of Architecture, University of Minnesota. pp. 1–8.

TH85. Millington, Thomas V. (1986). *Baha'i Consultation and Group-Decision Dynamics: A Study of the Compatibility of Religious Philosophy and Scientific Research*. Ph.D., Columbia Pacific University.

TH86. Miloff, Maury. (1978). *A Sociological Study of the Bahá'í Faith*. B.A., Concordia University.

TH87. Oldziey, Peter. (1985). *Spiritual Ideals in Non-Formal Rural Development: Rationale and Strategies for the Development and Use of Analogical Pictographs*. Ed.D., University of Massachusetts.

TH88. Parsa, Lida. (1986). *'La Moda Persiana' nella Letteratura Inglese dei Secoli Diciottesimo e Diciannovesimo*. Tesi di Laurea, Università degli Studi di Firenze.

TH89. Perry, Mark Lloyd. (1986). *The Chicago Bahá'í Community, 1921–1939*. Ph.D., University of Chicago.

TH90. Pope, Liston. (1932). *The Humanitarian Ideals of Bahaism: A Study of Bahal History and Doctrine*. B.D., Duke University School of Religion.

TH91. Pruski, Thomas Robert. (1974). *A Sympnonic Poem for the People of Baha*. Masters of Music, Northeastern Louisiana University.

TH92. Razi, Gholam Hossein. (1957). *Religion and Politics in Iran: A Study of Social Dynamics*. Ph.D., University of California—Berkeley. pp. 206, 213–215, 243.

TH93. Schmiedeskamp, Karl W. (1982). *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb: An Ethnography of Speaking of a Millenarian Movement*. M.A., University of Montana.

TH94. Shaoul, Eshagh Emran. (1971). *Cultural Values and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Iran: The Case of Iran's Recognition of Israel*. Ph.D., George Washington University, pp. 72–74.

TH95. Staley, William Converse. (1966). *The Intellectual Development of Ahmad Kasravi*. Ph.D., Princeton University, pp. 149–162.

TH96. Tabrizi, Behzad. (1978). *Bahailikte Tip ve Tedavi*. Mezuniyet Tezi, T.C. Ege Universitesi.

TH97. Tamas, Andras Akos. (1978). *Need Identification and Proctor Selection for Distance Education on Isolated Reserves*. Masters in Continuing Education, University of Saskatchewan. pp. 77, 156.

TH98. Towfigh, Nicola. (1985). *Schöpfung und Offenbarung in der Bahá'í-Religion: Anhang ausgewählter Texte*.

Magister-Prüfung, Universität Mülheim-Ruhr.

TH99. Tshonga, Kassanga Diata. (1978). *La Foi Baha'ie à Kisangani.* Gradué en Pédagogie Appliqué, Université Nationale du Zaire, Institut Superieur Pedagogique.

TH100. Ullman, Chana. (1979). *Change of Mind or Heart?: Some Cognitive and Emotional Characteristics of Religious Conversions.* Ph.D., Boston University Graduate School. pp. v, 34, 36, 37, 39,67, 70, 72, 95, 96, 97, 117, 118.

TH101. Vahdat, Nusheen. (1984). *A Comparison of Muslim and Baha'i Persian Women Living in Australia.* B.A., Murdoch University.

TH102. Waterman, Stanley. (1969). *Some Aspects of the Urban Geography of Acre, Israel.* Ph.D., Trinity College—Dublin. pp. 26, 103, figure 2.2, 2.9.

TH103. Weinberg, Robert. (1986). *Meetings with Remarkable Men.* B.A. Expressive Arts, Brighton Polytechnic.

TH104. Wyman, June R. (1985). *Becoming a Baha'i: Discourse and Social Networks in an American Religious Movement.* Ph.D., Catholic University of America.

TH105. Yeo Hock Choon. (1980–81). *The Bahá'í Community: A Study of Identity Consolidation, with Special Focus on Witnessing.* B.A., University of Singapore.

CORRECTION:

TH30. Author's name should be: Skelton, T. Lane.

# 8. A PARTIAL LISTING OF SOME CURRENT GENERAL BAHÁ'Í PERIODICALS

## A. PRODUCED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTIONS

1. *The American Bahá'í,* no. 1 (Jan. 1970)–. Wilmette, Ill.: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. Monthly newspaper of the United States Bahá'í community.
2. *Andalib.* v. 1, no. 1 (138, 1981–1982)–. Thornhill, Ont.: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada. Persian language general Bahá'í journal.
3. *Bahá'í News.* no. 1 (Dec. 1924)–. Wilmette, Ill.: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. Monthly journal of international Bahá'í news.
4. *Bahá'í Studies.* v. 1 (1976)–. Ottawa: Association for Bahá'í Studies. Monographic series in Bahá'í studies.
5. *Bahá'í Studies Bulletin.* v. 1, (June 1982)–. Newcastle upon Tyne, Eng.: Stephen Lambden. Unofficial journal of Bahá'í studies.
6. *Bahá'í Studies Notebook.* I, no. 1 (Dec. 1980)–. Ottawa: Association for Bahá'í Studies. Bahá'í studies journal containing conference papers and short essays.
7. *Brilliant Star.* v. 15, no. 1 (Mar.–Apr. 1983)–. Hixson, Tenn.: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. Children's journal which succeeds *Child's Way.*
8. *Glory: Bahá'í Youth Magazine.* v. 1, no. 1 (Dec. 1966)–. Panchgani: National Bahá'í Youth Committee of India.
9. *Herald of the south [New series].* v. 1 (Oct. 1984)–. Canberra, A.C.T.: National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of Australia and New Zealand, 1984–.
10. *Opinioni Bahá'í.* no. 1 (1973)–no. 16 (luglio 1976); v. 1, no. 1 (inverno 1977)–. Roma; Assemblea Spirituale Nazionale dei Bahá'í d'Italia. Italian language general Bahá'í journal.
11. *La Pensée Bahá'ie.* no. 1 (Jan. 1962)–. Berne: Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale des Bahá'ís de Suisse. French language general Bahá'í journal.
12. *Pensamiento Bahá'í,* no. 1 (enero 1980)–. Murcia: Asamblea Espiritual Nacional de los Bahá'ís de España. Spanish language general Bahá'í journal.
13. *Varqá.* v. 1 (Jan. 1971)–. New Delhi: Varqá. Persian language children's magazine, volumes 1–5 of which were published in Iran, 1971–1976.
14. *Varqá: Children's Magazine.* English ed. v. 1. no. 1 (Mar.–Apr. 1981)–. New Delhi: Varqá.
15. *Varqá, children's magazine.* Bengali ed. v. no. ( )–. [New Delhi: Varqá].
16. *Varqá, children's magazine.* Hindi ed. v. 1 no. 1 (Mar.–Apr. 1981)–. New Delhi: Varqá.
17. *Varqá, children's magazine.* Kannada ed. v. 2 no. 1 (1982 [i.e. 1985]). Bangalore: [State Teaching Committee of Karnataka].
18. *Varqá, children's magazine.* Oriya ed. v. no. ( )–. [New Delhi: Varqá].
19. *Varqá, children's magazine.* Tamil ed. v. 1 no. 1 (Mar. 1983)–. [New Delhi: Varqá.
20. *Varqá, children's magazine.* Telugu ed. v. 1 no. 1 (Jan. 1983)–. [New Delhi: Varqá].
21. *World Order.* v. 1, no. 1 (Fall 1966)–. Wilmette, Ill.: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. General Bahá'í journal.

## B. PRODUCED UNDER NON-INSTITUTIONAL AUSPICES

1. *Dialogue: a quarterly journal exploring the implications of the Bahá'í Faith for our time.* v. 1 no. 1 (Winter 1986)–. Los Angeles: Payam Afsharian.
2. *Spiritual mothering journal.* v. 1 no. 1 (Jan.–Feb. 1981)–. Dover, N.H.: Melinda Armstrong.

# 9. A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF COMMERCIALLY PRODUCED FILMSTRIPS ON THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH 1971–1986

1. *'Abdu'l-Bahá, glimpses of perfection.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971. 1 filmstrip (80 fr.): col., b & w + 1 sound cassette + 1 script (22 p.: ill.; 18 cm.)
2. *'Abdu'l-Bahá, glimpses of perfection.* Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1971. 1 filmstrip (80 fr.): col., b & w + 1 sound cassette + 1 script ([4] p.: 28 cm.)
3. *Arise!=[Levantense!].* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1977. 1 filmstrip (155 fr.): col. + 1 sound casette + script (19 p.: ill.; 28 cm.)
4. *Arise=Levantense.* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1977. 1 filmstrip (155 fr.): col.; 35 mm. + script (19 p.: ill.; 28 cm.)
5. *Arise=Levantense.* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; [Victor, N.Y.]: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1977. 1 filmstrip (155 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (19 p.: ill.; 28 cm.)
6. *Arise=Levez-vous!* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; [Victor, N.Y.]: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1977. 1 filmstrip (155 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette.
7. *Bahá'í World Congress 1963.* Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, [1968?]. 1 filmstrip (82 fr.): col. + script (5 p.; 28 cm.)
8. *The Bahá'ís and the holy land=[Les Bahá'ís et la terre sainte]=[Los Bahá'ís y la tierra santa].* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; [Victor, N.Y.]: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1971. 1 filmstrip (88 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette (18 min.) + English, French, Spanish scripts (4 p.: 28 cm. [each]).
9. *Call to remembrance.* Produced by the Office of the Treasurer. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, 1977. 1 filmstrip (82 fr.): chiefly col. + 1 sound cassette.
10. *Carmel ... the mountain of God.* Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, [1969]. 1 filmstrip (59 fr.): col. + script (4 p.; 28 cm.)
11. *Carmel ... the mountain of God=Carmel ... la montagne de Dieu.* Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, [1969]. 1 filmstrip (59 fr.): col. + English & French scripts (4 p.; 28 cm. [each]).
12. *Carmel ... the mountain of God=Carmel ... la montagne de Dieu.* Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, [1969]. 1 filmstrip (59 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + English & French scripts (4 p.; 28 cm. [each]).
13. *The Dawning place of the mention of God.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1972. 1 filmstrip (80 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (20 p.: ill.; 18 cm.).
14. *The Dawning place of the mention of God.* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1972. 1 filmstrip (80 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (4 p.; 28 cm.).
15. *Decade of drama: the Nine Year International Teaching Plan.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973. 1 filmstrip (120 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([20] p.: ill.; 18 cm.).
16. *Each one teach one.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976. 1 filmstrip (42 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([12] p. : ill.; 18 cm.).
17. *The Five Year Plan: America's role in the third global teaching campaign.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974. 1 filmstrip (96 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([20] p.; 18 × 18 cm.).
18. *God speaks again.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971. 1 filmstrip (71 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (21 p.: ill.; 18 cm.).
19. *God speaks again.* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1971. 1 filmstrip (71 fr.): col. + 35 mm. + script (3 p.; 28 cm.).
20. *God speaks again.* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1971. 1 filmstrip (71 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (3 p.; 28 cm.).
21. *The Greatest undertaking.* Produced by the Office of the Treasurer. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. [1979?]. 1 filmstrip (57 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + presentation instructions (5 leaves; 35 cm.).
22. *The Green light expedition of Rúḥiyyih Rabbani.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1976. 4 filmstrips (160, 112, 160, 160 fr.): col. + 4 sound cassettes + 4 scripts ([24], [20], [24], [24] p.: ill.; 18 cm.).
23. Hainsworth, Philip. *The Bahá'í Faith.* London: Audio Learning, 1982. 1 filmstrip (28 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + supplementary notes (4 p.; 30 cm.).
24. *The Hundredth Year.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, [1971]. 1 filmstrip (114 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette.
25. Jordan, Daniel C. *Birds of diverse feathers consult together.* [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.; International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor] 1972. 1 filmstrip (94 fr.): col. + script (5 p.; 28 cm.).
26. Jordan, Daniel C. *Birds of diverse feathers consult together.* Written and narrated by Daniel C. Jordan; artwork by Douglas Honaker. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1972. 1 filmstrip (94 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (23 p.: ill.; 18 cm.).
27. Jordan, Daniel C. *Birds of diverse feathers consult together.* Written and narrated by Daniel C. Jordan; artwork by Douglas Honaker. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1972. 1 filmstrip (94 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (5 p.; 28 cm.).
28. *Land of resplendent glory: part III, Bahá'u'lláh.* Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971. 1 filmstrip (258 fr.): col., b & w + 1 sound cassette + script (23 p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
29. *A Meditation on God.* Narrated by Joan Bulkin; photographed by David Walker. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976. 1 filmstrip (36 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([8] p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
30. *A Meditation on the Manifestation of God=Una Meditación sobre la Manifestación de Dios.* Narrated by Burrell Bullock; photographed by David Walker. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976. 1 filmstrip (35 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([8] p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
31. Murchie, Guy. *Land of resplendent glory.* Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1971. 3 filmstrips (258 fr.): col., b & w; 35 mm. + script (10 p.; 28 cm.).

32. Murchie, Guy. *Land of resplendent glory=Le Pays de la gloire resplendissante*. Written and photographed by Guy Murchie; cassette narrated by Marzieh Gail. Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1971. 3 filmstrips (258 frames): col., b & w; 35 mm. + 2 sound cassettes + 1 English script (10 p.) + 1 French script (11 p.).
33. *The People*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: American Indian Teaching Committee, 1978. 2 filmstrips (73, 63 fr.): col. + 2 sound cassettes + 2 scripts (5, 4 leaves; 36 cm.).
34. *Pilgrimage to the House of the Báb=Pèlerinage à la Maison du Báb*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1977. 1 filmstrip (84 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (11 p.: ill.; 28 cm.).
35. *Pilgrimage to the House of the Báb=Peregrinaje a la Casa del Báb*. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1977. 1 filmstrip (84 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([16] p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
36. *Pilgrimage to the House of the Báb=Peregrinaje a la Casa del Báb=[Pèlerinage à la Maison du Báb]*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1977. 1 filmstrip (84 fr.): col. + English/Spanish & English/French scripts (11 p.: ill.; 28 cm. [each]).
37. *The red velvet story*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1973 1 filmstrip (112 fr.): col.; 35 mm. + script (5 p.: 28 cm.).
38. *The red velvet story*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1973. 1 filmstrip (112 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette (19 min.) + script (5 p.; 28 cm.).
39. *The red velvet story*. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973. 1 filmstrip (112 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette (19 min.) + script ([20] p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
40. *Rich ones on earth*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: Office of the Treasurer, 1977. 1 filmstrip (56 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (5 leaves; 36 cm.).
41. *Sarzamin-i muqaddas-i Írán*. [Tihrán: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán, 197–]. 1 filmstrip (76 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (7 p.; 22 cm.).
42. *The School of Badí'*. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1977. 1 filmstrip (158 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([24] p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
43. *Sharh-i su'úd-i Hadrat-i 'Abdu'l-Bahá*. [Tihrán: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán, 1974]. 1 filmstrip (93 fr.): b & w + 1 sound cassette + script (8 leaves; 33 cm.).
44. *A Testimony of Love: The story of the Bahá'í Fund in America*. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973. 1 filmstrip (126 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([20] p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
45. *The Trusted ones of God: The Local Spiritual Assembly*. Artwork by Dale and Claudia Robison. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1972. 1 filmstrip (50 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (14 p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
46. *The Trusted ones of God*. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1972. 1 filmstrip (50 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette (4 p.; 28 cm.).
47. *Unity in diversity; a report on the eight oceanic and continental conferences*. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1972. 1 filmstrip (130 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script (32 p.: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
48. Walker, David Addison. *Out of God's eternal ocean*. Written and photographed by David Walker; narrated by Joan Bulkin. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974. 1 filmstrip (149 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([124 p.]: ill.; 18 × 18 cm.).
49. Walker, David Addison. *Out of God's eternal ocean*. Written and photographed by David Walker; narrated by Joan Bulkin. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1974. 1 filmstrip (149 fr.): col.; 35 mm. + script (6 p.; 28 cm.).
50. Walker, David Addison. *Out of God's eternal ocean*. Written and photographed by David Walker; narrated by Joan Bulkin. [Wilmette, Ill.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States; Victor, N.Y.: International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre [distributor], 1974. 1 filmstrip (149 fr.): col.; 35 mm. + 1 sound cassette + script (6 p.; 28 cm.).
51. Ware, Dan. *In loving memory, the Greatest Holy Leaf, 1846–1932*. Written by Dan Ware from tributes by Shoghi Effendi and Marjorie Morton; produced by the Office of the Treasurer, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. [Wilmette, Ill.]: Office of the Treasurer, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, [1982]. 1 filmstrip (42 fr.): col., b & w + 1 sound cassette + script (6 leaves: 35 cm.).
52. Ware, Dan. *Material Man*. Written and produced by Dan Ware for the Office of the Treasurer. [Wilmette, Ill.]: Office of the Treasurer, [Ca. 1980]. 1 filmstrip (57 fr.): col. + 1 sound cassette + script ([5] leaves; 36 cm.).

# III
# ORIENTAL TERMS
# 1. TRANSLITERATION OF ORIENTAL WORDS FREQUENTLY USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

'Abá
Ábádih
'Abbás
'Abdu'l-Bahá
'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd
'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn
'Abdu'lláh
Abhá
Abu'l-Faḍl
'Adasíyyih
Adhán
Ádhirbáyján
Afnán
Aghṣán
'Ahd
Aḥmad
Aḥsá'í
Ahváz
Akbar
'Akká
'Alá'
'Alí
'Alí-Muḥammad
Alláh-u-Abhá
Alváḥ
Alváḥ-i-Saláṭín
Amatu'l-Bahá
Amín
Amír
Amír-Niẓám
Amru'lláh
Ámul
Anzalí
Áqá
Aqdas
'Arabistán
Asmá'
Astarábád
'Aváshiq
Ayádí
Azal
'Aẓamat
'Azíz

Báb
Bábí
Bábu'l-Báb
Baghdád
Bahá
Bahá'í
Bahá'u'lláh
Bahíyyih
Bahjí
Balúchistán
Bandar-'Abbás
Báqir
Baqíyyatu'lláh
Bárfurúsh
Baṣrih
Báṭúm
Bayán
Bayt
Big
Bírjand
Bishárát
Bismi'lláh
Bukhárá
Burújird
Búshihr
Bushrú'í
Bushrúyih

Chihríq

Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih
Dárúghih
Dawlat-Ábád
Dhabíḥ
Duzdáb

Fará'id
Fárán
Farmán
Farrásh-Báshí
Fárs
Farsakh
Fatḥ-'Alí
Firdaws
Firdawsí

Ganjíh
Gílán
Gul
Gulistán
Gurgín

Ḥabíb
Ḥadíth
Ḥaḍrat
Ḥájí
Ḥájí Mírzá Áqásí
Ḥájj
Hamadán
Ḥaram
Ḥasan
Hawdaj
Ḥaydar-'Alí
Haykal
Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds
Hijáz
Hijrat
Himmat-Ábád
Ḥujjat
Ḥusayn

Ibráhím
Íl
'Ilm
Imám
Imám-Jum'ih
Imám-Zádih
Íqán
Írán
'Iráq
'Iráqí
'Iráq-i-'Ajam
Iṣfahán
'Ishqábád
Ishráqát
Ishtihárd
Islám
Ismá-'ílíyyih
'Izzat

Jalál
Jamádíyu'l-Avval
Jamál
Jamál-i-Mubárak
Jamál-i-Qidam
Jásb
Jubbih

Ka'bih
Kad-Khudá
Kalántar
Kalimát
Kamál
Karand
Karbilá
Káshán
Kashkúl
Kawmu'ṣ-Ṣa'áyidih
Kawthar
Káẓim
Káẓimayn
Khalkhál

Khán
Khániqayn
Khaylí Khúb
Khurásán
Khuy
Kirmán
Kirmánsháh
Kitáb-i-'Ahd
Kitáb-i-Aqdas
Kitáb-i-Asmá'
Kitáb-i-Badí'
Kitáb-i-Íqán
Kuláh
Kurdistán

Láhíján
Lár
Lawḥ
Luristán

Madrisih
Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá
Mahd-i-'Ulyá
Máh-Kú
Maḥmúd
Maláyir
Man-Yuẓhiruhu'lláh
Maqám
Marághih
Marḥabá
Marv
Masá'il
Mashhad
Mashíyyat
Mashriqu'l-Adhkár
Masjid
Maydán
Mázindarán
Mihdí
Miḥráb
Milán
Mi'ráj
Mírzá
Mishkín-Qalam
Mu'adhdhuin
Muftí
Muḥammad
Muḥammad-'Alí
Muḥammarih
Muḥarram
Mujtahid
Mulk
Mullá
Munírih
Muṣṭafá
Mustaghátth
Muẓaffari'd-Dín

Nabíl
Nabíl-i-A'ẓam
Najaf
Najaf-Ábád
Náqiḍín
Naṣír
Náṣiri'd-Dín
Navváb
Naw-Rúz
Nayríz
Nishápúr
Nuqṭih
Núr

Pahlaví
Párán

Qáḍí
Qádíyán
Qahqahih
Qá'im
Qájár
Qalyán
Qamṣar
Qaṣr-i-Shirín
Qawl
Qayyúm
Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'
Qasvín
Qiblih
Qúchán
Quddús
Qudrat
Qum
Qur'án
Qurbán
Qurratu'l-'Ayn

Rafsanján
Raḥím
Rahmán
Raḥmat
Ra'ís
Ramaḍán
Rasht
Rawḥání
Riḍván
Rúhu'lláh

Sabzivár
Sadratu'l-Muntahá
Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán
Ṣaḥifatu'l-Ḥaramayn
Sa'íd
Salsabíl
Samarqand
Sangsar
Sárí
Saysán
Sha'bán
Sháh
Shahíd
Shahmírzád
Sháhrúd
Sharaf
Shari'ah
Shaykh
Shaykh-Ṭabarsí
Shaykhu'l-Islám
Shí'ah (Shí'ih)
Shíráz
Shúshtar
Simnán
Sístán
Síyáh-Chál
Siyyid
Ṣúfí
Sulaymán
Sulṭán
Sulṭán-Ábád
Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá'
Sunní
Súratu'l-Haykal
Súrih
Súriy-i-Damm
Súriy-i-Ghuṣn
Súriy-i-Ra'ís
Súriy-i-Ṣabr

Ṭabarsí
Tabríz
Ṭáhirih
Tajallíyát
Tákur
Taqí
Ṭarázát
Tarbíyat
Táshkand
Tawḥíd
Thurayyá
Ṭihrán
Túmán
Turkistán

'Ulamá
Urúmíyyih
'Uthmán

Vaḥíd
Valí
Valí-'Ahd
Varqá
Vazír (also Vizír)

Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá
Yaḥyá
Yazd

Zanján
Zarand
Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín

# 2. GUIDE TO TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION OF THE PERSIAN ALPHABET

The system outlined below was approved by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith for use by Bahá'ís throughout the world in transcribing the Persian and Arabic terms and names which occur frequently in Bahá'í literature, thus ensuring uniformity in the practice of Bahá'í communities which use the Roman alphabet. Research by Bahá'í scholars has concluded that the system is based on the one adopted by the Tenth International Congress of Orientalists which was held in Geneva in 1894, and was also adopted by the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society in October 1896.

| | TS | IPA | | TS | IPA | | TS | IPA | | TS | IPA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ء | ' | [ ] | خ | kh | [ʋ] | ص | ṣ | [s] | ك | k | [k] |
| ب | b | [b] | د | d | [d] | ض | ḍ | [z] | گ | g | [g] |
| پ | p | [p] | ذ | dh | [z] | ط | ṭ | [t] | ل | l | [l] |
| ت | t | [t] | ر | r | [r] | ظ | ẓ | [z] | م | m | [m] |
| ث | th | [s] | ز | z | [z] | ع | ‘ | [ ] | ن | n | [n] |
| ج | j | [ ] | ژ | zh | [ʁ] | غ | gh | [g] | و | v | [v] |
| چ | ch | [ʧ] | س | s | [s] | ف | f | [f] | ه | h | [h] |
| ح | ḥ | [h] | ش | sh | [ɵ] | ق | q | [q] | ي | y | [j] |

| TS | IPA | Approximate pronunciation in English |
|---|---|---|
| a | [æ] | As in 'bat' |
| á | [a:] | Between the sound in 'sharp' (British) or 'shop' (American), and that in 'hall' |
| i | [ŋ] | As in 'best' |
| í | [i:] | As in 'meet' |
| u | [ʔ] | As in 'shot' (British) or 'short' (American) |
| ú | [u:] | As in 'moon' |
| aw | [ǫ] | As in 'know' |
| ay | [ŋi] | As in 'hay' |

The first of the above tables shows the letters in the Persian alphabet, the equivalent in the transliteration system (TS) and the sound as shown by the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

Vowels can be indicated in Persian and Arabic by signs written above or below the preceding consonant, followed, if they are long, by another consonantal letter. These vowel signs, however, are seldom written. Therefore, for simplicity's sake, the second table shows only their transliterated form and their equivalents in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

# 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 'at' and the second syllable to rhyme with 'on' (American) or 'barn' (British). English-speakers are apt to pronounce a short 'a' plus 'r' like the word 'are'; this is a mistake; 'ar', as in 'Tarbíyat' for example, should be pronounced as in the name 'Harry'.

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 the 'e' in 'best, and long 'í' like 'ee' in 'meet'; for example, 'Ibráhím' is pronounced 'Eb-ráheem'; 'Islám' is 'Ess-lahm'. Short 'u' being like 'o' in 'short' (American) or 'shot' (British), and long 'ú' like 'oo' in 'moon', the following would be pronounced: 'Quddús'—'Qod-doos'; 'Bárfurúsh'—'Bar-foroosh'.

Pronounce 'aw' to rhyme with 'low', or 'mown'; 'Naw-Rúz' is 'No-Rooz'.

The following letters have different sounds in Arabic, but in Persian are all pronounced like 'z': 'dh, z, ẓ, ḍ'.

Similarly, the following consonants may all be pronounced 'ss': 'th, s, ṣ'.

'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'. English-speakers often experience difficulty pronouncing 'gh' and 'q'; a guttural French 'r' will serve here; otherwise use a hard 'g' as in 'good'.

'H' and 'ḥ', although having different sounds in Arabic are pronounced in Persian approximately as is the English aspirate 'h'. This sound should never be dropped, even when it comes at the end of a word, nor does it lengthen a preceding short vowel.

In the case of double letters, pronounce both as in the case of the 'nn' in the English word 'unneeded', e.g. ''Abbás'.

The characters transliterated (') represent a pause; it is not unlike the initial sound made in pronouncing such a word as 'every'. The word 'Bahá'í' has a short 'a' in the first syllable, then a long 'á' in the second, followed by a brief pause and then a long 'í'.

The character transliterated (') may also be treated as a pause.

As Persian writing usually indicates no vowel sounds and as its pronunciation differs in different localities throughout Iran 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.

# 4. DEFINITIONS OF SOME OF THE ORIENTAL TERMS USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

**Ab** *Father*

**Abá** (See **Abú.**)

**'Abá** A loose, sleeveless cloak or mantle, open in front.

**'Abd** *Servant, bondsman, worshipper (of God).*

**'Abdu'l-Bahá** *Servant of Bahá:* title of the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh, and Centre of His Covenant.

**Abhá** *Most Glorious.* (See **Alláh-u-Abhá**; **Bahá'u'l-Abhá.**)

**Abí** (See **Abú.**)

**Abjad notation** System whereby each letter of the Arabic alphabet is assigned a specific numerical value.

**Abú, Abá, Abí** *Father of.*

**Adhán** Muslim call to prayer.

**Adíb** *Refined, cultured, learned; writer, scholar, man of letters.* Title of one of the early Hands of the Cause.

**'Adl** *Justice.* (See **Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam.**)

**Afnán** Literally *Twigs*: the Báb's kindred; specifically, descendants of His three maternal uncles and His wife's two brothers.

**Ághá** Originally *lord, nobleman; officer, commander*: placed after a woman's name *Ághá* is a courtesy title comparable with **Áqá**; may also form part of a compound proper name.

**Aghṣán** Literally *Branches*: denotes sons and male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh.

**A.H.** *Anno Hegirae (in the year of the Emigration)*: denotes the Muslim Era, reckoned from the year of Muḥammad's flight from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622. (See **Hijrat.**)

**'Ahd** *Covenant, bond, treaty; The Covenant (of God).*

**Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ** Literally *The Best of Stories*: a name for the Súrih of Joseph. *Tafsír-i-Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ*; the Báb's *Commentary on the Súrih of Joseph*, the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*.

**Akbar** *Greater, greatest.* (See **Alláh-u-Akbar**; **Kabír.**)

**Al-** The definite article in Arabic.

**A'lá** *Most Exalted.* (See **Ḥaḍrat-i-A'lá**; **Qalam-i-A'lá.**)

**'Alá'** *Loftiness*; nineteenth month of the Badí' calendar. (See **Há.**)

**Al-Abhá** *The Most Glorious.* (See **Bahá'u'l-Abhá.**)

**'Alí** The first Imám and rightful successor of Muḥammad; also the fourth Caliph according to the **Sunnah**.

**Alláh** *God.*

**Alláh-u-Abhá** *God is Most Glorious*: The Greatest Name, adopted during the period of Bahá'u'lláh's exile in Adrianople as a greeting among the Bahá'ís.

**Alláh-u-Akbar** *God is Most Great*: Muslim salutation, and opening words of the call to prayer, superseded by **Alláh-u-Abhá** as a greeting among the Bahá'ís during the Adrianople period.

**Al-Madínah** Literally *The City (of the Prophet).* (See **Mecca.**)

**Amih** *Maid(servant), handmaid(en).* **Amatu'l-Bahá**: *Maidservant of* **Bahá**; **Amatu'lláh**: *Handmaiden of God.*

**Amín** *Faithful, trustworthy, honest; trustee.* Title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on Ḥájí Sháh-Muḥammad-i-Manshádí and Ḥájí Abu'l-Ḥasan-i-Ardikání, first trustees of the **Ḥuqúqu'lláh.**

**Amír** *Prince, ruler; commander, governor.*

**Anís** Literally *companion, friend, associate*; appellation given by the Báb to Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Zunúzí, the youthful disciple who shared His martyrdom.

**Áqá** *Master; The Master*: title given by Bahá'u'lláh to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Also used, preceding a name, in an honorific sense: *Mister, Sir.* (See **Sarkár-Áqá.**).

**Aqdas** *Most Holy.* (See **Kitáb-í-Aqdas.**).

**Arḍ** *Earth, land, territory.* (See **Ṣád**; **Shín**; **Sirr**; **Ṭá.**)

**'Áshúrá** Tenth day of the month of **Muḥarram**, anniversary of the martyrdom of the Imám Ḥusayn.

**Asmá'** *Names*: ninth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Ayádí** Literally *hands*; *Hand(s) of the Cause.*

**Ayyám** *Days.* (See **Há.**)

**A'ẓam** *Greatest.* (See **Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam; Ism-i-A'ẓam; Ṣadr-i-A'ẓam.**)

**'Aẓamat** *Grandeur*: fourth month of the Badí' calendar.

**'Aẓím** Literally *mighty, great, glorious*: title given by the Báb to Mullá Shaykh 'Alí of Khurásán.

**Báb** *Gate*: title assumed by Mírzá 'Alí-Muḥammad after the declaration of His Mission in Shíráz on 23 May 1844.

**Bábí** Follower of the Báb.

**Bábu'l-Báb** *The Gate of the Gate*: title of Mullá Ḥusayn, the first Letter of the Living.

**Badí'** *Wonderful*: (1) Title of Áqá Buzurg of Khurásán, the seventeen-year-old bearer of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Náṣiru'd-Dín Sháh. (2) Style of the new nineteen-month calendar of the Bahá'í Era. (See **B.E.**)

**Bagum** *Lady (of rank), dame, begum*; placed after a woman's given name *Bagum* is a courtesy title comparable with **Big.**

**Bahá** *Glory, splendour, light*: (1) The Greatest Name. (See **Bahá'u'lláh.**) (2) First month of the Badí' calendar.

**Bahá'í** Follower of Bahá'u'lláh.

**Bahá'u'l-Abhá** *The Glory of the Most Glorious.* **Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!** *O Thou the Glory of the Most Glorious!*

**Bahá'u'lláh** *The Glory of God*: title of Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alí: born in Ṭihrán on 12 November 1817; ascended in Bahjí, near 'Akká, on 29 May 1892.

**Bahjí** Literally *delight, gladness, joy*: denotes that part of the Plain of 'Akká where the Shrine and Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh are situated.

**Baní-Háshim** Literally *Sons of Háshim (great grandfather of Muḥammad)*: clan of Quraysh from which Muḥammad was descended.

**Baqíyyatu'lláh** *Remnant of God*: traditional appellation of the **Qá'im**, derived from the Qur'án; designation of the Báb as the Promised One of Islám, and applied by Him to Bahá'u'lláh.

**Bayán** Literally *exposition, explanation, lucidity, eloquence, utterance*: title given by the Báb to His Revelation, and to two of His Writings, one in Persian, the other in Arabic.

**Bayt** *House.*

**Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam** *The Supreme House of Justice*: a title of the Universal House of Justice.

**B.E.** *Bahá'í Era*: denotes the Badí' calendar, reckoned from the year of the Báb's declaration of His Mission in 1844.

**Big** Literally *lord, prince; governor, bey*: placed after the given name, *Big* was used as a courtesy title for middle-ranking officials. (See **Khán.**)

**Bishárát** *Glad Tidings*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas.*

**Bismilláhi'r-Raḥmáni'r-Raḥim** *In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*: invocation prefixed to all but the ninth **súrih** of the Qur'án, and composed (in Arabic) of nineteen letters.

**Caliph** *Vicar, deputy*: successor of the Prophet Muḥammad, supreme civil and spiritual head of the Islamic world, a title claimed by successive dynasties.

**Caravanserai, -sera, -sary** (See **Khán.**)

**Dárúghih** *High constable.*

**Darvísh** (*Religious*) *mendicant, dervish, Muslim mystic.* (See **Súfí.**)

**Dawlih** *State, government.*

**Dayyán** Literally *conqueror, ruler; Judge* (an epithet of the Godhead): title conferred by the Báb on Mírzá Asadu'lláh, learned divine of Khuy.

**Dhabíḥ** Literally *slain, sacrificed, offered up*: (1) Designation of Áqá Siyyid Ismá'íl-i-Zavárí'í, enraptured follower of Bahá'u'lláh. (2) Title given by Bahá'u'lláh to Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ismá'íl-i-Káshání, ardent early teacher of the Cause.

**Dhi'b** *The Wolf*: appellation applied by Bahá'u'lláh to Shaykh Muḥammad-Báqir who, together with Mír Muḥammad-Ḥusayn (the **Raqshá**), precipitated the deaths of the King and Beloved of Martyrs, and instigated the martyrdom of many other Bahá'ís, particularly in Iṣfahán and Yazd. (See **Mahbúbu'sh-Shuhadá; Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá.**)

**Dhikr** *Mention, remembering; remembrance of God; praise and thanksgiving; recital of the names of God, religious exercise or ceremony; The Qur'án, The Word of God.* (Plural: **Adhkár**; see **Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.**)

**Dhi'l-Hijjih** Twelfth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Dhi'l-Qa'dih** Eleventh month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**El-Abhá** (See **Al-Abhá.**)

**Farmán** *Order, command, edict, royal decree.*

**Farráṣh** *Footman, lictor, attendant.* **Farráṣh-Báṣhí.** The head-farráṣh.

**Farsakh** Unit of measurement, approximately 3–4 miles or nearly 5.5 kilometres.

**Fáṭimih** Daughter of the Prophet, wife of the Imám **'Alí** and mother of the Imám **Ḥusayn.**

**Fatvá** A legal pronouncement or decree by a Muslim **muftí.**

**Firdaws** *Garden; Paradise.*

**Firmán** (See **Farmán.**)

**Ghuṣn** Literally *Branch*: son or male descendant of Bahá'u'lláh. (Plural: **Aghṣán.**).

**Ghuṣn-i-Aṭhar** *The Purest Branch*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mírzá Mihdí, brother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá who died in the Most Great Prison in 'Akká.

**Ghuṣn-i-A'ẓam** *The Most Great Branch*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on **'Abdu'l-Bahá.**

**Há** The thirty-first letter of the Persian alphabet, with a numerical value of five. **Ayyám-i-Há.** Literally *The days of Há*: the Intercalary Days, so named by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, where He also ordained that they should immediately precede the month of 'Alá', 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 to accommodate the extra day of the leap year.

**Ḥadíth** Literally *report, account; Prophetic Tradition.* The whole body of the sacred tradition of the Muslims is called the Ḥadíth.

**Ḥaḍrat** Literally *presence.* Placed before a name, in the form of *Ḥaḍrat-í-* —, the word is a courtesy title signifying 'His Majesty', 'His Holiness'.

**Ḥaḍrat-i-A'lá** *His Holiness, The Most Exalted One*: a title of the Báb.

**Ḥájí, Ḥájj** A Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca.

**Ḥaram** *Sanctuary, sacred precinct or court.* (See **Ḥill.**)

**Ḥaram-i-Aqdas** *The Most Holy Court*; 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.

**Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds** *The Sacred Fold*: official title designating headquarters of Bahá'í administrative activity in a particular country or region.

**Hijrat, Hijra(h)** Literally *Emigration; Hegira*: the date of Muḥammad's flight from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622: the basis of Islamic chronology.

**Ḥill** Non-sacred ground, an antonym of **Ḥaram.**

**Howdah** (See **Hawdaj.**)

**Ḥujjat** Literally *proof, argument, reason*: title of Mullá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Zanjání, hero of the Zanján upheaval.

**Ḥuqúqu'lláh** *Right of God*: payment by the believers, instituted in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas.*

**Ḥusayn** The third Imám, second son of 'Alí and Fáṭimih, martyred on the plains of Karbilá on 10 Muḥarram A.H. 61 (A.D. 680).

**Ḥusayníyyih** A place where the martyrdom of the Imám Ḥusayn is mourned, or where Muslim passion-plays may be presented. The term is the designation that was given to Bahá'u'lláh's Most Great House in Baghdád after its forcible occupation by the Shí'ah community.

**-i-** Sound inserted in pronunciation (though not represented in Persian script) at the end of a word to indicate that the following word stands in a possessive or adjectival relation to it.

**Ibn** *Son.*

**Íl** *Clan, tribe.*

**'Ilm** *Knowledge*: twelfth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Imám** *Head, chief, leader.* (1) Muslim cleric who leads the congregation in prayer. (See **Imám-Jum'ih.**) (2) Title applied by the Shí'ahs to each of the twelve successors of Muḥammad in the line of 'Alí. (See **'Alí; Ḥusayn.**)

**Imám-Jum'ih** Muslim clergyman who performs the Friday prayers, the leading imám in a town or city; chief of the mullás, who recites the Friday prayers for the sovereign.

**Imám-Zádih** Descendant of an Imám or his shrine.

**In-shá'a'lláh** *If God wills.*

**Íqán** Literally *Certitude*: title of Bahá'u'lláh's Epistle to Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad, a maternal uncle of the Báb.

**Ishráqát** *Splendours*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas.*

**Ism** *Name.* (Plural: **Asmá'.**)

**Ism-i-A'ẓam** *The Greatest Name.*

**Ismu'lláh** Literally *The Name of God*: title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on a number of believers.

**Isráfíl** Angel who sounds the trumpet on the Day of Judgement.

**'Izzat** *Might*: tenth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Jabal** *Mountain.* **Jabal-i-Básiṭ** *The Open Mountain,* **Jabal-i-Shadíd** *The Grievous Mountain*: the Báb's allusions to the fortress of Máh-Kú and the castle of Chihríq respectively.

**Jáhilíyyih** *The Age of Ignorance*: denotes the state of paganism prevailing in Arabia before the advent of Muḥammad.

**Jalál** *Glory*: second month of the Badí' calendar.

**Jamádíyu'l-Avval** Fifth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Jamádíyu'th-Thání** Sixth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Jamál** *Beauty*: third month of the Badí' calendar.

**Jamál-i-Mubárak** Literally *The Blessed Beauty*: a title of Bahá'u'lláh.

**Jihád** Literally *striving, endeavour; crusade; holy war*, enjoined in the Qur'án, abrogated by Bahá'u'lláh.

**Jináb** Literally *threshold*: placed before a name, in the form *Jináb-i-* —, the word is a courtesy title signifying 'His Excellency', 'His Honour'.

**Jubbih** An outer coat or cloak.

**Ka'bih** *The Kaaba*: ancient shrine at **Mecca**, chosen by Muḥammad to be the centre of pilgrimage for Muslims. The most holy shrine in Islám and **Qiblih** of the Muslim world.

**Kabír** Literally *great, big, old.* (See **Akbar.**)

**Kad-Khudá** Chief of a ward or parish in a town; headman of a village.

**Kalántar** *Mayor.*

**Kalím** *Speaker, interlocutor.* Title given by Bahá'u'lláh to His faithful brother, Mírzá Músá. (See **Kalímu'lláh.**)

**Kalimát** *Words*: seventh month of the Badí' calendar.

**Kalímu'lláh** *He Who Conversed With God*: title of Moses, given to Him in the Islamic Dispensation.

**Kamál** *Perfection*: eighth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Karbilá'í** Style of a Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Karbilá; as a title it is placed before the given name.

**Kawthar** Literally *plentiful, abundant, sweet (potion)*: a river in Paradise, whence all other rivers derive their source.

**Khádimu'lláh** *Servant of God*: title of Mírzá Áqá Ján, amanuensis of Bahá'u'lláh.

**Khalífih** (See **Caliph.**)

**Khalíl** *Friend*: (1) (See **Khalí'u'lláh.**) (2) Title of Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ibráhím-i-Qazvíní, conferred on him by the Báb.

**Khalílu'lláh** *Friend of God*: title given to Abraham in the Qur'án.

**Khán** (1) *Prince, lord, nobleman, chieftain.* Originally used as a courtesy title for officers and high-ranking officials, *Khán* came to denote—placed after a given name—simply 'gentleman'. (See **Big.**) (2) *Exchange, market; inn, caravanserai*: an inn constructed around a central court where caravans (trains of pack animals) may rest for the night.

**Khánum** *Lady; wife.* Placed after a woman's given name, *Khánum* is a courtesy title meaning 'gentlewoman' comparable with **Khán**.

**Khidr** *The Green One*: a prophet, companion of Moses according to Islamic tradition, associated with the unnamed personage mentioned in Qur'án 18:60–82; believed to have drunk from the fountain of life and to be its custodian, he symbolizes the true guide.

**Khuṭbih** Sermon delivered in the mosques on Fridays at noon by the **imám.**

**Kiblah** (See **Qiblih.**)

**Kitáb** *Book.*

**Kitáb-i-Aqdas** *The Most Holy Book*: title of Bahá'u'lláh's Book of Laws and Ordinances.

**Kitáb-i-Íqán** (See **Íqán.**)

**Koran** (See **Qur'án.**)

**Kuláh** The Persian lambskin hat worn by government employees and civilians.

**Kull-i-Shay'** Literally *all things*: the term, whose numerical value is 361, signifies 19 cycles of 19 years in the Badí' calendar.

**Lawḥ** Literally *slate, sheet, table; Tablet.*

**Madínih** (See **Medina.**)

**Madrisih** *Seminary, school, religious college.*

**Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá** *Beloved of Martyrs*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mírzá Muḥammad-Ḥusayn, martyred in Iṣfahán together with his brother, the **Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá**. (See **Dhi'b.**)

**Mahdí** (See **Mihdí**.)

**Makkih** (See **Mecca**.)

**Man-Yuẓhiruhu'lláh** *He Whom God Will Make Manifest*: title given by the Báb to the Promised One.

**Marḥabá** *Welcome! Bravo! Well done!*

**Masá'il** *Questions*: fifteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Mashhadí** Style of a Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mashhad; as a title it is placed before the given name.

**Mashíyyat** *Will*: eleventh month of the Badí' calendar.

**Mashriqu'l-Adhkár** Literally *The Dawning-place of the Praise of God*: title designating a Bahá'í House of Worship.

**Masjid** *Mosque*: a Muslim place of worship.

**Maydán** A square or open place.

**Mecca** Birthplace of the Prophet Muḥammad and scene of the early, difficult years of His ministry before His emigration to **Medina**. (See **Hijrat**; **Ka'bih**.)

**Medina** The 'City of the Prophet', Muḥammad's adoptive home after His flight from **Mecca**, and scene of the latter years of His ministry, during which His Faith spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula, and its social teachings were promulgated. (See **Hijrat**.)

**Mihdí** Literally *directed, guided; one who is rightly guided; The Mahdi*: a designation of the Twelfth **Imám**; title of the Manifestation expected by Islám.

**Miḥráb** A niche in the wall of a mosque indicating the direction of Mecca, before which the **imám** stands when leading the congregation in prayer; the most important part of a mosque.

**Mír** A contraction of **amír**, used, when prefixed to a name, to denote descent from the House of the Prophet. (See **Siyyid**.)

**Mi'ráj** *The Ascent*: Muḥammad's mystic vision of the 'night journey' in which He ascended into heaven.

**Mírzá** A contraction of *amír-zádih*, meaning 'son of an **amír**'. When affixed to a name it signifies '**Prince**'; when prefixed, it either denotes a clerk, secretary, scribe or scholar, or conveys a merely honorific sense: *Mister*.

**Mishkín-Qalam** Literally *the musk-scented pen*; title applied to Mírzá Ḥusayn-i-Iṣfahání, a distinguished Bahá'í calligraphist.

**Mu'adhdhin** *Muezzin*; the one who sounds the **adhán**, the Muslim call to prayer.

**Mubárak** *Blessed*. (See **Jamál-i-Mubárak**.)

**Muftí** Expounder of Muslim law; gives a **fatvá** or sentence on a point of religious jurisprudence.

**Muḥarram** First month of the Muslim lunar calendar, the first ten days of which are observed by the Shí'ahs as part of their mourning period for the Imám **Ḥusayn**, whose martyrdom occurred on the tenth day, 'Áshúrá.

**Mujtahid** Muslim doctor-of-law. Most of the mujtahids of Írán have received their diplomas from the most eminent jurists of Karbilá and Najaf.

**Mulk** *Dominion*: eighteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Mullá** Muslim trained in theology and Islamic jurisprudence; theologian, priest.

**Mustagháth** *He Who Is Invoked (for Help), God*: term used by the Báb in reference to the advent of Bahá'u'lláh on the Day of the Latter Resurrection.

**Mutaṣarrif** *Governor*: lower in rank than a **válí**.

**Nabíl** *Learned, noble*; title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on a number of the believers, most prominent among whom were Mullá Muḥammad-i-Zarandí, author of *The Dawn-Breakers* (Nabíl-i-A'ẓam), and Mullá Muḥammad-i-Qá'iní (Nabíl-i-Akbar).

**Navváb** An honorific implying *Grace, Highness*: title of Ásíyih Khánum, wife of Bahá'u'lláh and mother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

**Naw-Rúz** Literally *New Day*: Bahá'í New Year's Day, date of the vernal equinox; according to the Persian calendar, the day on which the sun enters Aries.

**Nuqtih** *Point*.

**Nuqtiy-i-Úlá** *The Primal Point*: a title of the Báb.

**Núr** *Light*: fifth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Pahlaván** *Athlete, champion*: term applied to brave and muscular men.

**Páshá** Honorary title formerly given to a Turkish officer of high rank such as military commander or provincial governor.

**Píish-Kish** *Present, tip, douceur*.

**Qáḍí** Muslim judge—civil, criminal, or ecclesiastic.

**Qá'im** *He Who Shall Arise*: title designating the Promised One of Islám.

**Qalam** *Pen*.

**Qalam-i-A'lá** *The Pen of the Most High*: a designation of Bahá'u'lláh.

**Qalyán** *Narghile, hookah, hubble-bubble pipe.* Oriental pipe in which the smoke is drawn through water in a vase by means of a long tube.

**Qawl** *Speech*: fourteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'** (See **Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ**.)

**Qiblih** Literally *that which faces one; prayer-direction; point of adoration*: the focus to which the faithful turn in prayer. The Qiblih for Muslims is the **Ka'bih** in Mecca; for Bahá'ís, the Most Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí: 'the Heart and Qiblih of the Bahá'í world.'

**Quddús** Literally *Pure, Holy, Blessed*; title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mullá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Bárfurúshí, last of the eighteen Letters of the Living at the Conference of Badasht.

**Qudrat** *Power*: thirteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Qur'án** *The Reading; The Recitation; That Which Ought To Be Read.* The Book revealed to Muḥammad: The Koran, Holy Book of the Muslims.

**Qurbán** *Sacrifice.*

**Qurratu'l-'Ayn** Literally *Solace of the Eyes*: a term applied to an object of affection. (1) Title conferred upon **Ṭáhirih** by Siyyid Káẓim of Rasht. (2) Term used by the Báb in the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* to refer both to Bahá'u'lláh and to Himself.

**Rabb-i-A'lá** *Exalted Lord*: one of the designations of the Báb.

**Rabí'u'l-Avval** Third month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Rabí'u'th-Thání** Fourth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Raḥmat** *Mercy*: sixth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Ra'ís** *President, head, leader.* **Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís**: Tablet addressed by Bahá'u'lláh to 'Álí Páshá, the Ottoman Grand Vizier.

**Rajab** Seventh month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Ramaḍán** Ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar in which the Fast is observed.

**Raqshá** *The She-Serpent*: appellation applied by Bahá'u'lláh to Mír Muḥammad-Ḥusayn, the **Imám-Jum'ih** of Iṣfahán, accomplice of Shaykh Muḥammad-Báqir. (See **Dhi'b**.)

**Riḍván** Literally *good-pleasure, favour, acceptance; garden, Paradise*; 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 extending from 21 April to 2 May, and celebrated annually.

**Ṣád** The seventeenth letter of the Persian alphabet. **Arḍ-i-Ṣád** Literally *Land of Ṣád*: Iṣfahán.

**Sadratu'l-Muntahá** *The Divine Lote Tree, The Tree beyond which there is no passing*: symbolic of the Manifestation of God. (See **Sidrih**.)

**Ṣadr-i-A'ẓam** *Grand Vizier, Prime Minister.*

**Ṣafar** Second month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán** *Lord of the Age*: one of the titles of the promised **Qá'im. Yá Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán!** Rallying-cry of the early Bábís.

**Salám** *Peace, salutation.* **Salámun 'Alaykum** *Peace be with you!* a greeting among Muslims. **Va's-Salám** *And peace (be with you)*: formula used to conclude an epistle or dissertation, indicating that the author has nothing further to say.

**Salsabíl** *Pure, limpid water.* A fountain in Paradise.

**Samandar** Literally *salamander; phoenix.* A mythical creature indestructible by fire. Title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on Shaykh Káẓim-i-Samandar of Qazvín.

**Sarkár-Áqá** Literally *The Honourable Master.* A designation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

**Sha'bán** Eighth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Sháh** *King*, especially of Írán.

**Sháh-Bahrám** World Saviour and Promised One of the Zoroastrians, identified by Bahá'ís with Bahá'u'lláh.

**Shahíd** *Martyr.* (Plural: **Shuhadá**; see **Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá**; **Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá**; **Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá**.)

**Sharaf** *Honour*: sixteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

**Sharí'at, Sharí'ah** Literally *path, way; custom, law.* Muslim canonical law.

**Shavvál** Tenth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Shaykh** *Venerable old man; tribal or village chief, patriarch, sheik; learned man, elder,*

*professor; clerical dignitary, superior of dervish order.* (See **Shaykhu'l-Islám.**)

**Shaykhí** (Follower) of the 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 to heaven on the night of the **Mí'ráj.**

**Shaykhu'l-Islám** *High Priest, Grand Muftí*: highest rank in the Muslim religious hierarchy; also, title of the head of a religious court, appointed to every large city by the Sháh.

**Shí'ah, Shí'ih** Literally *faction, party, sect*: partisans 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 by divine right to 'Alí (first Imám and fourth Caliph) and to his descendants. Originally, the successorship was the vital point of difference, and Islám was divided because Muḥammad's (albeit verbal) appointment of 'Alí was disregarded. (See **Sunnah**; **Imám.**).

**Shí'í, Shiite** Member of the Shí'ah (or Party) of 'Alí; Muslim of the Shi'ah branch of Islám.

**Shín** The sixteenth letter of the Persian alphabet. **Arḍ-i-Shín** Literally *Land of Shín*: Shíráz.

**Sidrih** *Lote tree.* (See **Sadratu'l-Muntahá.**)

**Ṣirát** Literally *path, way; The Way of God; The Religion of God; 'The Bridge'* leading to heaven. Denotes the True Faith of God.

**Sirr** *Secret, mystery.* **Arḍ-i-Sirr** Literally *The Land of Mystery*: Adrianople.

**Sirru'lláh** *The Mystery of God*: a designation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, conferred on Him by Bahá'u'lláh.

**Síyáh-Chál** *Black Pit*: the subterranean dungeon in Ṭihrán to which Bahá'u'lláh was consigned in August 1852. Here, chained in darkness three flights of stairs underground, in the company of some 150 thieves and assassins, He received the first intimations of His world Mission; regarded by Bahá'ís as the holiest place in Írán's capital.

**Siyyid** Literally *chief, lord, prince:* descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad.

**Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá** *Prince of Martyrs*: title of the Imám Ḥusayn.

**Ṣufí** An exponent of Sufism, a Muslim mystic or **darvísh.**

**Sulṭán** *Sovereignty*: (1) Seventeenth month of the Badí' calender. (2) *King, sovereign, monarch, sultan.*

**Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá** *King of Martyrs*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mírzá Muḥammad-Ḥasan, martyred brother of the **Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá.**

**Sunnah** Literally *way, custom, practice; The Way of the Prophet* as reported in the **Ḥadíth.** Designates by far the largest sect of Islám, which includes the four so-called orthodox sects: Hanbalites, Hanafites, Malikites and Shafiites. Sunnis accept the Caliphs as legitimate, believing that the position of Caliph is elective. (See **Shí'ah**; **Caliph.**)

**Sunní, Sunnite** Muslim of the Sunnah branch of Islám.

**Súrih** Name of a chapter of the Qur'án; used by the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in the titles of some of Their Own Writings.

**Súriy-i-Mulúk** *Súrih of the Kings.* Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh while in Adrianople.

**Ṭá** The nineteenth letter of the Persian alphabet, with a numerical value of nine. **Arḍ-i-Ṭá** Literally *Land of Ṭá*: Ṭihrán.

**Ṭáhirih** Literally *The Pure One*: title conferred on **Zarrín-Táj** by Bahá'u'lláh at the Conference of Badasht.

**Táj** Literally *crown.* Tall felt head-dress adopted by Bahá'u'lláh in 1863, on the day of His departure from His Most Holy House in Baghdád.

**Tajallíyát** *Effulgences*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas.*

**Takyih** *Religious house, monastery; hostel for pilgrims; religious theatre* for presenting Muslim passion-plays; place at which the martyrdom of Ḥusayn is commemorated. (See **Husayníyyih,**).

**Ṭárázát** *Ornaments*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas.*

**Túmán** Discontinued unit of Iranian currency.

**'Ulamá** Literally *learned men, scholars; clerical authorities, theologians, divines*; the Muslim religious hierarchy.

**Umm** *Mother.*

**'Urvatu'l-Vuthqá** *The Sure Handle, Firm Cord*: a Qur'anic term, used in the Bahá'í Writings to symbolize the Covenant and Testament.

**Ustád** *Teacher, professor; mechanic, artisan, craftsman.*

**Vaḥíd** *Single, unique, peerless*: title of Siyyid Yaḥyáy-i-Dárábí, hero of the Nayríz upheaval.

**Váḥid** Literally *unity; one, single, unique; The One, Indivisible God.* The word, whose numerical value is nineteen, denotes: (1) A 'unity' or section of the *Bayán*. The Persian *Bayán* consists of nine Váḥids of nineteen chapters each, except the last, which has only ten chapters. (2) The eighteen Letters of the Living (the Báb's first disciples) and the Báb Himself, who together constitute the first Váḥid of the Bábí Dispensation. (3) Each cycle of nineteen years in the Bádí' calendar. (See **Kull-i-Shay'**.).

**Valí** *Guardian.*

**Válí** *Governor* (of a province).

**Valí-'Ahd** *Crown prince, heir to the throne.*

**Varaqih** *Leaf*; often used metaphorically in the Bahá'í Writings to refer to a woman.

**Varaqiy-i-'Ulyá** Literally *The Most Exalted Leaf; The Greatest Holy Leaf*: title of Bahá'íyyih (or Bahíyyih) Khánum, saintly daughter of Bahá'u'lláh and 'the outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation'.

**Varqá** *Bird, nightingale; The Heavenly Dove.*

**Va's-Salám** (See Salám.)

**Vazír** *Vizír, minister (of state), vizier.* **Vazír-i-A'ẓam**: *Grand Vizier, Prime Minister.*

**Vilávat** *Guardianship.*

**Waqf** Literally *bequeathing (for charitable uses); pious bequest, religious endowment, estate held in mortmain.* Denotes landed property endowed to the Muslim community; in Írán, the estate of the expected Imám.

**Yá** Vocative particle meaning 'O'. (See **Bahá'u'l-Abhá**; **Ṣaḥibu'z-Zamán**.)

**Zádih** *Born; offspring, son.* Used as a suffix after a proper name it means 'Son of —'. (See **Imám-Zádih**; **Mírzá**.)

**Zarrín-Táj** Literally *Crown of Gold*: title by which Fáṭimih, daughter of Mullá Ṣáliḥ-i-Baraqání of Qazvín—better known as **Ṭáhirih**—was designated by her family and kindred.

**Zawrá'** A term signifying Baghdád.

**Zamzam** Literally *copious (water)*: sacred well within the precincts of the Great Mosque in Mecca. Though salty, its water is much esteemed for pious uses, such as ablutions, and drinking after a fast.

**Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín** Literally *Ornament of the Near (or Favoured) Ones.* Title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on Mullá Zaynu'l-'Ábidín of Najaf-Ábád, faithful apostle and trusted scribe.

PART SIX

# LITERARY AND MUSICAL WORKS

# I
# ESSAYS AND REVIEWS

## 1. GLIMPSES OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

EXCERPTS FROM THE MEMOIRS OF MUḤAMMAD-SHAFÍ' ROUHANI (RAWḤÁNÍ) OF HIS THIRTY-NINE DAY PILGRIMAGE IN APRIL/MAY 1921 (TRANSLATED FROM THE PERSIAN BY BAHARIEH (BAHÁRÍYYIH) ROUHANI MA'ÁNÍ)

MUHAMMAD-SHAFÍ' ROUHANI (Rawḥáni) was born in 1894 in Nayríz, Írán, and was descended from the generation of the early martyrs of the Bábí Faith who, as soon as Vaḥíd arrived in Nayríz and proclaimed the coming of the Promised Qá'im, responded to His Call, fought under His Banner, and nurtured with their blood the Tree of His nascent Cause. As a youth, Mr. Rouhani was an eye-witness to the martyrdom on Naw-Rúz, the Persian New Year, 21 March 1909, of eighteen Bahá'is of Nayríz whose blood-stained and mutilated bodies were hung upside down at the entrance of the town as a warning to others. On that day his father was in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as He entombed the sacred remains of the Báb in their permanent resting place on Mount Carmel and eulogized the martyrs of Nayríz. As the enemies were bent on exterminating the entire male Bahá'í population of Nayríz, Muḥammad-Shafí' Rouhani's mother disguised him as a girl and took shelter with some other women and children in a desolate place outside the town. The heart-rending events he witnessed made a lasting impression on the sensitive youth who vowed to serve the Faith to his last breath, a pledge he fulfilled most scrupulously to the end of his long earthly life.

With his wife and seven children he pioneered to Maḥmúdábád in the Province of Mázandarán in the forty-five month teaching plan assigned to Írán by the beloved Guardian, and assisted in the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly; and in his professional capacity as a cotton expert he travelled widely throughout Fárs devoting his free time to establishing deepening classes and presenting lectures on the Bahá'í Faith. After retiring, he continued his travels and devoted considerable time to interviewing people and conducting research for the history books he was writing. His two-volume history of Nayríz was published under the title of *Lama'átu'l-Anvár* (*The Gleam of Light*). Although his history of Ardistán was approved for publication, the disruption caused by the Islamic revolution prevented its appearance.

In his eighty-fifth year, Mr. Rouhani, who was sought by the revolutionary authorities because of his long years of outstanding service to the Faith, left his homeland, accompanied by his wife, at the encouragement of his children who are pioneers in various parts of the world, and settled in India in 1979. In his absence his house was confiscated and razed to the ground and his belongings, including his valuable papers and records, were pillaged. Both in Panchgani and Poona, Mr. Rouhani devoted himself to deepening the friends, especially the youth, until his passing on 25 November 1984 in Poona at age ninety. 'HIS LIFELONG SERVICES PROMOTION FAITH CRADLE FAITH UNFORGETTABLE,' the Universal House of Justice cabled on his passing.

When he was in his twenties, Mr. Rouhani joined the first group of seven pilgrims from Nayríz who visited the Holy Land after World War I. The following excerpts are from his memoirs of that period.

Passages in parentheses form an integral part of the memoir; interpolations by the translator appear in square brackets. Statements attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, although placed in quotation marks, represent the purport of His remarks according to the author's recollection and, as such, have the status of pilgrim notes.

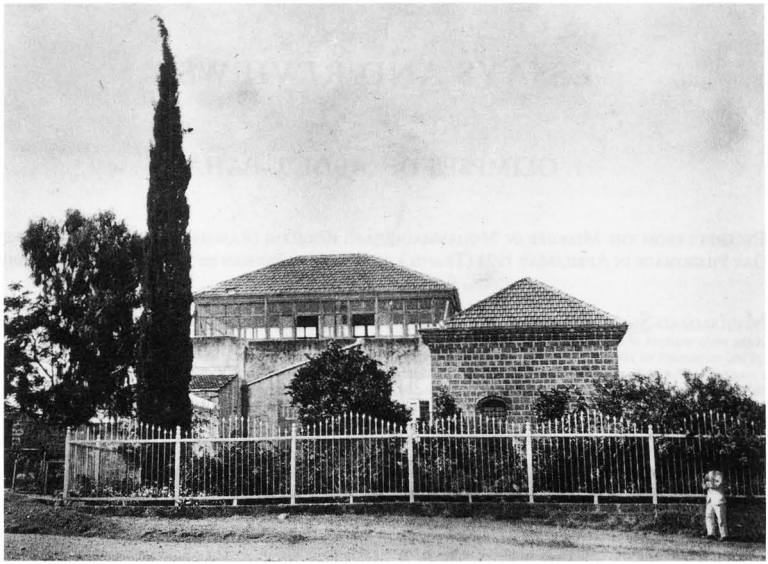
I

'Abdu'l-Bahá admitted us to His presence immediately upon our arrival in Haifa. There were seven of us from Nayríz accompanied by Náẓimu'l-Mulk. We were led to a small room to the north of the blessed House. We entered with utter humility and attained the honour of union.

We had been advised beforehand not to kneel before 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We were told to enter, say Alláh'u'Abhá, and await His instructions.

We followed this advice, and bowed one by one as we entered. With supreme dignity 'Abdu'l-Bahá welcomed us and bade us to be seated. The power of prostration was taken from us. We were like dead bodies in His presence. While He was leaning back, He said with a captivating voice, 'Welcome! You sustained many difficulties during your journey ...'

As there were seven pilgrims from Nayríz, 'Abdu'l-Bahá turned His loving attention to us, asked after the friends there, and said, 'Nayríz is a sacred place. The pure blood of many martyrs was shed on its soil. Among the martyrs is Áqá Siyyid Yaḥyáy-i-Vaḥíd who had committed to memory thirty thousand traditions. He was foremost among the 'Ulamá of Írán. Also among them was Ḥáj Muḥammad-Taqí-Ayyúb, who, as the gamblers say, risked his all. He sacrificed whatever he had in the path of God. He was tortured and made to suffer



*The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh circa 1920.*

*The Shrine of the Báb in December 1919.*

greatly. Finally he went to Baghdád and became the recipient of endless bounties.'

## II

The second day after our arrival was the first day of Riḍván. On that day 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His family went to Bahjí to visit the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. At His behest, bus tickets were obtained for all the pilgrims to go to 'Akká and visit the Most Holy Shrine. As we entered the bus and were introduced to the person in charge, he manifested extreme respect for 'Abdu'l-Bahá and expressed delight that we were the followers of 'Abbás Effendi.

We were dropped off at a place about one kilometer from Bahjí. From there all of us walked towards the Shrine while singing a song, the opening verses of which are:

> We, the followers of Bahá,
> with dilated hearts,
> from the beginning of creation
> to the end of time,
> are proclaimers
> of the Greatest Name:
> Alláh'u'Abhá! Alláh'u'Abhá!

And all of us, with cries of exultation, responded by repeating the last verse.

When we reached a curve in the path near the Bahjí Tea House and saw before us in the distance the blessed figure of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, we stopped singing and approached him with absolute courtesy and humility. We bowed and uttered the greeting of 'Alláh'u'Abhá.' With a heavenly smile He said, 'Welcome.' Then with much compassion and in a very humorous way He pretended to scold us, saying, 'You have publicly disgraced Us! There was a time when no one dared say "Alláh'u'Abhá". Now you raise the cry of praise and glorification and openly utter the greeting of "Alláh'u'Abhá" as you come to the Blessed Shrine.'

## III

One day the writer and another pilgrim from Nayríz were taken ill and were confined to bed. Dr. Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím was our physician. The illness deprived us of the bounty of attaining the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá for a few days. I was able to leave my sick bed on the eighth day of Riḍván. I joined the other pilgrims at the Pilgrim House. However, the condition of Ḥáj Amru'lláh, the other pilgrim, worsened. 'Abdu'l-Bahá issued instructions for the German doctor to visit the patient and help Dr. Ḥakím in his attempts to cure him.

On the ninth day of Riḍván we again left Haifa, at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's behest, and went to 'Akká. On that day we visited the Most Holy Shrine, the Garden of Firdaws,[1] and the Garden of Riḍván, which is also called by Bahá'u'lláh the Verdant Island. Dr. Ḥakím was directed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to remain in Haifa and watch Ḥáj Amru'lláh's condition, which had become critical.

Unfortunately, on this trip I developed diarrhoea. In the morning the matter was reported to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He ordered that one-and-a-half litres of milk be boiled. I was to drink it when it was cold. With this prescription I was completely cured; the immediate cure was obviously effected through His blessed Will.

Two days later something happened that astonished us all. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was sitting in the little garden in front of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh[2] and a group of us were in His presence. He was talking to us when Dr. Ḥakím arrived from Haifa and sought permission to attain 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence. Permission was granted. He, panic-stricken and perturbed, said 'One of the patients from Nayríz is in a critical condition.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá said calmly, 'He will be all right.' Dr. Ḥakím, who had given up hope and was certain the patient would die by the time he returned said, 'My Master, even the German doctor has no hope for him; he is moribund.' With a special gesture, which is His alone, and with considerable force, 'Abdu'l-Bahá repeated His assurance, saying, 'He will be all right,' and then He dismissed Dr. Ḥakím. There were some candies on the table. 'Abdu'l-Bahá took one of the candies known locally as Turkish Delight, gave it to Dr. Ḥakím and said, 'You may also give this to the patient.' The doctor took the candy, backed out respectfully, and returned to Haifa. On the twelfth day of Riḍván, when we returned to Haifa, Ḥáj Amru'lláh was out of bed, looking well and very much alive. He joined us in the Pilgrim House near the Shrine of the Báb.

[1] Paradise Garden, an extensive agricultural area immediately adjacent to the Riḍván Garden; see *Door of Hope*, pp. 102–4.

[2] That Garden is no longer there; it has been dismantled and now forms a part of the gardens surrounding the Most Holy Spot.

## IV

One evening 'Abdu'l-Bahá granted an audience to a large number of the friends in the hall of His House. With a captivating eloquence and in a state of joy and delight, He said, 'No government was able to seize the fortress and port of 'Akká, but when God willed it, it was conquered by two British cavalrymen. ('Abdu'l-Bahá with the use of His two fingers emphasized the figure 2). He then said, 'It is the will of God that this Faith should advance, therefore, nothing can hinder its progress or check its growth. All the religions of God have been like this in the beginning. We are holding a pickaxe in our hand ready to build, but we see that the building is raised by itself.' [At this point 'Abdu'l-Bahá related the story of Abú Muslim-i-Khurásání[1], and the seemingly trivial circumstances that contributed to his victory over the forces of Ibn-i-Marván, and remarked that 'the same force is in operation now'.]

## V

One afternoon 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in the garden of His House pacing the path when He admitted a group of us to His presence. We were completely immersed in the bountiful ocean of His eloquent utterances when someone informed Him of the arrival of Áqá Shaykh Faraju'lláh[2] from Egypt and requested permission for him to attain 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence. Permission was granted. Shaykh Faraju'lláh came and said one of the well-known scholars of Egypt by the name of Shaykh Muḥammad, with whom he had spoken about the Faith for some time and who had several unresolved questions, had come to Haifa with him to discuss his difficulties and pose his questions in person. 'Abdu'l-Bahá granted permission for them to attain His presence after supper (the pilgrims usually had their supper at the House of the Master and went to the Pilgrim House to sleep). After supper we were dismissed and returned to the Pilgrim House. Some time elapsed. I was in a state between sleep and wakefulness when I heard the voices of two Arabs coming up the mountain, who were talking together as they were approaching the Pilgrim House (the Pilgrim House is situated in the heart of Carmel and the voices of those who climbed could be clearly heard in the silent night. Therefore, I could hear their happy conversation. They were so jubilant, methought they had discovered a treasure house). As they drew nigh, they knocked at the door. Áqá Muhammad Hasan, the attendant ... awoke and opened the door. It became known that the arrivals were Áqá Shaykh Faraju'lláh and his friend, Shaykh Muḥammad, the Muftí of Egypt. After arrival they lit the light in the corridor, sat there and started talking together. Sleep was lost to me completely. As I had studied Arabic and could follow their conversation to a measured degree, I understood what they were talking about. In but one meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá had subdued the heart of the Shaykh in such wise that he had become an ardent lover. Their discussion was so intriguing, and the description of their visit with 'Abdu'l-Bahá so exciting, that I lost the power to resist. I left my bed and with their permission sat on a chair next to them.

They continued their conversation. Shaykh Muḥammad addressing Shaykh Faraju'lláh said, 'I had worked hard for several years and had selected some very difficult questions which I had noted down to ask. When I decided to accompany you to Haifa, I was thinking that my encounter with 'Abdu'l-Bahá would take a long time before settlement could be reached. However, after discussing one of my problems during the first meeting, the response was so comprehensive and all-embracing that I feel all my difficulties have been resolved. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has answered all my questions. For example, the problem of fate and free will which seemed to be very complicated and which I thought would have needed a long time to resolve, was disposed of in one meeting. As soon as the first question was discussed, the response was such that my other questions were also answered. It is like a key with which I can open the door to many other questions.'

The Shaykh spent several days in Haifa partaking of the bounty of attaining 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence. On the night of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh I saw him in the Most Holy Shrine

[1] A powerful chief of Persian origin, leader of the religious and political movement in Khurásán through which the Ummayads were overthrown and the Abbasids (Arabic family descended from 'Abbás, the uncle of Muḥammad) attained the throne. He died in 755.

[2] Shaykh Faraju'lláh Kurdí, a well-known believer who rendered outstanding services and who was responsible for printing many Bahá'í books in Egypt. At the time he was in the process of publishing *Makátíb-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá), Vol. III.

and in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá with absolute devotion and humility. He was so transformed and appeared so intoxicated with the spirit and filled with enthusiasm that I was envious of him. His tears were unceasing. He evinced such tender emotions at the time of prostrating himself at the Sacred Threshold that everyone present was affected.

This is the story of the meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá of one of the learned men of Islám whose transformation I witnessed with my own eyes. I saw how dust was transmuted by alchemy, and copper became gold.

## VI

One day as 'Abdu'l-Bahá entered the courtyard and was going up the steps leading to His House, one of the pilgrims approached Him and said, 'My purpose in life is to teach the Cause of God. I beseech confirmations.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá turned back and addressing the petitioner said, 'Every teacher is confirmed and victorious. The Blessed Beauty has said: "Verily, We ... shall aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favoured angels."'[1] He then said twice that purity of motive is needed and, alluding to Alma Knobloch, remarked, 'A woman of slight build and of little formal education arose with pure intention and conquered Germany.'[2]

## VII

One day 'Abdu'l-Bahá stepped out into the verdant garden of His House. The pilgrims stood in rows on both sides of the footpath awaiting Him. 'Abdu'l-Bahá called His faithful gardener, Ismá'íl Áqá, and asked him to bring a basket. 'Abdu'l-Bahá with His own Hands picked a considerable number of red roses and placed them in the basket. He then entered the path, followed by Ismá'íl Áqá who carried the basket. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was extremely happy and, as He walked past us, He gave each a rose and said ('Abdu'l-Bahá's Words are paraphrased):

Today the news was received that a beauty divinely blessed has been martyred in Kirmánsh̲áhán. This youth sought martyrdom from Me. I assured him with this verse, 'O Thou assured soul, return to thy Lord well-pleased and pleasing unto Him.' Now the news of his martyrdom has arrived. I give you these flowers in memory of Áqá Ya'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih.[3] He then continued as He walked, saying that when the Blessed Beauty [Bahá'u'lláh] was in Baghdád, there was a flowering tree in the House, which had become weak. Bahá'u'lláh ordered that some blood from a slaughtered lamb be poured around the tree. This was done and the tree became very strong. This is the effect of blood on a tree. Behold the effect that the sacrifice of blood of a youth such as Áqá Ya'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih will have on the tree of the Cause.

That day 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Words about martyrdom were such that they caused even the most stone-hearted individuals among the audience to desire martyrdom.

In the evening there was a beautiful gathering in the Master's House. 'Abdu'l-Bahá ordered that the letter from Mírzá Yúsif Kh̲án-i-Vujdání describing the circumstances attending the martyrdom of Áqá Ya'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih be read from the beginning to the end. The letter closed with the following lines of verse [by Jalálu'd-Dín-i-Rúmí]:

Thou hast slain the lovers,
Thy hands are stained with their blood;
Thou hast then performed prayers
Over their bodies, one by one.

'Abdu'l-Bahá again spoke in praise of that beloved youth who had asked Him to be permitted to be the first martyr from among the Bahá'ís of Jewish origin.

[1] *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, LXXII.

[2] Alma Knobloch became a Bahá'í in 1903 in the United States. With the consent of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and assisted financially by her sister Fanny, Alma settled in Germany in 1907, the first pioneer to join Dr. Edwin Fisher. She remained until 1921. See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, pp. 641–43. Alma Knobloch died in 1943, Fanny in 1949.

[3] Translator's note: The Bahá'í scholar 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd Ish̲ráq Kh̲ávarí in his book *Muḥádirát* states that Ya'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih was born in Kásh̲án and raised in Hamadán. When he embraced the Faith, the intensity of his love was such that he beseeched 'Abdu'l-Bahá on several occasions to bestow on him the honour of martyrdom. 'He is the only martyr from the Bahá'ís of Jewish background,' Ish̲ráq Kh̲ávarí writes (there have been others since) and 'he was the last to give his life for the Faith during 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ministry.' To please his mother, Hájiyih Kh̲ánum, Mr. Muttaḥidih had been about to marry, but when he recognized that his request to be martyred was to be granted, he declined to marry and asked his mother, instead, to invite the Bahá'ís to a meeting after his death and offer them sweetmeats. She fulfilled her son's wish each year on the anniversary of his martyrdom, inviting the friends for prayers, and then, with stooped posture and a brave smile, passing sweets among the guests.

## VIII

A meeting was convened one evening in the beautiful garden of the Master's House. At His bidding tea was served. Then two Jews, who had returned to Haifa from Jerusalem, asked permission to meet with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Permission was granted. They said, 'We are Jews. We had gone to Jerusalem for pilgrimage. Now that we want to return, it is the time of [heavy rains], we are fearful that our ship may sink. We have heard that Your prayers for people are answered. We have come to You with our need and beseech Your guidance and prayers.'

'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'We will pray, rest assured. From here you should go to Port Said. You will be able to get a ship to take you directly from there to Basra and Búshihr. You will reach home safely.' Then He dismissed them. As they were saying farewell they said, 'We are strangers in this city and have no place to rest tonight.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'Go to the Pilgrim House and spend the night there.' They bowed and left with supreme happiness and humility.

When they left, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'I like them very much. Although they came to Us with a need to be fulfilled, they were frank and forthright. The friends should have such an attitude and use this as an example...'

## IX

One day a meeting was held in the hall of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's House. A large number of people were present and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, while seated, spoke to the friends. At the end of His talk two small children, four and six years old, whose father was of Armenian background and had embraced the Faith, stood up with their hands over their chests and, with 'Abdu'l-Bahá's permission, recited in very sweet voices a poem which starts with the verse: 'O 'Abdu'l-Bahá, I am helpless, O 'Abdu'l-Bahá, I am homeless, hold Thou my hand, hold Thou my hand.'

It was very interesting to see the extraordinary kindness with which 'Abdu'l-Bahá treated those children. He called them to Him, seated them on His lap and, after showering His special favours upon them, let them go. The two children went to the other side of the meeting hall and sat on the lap of Áqá Ḥusayn-i-Kahrubá'i.[1]

## X

One day when we were in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, He was informed that the British Crown Prince[2] was arriving in Haifa and that the Governor [of Palestine] wished to borrow His car, which was the latest model and had been presented to Him by the American friends. ['Abdu'l-Bahá expressed no objection.]

## XI

One day we were in the presence of the Master in Bahjí. Something came up that prompted 'Abdu'l-Bahá to speak of Nayríz. Áqá Mírzá Aḥmad-i-Nayrízí conveyed a request from some of the friends, who had seen us off, that they be blessed and graced by the Master. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'They are all the recipients of favour.' Mírzá Aḥmad said, 'They seek the good pleasure of their Master.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá responded, 'I am well pleased with the friends of Nayríz and the Blessed Beauty is also well pleased with them. How can I be dissatisfied? They have thrice sacrificed their lives in the field of martyrdom.' Mírzá Aḥmad said, 'Our fathers gave up their lives but we are sinners and ashamed of ourselves.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied, 'We are all sinners but the bounty of the Blessed Beauty is immense, be assured.'

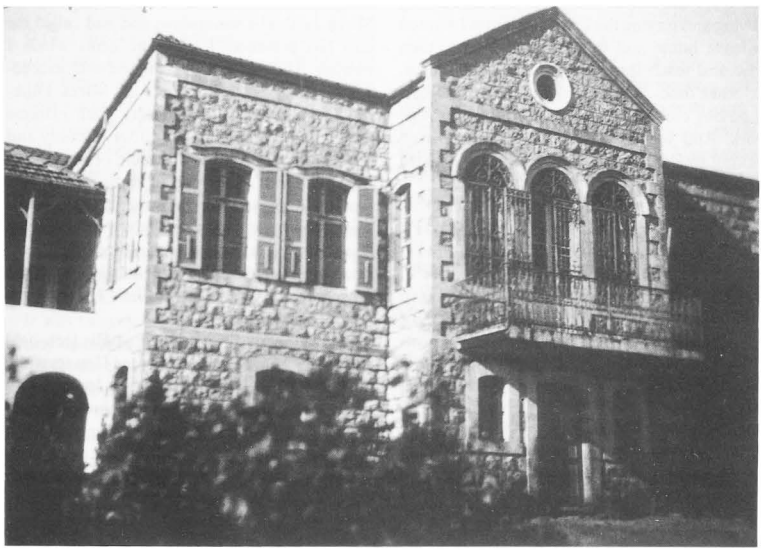
## XII

On a certain day when a group of pilgrims and resident Bahá'ís were in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Áqá Siyyid Muṣṭafá,[3] the renowned Bahá'í teacher from Rangoon, Burma, found an occasion to say that the land of India is like a jungle of different religions and denominations. He said the beliefs, customs, and manners are very diverse and superstitions are rampant. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said it was true, but He added that the establishment of schools and the promotion of knowledge will eradicate the foundation of superstition.

Áqá Siyyid Muṣṭafá said, 'The friends in India are awaiting the arrival of their Master there.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'I was inclined to the taking of a trip to Japan, China and India,

[1] A Bahá'í from India who, with Curtis Kelsey from the United States, installed the lighting plants for the illumination of the Shrines.
[2] Edward VIII.
[3] Muṣṭafá Rúmí, posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi. He died 13 March 1942.

*The House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on 27 April 1920.*



*The Eastern Pilgrim House, Haifa (north side) on 4 April 1922.*

but now there are obstacles in the way. I have accomplished My work. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Turkistán has been built and the foundation of another one in the United States is in place.[1] Today We have received the news that the Annual Convention has also been convened. The time has come for the friends to take over the work.'

These utterances conveyed the sad news of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's imminent departure from this world, but no one dared ask a question except Áqá Mírzá Abu'l-Ḥasan-i-Afnán, who was an ardent lover of the Master. Because that venerable man was a trustworthy person, 'Abdu'l-Bahá shared with him the hidden meaning of His utterance. When we returned to Írán, we received the news that because Mírzá Abu'l-Ḥasan could not bear the thought of separation from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he, while the Master was still enjoying good health, wrote his will and drowned himself.

## XIII

I was a youth in my twenties when I came on pilgrimage. As it is a condition peculiar to this age, I had not set a fixed pattern for earning a living and serving the Cause. At times I wanted to leave home and finish my education, then arise and teach the Faith on a full-time basis. At other times, since I was married, I thought of having children and educating them for this work. And yet at other times, I contemplated seeking wealth in order to spend it in the path of service.

As I was sincere in my intention, I knew that once I made up my mind and sought 'Abdu'l-Bahá's assistance, He would grant it. 'But what should I request that would not be harmful?' I asked myself. 'If I request wealth, it may become the cause of negligence; if I seek knowledge for the purpose of teaching the Faith, that knowledge may become a veil.' I was doubtful about what to ask that would be beneficial and in my best interest.

Several nights, before going to bed, I pondered upon the subject and prayed with fervour in order to choose the best option. One night I had a dream which gave me the courage to set aside my own thoughts, leave my affairs in the hand of the divine Physician, and implore Him to prescribe for me that which He saw was in my best interest. However, I knew that in His presence I would not have the power to utter anything, unless He granted me the strength to do so. Therefore, I chose a short sentence and practised it well with the intention of reciting it, if I ever had the bounty of attaining His presence privately.

Then I mentioned to Áqá Mírzá Dhikru'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's cousin, that I was longing to attain His presence in private. Because I knew 'Abdu'l-Bahá did not deprive sincere petitioners of reception in His Court, I made the necessary preparations for the visit.

I had just received a letter from Nayríz containing the glad-tidings of the arrival there of Mr. Náṭiq,[2] a Bahá'í teacher, of the establishment of Míthágíyyih School, and the news of the inauguration ceremony. Attached to the letter was the text of the speech delivered by my brother. I kept this material with me to present to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, because I knew He appreciated receiving such news.

One day when all the pilgrims from Nayríz were in the House of the Master, Mírzá Dhikru'lláh gave me the awaited news. He told me that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was alone in the house of Mírzá Jalál, His son-in-law, and had called me into His presence. I took the items which I wanted 'Abdu'l-Bahá to bless and with exceeding gladness accompanied Áqá Mírzá Dhikru'lláh to the appointed place. With extreme excitement and in a state of utter humility and lowliness I entered the vestibule of the house. Mírzá Dhikru'lláh went in and sought permission for me to enter. Permission was granted. I left the wrapper, which contained several items to be blessed, in the corridor. I then opened the door and saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá seated at a desk. I bowed and said 'Alláh'u'Abhá'. He gave me permission to enter.

I immediately threw myself at His feet, held the hem of His robe and entreated Him tearfully saying: 'O my Beloved! Do not leave me to myself, cause me to move in accordance with Thy Will, and confirm me in my servitude and obedience to Thee.'

'Abdu'l-Bahá bountifully lifted me up with the hand of His power and with a penetrating voice said, 'God hath confirmed thee in serving

[1] The Houses of Worship in 'Ishqábád and Wilmette, Illinois.

[2] Mírzá Muḥammad Náṭiq.

His Cause, in elevating His Word, and in spreading His fragrances.'

This blessed utterance opened before my face the portals of happiness. It imparted hope and assurance to my heart and helped me to know what course of action to follow in my life. I immediately realized that I was not going to become wealthy, but knew of a certainty that He would grant me all that was necessary for rendering service.

After I arose to my feet, 'Abdu'l-Bahá granted me permission to sit on a chair. He then gave me the courage and the opportunity to give Him the glad-tidings from Nayríz. The news of the arrival there of Mr. Náṭiq, of the establishment of the Míthāqíyyih School, of the inauguration ceremony, and of the speeches read by the students of the school, was presented to Him. In the end I submitted the handwritten copy of the speech which I had received from my brother, Jalál, and sought divine confirmations for the teachers and students of the school. 'Abdu'l-Bahá took the copy, read it carefully and in His own handwriting added the word 'bárí'[1] to a sentence. He then called His amanuensis, who was not there. Therefore, He took the pen and at the foot of the same sheet of paper wrote the following prayer:

> *O God, my God! I supplicate confirmation and assistance for those who have arisen to serve Thy Cause and educate the children who have been nurtured at the breast of Thy Love. O God! Glorify these children in Thy Kingdom and teach them from Thy knowledge. Thou art the Powerful and the Mighty.*[2]

Praised be God! 'Abdu'l-Bahá's favours were far beyond anyone's imagination and perception. It was providential that His amanuensis was not there, so that He wrote the prayers in His own handwriting.

It was the custom that unless 'Abdu'l-Bahá clearly dismissed a person by saying, 'May you be in God's trust,' the visit continued. Therefore, as He left the room, I followed Him. Outside in the corridor, I saw the items I had left there and forgotten about. I presented them to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and just said, 'For blessing.' He took them with the Hand of compassion and, while holding them, He recited a prayer and returned them to me.

He still did not dismiss me. As He was leaving the corridor to enter the vestibule, He rubbed His eyes with His Hands and said, 'I am tired, it is the spirit that endures, the body cannot bear it.' Then He recited a verse of poetry which says, 'Servitude is captivity and Lordship a headache.' He then immediately added, 'Servitude is not captivity, although Lordship is a headache.'

As 'Abdu'l-Bahá entered the courtyard of the house, He ordered that chairs be set up and the pilgrims from Nayríz be called. This was done. As soon as the chairs were in place, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sat down and granted me permission to be seated. The other six pilgrims from Nayríz also arrived and were seated at His behest.

'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke favourably of the friends of Nayríz, of their successes in rendering service, of the arrival of Mr. Náṭiq there, of the establishment of the Míthāqíyyih School, and He praised Mr. Náṭiq. When He was informed that before the arrival of Mr. Náṭiq, Mr. Muṭlaq and Mr. Nabílzádih[3] had visited Nayriz, and produced great results, He said, 'Mr. Nabílzádih and Mr. Muṭlaq are indeed sacrificial.' We were then dismissed.

## XIV

On the first day of Ramaḍán we were in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá together with a group of pilgrims and resident Bahá'ís, such as Ḥájí 'Alí-i-Yazdí, the brother of Ḥájí Muḥammad Ṭáhir-i-Málmírí. Because of the difference in the lunar calendar, some of the Muslims had observed the first day of Ramaḍán the previous day. 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked Ḥájí 'Alí whether the people in the market had observed the fast yesterday or today. He replied that some started the fast as from yesterday and some from today.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'Because they have not understood the significance of the fast, they have abandoned the primary purpose and have clung to a secondary matter, thus they have become the cause of division. In the early days of Islám this was not so, it has gradually become like this.' Then He continued, 'Fasting means abstinence from that which increases the appetite for lust and passion. This has been the

[1] A word introducing a summing up, equivalent to the phrase 'in short'.

[2] Translation authorized by the Universal House of Justice.

[3] Mírzá 'Abdu'lláh Muṭlaq and Mírá Munir Nabílzádih, noted Bahá'í teachers.

wisdom of the fast. Just as people abstain from indulging in food, they should likewise abstain from the promptings of the baser self and protect themselves from their evil effects. However, as it can be seen,' He said, 'they dispute with each other over the basic principle and instead of spending their extra time in meditating and pondering upon the Writings, in performing good and charitable deeds, and in suppressing their evil promptings, they are engaged in advancing their personal interests and improving their business.'

## XV

As the night of Bahá'u'lláh's Ascension drew close, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed all the pilgrims and the resident Bahá'ís to go to Bahjí on the eve of the Ascension. Therefore, in the company of a group of friends we travelled to Bahjí the day before the Ascension and were accommodated in the houses in the vicinity of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. (These houses were destroyed during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi and became a part of the Gardens.) At about sunset there was a meeting of the friends. 'Abdu'l-Bahá blessed us with His presence and spoke about the sufferings of Bahá'u'lláh in a manner which deeply affected everyone.

At the instruction of the Master another gathering of the friends was held at night in the Bírúní[1] opposite the Mansion of Bahjí. 'Abdu'l-Bahá honoured the meeting with His presence. The Covenant-breakers were watching the meeting from the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh and evinced signs of immense envy and rancour. They tried to attract attention by pretending that since they were the occupants of the Mansion, they were Bahá'u'lláh's true heirs. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá was giving a discourse, one of them started chanting one of the prayers of the Blessed Beauty's with a very loud voice, so that it could be clearly heard. After the prayer, 'Abdu'l-Bahá recited a poem in Persian, the gist of which is this: Once a fox stayed in a paint container for about two hours. When he saw his colourful coat and tail, he thought he was a peacock. His claim to be a peacock was nothing but the manifestation of his vain imagining.

That night the utterances of 'Abdu'l-Bahá revolved around the sufferings of Bahá'u'lláh and immersed us all in an ocean of sorrow. After the talk, when the darkness of the night had enveloped the land, 'Abdu'l-Bahá arose and left the meeting; in a short while He disappeared from our sight. No one knew where He had gone. When the meeting was over, we did not know what to do, because He had not indicated anything about how we should proceed.

I took advantage of the opportunity and decided that, since we were deprived of the opportunity of visiting the Mansion, I would circumambulate it. As I was walking around the Mansion, I was reciting one of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prayers. When I finished the prayer, and as I was still circumambulating, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His white cloak appeared before my eyes. I felt completely lost and did not know what to do. I bowed and said 'Alláh'u'Abhá.' I had no power to utter anything. I followed Him to the place of the gathering.

As He stood there, He instructed the friends to form several groups and each group to continue praying and meditating in one of the rooms. 'Abdu'l-Bahá left for the chamber on the second floor of the building in the small Garden of Bahjí, which is now called the Tea House. It was either through the intervention of Providence or the Will of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that, when the rooms were being assigned, a room on the first floor of the same building which 'Abdu'l-Bahá was using, was allocated to those of us who had come from Nayríz. Hence the appointed night when 'all were sleeping but we were awake engaging in prayer and meditation'[2] was at hand.

'Abdu'l-Bahá was awake in the upper chamber. At about midnight He started revealing a Tablet of visitation in honour of Áqá Ya 'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih, who was mentioned earlier. We could hear the captivating and melodious voice of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Just before the time of the Ascension, we heard a sound. Thereafter we beheld Khusraw, the faithful attendant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, descending from the steps of the upper chamber with a lantern in his hand. 'Abdu'l-Bahá followed him down the steps and left the area. Immediately after, we were informed of 'Abdu'l-

[1] Outer part of an eastern house, separate from the women's quarters, and used for receiving guests.

[2] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, on an earlier occasion during the pilgrimage of the Bahá'ís from Nayríz had alluded to the observance in those words.

Bahá's instruction to proceed to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh for the recitation of the Tablet of Visitation.[1]

We set off walking behind 'Abdu'l-Bahá until we reached the entrance to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, the Qiblih of the people of Bahá. As I approached the outer Threshold, I beheld 'Abdu'l-Bahá standing in the vestibule holding a large bottle of attar, with which He anointed those who entered. We stood in a line and went in one by one. As my turn came to be anointed, I stretched out my hand in such a way that my palm was flat. 'Abdu'l-Bahá lovingly pressed the palm of my hand with His thumb in order to make a hollow. He then poured the perfume generously into it. I was afraid it would spill from the corners of my hand. To avoid losing the precious perfume which 'Abdu'l-Bahá had granted me, I sipped some of it. It burned my throat to such a degree that my tears started rolling down.

After all the friends were anointed, they stood in rows facing the Inner Shrine. The Master, Who was in front, with a movement of His Hand and in a very quiet voice, instructed one of the resident friends to recite the Tablet of Visitation. At that time the learned man from Egypt, who was the travelling companion of Shaykh Faraju'lláh Dhakíy-i-Kurdí and who had been completely transformed in one meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was standing in front of me. He was weeping profusely as He supplicated at the Threshold of the Blessed Beauty.

After the recitation of the Tablet of Visitation, 'Abdu'l-Bahá kissed the Threshold of the Sacred Shrine and backed away. Others did likewise. While the ladies of the Holy Family and other women believers visited the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh (in those days in the Holy Land the matter of '*hijáb*' had not been abolished yet; therefore, men and women visited the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb separately), the Master sat on a chair outside facing the Sacred Spot. For about half an hour He was fully wrapt in meditation in absolute silence and complete lowliness. During that time we were all standing behind Him in utter humility and supplication. When the morning light broke, we were dismissed and proceeded to our rooms.

[1] A Tablet revealed by Bahá'ulláh which is read at His Shrine and at the Shrine of the Báb. It is also frequently used in commemorating Their anniversaries.

## XVI

On the afternoon of the Day of Bahá'u'lláh's Ascension, the seventieth day after Naw-Rúz, we had our last meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá at Bahjí. Thereafter, we had to leave the promised Paradise.

'Abdu'l-Bahá called the pilgrims from Nayríz one by one to His presence. He honoured us each with a separate Tablet and, after showering us with His supreme favours and endless blessings, He bade us farewell. When my turn came, I prostrated myself as I entered, kissed the threshold and kneeled before 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He pointed to a chair and invited me to sit on it. He quoted a verse of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* to the effect that God desires us to sit on thrones. He then graciously gave me a Tablet revealed in my honour, at the foot of which was the following prayer in the handwriting of His amanuensis:

> *O my God, O my God! Verily this plant hath yielded its fruit and standeth upright upon its stalk. Verily it hath astounded the farmers and perturbed the envious. O God, water it with showers from the cloud of Thy favours and cause it to yield great harvests heaped up like unto mighty hills in Thy land. Enlighten the hearts with a ray shining forth from Thy Kingdom of Oneness, illumine the eyes by beholding the signs of Thy grace, and gratify the ears by hearing the melodies of the birds of Thy confirmations singing in Thy heavenly gardens, so that these souls may become like thirsty fish swimming in the pools of Thy guidance and like tawny lions roaming in the forests of Thy bounty. Verily Thou art the Generous, the Merciful, the Glorious and the Bestower.*[2]

The above prayer was revealed at my request for my use on a regular basis. I was then dismissed when 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'May you be under God's protection.'

It can be well imagined how we felt; we had been invited to paradise and then dismissed. Methinks life was taken from us and our vitality sapped. The thought of separation from our Beloved reduced us to spiritless bodies.

[2] Translation authorized by the Universal House of Justice.

# 2. MEMORIES OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

ADAPTED FROM AN ORAL ACCOUNT BY 'ALÍ M. YAZDÍ*

I FIRST met Shoghi Effendi in 1910 when he came to Ramlih, Egypt shortly after the Master arrived there. He was thirteen, and I was eleven. I had heard about him but had never seen him before. Now, in Ramlih, we attended the French Brothers' School. We started to become acquainted, slowly, as children do, and then we came to know each other better. I would see him at the house occupied by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and gradually we became friends. Even as a child, Shoghi Effendi was always dignified, but he was friendly. Although I was his junior he almost always addressed me as Shaykh 'Alí, but in writing he used the untransliterated form 'Sheikh Aly'. He was always full of zest, always energetic, eager, always full of life.

When 'Abdu'l-Bahá was making plans to visit the United States, He wanted to take with Him Shoghi Effendi, as well as a few other believers. Shoghi Effendi was in the seventh heaven: he had heard so much about America, and he looked forward to accompanying the Master as he travelled all over that land giving the Message.

Shoghi Effendi was very close to the Master; 'Abdu'l-Bahá always treated him somewhat differently from other people, even when Shoghi Effendi was a child. He himself was devoted to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He was dedicated to the Bahá'í Cause from his earliest childhood; from the very beginning it was at the centre of his life.

On 24 March 1912, the day before their scheduled departure, Shoghi Effendi invited me to visit the ship and see his cabin. Accompanied by some other believers, we took the electric train to Alexandria, and then to the harbour. There stood the *Cedric*, a White Star liner. It was a beautiful ship, one of two that plied regularly between Alexandria and New York, stopping only at Naples. Shoghi Effendi and I went aboard and he took me upstairs and showed me his cabin, the dining room, and all that was available to our enthusiastic inspection. He was extremely happy, and I was happy on his account. I made him promise to write to me when he got to America, and he said he would.

At Naples, Shoghi Effendi was told that the doctors who tested his eyes had discovered that he had trachoma and insisted that he must leave the ship, although he had never had trouble with his eyes and displayed no symptoms of infection. Italy was at that time at war with Turkey and it might be inferred that 'Abdu'l-Bahá's party was thought to be Turkish, or that other political considerations came into play; but for whatever reason, Shoghi Effendi was sent back. He was heartbroken. Medical examiners at Ramlih confirmed that he did not have trachoma. Denied the opportunity to be with his beloved Grandfather and to witness the teachings of the Faith he loved proclaimed across America, I saw him lose weight, grow despondent, and actually become ill. It was some time before he regained his health and natural ebullience.

After 'Abdu'l-Bahá had travelled in the United States and Europe, He returned to Ramlih for five months. Shoghi Effendi, who had been in Haifa part of the time, came to be with Him. On 2 December 1913, 'Abdu'l-Bahá left Alexandria to return to the Holy Land.

I did not see Shoghi Effendi again until a few years later when we were fellow students at the American University of Beirut, then known as the Syrian Protestant College, where we were part of a circle of Bahá'í students who, as an extracurricular activity, would gather together and discuss the Teachings. A number of these students were Persians who were, in effect, marooned there, unable to go home because of the war and the blockade; so they were invited to spend their summer vacations in the Holy Land. There was an ante-room to the Shrine of the Báb which was assigned to them, and they spent very happy summers there. When I

* A later version of this memoir appears in *Blessings Beyond Measure. Recollections of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988.)

was in Haifa in the summer of 1917 I also greatly enjoyed being with Shoghi Effendi and with them.

At the university, Shoghi Effendi was always jolly, optimistic and hopeful. He had a really wonderful personality. Sometimes, spontaneously, a smile would light up his face, or he would suddenly break into hearty and infectious laughter. He had a well-shaped small mouth, beautiful expressive eyes, and very regular handsome features. He had a buoyant nature, exuberant and resilient.

At college, Shoghi Effendi and I were in the same building; his room was directly across the hall from mine. From time to time, he would receive parcels from Haifa containing good brown home-baked bread, honey, dried fruits and nuts. He would invite me to his room to share his gifts, and the two of us would sit together there, feasting and talking. He was always generous.

Our relationship was that of two young men, personal friends, just beginning their independent lives, and we had much to share. Although he was of holy lineage and I was a member of a family of early pioneers, we forgot all that and were just two young men, happy together, enjoying ourselves. That was what our relationship was like at that time and in later years. We both had logical minds, and we both enjoyed analytical discussion, especially if it reflected some degree of creativity and vision.

As students, we often spoke about the future. Even then, Shoghi Effendi had a vision of the Faith's having been established around the world, with communities everywhere, actively serving. That was his principal ambition. A common goal we shared was that of personal service to the Faith. He did not appear to know that he was going to be the Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause; even later, at Oxford, he never gave any indication that he knew he was to be the Guardian.

Shoghi Effendi and I graduated on 15 May 1918. He went to Haifa; I went to Damascus. Later on, when the way was opened for communication and travel, Shoghi Effendi was exceedingly happy. His letters and diary of that time are a truly remarkable record of what the Bahá'ís were doing, as well as of his own feelings. After the long period of silence and isolation, mail was now flooding into the Holy Land from the United States, Germany, France, India, Burma and other centres. Letters came with news of the progress of the Faith; telegrams arrived expressing the joy of the believers in being able to again communicate with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Shoghi Effendi, serving as amanuensis to his beloved Grandfather, was thrilled by these developments. The doors of pilgrimage were opened again; my father received permission to come to Haifa, and Shoghi Effendi described the visit in a letter of 13 February 1919.

'Abdu'l-Bahá worked all hours. One morning, Shoghi Effendi was sleeping when the Master summoned him to begin his work. Later that day, in a letter addressed to 'Ahmad', this tender description was written: 'Early this morning I was awakened by a gentle knock on my door, followed by the sweet voice of the Beloved calling me to rise from my sleep, to shake off my drowsiness and to attend to my work.'

It was evident that the Faith was Shoghi Effendi's life; his joy, service to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He was happy in this period and intent on the future of the Faith. He also recognized that all the Persian students of our group were now going their separate ways, some to Persia, some to Europe, some to America. In his diary on 24 August 1919 he recorded that I was coming from Damascus to Haifa to take my leave of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. 'Sad has been the farewell,' he wrote, 'but the idea that these young men, enlightened and active as they are, may one day each in his own sphere render a service to the Cause, affords sufficient consolation for the hearts that remain behind.'

I left Haifa by train for Port Said where I was to board a ship that would take me to Switzerland and Germany to pursue my studies. Shoghi Effendi came to the station in Haifa to see me off. He sat in the compartment until the train was ready to leave; then he said goodbye, and he asked me to write to him. It was the end of August. I did not visit Haifa again until 1928.

There were three other young Bahá'ís, one older than the others, who had been students at Beirut and who were now being sent by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Stuttgart to contact the believers. We travelled together by ship and had a beautiful trip along the Adriatic by the Dalmatian coast, with its sunny little hamlets and islands, to Trieste.

So all Shoghi Effendi's friends had gone and he was left behind. But he was happy in his

work. He was busy translating into Persian the incoming mail written in French and English, and translating the Tablets revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in reply to His petitioners. I corresponded with Shoghi Effendi now and then; we have all his beautiful letters.

After I arrived in Germany, I received this letter from him, written on 9 December 1919: 'For a long time have I awaited your letters as I was in the dark as to your whereabouts. But now that your father has come for a few days from Damascus, I secured your address and am sending you herein some news of the Holy Land.

'The Beloved is in the best of health and so are the friends and pilgrims. Your dear and devoted father is as ever warm-hearted, loving, rosy-cheeked and in full bloom. Your brother ['Abdu'l-Raḥím Yazdí] is studying at the S.P.C. [Syrian Protestant College] and all runs smoothly. I was told last night that he is growing wonderfully in height and his studies above par.

'As to myself, the same work and the same room.

'So please write me and forget me not as I do not and cannot forget the dear Sheikh.

'Yours affectionately, Shoghi.'

Eight days later he wrote that fifty pilgrims had arrived from many parts of the world. He enclosed a Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá commending me to the believers in Germany and said, 'I trust you have received my letter to you dated December 8 which I sent to the Techniche Hoschule and in which I enclosed some diary letters of mine which I thought might interest you.'

The time came when Shoghi Effendi, too, had to leave the Holy Land. 'Abdu'l-Bahá wanted him to continue his studies, but his health had broken. The Master sent him to a sanatorium on the outskirts of Paris, there to rest, undergo treatment and recuperate. He was commanded not to open a book while he was there. I received a postcard from him, written on 8 May 1920, describing his condition, giving me news of my father, and saying, 'Be sure dear friend that your place in my heart is ever reserved and warm! I wish, when recovered, I could come to see you. But I am afraid this is not possible ... The Master is in splendid health. Fourteen American pilgrims have arrived. The Holy Land is astir!'

On 28 June 1920 he wrote to say that he had almost recovered and was awaiting instructions from the Master concerning whether he would resume his work in Haifa or go to England for further study. He expressed his impatience to 'plunge again' into 'valuable, profitable work'.

Shoghi Effendi then proceeded to England. He was happy with the Bahái's there. He saw Dr. John Esslemont, whom he had met the previous winter in Haifa, and they struck up a friendship. Shoghi Effendi used to visit his private sanatorium in Bournemouth; they had meals together, and they enjoyed talking. Then Shoghi Effendi went to Oxford to resume his studies. He wrote to me from Balliol College on 5 October 1920 saying that although 'immersed heart and soul' in preparations for entrance at Balliol College and 'fearfully anxious and occupied' he was glad to have received my letter. I was experiencing financial difficulties at the time and he expressed deep sympathy although he had already taken measures to assist. His problems were of a different order, he said: 'My field of study is so *vast*, I have to acquire, master and digest so many facts, courses and books—all essential, all indispensable to my future career in the Cause. The very extent of this immense field is enough to discourage, excite and overwhelm such a young and inexperienced beginner as myself.' He wrote of his need to acquire a knowledge of economics, social conditions, the histories and principles of the great religions, and 'for translation purposes' a sound and literary ability in English. 'Prayer, faith, perseverance and effort will alone do it,' he concluded.

On my way to the United States from Germany in the Fall of 1920, at the invitation of Shoghi Effendi, I spent a couple of nights with him in his rooms at Oxford. He took me through the university, showed me the sights and unburdened his soul. In this situation, again, we were two young men, one of holy lineage and the other from a family that had long been in the service of the Faith, and we talked about the future of the Cause, and our part in it, and the opportunities that lay ahead.

After my visit, I received a card from Shoghi Effendi dated 6 November 1920 expressing concern about my financial circumstances and, a few days later, shortly before I sailed for America, there came from his hand further evidence of his tender heart, loving-kindness and

generosity. At a time when his own problems were almost overwhelming, Shoghi Effendi sent me five English pounds with the admonition, 'For heaven's sake think not of sending me back anything. I flatly refuse and decline. Let your mind be at rest.' The note was dated 10 November.

A year later, in Berkeley, California news of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá reached me. It is strange, but we had never considered that 'Abdu'l-Bahá would die. Though He Himself alluded to His passing, our minds had not, could not have, accepted the responsibility. Now, I wrote to my father—I did not want to bother Shoghi Effendi—and I pledged my loyalty to the beloved young Guardian. Shoghi Effendi answered anyway.

The unexpected news of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá almost broke Shoghi Effendi's spirit. Coming suddenly, without warning, it was too much to bear. Committing to the hands of the Greatest Holy Leaf the affairs of the Faith, he withdrew to recover from the shock and regain his strength. His answer to my letter to my father, which he wrote on 23 January 1922, gives a glimpse of how he felt at the time:

'My dearest brother:—

'The touching letter you have written to your dear father has been such a relief and comfort to me and to those who have perused it. In the midst of our sorrows, one ray of hope gives us the solace and peace that the world can not give—namely His sure and repeated promise that He will send souls that shall gloriously promote His Cause after Him. My dear brother! The pure faith, the ardour and the services of your father, I am sure, as well as your own, will make of you an efficient and energetic servant in His Cause and I assure you of my prayers at His hallowed Shrine, that whatever you do, whatever you acquire may in the near future be wholly and directly put to the service of His Cause.

'I am too overwhelmed to write more fully but I assure you of my prayers for you, my attachment to you and my fervent hope that we shall both co-operate to the very last, in our servitude at His Holy Threshold.

'The bereaved Holy Leaves remember you with tenderness and hope and wish you a bright future wherever you may be.

'Yours in His Love and Service, Shoghi.'

An envelope was enclosed on which he had written, 'Rose petals that have been laid upon His Sacred Threshold.'

When I think of our brilliant, devoted, purposeful Guardian and his unbelievable accomplishment through his own efforts, unaided except at the end, I think of the majestic legacy he left us. Yet my mind keeps going back to that lively, handsome, happy young man who looked ahead so eagerly to the future.

# 3. YÚSUF 'ABDU'L-WÁḤID OTOLUWA: AN APPRECIATION

K. H. PAYMÁN

Yúsuf Otoluwa was of the Gorontalo people of North Sulawesi (Celebes), Indonesia. In about 1912 he began attending primary school in Kwanding in the Gorontala region, and he continued his formal education in the Hollands Inlandse School, an institution established during the Dutch colonial era for indigenous Indonesians.

During his childhood Yúsuf often heard, particularly from his mother's parents, that the Imám Mihdí would arise at the end of the age, and his father often admonished him to pursue this matter. After graduating from the Hollands Inlandse School, Yúsuf was accepted to continue his schooling at the Idaltevreeden School in Batavia (now Djakarta), then capital of the Netherlands East Indies, on the island of Java. There he came across two books published in Amsterdam which mentioned the Bahá'í Faith, at least one of which he kept till the end of his life. He investigated as well many populist movements within Islám that were active in Batavia at that time. But always in the back of his mind during these years there remained his father's admonition to look into the matter of the coming of the Imám Mihdí.

In 1927, Yúsuf returned to Gorontalo. For the next thirty years he occupied various posts as a teacher on the island of Sulawesi, and was active in certain Islamic movements. Then in 1956, while occupying a post within the Department of Religion in Makassar (now called Ujung Pandang), he came across a small book entitled *The Bahá'í Community*, reminding him once again of the Bahá'í Faith. In 1957, Yúsuf was appointed head of the Department of Religion for the municipality of Makassar in South Sulawesi. As one of the 'Ulamá in the world's largest nominally Muslim country, his mastery of Arabic and knowledge of the Qur'án had gained him wide respect. But despite objections from his superiors, he began to investigate the Bahá'í Faith in depth. He learned that discussions about the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh were held each Friday and Saturday evening at the homes of two Bahá'í pioneers in Makassar. In March 1958, he declared his belief in the Bahá'í Faith.

Yúsuf made a valuable contribution to the early stages of the development of the administrative order in Indonesia. The administrative institutions of the Bahá'í Faith were banned in 1962 by the late President Sukarno. A similar ban was imposed at the same time on many internationally-affiliated organizations. When the new regime came to power, the ban on other groups and organizations was rescinded but, despite many appeals to the authorities, the ban on the organized activities of the Bahá'í Faith remained in force.

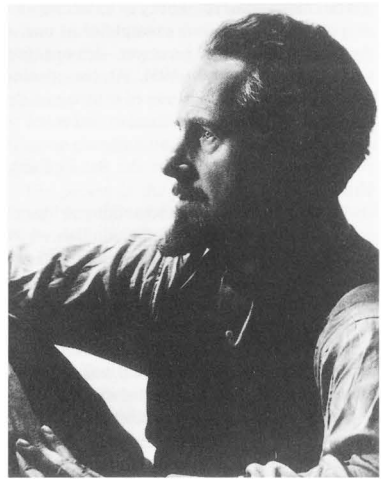
Despite the ban against the Faith, Yúsuf took advantage of his official position and became known for his well-reasoned defence of the Bahá'í Faith. He was also a patient and careful teacher of the Cause, never pressing his spiritual pupils to declare their faith prematurely. In 1964 he obtained copies in Arabic of Bahá'u'lláh's *Hidden Words* and the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, and studied them assiduously. His study classes became a regular feature of life in the Makassar Bahá'í community until Yúsuf Otoluwa's death in 1978, and helped bring the Bahá'í friends there to a depth of understanding that has enabled them to remain staunch in the face of numerous adversities.

# 4. MARK TOBEY AND THE 'TWO POWERS'*

JULIE OEMING BADIEE

MARK TOBEY is best known to the twentieth century as a painter of great originality who occupies a special place in modern art. Born in 1890 in Centerville, Wisconsin, Tobey's career spanned the period in which American art moved from a rather timid provinciality to a position of world dominance. Tobey began his career as a commercial artist in New York about 1912, but he preferred to live and work in Europe or in the American Northwest. During the 1930s Tobey was a visiting artist at Dartington Hall, a progressive school for the arts in Devonshire, England; he also taught at the Cornish School in Seattle. Tobey is often acknowledged as the foremost painter of the 'Northwest School,' a group including Morris Graves and Kenneth Callahan, centered around Seattle that explored mystic themes and was particularly interested in uniting Eastern and Western modes of expression.[1] Tobey is best known for his 'white writing', an energetic derivation of the techniques of Eastern calligraphy, including Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese forms. Critical events in the development of Tobey's style include his acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith about 1918 and a stay in a Zen monastery in Japan in 1934. Tobey's career reached a high point in Europe in 1958 when he was awarded First Place at the Venice Biennale, the first American painter since Whistler to win such an award. He was also invited to give a retrospective of his work at the Musée des arts décoratifs at the Louvre, an honor never before given a living American artist.[2]

Tobey was recognized and appreciated in Europe to a greater degree than he was in the United States. His delicate, small-sized paintings with their sometimes overt religious imagery ran against the tide of the huge heroic murals of the Abstract Expressionists that dominated the New York School of Abstract



*Mark Tobey, circa 1935.*

Expressionists in the 1950s. In 1962, in a belated recognition of his importance, Tobey was given a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and in 1974 his paintings were the subject of a large show at the National Collection of Fine Arts at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. After his death in 1976 Tobey's paintings continued to be recognized as in a recent exhibit of his 'City Paintings' in the East Wing of the National Gallery of Art in 1984 and a growing number of publications analyzing his art.[3]

Although Tobey's contribution to modern art is now widely recognized, and his paintings are routinely included in surveys of the great masters of the twentieth century, Tobey had a second life commitment beyond that of art, one

* Reprinted by permission from *World Order*, 20, nos. 3 and 4 (Spring/Summer 1986), 45–64.

[1] Martha Kingsbury, *Northwest Traditions* (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1978) 47–61.

[2] *Mark Tobey: Retrospective* (Paris: Musée des arts décoratifs, 1961).

[3] William Seitz, *Mark Tobey* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1962); *Tobey's 80: A Retrospective* (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1971); *A Tribute to Mark Tobey* (Washington D.C.: National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, 1974); and Eliza Rathbone, *Mark Tobey: City Paintings* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1984).

which was of equal importance to him. For fifty-eight years his association with the Bahá'í Faith sustained and nourished his spirit. In effect, the main achievement of Tobey's life was to find a way to express what he called 'the two powers'—'Bahá'í and Art.'[1]

The difficulties of Tobey's balancing his religion and his art were exemplified at one of the major triumphs of his career—his one-man show at the Louvre in 1961. At the opening of the show, Tobey, instead of exulting at the concrete evidence of his success, lamented to Marion Hofman, a long-time friend, his wish that he had done more for the Bahá'í Faith. Hofman later wrote:

> I was privileged to see something of Mark's humility and dedication to Bahá'u'lláh, when, on the second day of the exhibition, as I was sitting alone to read his catalogue, he came and sat with me. Here, in his hour of triumph in the world, with a great enlargement of his name in his own handwriting surmounting the entrance from the rue de Rivoli, he spoke wistfully of his life as an artist in comparison with a life of direct and active service in the Faith.[2]

On occasion Tobey even considered giving up his art and working full-time in Bahá'í activities. In 1938, when he had returned to the United States after ten years in Europe, Tobey wrote to two Bahá'í friends from Oregon, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bishop:

> It was a hard time spiritually for me. . . . I find myself remiss more than I want to say . . . I now see art—or anything like it as a deterrent—and find I should have gone another route long ago! This next year will probably decide many things. I shall make one more attempt to put the Kingdom before all else—if I can't, well. . . . there's been plenty said on that![3]

The same theme was repeated much later in an article written for *Puget Soundings*, a local publication in the Seattle area:

> Mark Tobey is a member of Bahá'í faith. In discussing this facet of life with him I found that he had strong religious conviction. One day while walking together he told me that he was thinking about quitting painting for awhile and spending his time in preaching. From time to time Tobey would invite me to a Bahá'í meeting, where sometimes he would be speaking.[4]

Friends such as Marzieh Gail, an author, historian, and poet and daughter of Ali-Kuli Khan, Persian Consul in the United States during the early years of this century, often heard Tobey agonize over balancing his work as an artist and as a Bahá'í. When she visited Tobey in Basel, Switzerland, during the last decade of his life, she noted that 'He spoke of his Bahá'í work, and said that he had his usual problem: how much time to allot to the Faith, how much to his art.'[5]

As Tobey became an internationally famous artist, he had many opportunities to proclaim the Bahá'í Faith. He willingly granted extensive interviews on the influence of the Bahá'í principles and beliefs in his art. Even the shortest analyses of Tobey's work contain references to the Bahá'í Faith and how its universal outlook affected every aspect of Tobey's style. Occasionally an inattentive writer might identify Tobey as a 'Zen artist,' but most critics who wrote about him realized the influence of the Bahá'í Faith in his work.

However, Tobey was not satisfied just to proclaim the Bahá'í Faith in the world of art critics and gallery goers. For fifty-eight years, he also contributed his services to the Bahá'í Faith in the realms of teaching, administration, and pioneering, an activity that included changing his residence to serve the Faith. The strength of Tobey's commitment has been illuminated by the recent discovery of a series of remarkable letters Tobey kept among his papers, which were found in his Seattle studio after his death. These documents, owned by the Seattle Museum of Art and made available in the micro-

[1] *Mark Tobey: Paintings from the collection of Joyce and Arthur Dahl*, exhibition catalog (Stanford: Stanford U, 1967) 15.

[2] Marion Hofman, 'Recollections,' in Arthur Dahl et al., *Mark Tobey: Art and Belief* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1984) 56.

[3] Mark Tobey, letter to Helen and Charles Bishop, 8 September 1938, Papers of Mrs. Charles Bishop, Portland, Oregon, quoted in Frederick Hoffman, 'Mark Tobey: Toward a Psychology of Consciousness,' diss., U of California at Los Angeles, 1977, 137. 'The Kingdom' is a poetic reference to the Bahá'í Faith.

[4] James Washington, Jr., 'Mark Tobey,' *Puget Soundings*, n.d., Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Microfilm reel 3209.

Inasmuch as the Bahá'í Faith has no clergy, 'preaching' is a misnomer on the part of the article's author for Tobey wished to spend time teaching the Faith as an unpaid volunteer.

[5] Marzieh Gail, 'The Days with Mark Tobey,' *World Order* 11.3 (Spring 1977): 26.

film collection of the Archives of American Art, appear in print here for the first time.[1]

Spanning the years from 1919 to 1954, the letters show Tobey to have been in continuous touch with the World Center of the Bahá'í Faith in Haifa, Israel. Particularly moving are letters between Shoghi Effendi, then newly appointed leader of the Bahá'í Faith and authorized interpreter of the Bahá'í teachings, and the artist, who was living in England and serving as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Great Britain, the national governing body of the Bahá'ís in that country. The letters appear here in chronological order with annotation and commentary. They show how Tobey used his talents throughout his life to serve one of those 'two powers' that meant so much to him—the Bahá'í Faith.

**The Early Years**

Tobey's contact with the Bahá'í Faith began in 1918 when he was introduced to Juliet Thompson at a dinner party in New York City. Thompson was an artist and a member of the small Bahá'í community active in New York at that time. Tobey already had a strong interest in religion; at one time in his youth he considered going into the ministry.[2] Just before his encounter with Thompson he had already had a decisive spiritual experience while returning home from a party at the studio of the famous painter Marcel Duchamp in which the importance of art had been discussed. Tobey recalled walking under a street lamp and wondering if ever there could be something greater than art:

> I remember one night, after an evening party in Marcel Duchamp's studio, while waiting for an elevated train, I kept wondering if by chance there might be something else greater than art. This idea remained with me for several days—during which I thought considerably about the expression 'the love of God.' What it is, what it could mean to one like myself. This led to a prayer to know about this profound state.[3]

Shortly thereafter, Tobey met Thompson and offered to walk her home. When she asked him to pose for her, he agreed and recounted the following experience:

> Upon a wall near where I was seated there was a photograph of a man with a white beard, wearing a white turban—a remarkable face, but I had no curiosity about him. During this period of posing, I had a very strange and powerful dream which concerned this person in the photograph, or seemed to. When I told Miss Thompson about the dream she grew quite excited but didn't say anything.[4]

The person in the photograph was 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had been appointed by Bahá'u'lláh as the interpreter of the Bahá'í writings and as the leader of the Bahá'í community. Six years before, in 1912, during His visit to the United States, He spoke about the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith at many churches and societies in New York. His visit had been extensively reported in newspapers across the United States, and He had attracted many new adherents to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Some time later, Thompson invited Tobey to come to Green Acre, a Bahá'í school in Eliot, Maine. A religious and intellectual retreat, Green Acre had been founded by Sarah Farmer, daughter of the prominent New England Transcendentalists, Moses and Hannah Farmer. After becoming a Bahá'í in 1899, Sarah Farmer had turned Green Acre into a Bahá'í school. Here Tobey was introduced to the Bahá'í teachings and studied them in some detail. He enthusiastically recounted his contact with the Bahá'ís there, where he found

> a small group of Bahá'ís speaking of a new religion, claiming that the Day of Judgement [sic] was upon us and all the prophesies [sic] were now fulfilled. Also I found out that Miss Thompson was a Bahá'í and had met the man in the photograph while he was in New York in 1912. Gradually it dawned upon me that this little group of people with their prayers, their smiling faces, and their unbounded enthusiasm regarding this new religion really had a new spirit. Anyway, something I couldn't put exactly into words,

[1] The Mark Tobey Papers, owned by the Seattle Museum of Art, filmed by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Microfilm reels 3200–3210. I would like to thank the Archives of American Art for making this material available to me.

[2] Seitz, *Mark Tobey* 89.

[3] Mark Tobey, interview, Arthur Dahl, Jr., quoted in Edward Rulief Kelley, 'Mark Tobey and the Bahá'í Faith: New Perspectives on the Artist and His Paintings,' diss., U of Texas at Austin, 1983, 37.

[4] Tobey, interview, Arthur Dahl, Jr., quoted in Kelley 37.

but convinced me that what they believed was the truth.[1]

When Tobey returned from Green Acre to New York in 1918, he joined a study group that included several active Bahá'ís who later held important positions in the growing North American Bahá'í community. The membership of this group is preserved in a letter from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in the earliest dated correspondence to be found in Tobey's papers.

December 9, 1920

Mr. Horace Holley, Doris Holley, Mr. A. W. Randall, Lillian L. Randall, Isobel F. Chamberlain, Mr. Mark Tobey, Marjorie Morten and Mountfort Mills, unto them be the Glory of God, the Most Glorious.[2]

He is God

O ye friends of 'Abdu'l-Bahá!

The supplication which you have offered to the Kingdom of Abhá was in reality a flame which had arisen from enkindled hearts, because the hearts have been in the utmost purity and deeply mindful of the Kingdom, supplicating and imploring at the Supreme Threshold.

In brief, it was a touching melody and a supplication in the utmost sincerity. Rest ye assured that it will bring forth great fruits and thus invisible confirmations will reach ye.

Unto ye be the Glory of Abhá!

(signed) 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás

Dec. 9, 1920, Haifa

c/o Mr. Roy Wilhelm

Translated by Azizullah S. Bahadur, Mt. Carmel, Palestine[3]

Tobey's papers also contain a letter from 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to him alone. This letter dates from 1919, and it could have been sent in answer to Tobey's written profession of Faith, a practice common among new believers during 'Abdu'l-Bahá's lifetime. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's reference to his prayer for forgiveness of Tobey's father and brother indicates that there may have been an uneasy relationship between Tobey and those members of his family:

To his honor, Mr. Mark Tobey c/o his honor Mr. W. Randall, upon him be Bahá'u'lláh'il-Abhá.

HE IS GOD

O thou son of the Kingdom!

The last letter which thou hath written has arrived but the previous letter with the poems hath not been received. Nevertheless thy spiritual sentiments have reached the Holy Land. Rest thou assured. I hope that this year at Green Acre a remarkable life and stir may be witnessed and the friends of God may be so stirred and moved that Green Acre may be animated, the souls may turn toward God and may become attracted by the fragrances of God, that that region may be enlightened with the light of the love of God, the melody of praise and thanksgiving may reach the Supreme Concourse and 'Abdu'l-Bahá may be gladdened in this Holy Land from the effect of that melody.[4]

From the bounties of God, I supplicate that thy father and brother may be forgiven, may receive a share from His generosity and may be immersed in the ocean of pardon and forgiveness.

Upon thee be Bahá'il-Abhá.

Translated by Shoghie Rabbani,

Haifa, Palestine;

July 16th, 1919[5]

In 1921, after the death of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the leadership of the Bahá'í Faith passed to His grandson, Shoghi Effendi, the same young man who had translated 'Abdu'l-Bahá's letter to Tobey. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had appointed Shoghi Effendi Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and His successor as leader of the Bahá'í community.

[1] Tobey, interview, Arthur Dahl, Jr., quoted in Kelley 38–39.

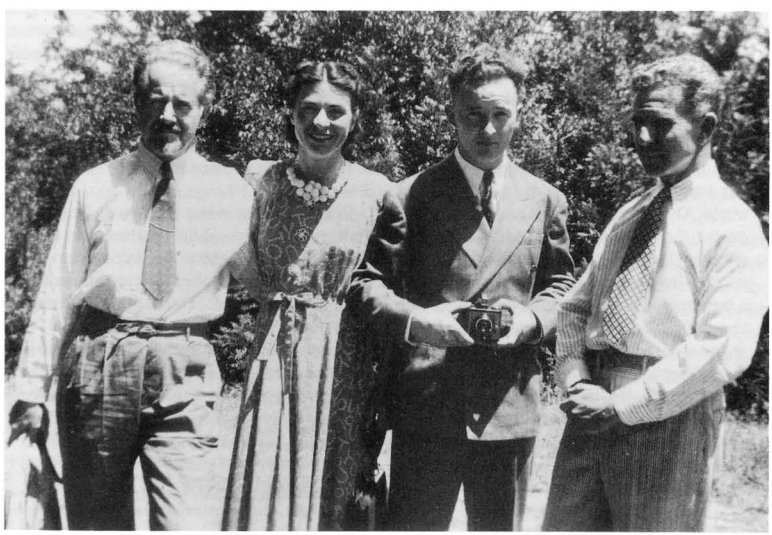
[2] Horace Holley was later to be Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada and then was elevated to the rank of Hand of the Cause of God, the highest position attainable to a Bahá'í. His wife, Doris, was to be a future pioneer to Ireland. Mountfort Mills was later the first Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada and the formulator of the Trust and By-Laws of that institution. Marjorie Morten was a friend of Juliet Thompson and a patron of the Lebanese poet Khalil Gibran. She also lived for a time in Akka and was part of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's household. A. W. Randall, Lillian Randall, and Isobel Chamberlain later moved to California where they became part of the Bahá'í community on the West Coast.

[3] Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 3205. The 'supplication' is a reference to the letter written by the group to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. According to the Bahá'í writings, the 'Kingdom of Abhá' is the spiritual world. The 'Supreme Threshold' refers to Bahá'u'lláh or God and alludes to the practice of praying at the shrines of the prophets or saints.

[4] According to the Bahá'í writings, the 'Supreme Concourse' is the company of holy souls of the spiritual world.

[5] Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 3205. 'Bahá'u'lláh'il-Abhá' means the Glory of God, the Most Glorious. 'Bahá-il-Abhá' means the Glory of the Most Glorious.

*Mark Tobey with Juliet Thompson (centre) and Frances Fales (right) in the United States in the 1920s.*



*Mark Tobey at Geyserville Summer School in California in 1943 with Marion Holley (Hofman), and Frederick Laws and Charles Bishop seen on the right.*

During this period of transition Tobey made his first pilgrimage to Haifa. In 1925, while living in France, he and some friends took a Mediterranean cruise to Barcelona, Greece, Constantinople, Beirut, and Haifa. The artist remained in Haifa for his first glimpse of Mount Carmel, the Bahá'í Shrines in Haifa, and the ancient city of 'Akká. In a lengthy description Tobey wrote about the effect this visit had upon him:

> Acca, my destination, looked like a shadowy spur of land extending into the sea. Eventually we drove down through the huge gate of entrance into Acca and went to visit the home of the Master ['Abdu'l-Bahá]. There I was welcomed by an aged, bearded servitor of Bahá'u'lláh.... The house appeared devoid of furnishings. The light through the high narrow horizontal windows of colored glass decorated the walls opposite with many beautiful colors. In an old chest were many small lanterns, a symbol of journeying, of search in the darkness, for 'When the dawn breaks, the lamps of journeying and wayfaring are put out.' How beautiful are these words, the promise fulfilled at the end of the long night, the long, long journey. At last, the radiance coming to spread its beauty everywhere—everywhere and for everyone. The great light given and the gift of the light of life ... The Ancient Beauty, He called himself [Bahá'u'lláh]. The light to man, coming from age to age to endure untold affliction, always through a life of sorrow and misunderstandings, calling to man until His last breath released Him from this thorny world. Always over and over has He appeared on the threshold of the world, each time a different face but the same beauty, ancient yet ever-living, ever appearing each time with a message of hope—the day will come. The knowledge of God and His ways, the coming together of the sons of man, the great oneness, to be discovered existing always with us but unrecognized. He, the promise of all ages, at last He appears and from a prison telling us that the time is fulfilled. 'Mt. Carmel shall blossom like a rose' ... These thoughts all associated with my visit to Acca.[1]

Years later, in a newspaper article about his 1968 show at the Hanover Gallery in London, Tobey again recalled that first magical visit to the Bahá'í holy places: 'The beginning of everything is very special. I remember, we went in an old surrey along those miles of sand to Acre, it was wonderful. You entered Acre, and it was just a walled city.'[2]

Tobey's first visit to the Holy Land had a profound effect upon him and inspired his art for the next forty years. He began to include specifically Bahá'í subjects in his art; from then on Tobey's 'two powers' united to determine the course of his creative endeavors. In 1931 when he moved to Devonshire, England, he began the pattern he would follow for the rest of his life: a double commitment to the muse of art and to an active participation in the founding of the new world order promised in the writings of the Bahá'í Faith.

**Correspondence with Shoghi Effendi**

In 1932 Tobey entered into what would become a continuous correspondence with Shoghi Effendi. The two exchanged letters until the mid-1950s with Shoghi Effendi consistently exhorting Tobey to teach the Bahá'í Faith in whichever country he might be residing. The form of these letters was always the same—a long letter written by a secretary on Shoghi Effendi's behalf with a shorter personal note penned by Shoghi Effendi himself at the bottom of the letter. In some cases the note extended up into the margins. Until 1949 all of these letters were handwritten.[3] Considering the volume of Shoghi Effendi's correspondence and the magnitude of his other duties, these personal notes must have been especially precious to Tobey.

It was while he was a resident at Dartington Hall, a progressive school for the arts in Devonshire, England, where he lived from 1931 through 1938, that Tobey received his first letter from Shoghi Effendi. Dartington Hall was an important center for the arts that had been founded by Mrs. Dorothy Elmhirst and her husband, Leonard. The school became a haven

[1] *Mark Tobey: Paintings* 13. Bahá'u'lláh is buried near 'Akká; the Báb, the Prophet-Forerunner of the Bahá'í Faith, is buried in a mausoleum on Mount Carmel. The Shrines of both are objects of pilgrimage for Bahá'ís.

[2] Undated newspaper article, Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Microfilm reel 3209.

[3] This letter and all subsequent letters from Shoghi Effendi are transcribed from originals in the Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 3201.

where Tobey could meet kindred souls who shared his interest in uniting East and West; visitors to the school included such intellectuals as the English writer Aldous Huxley and two individuals who would later win the Nobel Prize for literature—the American writer Pearl Buck and the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore. During his stay at Dartington Hall, Tobey became extremely active in teaching the Bahá'í Faith in the Devonshire area. In a 1932 letter Shoghi Effendi encouraged Tobey in his teaching efforts, especially those having to do with Mrs. Elmhirst, an important patron of Tobey's:

Persian Colony
Haifa, Palestine
5.10.32

Dear Mr. Tobey:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your short but very encouraging letter dated September 14th, 1932. He sincerely hopes that wherever you happen to be you will strive to spread the message of love, spirituality and human brotherhood brought to the world by Bahá'u'lláh, for after all this is the only work which is worthwhile and of an abiding effect.

While visiting the Shrines, the Guardian will think of you as well as of Mrs. Elmhirst and ask for both of you divine guidance and help.[1] He trusts that through the reading of the literature you have presented to her she will become acquainted with the spirit and teachings of the Cause and find therein the realization of all her highest hopes and ideals.

In closing may I express Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings and best wishes for the progress of your work in serving the Cause.

Yours ever sincerely,
Ruhi Afnan

Dear co-worker:

I wish to add a few words in person in order to assure you of my prayers for your success in the efforts you are exerting for the spread of the knowledge of our beloved Faith. I appreciate the opportunities you have and the facilities you enjoy, and I pray that you may be guided to utilize them to the fullest possible extent, and thereby enhance the prestige of the Cause and extend its scope in these regions.

Your true brother
Shoghi

During his second year at Dartington Hall Tobey wrote to Shoghi Effendi requesting a pilgrimage to the Bahá'í Shrines in Haifa and 'Akká. The following letter, found among his private papers, was Shoghi Effendi's reply:

Persian Colony
Haifa March 15th, 1933

Dear Bahá'í Friend:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to extend to you his hearty welcome to visit him in Haifa.

It is a great privilege for you to come to the Holy Land and you will certainly enjoy this trip.

The Guardian was pleased to hear that through the endeavours of the Bahá'ís, the Cause is rapidly spreading in Devon. He will be indeed delighted to hear these glad-tidings from you, during your stay at Haifa. He prays for all the dear Friends, and asks Bahá'u'lláh to assist and guide them to fulfill their aim and establish the Faith in their country.

Shoghi Effendi hopes that this letter will reach you in time so as to enable you to make the necessary arrangements for your trip.

With the assurance of [ ] prayers,
Your Bahá'í sister,
Mehranguise Rabbani

With my best wishes for your welfare and spiritual development,

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Tobey's second visit to Haifa cemented his relationship with the young leader of the Bahá'í Faith. He reveled in the special atmosphere at Haifa and wrote about this visit:

Sunday the Guardian had lunch with us. His presence was very powerful. I made him laugh, which seemed to please him. Of course in Haifa many things happen and yet all seems to melt in time which is no time. You are there—that's enough. Just to sit down in a chair seems as important as going to town. You are released from yourself.[2]

In 1934 Tobey was back at Dartington Hall, ready to prepare for another important journey. Through the invitation of the Elmhirsts, Tobey was to accompany the English potter Bernard Leach on a trip to the Orient. Leach, a friend

[1] The Bahá'ís frequently refer to Shoghi Effendi as 'the Guardian.'

[2] Tobey, interview, Arthur Dahl, Jr., quoted in Kelley 47.

from Dartington Hall, was the perfect traveling companion for such a trip; he had been born in Hong Kong and was fascinated with developing art forms that would speak of the unity of East and West. Tobey had become enamored of Chinese calligraphy and art through his friendship with Teng Kuie, a Chinese student he had met in Seattle. Leach and Tobey planned to visit Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Japan. Upon learning of this opportunity, Tobey must immediately have written Shoghi Effendi, who replied:

March 14th, 1934

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

It was such a pleasure for the Guardian to receive your welcome letter and to learn of your projected trip to China. He hopes that your stay in that country will be an opportunity for you to do something for the Cause. In Shanghai we have a small group of believers, among them Mr. Ouskouli, originally a Persian, but who has been living since long in China. He is an old and devoted servant of the Cause. You will also find there a young and enthusiastic Chinese believer by the name of Dr. Tsao who, in addition to his many intellectual gifts, is a wonderful soul, so active and so restless. He has already done some valuable translations into Chinese, among them the 'Paris Talks' of the Master and the 'Some Answered Questions.'[1] Dr. Ouskouli's address is as follows: P.O. Box 551, Shanghai, China. I am sure he will be delighted to introduce you to Dr. Tsao, who, you may be glad to know, is fully conversant with the English language.

In closing please accept Shoghi Effendi's best wishes, and be assured of his prayers for your spiritual advancement and physical welfare,

Yours in His Service
H. Rabbani

May the Beloved bless your efforts, guide your steps and enable you to promote effectively the best interests of His Faith.

Your true brother.
Shoghi

Tobey's papers do not contain evidence of teaching trips or indicate that he contacted the Bahá'ís of Shanghai, but his firm adherence to the Bahá'í Faith had an important impact on his traveling companion. In his autobiography *Beyond East and West*, Leach wrote of how his friendship with Tobey changed his life:

> Mark Tobey was the profoundest influence in my life. It was through him I became a Bahá'í.
>
> I was first introduced to him at Dartington Hall in Devonshire, in 1932. He was the resident artist; I came as a potter. There was an immediate exchange between us. He talked to me about the Bahá'í Faith, sharing with me his books. I was most moved by Nabil's narrative and its immediacy, but it took eight years for me to reach acceptance.[2]

Although Leach reports that the idea of the oneness of all religions was at first too difficult for him to grasp, Tobey's patient teaching sowed the seed which allowed Leach's faith to flower into a mature understanding of the new religion. Destined to become one of the most important potters of the twentieth century, Leach was only one of many who were profoundly influenced by Tobey's teaching.

After the journey with Leach to Hong Kong and Shanghai, Tobey traveled to Japan where he spent a month in a Zen monastery in Kyoto. This experience was to have important implications for the development of his later work, most particularly in his deepened understanding of Oriental calligraphy and his more profound grasp of the macrocosms and microcosms of Nature.

Tobey must have been eager to share his new experiences with Shoghi Effendi because he arranged for two scrolls of Chinese calligraphy to be sent to Haifa. A secretary replied on Shoghi Effendi's behalf:

January 14th, 1935

Dear Mr. Tobey:

I am directed by Shoghi Effendi to inform you of the receipt of your deeply-appreciated message of the 17th of December, and also

[1] *Paris Talks* is a collection of talks given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Paris in 1911 and 1912 (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1972). *Some Answered Questions* is a collection of answers to eighty-four questions put to 'Abdu'l-Bahá at table during 1904, 1905, and 1906 (collected and trans. Laura Clifford Barney [Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1981]).

[2] Bernard Leach, 'Mark, dear Mark,' *World Order* 11.3 (Spring 1977): 28. See also Bernard Leach, *Beyond East and West: Memoirs, Portraits, Essays* (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1978) 164–65. Nabil's Narrative is *The Dawn-Breakers*, a detailed and poetic account of the early history of the Bahá'í Faith, by Muḥammad-i-Zarandí, surnamed Nabíl, trans. and ed. by Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1932).

to thank you for the two Chinese scrolls which you had kindly sent to him some time ago. He has himself placed them in the hall of the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, and needless to say they have much beautified the place, and have become an object of attraction and interest to all the visitors.

The Guardian views with great favor your plan to return to England, as the friends there stand in dire need of young and capable believers who can lend effective assistance to their work for the Cause, in both the teaching and administrative fields of service. Your presence among them, [it is] hoped will, as in the past, give them an added stimulus and wider vision to carry on the arduous task which they have set themselves to achieve.

Shoghi Effendi is continually praying at the Holy Shrines for your guidance and assistance, and trusts that as a result you will be enabled to attain the goal of your heart's desire.

With loving greetings and best wishes,
Yours in His Service,
H. Rabbani

May the Almighty keep and bless you, sustain your efforts, and enable you to extend the scope of your valued, international activities,
Your true brother,
Shoghi

Tobey's attraction to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith led him to visit Haifa a second time, probably in 1935. His fellow pilgrims were Marzieh Carpenter (later Gail) and her husband Howard, Mountfort Mills, and Marjory Morten. Marzieh Carpenter described Tobey as 'slender and timid,' a person who made her 'think of a skittish deer that would pause to nibble a leaf from the Guardian's hand, before vanishing into the forest.'[1] During this stay in Haifa Shoghi Effendi told Tobey that 'art must inspire. Personal satisfaction is not enough.'[2] Tobey repeated in several later interviews that Shoghi Effendi had 'freed art,' that there was no such thing yet as Bahá'í art, because the Bahá'í civilization had not yet come into being.[3] For Tobey, this insight permitted him to continue developing his personal style, while still including Bahá'í themes in his work.

[1] Gail 12.
[2] Shoghi Effendi, quoted in Gail 13.
[3] *Mark Tobey: Paintings* 15.

Tobey returned to England in 1935 where he continued as a resident artist at Dartington Hall. He also continued his Bahá'í activities and was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Great Britain. While not particularly gifted in the attributes required for administration, Tobey was constantly involved in teaching activities. As the following letter shows, his teaching efforts were strongly encouraged by Shoghi Effendi:

December 7th, 1935

Dear Mr. Tobey,

Shoghi Effendi is very happy to receive your letter of November 27th and to learn that you are back again in England after such a long absence. Your return has, no doubt, deeply rejoiced the friends who are in need of your assistance, and will, it is hoped, impart to them a fresh stimulus in their manifold duties and labors for the spread of the Cause throughout Great Britain.

The Guardian has been also pleased to receive your article on China, and has read it with sustained interest. He trusts that its publication in the next issue of the Biennial will serve to deepen the interest of the friends in teaching the Cause in the Far East, where the number of the believers is still quite negligible, and where we, therefore, need a group of young and capable teachers who would be able to settle in the country and to gradually open it to the Cause.[4]

With regard to Mr. Gordon Bottomley's statement on the 'Dawn-Breakers'; Shoghi Effendi is, indeed, gratified to note that this book has so much interested and impressed him.[5] He trusts that your first contact with this noted English poet will, through its encouraging results, stimulate you to keep it up, and even to make a few more attempts to deepen and confirm his interest in the Message.

With his renewed and loving greetings, and the assurance of his continued prayers on your behalf at the Holy Shrines,

Yours in His Service,
H. Rabbani

[4] 'The Biennial' is a series of volumes (now numbering eighteen) issued periodically and entitled *The Bahá'í World*. The volumes constitute an ongoing record of worldwide Bahá'í activities.
[5] See p. 768, n.2 for an explanation of *The Dawn-Breakers*.

*Mark Tobey at the All-American Intercontinental Conference in Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A., in April 1953 with (from left to right): Mrs. Samíhih Bananí, the Hand of the Cause of God Músa Banání, Mrs. Helen Bishop, the Hand of the Cause of God Tarázu'lláh Samandarí, Mrs. Marzieh Gail, and Mr. Charles Bishop.*

Dear and valued co-worker:

I am very pleased to receive your contribution to 'The Bahá'í World,' and wish to assure you in person of my appreciation and gratitude for the services you render. I would urge you to concentrate for a time your efforts on the work in London and help the friends to promote their teaching activities and consolidate the foundations of their institutions. I will especially pray on your behalf.

Shoghi.

Tobey's report on China was not published in the 1934–36 volume of *The Bahá'í World*, but his contributions to the teaching work were mentioned in the report on 1936 Bahá'í activities in the British Isles:

> In April, Mr. and Mrs. Bishop went to Devonshire. Lectures were given in Torquay at the Theosophical Society, before a large audience at the Practical Psychology Center; then at half a dozen friendly firesides the Faith was discussed with members of the Oxford Group, psychologists, Theosophists and Anglicans.... Mr. Mark Tobey had been ploughing four years for contacts at Dartington Hall, where he teaches painting. He presented Mrs. Bishop and her lecture before a goodly number in his studio. An American-Norwegian home was then offered for successive lectures with the result that before Mrs. Bishop's departure, the listeners volunteered to form a study class under Mrs. [sic] Tobey's instruction. Good news has just come that interest is sustained; sixteen are faithful through the summer holiday season, while the autumn is promising, indeed.[1]

It was also during this period that another artist at Dartington Hall became interested in the Bahá'í Faith. The South African painter, Reginald Turvey, a long-time friend of Bernard Leach, had arrived at Dartington Hall in 1932. It was at the school that Turvey met Tobey and learned of the Bahá'í Faith; after three years of study, Turvey had become a Bahá'í. Turvey's devotion to his new Faith manifested itself upon his return to South Africa and climaxed in the

[1] *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record, Volume VI, 1934–1936*, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1937) 37.

artist's 1956 pilgrimage to Haifa where Shoghi Effendi called him 'the father of the Bahá'ís of South Africa.'[1]

In the following years Tobey received a series of letters praising his teaching efforts and exhorting him to continue:

September 12, 1936

Dear Mr. Tobey,

Your welcome letter to the Guardian has been duly received together with the enclosed photographs, and has brought much cheer and encouragement to his heart. He is indeed rejoiced to learn of the growing success of your activities on behalf of the Cause, particularly in the teaching field where, he feels, you are called upon to render many distinguished services to the Faith. The group of students you have at last succeeded in establishing in your locality seems to be highly promising, and will, it is hoped, form the nucleus of a strong, united and active Assembly. He is confident that your labors will result in the formation of such an Assembly, provided you persevere in your efforts and strive by every means to maintain, nay deepen, the interest of these new-comers. Your idea to invite some London friends to address your group during next winter, he thinks is splendid, as this contact will inevitably serve to stimulate and widen the interest of the students, and will afford them a much-needed opportunity to widen the circle of their Bahá'í acquaintances.

The Guardian would greatly deplore your departure from England, specially now that your painstaking efforts are beginning to bear good fruitage. He would certainly urge you to make every possible effort to prolong your stay, and if possible to permanently settle in England where, he feels, you are admirably qualified to teach, and thus can help rendering effective the new teaching campaign so splendidly organized by the friends in Great Britain under the leadership of their N.S.A.

In closing let me assure you of the Guardian's prayers for the confirmation and guidance of Mrs. Elmhirst, and of Mr. and Mrs. Bennett, all of whom, he hopes, will be assisted in accomplishing notable services for the Cause in Devon.

Assuring you also of his good wishes and ardent prayers for your welfare, protection and guidance,

Yours in His Service
H. Rabbani

Dear and prized co-worker:

I certainly advise you to extend your beneficent stay, and intensify your meritorious activities and exemplary efforts in the West of England and to persevere until a properly-constituted Assembly is definitely established. Your collaboration in connection with the consolidation of the newly-formed Summer School is no doubt vital and of the utmost benefit to the Cause. My prayers will ever be with you, and I am always eager to hear from you, however heavy the load of correspondence which I carry. Affectionately, Shoghi

July 10, 1937

Dear Mr. Tobey,

Your letter of June 15th addressed to the Guardian was most welcome, and he was indeed happy to know that the work in Torquay is progressing steadily. He trusts that before long a deeply-rooted, effectively-functioning and united Assembly will be established in that center, and that from it the light of the Cause will radiate throughout the South-West of England. He would urge you to concentrate heart and soul on this objective and to never relax in your efforts until some substantial result has been accomplished. The task is surely difficult, and calls for the utmost perseverance, patience and courage. But your devotion to the Cause and your utter consecration to its service are surely forces wherewith you will be able to overcome every obstacle in your way, no matter how insuperable it may first appear.

Take courage, therefore, dear brother, and be confident that with Bahá'u'lláh on your side your task will be made easy, and the burden of your work considerably lightened. Whenever you feel depressed or discouraged over the results of your painstaking efforts do recall to mind His divine promise that though the forces of the entire world be arrayed against His Cause they would be powerless to resist its onward march and to prevent its eventual triumph.

The Faith is God's, and as such is bound

[1] Shoghi Effendi, quoted in Lowell Johnson, ed., *Reginald Turvey: Life and Art* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1986) p. 5.

to prevail, even though we fail in our tiny efforts.

With loving greetings to you and to the friends in Torquay,

Yours ever sincerely,
H. Rabbani

May the Beloved bless richly your painstaking efforts and crown them with signal success, and enable you to promote effectively the best interests of His Faith and to consolidate its nascent institutions.

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Feb. 15, 1938

Dear Mr. Tobey,

The Guardian has just received your message of the 8th instant and is indeed pleased to hear from you after such a long silence. He is glad to know that you are keeping in good health and are successful in your academic studies, but feels exceedingly sorry that you are not progressing in your Bahá'í work. He wishes you not to feel discouraged about the immediate prospects of your labors for the Cause, but to draw confidence and strength from the unfailing promises which Bahá'u'lláh has given regarding the future triumph of the Faith.

The Guardian is fully aware of the nature of the obstacles that hinder the progress and expansion of the teaching work in England, but is certain that sooner or later, this country will be stirred up and its people will be quickened spiritually and thus will be prepared to receive the Message. The forces of destruction are already at work, and are paving the way for the expansion and future consolidation of the Cause. The believers need not feel therefore depressed if their teaching results are meagre, but should look ahead at the glorious harvest which the future has in store for them.

Regarding your plans to visit America next summer: the Guardian thinks it would be splendid if you could undertake this trip which, in addition to the physical benefits it would confer upon your health would give you the great spiritual bounty of refreshing your soul through close contact and personal association with the American believers who are indeed the vanguard of the Faith in the West. The recent developments in both the teaching and administrative fields of service in that country have been such as to inspire and stimulate every sincere Bahá'í visitor. May your visit too serve to stimulate you afresh in your services to the Cause in England.

With loving greetings,
Yours ever sincerely,
H. Rabbani

Dear co-worker:

The work you have achieved in England will always be remembered with keen appreciation and gratitude. Your splendid pioneer accomplishments under such difficult circumstances are truly meritorious and praiseworthy. I will pray from the depths of my heart that you may be able to render still greater services in the days to come. Be happy and persevere. Shoghi.

The letters from Shoghi Effendi reflect the successful teaching campaign in the Devonshire area in which Tobey clearly had played a major role. However, by 1938, as Shoghi Effendi's letter indicates, Tobey had become discouraged with teaching opportunities in Devonshire. In addition, the international situation had deteriorated, making a second world war inevitable. In his last letter during that period Shoghi Effendi approved Tobey's plans to visit the United States, where the artist had frequently spent summers in Seattle, or, for short periods, in New York. Shoghi Effendi's personal postscript at the end of the 1938 letter seems to indicate his realization that the artist's pioneering work in England was at an end. Indeed, due to the mounting international tensions, Tobey was unable to return to Dartington Hall in the autumn of 1938 as originally planned.

In early 1939 Tobey's paintings and personal possessions were sent to him from Dartington Hall, and he settled in Seattle, which became his home during the 1940s. In Seattle Tobey obtained work as an artist in a government-sponsored Works Project Administration project. In 1939 he visited the Bahá'í school at Geyserville in northern California where he stayed during June and July. As a consequence of his long absence, he was dropped from the government project.[1]

During the 1940s Tobey's career as an artist

[1] Rathbone, *Mark Tobey: City Paintings*, p. 98.

began to develop at a faster pace. In 1942 he had a one-man show at the Seattle Art Museum. That summer, at the Bahá'í school at Geyserville, he met Arthur and Joyce Dahl, who became important patrons of his work. In the same year Tobey's painting *Broadway* won sixth place in a show for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and became part of that museum's permanent collection. In 1943 and 1944 his paintings began to sell at the Willard Gallery in New York, and his work was favorably reviewed by Clement Greenberg, an important critic of the developing New York School. By 1949 Tobey was recognized to the extent that he was included in the Western Round Table discussion on Modern Art sponsored by the San Francisco Art Association. Participants were the famed anthropologists George Boas and Gregory Bateson, the architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and painters Marcel Duchamp and Mark Tobey.[1]

Although Tobey must have had less and less time for his Bahá'í work, there is no doubt that his services to the Faith continued. He served on the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Seattle (the elected governing body of the Bahá'ís of Seattle) and was often a speaker at public meetings in the Seattle area. At one point he moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, to help maintain a spiritual assembly in that area.

Tobey also reestablished the contact with the Bahá'í World Centre that had been interrupted during World War II. Letters to the artist were now handwritten by Rúḥíyyih Rabbani, Canadian wife of Shoghi Effendi. Postscripts from Shoghi Effendi were still appended to the bottom, as in the first one to arrive:

Haifa
February 5th
1949

Dear Bahá'í brother:

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, with enclosures, and dated January 17th, has been received, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He very much appreciates the work done by Mr. Per [sic] Hallsten, and hopes it will be found suitable for publication, as it would greatly add to the store—the very limited store—of Bahá'í literature available in Swedish. There is certainly no objection to your writing to the E.T.C. [European Teaching Committee] and inquiring what they plan to do about it, and so on.

He was pleased to hear you are able to make trips up to Canada and see the friends there. They have a heavy teaching schedule, and any help you can give them would be much appreciated.

Life everywhere in the world seems to be increasingly hard. The blindness of humanity seems to be catching up with it—when will men turn to their true haven and refuge and find the peace God has given them in this Revelation? We can only labor lovingly and leave the rest to Him.

Shoghi Effendi assures you of his loving prayers for your success, and the betterment of your affairs in general.

With Bahá'í greetings,
R. Rabbani

May the Almighty bless, sustain and guide you, and enable you to overcome all obstacles in your path, and win great victories in the service of our beloved Faith and its God-given institutions.

Your true brother
Shoghi

The 'work done' by Mr. Pehr Hallsten was an important project, initiated by Tobey, to translate *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* into Swedish. Hallsten was a close friend whom Tobey had met in 1939 after returning from England. Through Tobey's patient teaching and personal example, Hallsten had become a Bahá'í. Anxious to perform some service for the Bahá'í Faith, Hallsten, a linguist, had undertaken the translation of Bahá'u'lláh's work whose original was written in both Arabic and Persian.[2]

In 1954 Hallsten wrote the following testimony about Tobey's influence upon him:

To whomever it may concern

I herewith confirm that Mark Tobey has been the absolute and only instrument and

[1] 'The Western Round Table on Modern Art,' Robert Motherwell and Ad Reinhardt, eds., *Modern Artists in America* (New York: Wittenborn Schultz, 1951), pp. 24–37.

[2] *The Hidden Words*, a poetic work concerning the spiritual life of humanity, was written by Bahá'u'lláh in 1858 during his exile in Iraq. See Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, trans. Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1939).

factor in my translation of Bahá'u'lláh's *Hidden Words* into Swedish.

Through his devotion to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, his sincere desire to promote the publication of this sacred work, having paid for the publication of this work, privately, besides having been through his good and idealistic example and indefatigable efforts to inspire me to do this significant work. Without Mark Tobey my translation could not have been done.

May God reward him for this.

I humbly place this document into his hands as a small tribute to him.

Gothenburg, Sweden
Pehr Hallsten, Professor[1]

In addition to his proclamation, teaching, and administrative work for the Faith, Tobey was a generous contributor to the Bahá'í Fund. Even after he moved to Basel in 1960, according to a long-time member of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Seattle, checks from Mark Tobey would suddenly appear, often containing just the amount needed to begin an important teaching campaign in the area.[2] Tobey also contributed generously to the Bahá'í World Center, as the following letter shows:

Aug. 5, 1951

Dear Bahá'í brother:

The beloved Guardian was very glad to hear from you as it is some time since he had any news of you. Your letter just recently arrived (postmarked May 29), so you see it was a long time on the way.

He thanks you for your generous and loving contribution to the Shrine work, a receipt for which I am enclosing herewith.

Your services to the Faith are much appreciated, you may be sure.

With Bahá'í love,
R. Rabbani

With the assurance of my loving appreciation of your contribution, and of my prayers for your success in the service of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,
Shoghi

I gratefully acknowledge the receipt of the sum of three hundred dollars from my dear Bahá'í brother, Mr[.] Mark Tobey, to be expended for the construction of the Shrine of the Báb on Mt. Carmel.

(signed) Shoghi

Tobey's final letter from Shoghi Effendi came in 1954, a critical time in Tobey's career. During this period Tobey was in Seattle (January), New York (February through June), Sweden (August and September), and Paris (October through June of the following year). Shoghi Effendi was clearly pleased that Tobey had returned to Europe:

Haifa,
Israel,
November 15, 1954

Mr. Mark Tobey.

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your letter of October 13th has been received by the beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He is delighted to learn that you are now living in France, and he feels sure you will be of tremendous assistance to the teaching work there. As you know, he has been most anxious to see the Faith progress more rapidly in France, and recently it seems to have made great strides forward.

In whichever town or city you decide to locate, he hopes you will soon find a few searching and receptive souls whom you can confirm in the Teachings; so that, in a short time, there will be a nucleus of active supporters in yet another center in France.

The Guardian assures you of his ardent prayers for the abundant success of all your labors in France, and of his deep appreciation of your devoted and sacrificial services in the past.

With warm Bahá'í greetings,
R. Rabbani

Assuring you of my loving prayers for your success and spiritual advancement, Your true brother, Shoghi

This letter was the last from Shoghi Effendi among the papers in Tobey's Seattle studio. Three years later, in November 1957, Shoghi Effendi died while on a visit to London. His death must have been a particular blow to

[1] Pehr Hallsten, letter to Mark Tobey, April 1954, Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 3201.

[2] Florence Winship, interview, 28 March 1985, Seattle, Washington.

Tobey, who had received a great deal of affectionate support from Shoghi Effendi. A copy of the telegram sent from Rúḥíyyih Rabbani announcing the death of Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of the world was among the papers kept by Tobey in his Seattle studio.

**The Later Years**

During the final two decades of Tobey's life, his international artistic reputation continued to grow. Tobey maintained a studio in Seattle but spent most of his time in Europe where his art flourished in a critical atmosphere more accepting than that of his native land. In 1960 he settled in Basel, where he was to spend the rest of his life.

During the 1950s Tobey's travels did not allow him to stay long enough in one place to render any long-term local services to the Bahá'í Faith. He did, however, attend Bahá'í conferences, including the 1958 International Conference in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, at which the site of the new Bahá'í House of Worship for the European continent was dedicated. In 1953 he had attended the dedication of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois. Ten years later he came to the Jubilee Congress of 1963 in London, at which more than six thousand Bahá'ís from all over the world gathered to celebrate the centenary of the birth of the Bahá'í Faith. This experience must have been especially meaningful to Tobey because carefully preserved in his private papers are scores of newspaper articles cut from London papers giving daily reports of events at the Congress. It must also have been a particularly emotional time for him as he was able to fulfill a pact with his old friends Bernard Leach and Reg Turvey that they would meet again at the Jubilee Congress after years of separation.[1]

As Tobey became more renowned, his attempts to work within the two worlds that he cherished became more difficult. Tobey understood the essential relationships between his work and his faith, but friends from both worlds often had problems understanding his priorities and interests. Some critics considered Tobey's symbolism to be 'obscure', or they were uncomfortable with religious themes in an increasingly secular age. At times his adherence to Bahá'í themes led to adverse reactions to his work as in the following review in *Art News*: 'One finds himself annoyed that such a talented artist often pushes his conclusions into obscurity, and this reviewer found himself even more annoyed with the pretentious religious philosophy which Tobey insists on dragging into his titles.'[2]

Some members of the Bahá'í community also showed a lack of understanding of Tobey's art. When he had his important one-man show at the Musée des arts décoratifs at the Louvre in Paris only a small number of Bahá'ís attended. Bahá'í collectors who bought paintings from him often had to endure derogatory remarks from others who did not comprehend Tobey's works or realize how they expressed Bahá'í principles.

Tobey was particularly concerned when Bahá'ís viewed his exhibitions more as teaching campaigns than cultural events. His distaste for this method was made clear in a 1962 letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States concerning projected activities during his one-man show at the Museum of Modern Art, a critical event in Tobey's career:

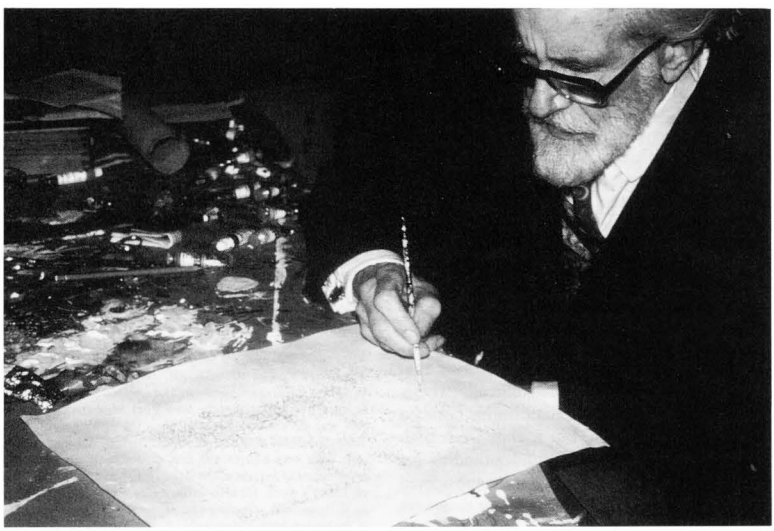
> After consultation with Mr. and Mrs. Dahl, I am writing to ask you not to go ahead with plans for meetings of Bahá'ís in New York at the time of my exhibition there. If my exhibition concerned an attempt to illustrate Bahá'í themes it would be a different matter. However, it doesn't, although there is a relation which will be explained by Mr. Seitz in the catalogue.[3]
>
> As you well know the Guardian freed art

[1] Johnson, *Reginald Turvey*, p. 101.

[2] From an undated *ArtNews* review of a Tobey show in New York. Mark Tobey Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 3209. Concerning such reactions, Tobey wrote, 'I shall try to make them conscious that we are traveling on one cylinder (science) and are practically blind to the fact that religion will come on as "dark horse." The whole affair is very lopsided and this is my dilemma.' Tobey, letter to Arthur Dahl, 7 May 1957, quoted in *Mark Tobey: Paintings* 15.

[3] William C. Seitz, art historian and curator of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions at the New York Museum of Modern Art, was the author of *Mark Tobey*, the catalog written for Tobey's exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art (see p. 751, n3). Seitz was one of the first critics to understand the importance of the role of the Bahá'í Faith in the development of Tobey's work. He also wrote a major essay about Tobey in William Seitz, *Abstract Expressionist Painting in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U P, 1983) and taped a lengthy interview with Mark Tobey in 1962. A transcript of this interview is available from the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

*Mark Tobey, left, during the reception on the opening day of the 'Mark Tobey Retrospective' in the Louvre in Paris, France, in September 1961. (The man on the right is not identified.)*



*Mark Tobey working on a painting in his home in Basel, Switzerland; 1974.*

from didactic purposes. 'There is no official Bahá'í art.' I think it would always be best if the Bahá'ís would show they like art—respect it—it would be impressive to those non-Bahá'ís who are interested in art. This would be enough and a more rightful way.

New York is the nerve center of painting in the United States, and is very critical and as my painting constitutes my livelihood, there are many things to consider.[1]

In an undated letter to Arthur Dahl written around 1963, Tobey wrote:

I am, I hope, a Bahá'í, but I am also an artist. But I am not a Bahá'í artist.... This is how I feel about it—and not only that they see the paintings but that they are made cognizant of the sayings of Bahá'u'lláh and Shoghi Effendi. The combination will stick.[2]

Tobey often quoted Shoghi Effendi's assertion, recorded in a letter written on his behalf, that there could not yet be such a thing as 'Bahá'í art': 'As regards producing a book of Bahá'í songs, your understanding that there is no cultural expression which could be called Bahá'í at this time (distinctive music, literature, art, architecture, etc., being the flower of the civilisation and not coming at the beginning of a new Revelation), is correct.' Tobey felt that Shoghi Effendi had 'freed art' through similar statements: 'The believers [Bahá'ís] are free to paint, write and compose as their talents may guide them.... As long as they have music for its own sake it is all right, but they should not consider it *Bahá'í* music.'[3]

Although Tobey was very careful that his paintings not be identified as Bahá'í art, he continually acknowledged the seminal influence of the Faith on his work. He told the famous critic Katherine Kuh:

'I've been influenced by the Bahá'í religion which believes there has been but one religion, which renews itself under different names. The root of all religions, from the Bahá'í point of view, is based on the theory that man will gradually come to understand the unity of the world and the oneness of mankind. It teaches that all the prophets are one—that science and religion are the two great powers which must be balanced if man is to become mature. I feel my work has been influenced by these beliefs.'[4]

In spite of misunderstandings and difficulties on the part of others, Tobey must have seen the 'two powers' in his own life as two wings of a bird, art and the Bahá'í Faith, that needed to function together. In 1957 he wrote to Arthur Dahl, Jr.:

Now art should be a part of Bahá'í life as I see it, and perhaps it could be in some locale, but not here. One wonders if one should sacrifice to such a degree, but there is one's nature and one's livelihood. These questionings are endless, but I have written a few. We all have much to learn. When and if I go to Europe, I hope to settle somewhere where I can put the two to work.[5]

In 1971 Tobey was interviewed for a book on the influence of Japanese art in the West. No doubt the interviewer expected to hear of Tobey's experience in the monastery in Kyoto or of the influence of Oriental calligraphy on his work. Instead, he got a glowing description of the importance of the Bahá'í Faith:

I found in my life what I call the light. This light is the light of a new age, not the light of old times. I am not considering other things that exist today which we know about and talk about: they are old. And, as for the old, you can read things over and over, and do things again and again, but if a new reality has come, they are no good—they are nothing, that's all. But if you know where reality is, if you have seen it, found it, and touched it, if you have been near it, then you know. I think that today in Bahá'í—well, that's where it is. That's where the world must unite. Things cannot go on much longer without the realization that we are all the same. This may not happen for a while but... Of course, I don't know what exactly will happen. I've

[1] Mark Tobey, letter to National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, Arthur Dahl, Jr., Papers, quoted in Hoffman, p. 410.

[2] Mark Tobey, letter to Arthur Dahl, n.d., Joyce and Arthur L. Dahl Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Microfilm reel 1785.

[3] Shoghi Effendi (through his secy.) to National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, 21 September 1957, and Shoghi Effendi (through his secy.) to National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, 20 July 1946, in *A Compilation of Bahá'í Writings on Music*, comp. Research Department of the Universal House of Justice (Oakham, England: Bahá'i Publishing Trust, 1973), pp. 12–13, 12.

[4] Katherine Kuh, *The Artist's Voice: Talks with Seventeen Artists* (New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 239–40.

[5] Mark Tobey, letter to Arthur Dahl, Jr., 26 November 1957. Joyce and Arthur Dahl Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 1785.

studied the Bahá'í faith very hard and I think this is the real truth.

In the same interview Tobey summed up a lifetime of his religious faith and its relationship to his art: 'I believe that a considerable amount of what might be called my better work is derived from Bahá'í love. That, I think, has had the strongest effect on me.'[1]

By 1960 Tobey had finished his period of wandering and had finally found a home, when he and his companion Pehr Hallsten with secretary Mark Ritter, moved to a house in Basel. Although Tobey's advancing age (he was now seventy) and language barriers created difficulties in this German-speaking part of Switzerland Tobey was still eager to work for the Bahá'í Faith in his new home. He served as chairman of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Basel for sixteen years until his death in 1976.

In an undated letter written just after his move to Basel, Tobey wrote of his desire to contribute to the teaching work of the Bahá'í Faith in his new home:

> Well, in the passing of time three people have left my house Bahá'ís. They are all active—many come not knowing they are going to ask—what is Bahá'í? I make no brags, but all this time somewhat in and out I have felt I was placed here to help and perhaps grow some for myself. The same things happened in England—slowly I worked with Bahá'ís there—when I left in 1938 Shoghi Effendi wrote me and said my work in England would never be forgotten. These words are naturally precious to me, but I didn't expect anything like that again.[2]

## Conclusion

Tobey's services for the Bahá'í Faith spanned almost six decades of the most formative and important period of the growth of the Bahá'í Faith in the West. Like many other members of the Bahá'í Faith, a religion without a clergy, Tobey often grappled with the desire to excel in his occupation and the deep and recurring need to contribute wholeheartedly to the world order of Bahá'u'lláh. This conflict must have intensified in the last three decades of Tobey's life when he became a world-class artist who could have easily dropped his Bahá'í activities in favor of a life completely devoted to art. Yet Tobey clearly understood his commitment to the Bahá'í Faith and never lost sight of his ultimate 'occupation' as a servant of Bahá'u'lláh. The fortunate preservation of the letters Tobey received from Shoghi Effendi and the record of his contributions over fifty-eight years as a Bahá'í show the continuing centrality of this role in his life and his devotion and sacrifice for the Bahá'í Faith.

In a letter written to his Bahá'í friends Tom and Helen Sousa when the artist was seventy-eight years old, in fragile health, and living in an area where he had never mastered the language, Tobey expressed his unquenchable desire to serve: 'Success—ye gods!—So many people for so many demands—so much to keep up or go under. But I still hope to arrange life so I can do more telling about the Cause than ever before....'[3]

The following letter from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, although not written to Mark Tobey, can help to provide a possible assessment of Tobey's life.

*Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá to an Artist*

*Can you paint upon the page of the world the ideal pictures of the Supreme Concourse?*[4] *The pictures which are in the ideal world are eternal. I desire you to become such an artist. Man can paint those ideal pictures upon the tablet of existence with the brush of deeds.*

*The holy, divine Manifestations are all heavenly artists. Upon the canvas of creation, with the brush of their deeds and lives and actions they paint immortal pictures which cannot be found in any art museum of Europe or America. But you find the masterpieces of these spiritual artists in the hearts of them that know Him.*[5]

Mark Tobey did endeavor to paint upon the tablet of existence not only with a brush of paint but also with a 'brush of deeds.' His wish to serve the two powers—art and the Bahá'í Faith—seems to have been fulfilled.

[1] Chisaburoh Yamada, ed., *Dialogue in Art: Japan and the West* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1976), pp. 305, 304.

[2] Mark Tobey, letter to Arthur Dahl, Jr., n.d., Joyce and Arthur Dahl Papers, Archives of American Art, Microfilm reel 1785.

[3] Mark Tobey, letter to Tom and Helen Sousa, 9 March 1968. I would like to thank Helen Sousa for permission to use this excerpt.

[4] See p.764, n. 4.

[5] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Star of the West* 8.2 (1917): 28. I would like to thank Mrs. Sheila Cowan for drawing my attention to this information.

# 5. LILIAN VAUGHAN McNEILL

LOIS HAINSWORTH

LILIAN VAUGHAN BARRON was born on 1 December 1879 into a military family. Her father, Major-General Sir Harry Barron, K.C.V.O. (Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order), of the Royal Artillery, among other appointments, had served as chief instructor at the Shoeburyness School of Gunnery, as Acting Governor of Malta and, later, as Governor of Tasmania and Western Australia. Her mother was the daughter of Major-General T. Conyngham Kelly.

It was during her father's service as an artillery officer in Malta during 1888–89, (before he became Governor in 1909), whilst H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, second son of Queen Victoria and afterwards Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, was Commander-in-Chief of the British fleet in the Mediterranean, that Lilian first met the four daughters of the Duke of Edinburgh. One of them, Marie, was later (1893) to become the wife of King Ferdinand I of Romania who lived from 1865 to 1927. He was called to the throne in 1914 on the death of Carol I. Marie Alexandra Victoria, who was born in 1875, died in 1938.

The five little girls played together in the sunlit gardens of the palace of San Antonio in Malta, although Lilian, who was then about ten years of age, had fallen from a pony in her earlier years and was, as a result, rather delicate, and unable to join the others in their wildest games. The eldest daughters of the Duke of Edinburgh always took the greatest care of her and called her 'little' Lilian, a name used thenceforth by Marie, even after her marriage to Ferdinand I. It was during Lilian's time in the seaport city of Valletta, Malta, that the Duke of Edinburgh helped her to make a collection of crests and monograms, perhaps nurturing an interest in art which in later life became an absorbing hobby.

Eventually, both families left Malta, and the girls resumed their friendship and games in the gardens of Buckingham Palace and Clarence House. In a letter to Queen Marie, Lilian recalls

*Lilian Vaughan McNeill*

a blackberrying expedition in the grounds of Buckingham Palace when Lilian and Queen Marie's youngest sister returned 'looking like a pair of little tinkers', and were taken by an irate nurse to the Duchess of Edinburgh who, instead of scolding them, gave them 'delicious Russian toffee'.

All five girls married very young, and their ways parted. At the age of seventeen, when her father was serving in Gibraltar, Lilian met and married Captain Charles Findlay of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. After a honeymoon in Spain, she went with him to Egypt where his regiment was stationed. She was living in Cairo in 1898 when she heard that he had been killed at the battle of Atbara in the Sudan during the Nile campaign. Six months later her first son, Victor Alexander Charles, was born. The story of the widow of the young officer who had been killed in battle before his child was born touched the hearts of members of

London society. Queen Victoria herself was godmother to the child, showing 'the most wonderful kindness', and surely remembered that as a child, Lilian had been a playmate of her own grandchildren. As a young widow, Lilian lived very quietly, and little is known about her life during the following few years, until her marriage to Angus McNeill in 1907.

Angus McNeill and Charles Findlay had been close friends, fighting alongside each other when Captain Findlay was killed. It fell to Angus McNeill to take the sad news to the young widow in Cairo. This was their first meeting. At the time of their marriage in 1907, he was Adjutant of the Mounted Infantry School at Longmore, in Hampshire. The couple remained in Hampshire until Angus McNeill retired from the army in 1910, a year after the birth of Lilian's second son, John Malcolm.

At the outbreak of World War I, Angus McNeill was recalled, and served from 1914 to 1918 with the Lovat Scouts Yeomanry. He commanded this regiment at Gallipoli, and afterwards led a brigade in General Allenby's campaign in Palestine, as it was then known. He was awarded the D.S.O. (Distinguished Service Order) in 1918. During the war, Lilian lived in London and worked on behalf of refugees, making many friends among the Serbian and Russian peoples. She also helped to create the St. Clement's School for Girls at Ochrida in Serbia. She was a brilliant linguist and spoke fluently French, Italian, German and Spanish.

In 1922, the McNeills went to Palestine. Here Angus McNeill raised the British gendarmerie of Palestine, which he continued to command until it was disbanded in 1926. At that time the High Commissioner for Palestine, Lord Plumer, required an administrator for a new stock-breeding project near 'Akká. As a proven administrator who knew all the officials in Jerusalem, was familiar with every village in the territory and was experienced in the breeding of horses, Angus McNeil was the ideal choice. The farm was engaged in the breeding of horses, cattle, mules, sheep, goats, chickens and even bees. He built up this stud farm from nothing, importing Arab stallions and other stock from England. For part of this time the McNeills lived in the Nashashibi quarter of Jerusalem.

While she was living in Palestine Lilian McNeill became acquainted with the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. She writes, 'Queen Marie and I were reunited in close affection through the Bahá'í teachings, with which we both became acquainted about the same time, she in Romania, I in Palestine.' Martha Root, a renowned Bahá'í teacher, met Queen Marie at the Controceni Palace on 30 January 1926. This, and Miss Root's subsequent audiences with Queen Marie, are described in 'Queen Marie of Rumania', by Martha Root, *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VI, 1934–36, pp. 580–83.

It was in 1929, during the course of building up the stock farm, that Angus and Lilian McNeill, making a voyage of discovery in the neighbourhood across country where only the roughest tracks existed, came upon a neglected, partly ruined old house. Beside it stood two enormous cypress trees, thought to be hundreds of years old. An inside courtyard was surrounded by a thick, high wall and, outside, an aqueduct flowed through a paved terrace. A Bedouin family lived in tents in the garden, and olive-pickers from a village near Carmel occupied the lower part of the house during the olive harvest. The building was in a state of unimaginable dereliction. Lilian states that she 'saw the possibilities and the poor old house with its vaulted lower rooms had an intense and almost weird fascination for me.' Thus Lilian McNeill found Mazra'ih where Bahá'u'lláh and His family lived after leaving 'Akká in June 1877,[1] (there He had been confined for nine years without sight of verdure), and before moving into the Mansion of Bahjí in September 1879,[2] a total of two years and four months, approximately.

In May 1931, when Angus McNeill finally retired, the couple took a lease on the house and were able to restore it, creating a garden and a proper setting for a 'dwelling with such sacred associations'. One floor they left untouched—the floor in the downstairs room which was Bahá'u'lláh's Own special room—in the belief that His feet may have trodden upon it.

Lilian had hoped to meet her old school friend during the course of the Queen's visit to the Near East. Shoghi Effendi has written of this: 'In the course of a visit to the Near East she

[1] H. M. Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh The King of Glory* (Oxford: George Ronald Publisher), 1980, p. 362.

[2] David S. Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, (Oxford: George Ronald Publisher) 1986, pp. 12, 224 (note 4).

[Queen Marie] expressed her intention of visiting the Bahá'í Shrines, and, accompanied by her youngest daughter [Ileana], actually passed through Haifa, and was within sight of her goal, when she was denied the right to make the pilgrimage she had planned—to the keen disappointment of the aged Greatest Holy Leaf who had eagerly expected her arrival.'[1] Lilian was herself actually in Haifa when the Queen 'passed through like a flash' and was 'gone again into another land'. A few months later, in June 1931, Queen Marie wrote in a letter to Martha Root: 'Both Ileana and I were cruelly disappointed at having been prevented going to the holy Shrines',[2] and went on to speak of the forces beyond her control that 'curtailed [her] liberty most unkindly'.

Following this, Lilian, who had written to tell Queen Marie about Mazra'ih, received a letter in which the Queen stated: 'Dear "little" Lilian, it was indeed nice to hear from you, and to think that you are of all things living near Haifa and are, as I am, a follower of the Bahá'í teachings. It interests me that you are living in that special house; the Teachers so loved flowers, and being English, I can imagine what a lovely garden you have made in that Eastern climate...'[3]

Shoghi Effendi visited the McNeills at Mazra'ih, and took tea with them on the terrace. He must have been a frequent visitor, for Lilian's letters to Queen Marie are full of allusions which he made to the Bahá'í teachings. On at least one occasion he mentioned the Queen's ancestral association with the Faith, her grandparents, Queen Victoria of England and Alexander II of Russia, having been recipients of Tablets from Bahá'u'lláh. Lilian's devotion to the Bahá'í teachings shines through her letters to Queen Marie, and she wrote telling the Queen of new books which became available and offering to send her copies, as she had 'access to the store at Bahjí'.

The photograph of Lilian McNeill portrays a beautiful and tranquil woman, but she had a keen and analytical mind, and her letters and diaries show that she was well acquainted with the international situation; indeed, in her correspondence with Queen Marie during 1935–36 she predicted the imminence of war. Lilian's grasp of the political situation in Palestine was acute, and she was impatient of politicians who stirred up nationalist passions. There exist letters she wrote to leading Arab families deploring in strong language their political activities, and stringently exhorting them to learn to live in peace with the Jews and not continually seek confrontation. Jews and Arabs worked peacefully together at the stud farm and she saw no reason why this state of affairs should not prevail elsewhere. When she espoused a cause she did so with all her heart, and she expressed her opinions vehemently.

During her later years, Lilian was severely stricken with arthritis and was often in great pain, having to walk with a stick—sometimes two—and the way in which she coped with her infirmity showed great courage and determination. She always accompanied her husband when he went sailing or shooting, and on other journeys. She was a talented watercolourist, and her husband would leave her happily occupied with her paints when he had to walk far distances.

During her years at 'Akká and Mazra'ih, Lilian wrote a series of short stories, some of which were published in the local English-language newspaper. Her stories reveal exceptional insight into local life and present a very clear view of the situation which then existed.

Lilian and Angus McNeill were respected and much loved by the local villagers; they called Lilian 'Aziza'—'dear one'. During the 1948 war, the McNeills convinced the villagers at Mazra'ih that they should not shoot or throw stones at Israeli buses, and so the villagers were safe when the war was over. The village was an Arab enclave entirely surrounded by homes occupied by Jewish families. Angus McNeill maintained a nominal roll of the villagers and, during those difficult times, sent for rations for them which were brought from nearby Nahariyya by a policeman who was a Jew.

When Lilian died on 16 August 1949, her husband wrote to Shoghi Effendi: 'Her faith in the Bahá'í teachings was a great comfort to her in the last twenty years of her life, and she always longed that she and her old school friend Queen Marie of Romania could have gone together to the Shrines.' Angus McNeill did not long survive his wife; he died in Cyprus six months later.

[1] See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust), 1944, p. 392.
[2] ibid. p. 393.
[3] ibid. p. 393.

In 1981, members of the staff of the Bahá'í World Centre discovered the grave of Lilian McNeill in the Commonwealth Cemetery in Haifa, marked by a simple wooden cross. The Universal House of Justice, wishing to honour her early espousal of the Faith and her role in the rehabilitation and protection of Mazra'ih, has, with the acquiescence of her son, Major-General John McNeill, erected a befitting and dignified memorial to this distinguished British lady.

## Afterword

After the death of Brigadier General Angus McNeill in 1950, Shoghi Effendi commenced negotiations with the Israeli Government, into whose control Mazra'ih had relapsed, to have this historic site secured to the Bahá'í community. Through Shoghi Effendi's direct appeal to the Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, the Bahá'í interest in the property as a Holy Place was recognized by the Government of Israel, and he was able to lease the property. On 15 December 1950, Shoghi Effendi cabled the Bahá'í world: 'ANNOUNCE FRIENDS DELIVERY AFTER MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS KEYS QAṢR MAZRA'IH BY ISRAEL AUTHORITIES. HISTORIC DWELLING PLACE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AFTER LEAVING PRISON CITY 'AKKÁ NOW BEING FURNISHED ANTICIPATION OPENING DOOR PILGRIMAGE.[1]

On 13 March 1973, the Universal House of Justice sent the following announcement to all National Spiritual Assemblies: 'OCCASION NAWRÚZ 130 JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE BAHÁÍ WORLD ACQUISITION BY PURCHASE MANSION MAZRA'IH RESULT SEVERAL YEARS PATIENT PERSISTENT DETERMINED NEGOTIATIONS THEREBY ADDING TO BAHÁ'Í ENDOWMENTS HOLY LAND FIRST RESIDENCE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AFTER NINE YEARS SPENT WALLED PRISON CITY 'AKKÁ. CONTROL THIS HOLY SITE REACQUIRED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN AFTER LAPSE MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS WHEN HE SECURED LEASE MANSION 1950 EXTENDED TO PRESENT TIME. PURCHASE INCLUDES LAND AREA APPROXIMATING TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND SQUARE METRES HIGHLY SUITABLE EXTENSION GARDENS CULTIVATION. OFFERING PRAYER THANKSGIVING SACRED THRESHOLD THIS GREATLY CHERISHED BOUNTY...[2]

Subsequently, on 24 September 1980, the Bahá'ís of the world were informed by the House of Justice: PURCHASED NEARLY 50,000 SQUARE METRES AGRICULTURAL LAND ADJACENT TO AND NORTH OF MAZRA'IH PROPERTY AS PROTECTION TO MANSION IN RAPIDLY DEVELOPING AREA.[3]

Lilian McNeill's first-born son, Victor Findlay, worked in the Tse-Tse Research Department in Tanganyika (now Tanzania), and was killed by a rhinoceros in 1946 whilst on duty. He was married with two sons; one was killed during World War II, and the other at present resides in Scotland. Lilian McNeill's second son, John Malcolm McNeill, followed the family military tradition and joined the Royal Artillery. He served in India, western Sahara, Sicily, north-west Europe and Burma. He has been awarded the C.B. and C.B.E., has held senior staff appointments, and was for two years aide-de-camp to Queen Elizabeth. His wife, Barbara, is also from a military family. They have two children.

Quotations in this article are taken from 'Treasured Memories', an article by Lilian McNeill in *World Order* magazine, Vol. IV, No. 10, 1939, and from unpublished letters. The author has also drawn upon an article in the 21 June 1979 issue of *Country Life*.

My grateful thanks to Major-General John McNeill and his wife for their help in producing this article, and for the generous gift of photographs of Lilian McNeill which have been sent to the international audio-visual archives of the Bahá'í World Centre. One of them is reproduced here.

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950–1957* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust), 1958, p. 7.

[2] The Universal House of Justice, *Messages from the Universal House of Justice* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust), 1976, p. 112.

[3] *Door of Hope*, p. 94.

# 6. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF ÍRÁN

HOLLY HANSON VICK

IN its message to the Bahá'í world of 20 October 1983,[1] the Universal House of Justice cited the social and economic progress made by the Bahá'ís of Írán as an example of the vital efficacy of the Bahá'í teachings in the affairs of the world. The essential aspects of Bahá'í social and economic development are found in the history of the Persian Bahá'í community during the early years of the Faith. Love and devotion to Bahá'u'lláh motivated the believers to improve their own lives and serve mankind; co-operative efforts on the local and on the provincial levels enabled the Bahá'ís to establish a broad network of schools and other service institutions; and adherence to Bahá'í principles and standards of conduct caused the Bahá'í community to stand out, despite official repression and universal prejudice against it, as manifestly more progressive than the rest of Iranian society.

The profound and transforming effect of the Cause in the lives of the believers and their communities was an accepted facet of life in Írán. Bahá'u'lláh had proclaimed *that which will serve as the key for unlocking the doors of sciences, of arts, of knowledge, of well-being, prosperity, and wealth*[2] and His followers, using those 'keys', became different from other people. As Bahá'ís, they wanted to educate their children, to uplift themselves, to serve their communities. The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, who was raised in Sabzivár, Írán, and whose father became a Bahá'í in advance of his mother, described this deliberate transition in his autobiography: 'When my mother and grandmother declared their belief in the Cause, they conscientiously began to think in terms of the education of their children and promptly sent me and my brother, who was then nine, to the "school".'[3] The distinction achieved was so pervasive that Persian believers take it for granted and others find it hard to comprehend: the Bahá'í child among a group of children playing could be identified by his neatness and his manners; the Bahá'í home in a village stood out because of its cleanliness, orderliness and its light; and the Bahá'í students were usually at the top of their class. The relentless persecution suffered by the Bahá'ís in Írán from 1978–79 onward is the consummate and tragic proof of this distinction. The fanatical elements in Iranian society, fuelled by their ingrained prejudice as well as their envy of the Bahá'ís' prosperity and advancement, and not able to accept that it is the consequence of putting the Bahá'í teachings into action, have tried to destroy the Faith and all the evidences of its vitality.

The inner transformation of the community, which is the essence of Bahá'í development, was complemented by activities organized by the National and Local Spiritual Assemblies. The Bahá'í schools and the Missaghieh (Míthāqíyyih) Hospital and Maternity Clinic—established *circa* 1940 in Ṭihrán and recognized as one of the most important and best equipped in the Iranian capital—attained great prestige, and the programme of spiritual education for children and adults was comprehensive and effective. In the few areas in which Bahá'ís formed a majority of the population, they were able to carry out many more activities.

The Persian Bahá'í emigrants to 'Ishqábád in Russian Turkistán created the first example of a community openly organizing its community life according to the teachings and laws of Bahá'u'lláh. Encouraged by Bahá'u'lláh and the Master, almost four thousand believers left Írán between 1880 and 1920 in order to practise their new religion freely in 'Ishqábád, a fast-growing outpost of the Russian nation.[4] They

[1] Excerpts from this message appear on p. 346.
[2] *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 96.
[3] *The Story of My Heart*. (Oxford: George Ronald), 1984, p. 3.
[4] A. A. Lee, 'The Rise of the Bahá'í Community of 'Ishqábád', *Bahá'í Studies*, Volume 5, January 1979.

built a beautiful and imposing House of Worship where community members gathered to listen to dawn prayers every morning. Four dependencies were built on the grounds of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár: two elementary schools, a medical clinic, and a pilgrim's hospice. The community also established schools in two nearby communities, Marv and Qahqahih, and opened two kindergartens in 'Ishqábád.[1] They published a magazine and opened a library and public reading room. 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged them to build on this foundation, writing, *Now must ye widen the scope of your endeavours, and draw up plans to establish schools for higher education, so that the City of Love* [i.e. 'Ishqábád] *will become the Bahá'í focal centre for sciences and arts.*[2] Since the time in the 1920s when development of the Bahá'í community of 'Ishqábád was disrupted by opposition to the Faith, no other community has yet advanced to the same degree.

The schools established by Persian Bahá'ís were the first Bahá'í development activities. At a time when secular education was almost non-existent and religious education circumscribed and rudimentary, the Bahá'ís in Írán built an educational apparatus that was widespread, open to everyone, and distinguished in every way. The premier Bahá'í school of Írán, the Tarbíyat School in Ṭihrán, was officially opened in 1899, although it had already been in operation for two years.[3] The Tarbíyat Girls' School opened in 1911.[4] The example of the Tarbíyat School was emulated in the Ta'yíd and Mawhibat schools in Hamadán, the Vaḥdat-i-Bashar school in Káshán, and similar schools in Barfurúsh and Qazvín.[5] These schools offered six primary and six secondary classes, were recognized by the Government, and followed the official curriculum when it was introduced in 1925. Many other Bahá'í communities organized educational facilities according to their ability; some had a staff of teachers and hundreds of students, in others one or two teachers taught the children of a village. Enquiries reveal that over forty schools of all sizes were operated by the Bahá'ís of Írán.

Each one of these schools came into being as a response to Bahá'u'lláh's teachings on education, teachings which set forth the principles that *the greatest means* to *the advancement of the world of being* is *education of the child*;[6] that education is *the indispensable foundation of all human excellence*;[7] and the source of *honour, prosperity, independence and freedom for a nation.*[8]

Individual Bahá'ís inspired by the spirit of the Faith founded the first schools which were open to Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike; as Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed they took the responsibility for education. Local Assemblies organized and administered schools, and ascertained that all children were able to attend, whatever their financial resources. Bahá'í funds supported children who could not pay. Many of the village Bahá'í schools were operated by Local Spiritual Assemblies whose members were themselves illiterate: they knew Bahá'u'lláh had made education obligatory, so they asked the Central Assembly in Ṭihrán to send them a teacher.

Despite the strong prejudice against the Faith in Írán, the Bahá'í schools achieved a high standard of excellence and gained a reputation of being the best schools in the country. Many notable people sent their children to Tarbíyat schools which trained a generation of leaders in every field. The standard for Bahá'í schools was clearly established by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in an early letter to the Tarbíyat school: *it must become evident that it is the first school of Persia and its graduates are the most successful. Otherwise its non-being is better than its being.*[9]

The international co-operation which characterized the schools from their inception was one cause of their success: the teachers who came from the American Bahá'í community introduced modern educational methods. In 1906 the Tarbíyat Boys' School was the only one in Ṭihrán where mathematics was studied every day and children were separated into classes according to their ability.

[1] 'International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. V, p. 38.
[2] *Bahá'í Education: A Compilation*, p. 35.
[3] *Bahá'í News*, 9 June 1910, pp. 4–7.
[4] Lillian Kappes, *The Orient–Occident Unity Bulletin*, No. 6, March–April 1912, pp. 6–7. Miss Kappes, with the encouragement of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, left her home in the United States in 1911 and settled in Írán where she headed the Tarbíyat Girls' School until her death in 1921.
[5] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 299.
[6] Bahá'u'lláh, *Bahá'í Education: A Compilation*, p. 4.
[7] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 129.
[8] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 111.
[9] *Star of the West*, Vol. I, No. 5, June 1910, pp. 2–7.

The Tarbíyat Girls' School had recess and gymnastics more than fifteen years before Government schools allowed physical education for girls. Through the American connection, Bahá'í schools were the first to have laboratory equipment for science classes, and former Tarbíyat students will remember the excitement of watching educational films—at that time their school was the only one in Írán with a film projector.

The fundamental distinction of the Bahá'í schools, however, lay in the Bahá'í concept of education, which declares moral and spiritual training to be the foundation of all learning. From 1925, all schools in Írán were required to follow a standard curriculum issued by the Government, and no mention of the Faith was possible, but the Bahá'í schools were still unique. Former Tarbíyat students recall the effect of the prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that was chanted every morning while each class stood in line, and the atmosphere of love and trust that pervaded the school. Teachers and students shared a mutual respect and dedication to learning. The Bahá'í students had been trained from infancy to be well-mannered, obedient, and conscientious, and their refinement of character raised the level of their academic education. Members of other religious groups sent their children to the Bahá'í schools, in part because the schools were known to be progressive and to have an enriched programme of study, and in part because conscientious parents were hopeful of having their children acquire the desirable manners and discipline associated with Bahá'í children. The monthly evaluations of each child included not only a report to parents of his progress in academic subjects, but also a report from parents about the child's behaviour at home.

A careful effort was made to involve parents in school activities, because in the Bahá'í context, the school is a centre for the education of the whole community. The Tarbíyat Girls' School held monthly conferences for mothers and other women, who had no other opportunity for education, no organized activities, and no life outside the home. At each conference students presented talks, plays, and demonstrations to illustrate a theme, such as the value of subjects learned in the secondary school, or modern home management, which would interest and inform the women. These conferences were immensely popular—300 to 400 attended each conference when they were initiated in the early 1920's.[1] Teachers tried to show parents how to apply Bahá'í principles in child-rearing, and, because they were well-educated and dedicated believers, the teachers became models for all the Bahá'ís.

Especially in the villages, the Bahá'í teachers were the hub of Bahá'í community life. They taught Bahá'í classes and adult education as well as the children, and through their own example created a momentum for self-improvement and development. The Bahá'í youth of the 1920s and 1930s who left Ṭihrán to teach school in the villages set the example for the Bahá'í youth volunteers of the present; through their love and respect for their host communities, their willingness to sacrifice their modern customs and habits, and their reliance on Bahá'u'lláh, they gained the confidence of the villagers and helped them to realize the progressive qualities that characterized Bahá'í communities in Írán.

The first stage of Bahá'í educational activity came to an end in 1934 when the Government closed all Bahá'í schools because they refused to stay open on Bahá'í Holy Days. The schools in Russian Turkistán had been closed by the Government four years earlier. Non-formal educational activity continued within the Bahá'í community; thousands of Bahá'í children attended character training classes every week, and national committees were organized to meet the needs of other groups. In 1973 it was announced that the Bahá'ís had achieved a literacy rate of one hundred per cent among women under the age of forty, a dramatic contrast with the national literacy rate of fifteen per cent.[2]

The progress achieved by women was a remarkable aspect of the Bahá'í community. The Bahá'í teachings created a consciousness and self-image for women that was wholly new.

[1] Genevieve L. Coy, 'Educating the Women of Persia', *Star of the West*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, April 1926, pp. 50–55. Dr. Coy, a graduate of Columbia University, was a specialist in the education of gifted children and a teacher of psychology. She was the director of Tarbiyat Girls' School from 1922 until 1924 when she returned to the United States to teach psychology at Dalton School, New York, and was later appointed its principal.

[2] 'International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, 1968–73, p. 248.

At a time when the women's world was entirely confined to the home, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed the Bahá'í women to direct their minds to science, industry, and subjects that would improve the human condition. He constantly encouraged the Bahá'í communities to establish schools for girls, emphasizing that this was more important than their other efforts.[1] These girls' schools were a radical departure from the standards of the society and often met considerable opposition.[2] Each student had to be escorted to and from her home, because girls were not permitted to appear in public by themselves. These girls' schools trained the first generation of professional women in Iranian society, and the model of Bahá'í women had an effect on the whole society.

The Nawnahálán Company, a community savings bank, was organized around the turn of the century to encourage savings by children and to provide funds for community development. The original plan, which was curtailed by the restrictions placed on Bahá'í activities, was that projects to benefit the whole community would be funded by loans from the accumulated capital. 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged the Nawnahálán Society and subscribed to it Himself; when it was confiscated by the Revolutionary Government, beginning in February 1979, it held the life savings of more than 15,000 Bahá'ís.[3]

The Persian Bahá'í communities also organized health-care facilities. 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged Dr. Susan Moody, Dr. Sarah Clock, and Elizabeth Stewart, a trained nurse, to settle in Ṭihrán.[4] These noble women, constrained by social conditions from establishing a nursing school as they had hoped, provided primary health care, held classes for mothers, and quietly demonstrated the capacity of women. Dr. Moody, as early as 1910, in collaboration with some Persian physicians, established a private clinic. Both Dr. Moody and Dr. Clock died in Ṭihrán, after years of selfless service to the Bahá'ís and the general public.

Before 1910, the Ṣiḥḥat Hospital was started in Ṭihrán by a group of Bahá'í doctors, and here Dr. Moody lent her skills as gynaecologist and specialist in women's diseases.

The high standard of personal hygiene and the emphasis on education found in the Bahá'í Writings both contributed to the health of the Bahá'í community. In 1930, a number of Bahá'í communities were reported to be establishing modern public baths.[5]

Many individual health professionals donated their time and skills to facilities sponsored by the Bahá'í community: one example is the Tákur Clinic.

The Persian believers who participated in Bahá'í community life when it was not thoroughly constrained by repression, who taught or attended Bahá'í schools, and who witnessed the distinction achieved by the Iranian Bahá'ís in their society, have a perspective which is very relevant to the current development activities of Bahá'ís around the world.[6] Their experiences of the Bahá'í teachings in action, in the excellence of the Bahá'í schools, the well-being of Bahá'í villagers, and the success of Bahá'í women, can help us understand the Universal House of Justice's statement that development activities 'will ensure a deeper consolidation of the community at all levels'. Because the Persian friends accepted Bahá'u'lláh, read His Writings, tried to obey His laws, and followed the guidance of the Master and the Guardian, they achieved a remarkable degree of social and economic progress. The transforming power of the Cause of God gave them a motivation to change their lives, an ability to work together, and a vision of their own capacity.

[1] *Bahá'í Education: A Compilation*, p. 46.

[2] Dr. Genevieve Coy in her 1926 article cited above states, 'Three years ago a reactionary Minister of Education said to the principal of another school: "The Tarbíyat School is the best school for girls in Ṭihrán. Alas that they are Bahá'ís!"'

[3] The Government took over the Nawnahálán Company, as well as Umaná', a foundation for the maintenance and purchase of Bahá'í community properties and holy places; see 'The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, 1979–83, p. 252.

[4] Dr. Moody settled in Írán in 1909, Dr. Clock in 1910, and Miss Stewart in 1921.

[5] 'International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. III, 1928–30, p. 33.

[6] The world-wide dispersion of the Iranian Bahá'ís will allow many communities to hear the stories of the earliest Bahá'í development activities. In preparing this article, the author interviewed eight individuals who had taught in or administered Bahá'í schools.

# 7. ANTON GRAF PROKESCH VON OSTEN – 'WORTHY REPRESENTATIVE OF EUROPE'*

KENT D. BEVERIDGE

REPRESENTATIVES of several European governments, including Austria, have intervened with Iranian authorities in recent years on behalf of the followers of the Bahá'í religion. The persecution suffered by the Bahá'ís under the current régime in Írán, and the subsequent diplomatic démarches, have received extensive media coverage. Concern on the part of European powers is not, however, unique to our times: diplomats from many of the same countries which have made official representations concerning the present situation facing the Bahá'ís in Írán, attempted to protect Bahá'u'lláh and His followers from the autocratic power of the Persian and Ottoman Imperial governments during the nineteenth century.

In 1852, three youths made an abortive attempt on the life of Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh. This incident gave the Sháh an excuse to imprison Bahá'u'lláh with the intent of silencing Him. Bahá'u'lláh's innocence in the matter was clearly established, but He and His family were nevertheless banished from Persia.[1] Although the Russian Minister in Ṭihrán, Prince Dolgorukov, extended an offer of asylum in his country, Bahá'u'lláh chose to go to Baghdád whereupon the Prince provided an escort for the journey from Persia to 'Iráq.

Other offers of aid include that of British citizenship made by Colonel Sir Arnold Burrows Kemball, representative of the British crown in Baghdád on the occasion of Bahá'u'lláh's subsequent transfer to Constantinople in 1863; and repeated remonstrations addressed to the French and Ottoman governments on Bahá'u'lláh's behalf by Arthur Comte de Gobineau, French diplomat in Ṭihrán and Athens.

Anton Graf Prokesch von Osten, Austrian ambassador to the Sublime Porte, stands out among the members of the diplomatic corps. Records in the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna reveal that Prokesch-Osten interceded with the Ottoman authorities on behalf of Bahá'u'lláh in order to have the edict banishing Him and His adherents from Turkey to the notorious penal colony of 'Akká in Palestine withdrawn.

Anton Prokesch's adult life was spent in the service of the Austrian Empire. Influenced by his experiences during the course of the French occupation of Styria in his youth, as well as by his 'enlightened' education, he abandoned his law studies at the age of eighteen to join an Austrian regiment fighting Napoleon's troops. After receiving several decorations for bravery, he was promoted to the General Staff, and soon rose to the position of adjutant to Prince Karl zu Schwarzenberg, victor of the Battle of Leipzig. Prokesch found army service confining and unsatisfactory following Schwarzenberg's death and requested a transfer to the Austrian navy, which was granted in 1824.

Prokesch made his first acquaintance with the Orient as a result of this transfer, for the Austrian navy's mission at that time was to protect the interests of Austrian merchants in the Levant who were enmeshed in the Greek war of independence.[2] However, Prokesch's early enthusiasm for the Greek cause, which had grown out of an interest in German romanticism and a sense of identification with Byron, soon withered; he wrote a former professor that, precisely because he loved Greece, the sight of the

* This is the revised version of an article published in the *Mittelungen des österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, no. 40, 1990. I wish to thank the editors of that journal for their kind permission to publish the article here.

[1] *Cf* Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1970), pp. 66 *et sec.*, and H.M. Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1980), chapters 15 and 19.

[2] *Cf* Anton Prokesch-Osten, *Geschichte des Abfalls der Griechen*, 5 vols. (Vienna: C. Gerold's Sohn, 1867) and Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964), 286 *et sec.*

Greeks who presently populated that sacred ground filled him with such pain.[1]

His reports showed such insight into 'Oriental affairs' that, when rising tensions between Muḥammad-'Alí Páshá, Viceroy of Egypt, and the Sublime Porte[2] made it necessary for the Austrian government to dispatch an observer to the Viceroy's court in Cairo, Prokesch was chosen. This marked the beginning of his diplomatic career. He was able to enhance Austria's standing in the Near East by mediating the settlement of a long-standing feud between the Viceroy and the Ottoman Sulṭan, Maḥmud II.[3]

As a result of his successful mission to Egypt, Prokesch was appointed Chief of the Eastern Mediterranean section of the Austrian navy's General Staff. Following the termination of the Greek war of independence, Prokesch was ordered to return to Vienna, arriving in February 1830. The success of his campaign against pirates in the area, during which he sank thirty-six pirate vessels with only two Austrian warships at his command, earned him the *Leopoldsorden* and knighthood. He took the surname 'of the East' at this juncture: Anton Ritter Prokesch von Osten.[4] The first of his numerous works on the Orient, which clearly express his love for the East, were published at this time: *Erinnerungen aus Aegypten und Kleinasien*;[5] *Das Land zwischen den Katarakten des Nil*, which included the results of his painstaking research on Egyptian antiquities and the first astronomically determined map of Nubia;[6] and *Die Reise in's heilige Land im Jahre 1829*.[7]

Prokesch-Osten returned to Eygpt as the Austrian envoy to the Viceroy's court in 1833, following Muḥammad-'Alí Páshá's conquest of Syria. His instructions were to join the British envoy in attempting to convince the Viceroy to reduce his demands upon Sulṭan Maḥmud II. The damage caused by Muḥammad-'Alí Páshá's Syrian campaign had nearly given the *coup de grâce* to the entire Ottoman Empire[8] and had therefore to be minimized lest Russia move into the void created by the weakening of the Sublime Porte's control over the area. Although the mission was successful—the Egyptians eventually withdrew from Syria under pressure from the European powers—the respite for the Sublime Porte proved to be temporary.

Once Prokesch-Osten returned from Egypt, he was viewed in Austria and Germany as the leading specialist in Oriental affairs due to his diplomatic activities, as well as to his careful research on Egyptian, Greek and Etruscan antiquities.[9] His next appointment, therefore, was to the unfilled post of minister to Greece, in which capacity he spent fifteen years working to bring a stable, viable government to power.[10] During this period, Prokesch-Osten was ennobled, receiving the title of Baron (*Freiherr*).

Prokesch-Osten was recalled in 1849 and appointed envoy, first to the Prussian court in Berlin, and later to the *Deutsche Bundestag* (the German federal Diet) at Frankfurt. Here he found himself pitted against Otto von Bismarck as Austria and Prussia vied for mastery of the German Confederation.[11]

While in Frankfurt, Prokesch-Osten first met

[1] Prokesch to Julius Schneller. *Cf* Julius Schneller, *Hinterlassene Werke*, hrg. Ernst Münch, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Hallberger's Buchhandlung, 1836), p. 313; and Friedrich Engel-Janosi, *Die Jugendzeit des Grafen Prokesch von Osten* (Innsbruck: Universitäts-Verlag Wagner, 1938), p. 54.

[2] *Cf* H. M. Balyuzi, *Muḥammad and the Course of Islám* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1976), pp. 414 and 418–9; and Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 6th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1956), pp. 722 *et sec.*

[3] Lawrence Ross Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten and Austria's Balkan Policy 1860–1872' (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1973), p. 2. At Prokesch's suggestion, Metternich intervened with the Sulṭán to have the cause of the feud, Admiral Khusraw Páshá, dismissed. *Cf* Anton Berger, *Prokesch-Osten: Ein Leben aus Altösterreich* (Graz: Verlag Ulr. Mosers Buchhalndlung, 1921), p. 62.

[4] Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', p. 3.

[5] 'Memories from Egypt and Asia Minor', published by Armbruster in 1829, was well received by the orientalists of the day.

[6] 'The Land between the Cataracts of the Nile' was published in 1831. As a result of his findings, Prokesch-Osten was invited to join the Institute of Archaeological Correspondence in Rome as well as the Imperial Academies of Science in Vienna and Berlin. *Cf* Berger, *Prokesch-Osten*, p. 63.

[7] 'The Journey to the Holy Land in 1829' was published by Gerold's in 1831. Prokesch visited 'Akká during this journey and forced 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, the Governor of 'Akká who had desecrated the flag flying above the Austrian consulate, to make restitution. *Cf* Berger, *Prokesch-Osten*, p. 64.

[8] Hitti, *History*, p. 725.

[9] Kissinger calls Prokesch-Osten 'the Austrian diplomat best acquainted with the Ottoman Empire' and 'Metternich's expert on the Eastern question' (*World Restored*, p. 335).

[10] Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', p. 3.

[11] Prokesch-Osten, who was elected President of the Diet, was instrumental in convincing Frederick Wilhelm IV not to accept the imperial crown offered him by the Diet. In October 1850, when the tension between Austria and Prussia was at its height, Prokesch-Osten disregarded instructions from his Foreign Minister tantamount to a declaration of war and, together with the Prussian envoy Manteuffel, laid the foundation for the Olmütz settlement. For his services at Frankfurt, he received the *Grosskreuz* of the *Leopoldsorden* from Emperor Franz Josef I.

Arthur Comte de Gobineau, recording in his diary: 'Every evening with Comte Gobineau and his wife from Martinique.'[1] In the summary with which he closed his diary entries for the year 1854, Prokesch-Osten noted, 'With thanks I accept the Gobineaus, whom this year brought me. Both good and spiritually mature. Through him, to my delight, introduced to Chinese and Indian literature.'[2] Prokesch-Osten's correspondence with Gobineau, which began at this time, lasted until the former's death in 1876.[3]

Austria's foreign policy concerning the Ottoman Empire was vitally important since the course of the Danube River—the aorta of the Austrian monarchy, as Radetzky had styled it—flowed through Ottoman territory to empty into the Black Sea. With this in mind, Austria endeavoured to strengthen the Ottoman Empire against the encroachment of Imperial Russia, and, during the second half of the nineteenth century, against the rising tide of nationalism in the Balkans.[4]

His background made Anton Freiherr Prokesch von Osten a natural choice for *internuncio*[5] of the Austrian Empire to the Sublime Porte. His appointment in 1855—at the age of sixty[6]—was both the culmination of a life of service to the Austrian Empire and the fulfillment of a long-cherished desire.[7] The legation in Constantinople was Austria's foremost mission in the Near East. All other legations and consulates in this area reported to the *internuncio*, who in turn reported directly to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Vienna.

Prokesch-Osten had long desired this important position, not only because of his familiarity with the Porte and with many of the officials in Constantinople, but also because of his affinity for the Orient. He shared with Gobineau the feeling that European civilization was decaying, and that a wave of renewal sweeping westward out of the uncorrupted Middle East offered the only possibility of reversing the ever-increasing decadence of Europe,[8] a conviction reflecting the fascination he had felt for Ottoman customs and institutions since the Greek war of independence.[9] Although he clearly saw the signs of political disintegration within the Ottoman Empire, Prokesch-Osten's belief in Ottoman strength and potential was a constant theme in his actions and reports throughout his term of service in Constantinople.[10]

This term ended in 1872, when Prokesch-Osten resigned his diplomatic post and retired from public life. The death of 'Álí Pásḥá, a statesman whom he revered, on 7 September 1871, had been the final factor in his decision.[11] At the ceremony in which Prokesch-Osten tendered his formal resignation, Emperor Franz Josef I elevated him to the hereditary rank of count (*Graf*), as Berger has it, in order that it

[1] Diary entry, 10 July 1854. Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna (hereafter HHStA). Also quoted in Friedrich Engel-Janosi, 'Der Briefwechsel Gobineaus mit Prokesch-Osten', *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung* 48 (1934), p. 457.

[2] Diary entry, close of 1854. Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, HHStA. Also quoted ibid.

[3] Partially collected in *Correspondance entre le Comte de Gobineau et le Comte de Prokesch-Osten (1854–1876)*, ed. Clément Serpeille de Gobineau (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1933).

[4] 'Almost from the time of the Congress of Vienna, the maintenance of the status quo in the Balkans, more precisely the preservation of European Turkey for as long as possible, had been a cardinal principle of Habsburg foreign policy. This was in fact a corollary to Austrian rivalry with Imperial Russia, where Turkey had long been viewed as the primary obstacle in Russia's southward expansion.' Hugo Hantisch, *Die Geschichte Österreichs 1848–1918* (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1953), pp. 425–26. Translated in Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', p. 6. See also Kissinger, *World Restored*, pp. 288–91. This policy changed, however, as Beust became Minister of Foreign Affairs. He viewed the Balkans primarily as an area in which to make concessions to France and Russia in return for support of his German policy.

[5] Although normally reserved for Vatican envoys, this was the traditional title of the Austrian plenipotentiary to the Sublime Porte, who had also represented the interests of the Vatican at the Sultán's court for many years. *Cf* Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', p. 1, and literature cited therein.

[6] Prokesch-Osten was born in Graz on 10 December 1795.

[7] Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', p. 5. He was appointed as a result of his successful mediation during the Vienna Conference, which had been convened to find a compromise solution to the Crimean War. Prokesch-Osten informed Beust that the prospect of negotiation with 'wise 'Álí, the Grand Vizier, instead of with Bismarck at Frankfurt, seemed to him like an Oriental vision of the blessed.' Friedrich Engel-Janosi, 'Austria in the Summer of 1870', *Journal of Central European Affairs* (7 April 1947), p. 342.

[8] 'L'esprit canaille, qui a la haute main en Europe, me dégoûte jusqu'aux entrailles. Je crois que nous marchons à pas de géant vers la barbarie la plus hideuse, résultant de la pourriture de la civilisation.' Prokesch-Osten to Gobineau, 5 December 1860, *Correspondance*, p. 218. *Cf* Engel-Janosi, 'Briefwechsel', pp. 457–58.

[9] Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', p. 5.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Alexander Freiherr von Hübner, the Austrian minister in Paris, who had dealt with 'Álí Pásḥá during the course of the international conference held there in 1856, also thought highly of him. *Cf* Alexander von Hübner, *Neun Jahre der Erinnerung eines österreichischen Botschafters in Paris unter dem zweiten Kaiserreich*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Gebr. Patel, 1904), p. 243. Even Beust had been favorably impressed by 'Álí Pásḥá. *Cf* Engel-Janosi, 'Summer of 1870', p. 342.

be recognized with what regret the Emperor let him leave the diplomatic service.[1] During his final audience with the Sulṭán, he was awarded the Order of Osmanië with diamonds for his services to the Ottoman Empire, and, as the steamer carrying him away from Constantinople rounded the Golden Horn, the cannons ashore fired a parting salute.

Following his retirement from diplomatic service, Prokesch-Osten collected material for his memoirs—which were never completed—and traveled extensively in Europe and North Africa until his death on 26 October 1876.

Anton Graf Prokesch von Osten first learned of the Bábí religion while reading a manuscript of Gobineau's book *Religions et Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale*.[2] He expressed his favorable impression of the teachings of the Báb in a letter to Gobineau dated 5 January 1866:

'I am on page 336 of your book, in the middle of the teachings of the Bábís, and close to becoming a Bábí myself. Everything is wonderful in the history of this historical and humanitarian phenomenon, even the ignorance of Europe about a matter of such colossal importance. I, worthy representative of Europe in this respect, know nothing of it. I heard of it from you.'

He notes that he is most impressed with 'the explanation of evil as the sole result of the recession of the emanation from its source'. This doctrine, he remarks, 'seems to me to be more worthy, more exalted than everything that has been previously said by any philosopher or founder of a religion'. Prokesch-Osten also states that 'the teaching with regard to the prophets pleases me infinitely, as it is conciliatory and completely excludes all fanaticism'.[3]

During a dinner which Prokesch-Osten gave at his residence on 6 January of the same year he learned from a guest that Bahá'u'lláh, 'the present-day Báb', was interned in Adrianople.[4] He records in his diary that this guest, Comte Rochechounard, the French *chargé d'affaires* in Ṭihrán, 'spoke a great deal about Bábism'.[5]

Prokesch-Osten broached the subject of the 'Báb' [Bahá'u'lláh] and the 'Bábí' religion at his next audience with 'Álí Páshá on 8 January, and recorded that 'Álí Páshá spoke of Bahá'u'lláh as 'a man of great distinction, exemplary conduct, great moderation, and extremely dignified demeanor'; he expressed the opinion that the Bahá'í teachings deserved great respect as they cleared away certain anomalies which Islám had taken from the Judaic and Christian teachings, such as the struggle between good and evil in which God, the Omnipotent, is nevertheless powerless against evil, or the concept of eternal punishment. From a political point of view, however, he maintained that these doctrines were unacceptable both in Persia and in Turkey, as they upheld the sovereignty of the Imámate. 'Álí Páshá added that this view was the origin of the centuries-long dispute between the Shí'ihs and the Sunnís, but noted at the same time that the Shí'ih government in Persia had since abandoned the position which the Bahá'ís were now championing.[6]

Prokesch-Osten, intrigued by all that he had heard and read, directed a query regarding 'the Báb'[7] to the Austrian consul in Adrianople,

[1] Berger, *Prokesch-Osten*, p. 109.

[2] Prokesch-Osten to Gobineau, 29 December 1865, *Correspondance*, p. 285.

[3] Prokesch-Osten to Gobineau, 5 January 1866, *Correspondance*, p. 287.

[4] 'The present-day Báb': Bahá'u'lláh announced in 1863 that He was the Manifestation foretold by the Báb. The majority of the Bábís' accepted Bahá'u'lláh's claim and gradually became known as 'Bahá'ís', i.e. followers of Bahá'u'lláh. Although Prokesch-Osten and Gobineau, following a widespread misconception, referred to the exiles in Adrianople as 'Babys', this paper will give them their correct name to avoid misunderstandings.

[5] Diary entry, 6 January 1866.

[6] Diary entry, 8 January 1866, and Prokesch-Osten to Gobineau, 10 January 1866, *Correspondance*, pp. 288–89. The successorship of Muḥammad constitutes a major difference between Shí'ih and Sunní Islám. The Shí'ihs believe that Muḥammad designated His son-in-law, 'Alí, to be the Imám, or leader, of His people. The Imamate was hereditary: each Imám was to appoint His successor from among Muḥammad's lineal descendants. The Sunnis, on the other hand, uphold the Caliphs (from *khalífah*, meaning 'successor' or 'vice-gerent'). The first Caliphs were elected from among the companions of the Prophet, but the Caliphate soon became appointive, leading to the formation of dynasties. *Cf* Dwight M. Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion: A History of Islam in Persia and Irak* (London: Luzac, 1933); Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1985); and Balyuzi, *Muḥammad and the Course of Islam*.

As the Bahá'í religion confirms the legitimacy of the Imámate, Ottoman officials felt that the Bahá'ís would deny the authority of the Caliphate. However, Bahá'u'lláh had charged His followers not to interfere in partisan politics and to render obedience to every just government. This would have precluded, according to Bahá'ís, the challenge to the Caliphate feared by Ottoman authorities.

[7] Prokesch-Osten, a meticulous person, recorded the letters which he wrote, along with their dates, recipients (including city), and a note concerning their contents, in the back of his diaries. This entry thus reads '10 Jan, Camerloher, Anfrage wegen Bab, Adrianople'. In addition, he often noted the date of the letter to which he was responding.

Gustav Wilhelm von Camerloher on 10 January.[1] Unfortunately, the text of this letter has not yet come to light.

Camerloher reports in his reply[2] that Bahá'u'lláh, commonly known in Adrianople as Anshad Effendi,[3] had been interned there for the past three years, along with his two wives, almost all of his relatives and more than sixty of his followers. The 'Khán', as Camerloher refers to Bahá'u'lláh, was formerly the Shaykhu'l-Islám of Persia, but had been banished from that country due to his 'reformatory sectarian endeavours with strong Sunní tendencies', whereupon he traveled to Baghdád. Following Persian protests, he was ordered to Constantinople, and then interned in Adrianople. Camerloher states that Bahá'u'lláh receives a monthly allowance of 5,000 *rials* from the Ottoman government;[4] from his followers, all of whom live in the patriarchal house-hold, he receives the proceeds of their activities as tobacconists, dealers in carpets or antiquities, confectioners, carpenters, painters or lamplighters; and that this money is then shared with each according to his needs and merits. According to Camerloher, Bahá'u'lláh is 'barely thirty-six years of age',[5] yet he accepts the strongly Oriental homage paid him by his followers, including even his brothers and relatives, who approach him on their knees, as his due. He never leaves his house, but is affable and genial to his visitors. Sulaymán Páshá, the former Válí of Adrianople, whom Camerloher styles as Shaykh of a Darvish lodge, is reported as having visited Bahá'u'lláh several times, whereas Bahá'u'lláh does not associate with other officials. Camerloher further reports that it is rumoured in the city that Bahá'u'lláh brought great riches with him to Adrianople, 'gold, precious stones and other valuables', but that he has had to sell many of them, 'particularly magnificent horses as well as a carpet at a price of 80,000 *rials*'. Camerloher closes by stating 'he is esteemed by everyone everywhere.'

Although the details concerning Bahá'u'lláh's age and wealth are erroneous, Camerloher's report basically agrees with the accounts of Áqá Ḥusayn-i-Áshchí and Áqá Muḥammad-Riḍáy-i-Qannád-i-Shirází, two of Bahá'u'lláh's adherents who resided in Adrianople at that time.[6] In order to gather this information within the space of one or two days, Camerloher must have spoken with his contacts in the city. The reverence with which Bahá'u'lláh was generally viewed is obvious in that, although He was a Persian of Shí'ih background exiled amongst Sunnís, the report contains no negative information; in fact, Bahá'u'lláh is even attributed with Sunní tendencies, an apparent sign of the informants' approbation.

Prokesch-Osten wrote several letters to Europe regarding the Bahá'í religion: his letters to Sir Henry Bulwer[7] and Alexander Freiherr von Warsberg,[8] for example, attest to his admiration for both Bahá'u'lláh and His teachings. It has been impossible, however, to ascertain whether he communicated further with Gob-

[1] Camerloher, born in Liedolsheim, Bavaria in 1825, received Austrian citizenship simultaneously with his appointment as Austrian consul in Adrianople on 31 October 1859. Although knighted for services to the Imperial crown on 1 November 1869, he was consequently suspended on 3 December 1874 following the discovery that he had been embezzling official funds. He died shortly thereafter, on 29 June 1875.

[2] Camerloher to Prokesch-Osten, 14 January 1866, Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, Consular & Diplomat. Correspondenz 1864–1871, HHStA.

[3] The Kurds referred to Bahá'u'lláh as *Íshán* ('They') during His sojourn in Sulaymániyyih, a name by which He was also known in Adrianople according to Rosenberg's reports, published in *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions 1844–1944: Some Contempary Western Accounts*, ed. Moojan Momen (Oxford: George Ronald, 1981), pp. 194–97. Adib Taherzadeh states that He was known as 'Shaykh Effendi', in *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 2, *Adrianople 1863–1868* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1977), p. 63.

[4] Momen notes in *Religions*, p. 188n, that 'this figure represents the sum of the monthly allowances payable to each member of Bahá'u'lláh's family and those exiled with Him.' 'Álí Páshá had informed Prokesch-Osten that the allowances were paid by the Persian government (diary entry, 8 January 1866).

[5] 'Barely thirty-six years of age' – Bahá'u'lláh was forty-nine at the time.

[6] Cited in Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh*, chapters 27–29.

[7] Contained in Korrespondenz mit H. Bulwer, Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, HHStA. Sir Henry Bulwer was the British minister to the Sublime Porte from 1858 to 1867. London and Vienna had mutual distrust of Imperial Russian expansionism as a bond. Furthermore, it was Britain, with her industry and navy, that had the power to speak with a decisive voice in any Balkan crisis. This power, along with their similar interests, lead to the common Anglo-Austrian front in questions concerning the Balkans, which lasted until the advent of the Anglo-German antagonism in the early twentieth century. *Cf* Beaber, 'Prokesch von Osten', *passim*. However, it is obvious from their correspondence that Prokesch-Osten and Bulwer were bound by ties of friendship based on shared philosophical convictions as well as by those of a common policy.

[8] Contained in Korrespondenz mit Alex. v. Warsberg, Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, HHStA. Prokesch-Osten's friend since childhood, Warsberg was regarded as one of the leading German-language poets of the period. He was a close friend of the Empress Elisabeth as well, and accompanied her on her trips to the Orient.

ineau about the Bahá'ís, as their correspondence between October 1866 and May 1868 is missing.[1] Unfortunately, a comparison of the index of correspondence in Prokesch-Osten's diary with the published *Correspondance entre le Comte de Gobineau et le Comte de Prokesch-Osten* reveals that other letters which he addressed to Gobineau are also absent from that collection.[2]

It was during this eighteen-month period that events with grave consequences for the Bahá'í religion took place: one of Bahá'u'lláh's half-brothers, known as Ṣubḥ-i-Azal, contested Bahá'u'lláh's claim to be the Manifestation of God promised by the Báb, and advanced his own claim to that station. Although the great majority of the community loyally followed Bahá'u'lláh, the Bahá'ís feel that this open break, and the subsequent divisions that it caused among the followers of the Báb, weakened their community in the eyes of its enemies and emboldened them to move against it.[3] Unsigned letters, purporting to have been written by Bahá'ís and boasting of their numbers, were covertly thrown into the houses of notables in Constantinople, which heightened the fears of such officials as were already concerned about the number of Bahá'ís in Adrianople.[4] In addition, erroneous stories about the deeds and plans of the Bahá'ís were circulated. One of these intimated that Bahá'u'lláh was involved with Bulgarian revolutionaries, which so alarmed Fu'ád Pásḥá, the Minister of Foreign Affairs,[5] that he pressed the Sulṭan to take action.[6] Thus, 'Abdu'l-'Azíz came to issue a *farman* dated 26 July 1868 condemning Bahá'u'lláh and several of His followers to perpetual banishment in the penal colony of 'Akká (St. Jean d'Acre), stipulating their close confinement and forbidding them association with each other or with the local inhabitants.[7] The rationale for this drastic action was the accusation that the exiles had grievously erred and had also led others astray.

According to documents in the archives of the British Public Record Office, the Reverend Mr. Rosenberg, a Protestant missionary from Britain, had acquainted the foreign consuls in Adrianople, including Camerloher, with the plight of Bahá'u'lláh.[8] Mr. John D. Blunt, the British consul at Adrianople, sent a dispatch to his minister in Constantinople, Sir Henry Elliot, stating: 'I do not know what the tenets of this 'Babee' sect are. The Reverend Mr. Rosenberg and Boghos Agha [head of the local Protestant community] believe that they are adopted from the Holy Scripture, and this belief naturally excited their sympathy and zeal on behalf of the Shaykh [Bahá'u'lláh].' Furthermore, Blunt confirms the information that Camerloher had previously supplied to Prokesch-Osten, namely that Bahá'u'lláh 'has led a most exemplary life in this city', and 'that he is regarded with sympathy, mingled with respect and esteem, by the native Mahomedans [sic]'.[9]

Áqá Ḥusayn-i-Áshchí relates in his account of that period:

'... all of a sudden the consuls of the foreign powers became aware of what was happening and together they sought the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. The soldiers stationed around the house, blocking the way to everyone, could not prevent the consuls from entering. After paying their homage, they said they had come as a body, and any one of them whom Bahá'u'lláh might command would take up the issue with the Turks and ward off this evil.'[10]

[1] *Correspondance*, p. 320n.

[2] For example, the letter dated 28 August 1868, in which he describes his intervention on behalf of Bahá'u'lláh, as well as those dated 23 June and 11 December 1869; 20 April, 1 November and 2 December 1870; etc. Cf Engel-Janosi, 'Briefwechsel', pp. 456–58.

[3] *Cf* Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, chapter 10.

[4] *Cf* Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 252.

[5] Fu'ád Pásḥá had taken over the Foreign Ministry from 'Áli Pásḥá in 1867.

[6] Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 254. These accusations are said to have originated with the followers of Ṣubḥ-i-Azal. *Cf* Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 179.

The extremely unstable situation in the Balkans during that period helps to explain the reaction of 'Áli Pásḥá and Fu'ád Pásḥá. In the summer of 1868, the Russians were smuggling arms on a large scale to the Serbians through the Danubian Principalities (two provinces of European Turkey), and local authorities were unable to stop them. The ruler of the Ottoman province of Serbia, which bordered on the Austrian Empire, had just been assassinated, and civil war was threatening to break out between the rival clans of the Karageorgevichs and the Obrenovichs. An uneasy peace was barely being maintained in Montenegro following an uprising which had been bloodily quelled by Turkish troops in 1863. Moreover, tensions were running high between the Muslim Turks and the Christian Bulgarians, who were also incited and supported by the Russians. Agents of all these factions were operating throughout European Turkey.

[7] *Cf* p.785, n.2 and Taherzadeh, *Revelation*, vol. 2, pp. 402 and 408–9.

[8] See Momen, *Religions*, chapter 11, where the sources are quoted in full.

[9] Ibid., p. 189.

[10] Quoted in Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 256.

According to this account, Bahá'u'lláh categorically declined their 'oft-repeated offer' of assistance. In an interview with a European living in Haifa some years later, 'Abdu'l-Bahá further clarified Bahá'u'lláh's stance:

'The European consuls in Adrianople offered to prevent [the banishment] but [Bahá'u'lláh] explained to them that if they thought it good to take steps on his behalf, they should do this without his petition and independently from him, but that he was decided to follow the decree of God. Thus he came to 'Akká.'[1]

The descriptions found in the government archives of the European powers involved concerning the circumstances surrounding these offers differ somewhat from the above accounts. For example, in a dispatch dated 10 August to Elliot regarding this matter, Blunt enclosed an appeal for the protection of the British consulate, written in Turkish and said to be from Bahá'u'lláh, and reported that similar appeals had been addressed to Blunt's colleagues in Adrianople.[2] Recently discovered evidence, however, suggests that the initiative for petitioning consular protection may have come from within the Christian community in Adrianople.[3]

Camerloher apparently wished to discuss the situation and visited Blunt shortly after the latter had received this appeal. Blunt later reported that Camerloher, who had already submitted the case to his superior, Prokesch-Osten, had 'strong reasons' to believe that Bahá'u'lláh and his companions were to be delivered into the power of the Persian government.[4] As neither of the consuls felt that they could interfere officially without instructions, they sent telegrams to their Embassies in Constantinople requesting guidance.[5]

The departure of the exiles did not take place as originally planned; Bahá'u'lláh refused to leave Adrianople until the debts which His agent had incurred in the bazaar were paid. Bahá'u'lláh and His followers finally departed Adrianople on 12 August, escorted by a Turkish captain, Ḥasan Effendi, and a squad of soldiers.

Although Camerloher's dispatch of 10 August is missing, Prokesch-Osten's papers contain a copy of his reply, dated 19 August. Here Prokesch-Osten maintains that when one divests the exile of the Bahá'ís of 'incorrect alarms, (e.g., the surrender of the [Bahá'ís] to the Persians or their interrogation by the Shaykhu'l-Islám, etc.)' what remains is a 'police measure, more or less severely executed, which is within the authority of every government, and in which, for that very reason, no independent government will brook interference.' He himself, he informs Camerloher, had spoken with Fu'ád Páshá, 'who is as enlightened as any European minister', about the Bahá'ís and believes that Sir Henry had also done so. Bahá'u'lláh and his companions, Prokesch-Osten continues, are being banished to 'Akká, 'a less dangerous point', not because of their doctrines, but rather because of the 'divisive force inherent in every sect'. Such a force, he states, is especially dangerous in the Balkans, as 'certain agents, sprinkled over the entire European Turkey, have the crumbling away of the population in all directions as their objective'.

As further justification for his inability to intercede for the Bahá'ís, Prokesch-Osten mentions the innumerable examples of intolerance toward dissension that Christian history—not

[1] Quoted in G[eorg] D[avid] Hardegg, 'Kurzer Abriß der Geschichte einer Sekte unter den Muhamedanern in Persien', *Süddeutsche Warte*, vol. 28, no. 29 (20 July 1871); English translation from Rev. Henry R. Coleman, *Light from the East: Travels and Researches in Bible Lands in Pursuit of More Light in Masonry* (Louisville, KY: by the author, 1890), pp. 347–49. Hardegg was the head of the German Temple Society colony in Haifa and the recipient of a Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.

[2] Balyuzi reports, ibid., p. 457, that a copy of this appeal, 'eight lines written in Turkish with a signature and seal both reading Ḥusayn-'Alí' was found in the archives of the French Foreign Office. The handwriting, however, is neither that of Bahá'u'lláh nor any of his amanuenses. 'Expert opinion on documents in Turkish states that they "were written by non-Turks and contain numerous mistakes of grammar and spelling. Some misspellings are of Arabic words, and this suggests that the scribes were non-Muslim, possibly Armenians"', ibid., p. 257.

[3] Momen, *Religions*, pp. 192–97.

[4] It will not be known what these reasons were until the text of Camerloher's letter to Prokesch-Osten is found. Although the Bahá'ís were not turned over 'to an agent of the Sháh' in Gallipoli, as expressed by Blunt and Camerloher in their telegrams, it is known that Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥusayn Khán-i-Qazvíní, the Persian ambassador to the Sublime Porte, issued 'telegraphic and written instructions' that the injunctions of the *farman* be carried out to the letter, and appointed a representative in 'Akká to ensure that these orders were obeyed. These actions, clearly interference in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, appear to confirm Camerloher's fears. The Ambassador further informed the Persian consuls in 'Iráq and Egypt that the Porte had withdrawn its protection from the Bahá'ís.

[5] Momen, *Religions*, pp. 189–90. The statement that the 'Baron [Prokesch-Osten] is personally acquainted with the Shaykh [Bahá'u'lláh]', contained in the report, appears to be an exaggeration. Prokesch-Osten's index of correspondence shows the receipt of a letter from Camerloher dated 10 August, which is unfortunately not to be found among his papers.

only in the Middle Ages, but also in recent years—contains.[1] Compared with these, Prokesch-Osten maintains, this policy measure against the Bahá'ís barely deserves mention. 'This does not excuse intolerance, but it weakens our voice when we preach tolerance of dissenters, who as a sect of Islám disquiet the faith of the masses.'

Prokesch-Osten indicates that he is familiar with the teachings of the Bahá'í religion:

'I know the teachings of the Bahá'ís [sic]. The naïve report of the Rev. Mr. Rosenberg proves that he knows nothing of them, and that he has the most peculiar illusions [regarding them]. In the teachings of the Bábís there are views concerning the creation of evil and concerning the final reconciliation of the same in God to which an English missionary is as little likely to soar as a Turkish mullá—and the latter is probably more likely.'[2]

Gobineau wrote Prokesch-Osten on 25 August to say that he had read of the 'incident', in the *Courrier d'Orient*, but did not agree with the Ottoman policy towards the Bahá'ís, 'who have requested their [Ottoman] support and are willing to become their subjects.' If the government persecutes the Bahá'ís, it will lose the special favour with which many Bahá'ís in the páshálíks of Van and Baghdád, as well as the Bahá'ís in Persia, view it. This special favour could be 'a strong force opposed to the very aggressive disposition of the Qájár dynasty'. As the Bahá'ís very definitely require assistance, Gobineau believes they could receive it from the Russians, which would not be in Turkey's best interests. Gobineau notes in closing that he feels he is doing something useful for the Porte when he intervenes for 'the poor Babís' and pleads for their protection.[3]

In spite of his rather brusque reply to Camerloher's dispatch, Prokesch-Osten records in his diary that he traveled to the Bosporus for another audience with Fu'ád Páshá on 24 August, 'mainly because of the Adrianople ban'.[4] His dispatch to Camerloher dated 12 August and the letter he wrote to Gobineau on 28 August, which describe his activities on behalf of Bahá'u'lláh and the Bahá'ís, are unavailable. However, Blunt, in his dispatch to Elliot dated 15 August, includes information which Camerloher, in turn, had provided regarding statements made by Fu'ád Páshá during this audience.[5]

Prokesch-Osten was apparently acting on his own behalf—not in his official capacity as *internuncio* of the Austrian Empire—when he intervened in support of the persecuted Bahá'ís. This is substantiated by his inclusion of the entire correspondence with Camerloher concerning the Bahá'ís among his private papers, rather than in the official embassy files. In fact, no mention of the Bahá'ís has yet been found in Prokesch-Osten's official dispatches to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is probable that he felt the Foreign Minister, Friedrich Freiherr von Beust—who considered the Near East to be of secondary importance—would neither understand the doctrines of Bahá'u'lláh nor be concerned about His persecution or that of His followers. Thus Prokesch-Osten was required as *internuncio* to issue instructions to his subordinate in Adrianople not to interfere in the matter, which must have been, at the very least, personally distasteful.

'I recognize you very well indeed in that which you did for the [Bahá'ís],' Gobineau responded on 31 August. 'I am delighted that there were exaggerations in the reports [concerning the treatment of the Bahá'ís], but I believe that Fu'ád is not fully informed.' Gobineau further reports that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are spreading rapidly amongst the 200,000 or 300,000 Persians living in the Ottoman Empire, and adds that the missionaries are '*imbéciles*' if they believe that they can make an impression on 'the enthusiasm of the new faith'.

According to Gobineau, Bahá'u'lláh 'has turned to me several times with reports of per-

[1] It is evident from his other writings that Prokesch-Osten was thinking of the atrocities committed by the Greeks during their war of independence (never reported in the European press, although Turkish atrocities against the Greeks had been given wide coverage), as well as of recent atrocities in Rumania; he expressly mentions Bratiano (or Bratianu), the Minister-President of Romania.

[2] Prokesch-Osten to Camerloher, 19 August 1868, Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, Consular & Diplomat, Correspondenz 1864–1871, HHStA.

[3] Gobineau to Prokesch-Osten, 25 August 1868, *Correspondance*, p. 332.

[4] Diary entry, 24 August 1868. He further records in his diary that he visited 'Alí Páshá on 16 August, and Elliot (the British minister), Bourée (the French minister), and Ignatief (the Russian minister) on 24 August. Elliot visited Prokesch-Osten on 20 August. It is probable that the situation of the Bahá'ís was discussed during these meetings.

[5] Momen, *Religions*, p. 192.

secutions in Manṣúríyyah, Egypt, which were instigated by the Persian consul there'.[1] Gobineau states his conviction that the Sublime Porte has a very serious interest in this matter, and not only because the Bahá'ís in Persia, if properly cultivated, could serve as a counterweight to the Qájárs.[2]

Gobineau enclosed a letter he had written to Bahá'u'lláh, not only describing the actions Prokesch-Osten had taken on Bahá'u'lláh's behalf but also attempting to reassure Him, and asked Prokesch-Osten to see that it was forwarded to Him. From Gobineau's letter it is clear that Prokesch-Osten had spoken with more than one member of the Ottoman government regarding Bahá'u'lláh.

Camerloher had responded to Prokesch-Osten's letter of 19 August on 22 August with a critique of the Ottoman policy regarding the Bahá'ís very similar to that of Gobineau.[3] Prokesch-Osten must have admonished him that the parallels drawn by Camerloher between the government's treatment of the Bahá'ís and its treatment of the Bulgarian Catholic Union were incorrect, for in a later dispatch dated 12 September Camerloher states that he was referring less to the concrete case of the Bahá'ís than to the general consequences derived from Fu'ád Pásha's actions.[4] Camerloher reports in the latter dispatch that he has arranged for Gobineau's letter to Bahá'u'lláh to be delivered via Gallipoli, and encloses a photograph of Bahá'u'lláh, 'the noble-hearted martyr', characterizing the portrait as '*wohlgetroffen*' (a good likeness), which would imply that he had seen Him.

Another enclosure to Camerloher's dispatch was a German translation of a letter written in Turkish from "Abbás Effendi, son of Ḥusayn' [i.e., son of Bahá'u'lláh], to the Rev. Rosenberg. Camerloher had probably translated the letter himself as his knowledge of Turkish was one of the reasons cited for awarding him the post of Austrian consul.

According to this letter, the trip from Adrianople to Gallipoli required six days. When the Bahá'ís arrived in Gallipoli they were met by a Turkish major who had brought a group of Bahá'ís arrested in Constantinople.[5] The major carried an order banishing Bahá'u'lláh, two of His brothers and another of His followers, as well as two of His enemies, followers of Ṣubḥ-i-Azal, to 'Akká.[6] The remaining Bahá'ís were to be taken to Constantinople and scattered in small groups among various fortresses throughout the Ottoman Empire. The Bahá'ís replied to this threat of dispersal that they would prefer to be 'drowned in the sea, together with wives and children, or have our heads cut off' than to be separated from Bahá'u'lláh. The letter mentions that they sent a written petition to the English legation asking that the legation intervene for them at the Sublime Porte, and that they were 'in despair of their lives' as no answer had yet been received. It closes with the writer's acknowledgement of the Rev. Rosenberg's zeal and goodwill, and conveys Bahá'u'lláh's greetings to the Rev. Rosenberg, Boghos Effendi and Artin Effendi (another member of the local Armenian Protestant community), as well as the greetings of the writer and the other Bahá'ís.[7]

[1] Bahá'u'lláh 'has turned to me several times with reports of persecutions in Manṣúriyyah, Egypt, which were instigated by the Persian consul there'. For instance, the extortion of money from Ḥájí 'Abdu'l-Qásim-i-Shirázi, the arrest and exile of Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥaydar-'Alí and six other Bahá'ís to the Sudan, and the imprisonment of Nabíl-i-Aẓm. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 178; Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 265–67; and *Stories from the Delight of Hearts: The Memoirs of Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥaydar-'Alí*, trans. A. Q. Faizi (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1980), pp. 29 *et sec.*

[2] Gobineau to Prokesch-Osten, 31 August 1868, *Correspondance*, p. 333.

[3] Camerloher to Prokesch-Osten, 22 August 1868, Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, Consular & Diplomat, Correspondenz 1864–1871, HHStA.

[4] Camerloher to Prokesch-Osten, 12 September 1868, Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, Consular & Diplomat. Correspondenz 1864–1871, HHStA. He also noted that Khurshíd Páshá had been absent from Adrianople for the past four weeks on an 'inspection tour of *bulgaricis*', i.e., Bulgarian affairs.

[5] Among these prisoners were Mírzá 'Alí-i-Sayyáh, Mishkín-Qalam, Áqá 'Abdu'l-Ghaffár-i-Iṣfahání, Muḥammad-Baqír-i-Qahvih-chí, and Darvísh Ṣidq-'Alí. *Cf* Taherzadeh, *Revelation*, vol. 2, pp. 408–9.

[6] According to this letter from "Abbás Effendi, son of Ḥusayn', contained in Nachlass Prokesch-Osten, Consular & Diplomat. Correspondenz 1864–1871, HHStA: 'our honored Lord and Master (Shaykh Ḥusayn-'A.) and two (of his?) brothers, along with one other and two enemies of the Shaykh.' The two brothers of Bahá'u'lláh were Mírzá Músá and Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí, the other Darvísh Ṣidq-'Alí, and the two enemies, Siyyid Muḥammad-i-Iṣfahání and Áqá Ján Big.

[7] It cannot be ascertained whether 'Abbás Effendi was indeed the author of this letter until the original is found. However, the contents of the translation give no reason to suspect that He did not write it. It would seem that this letter was written between 17 and 20 August 1868, which would support Taherzadeh's theory (*Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 403) that the exiles were first informed of their final destination following their arrival in Gallipoli.

The original order assigning the Bahá'ís various places of exile was eventually revoked; the authorities in Constantinople instead decided to send all of the Bahá'ís, with the exception of those specifically exiled to Cyprus in the original *farman*, to 'Akká. However, the Ottoman government agreed to pay passage only for those persons whose names appeared on their prisoner lists. Much to the surprise of the officials in Gallipoli, several Bahá'ís not included on the Ottoman registers came forward to pay their own passage on the Austrian Lloyd steamship which departed from Alexandria on 21 August 1868. In Alexandria, the exiles were transhipped to a second Austrian Lloyd steamer bound for Haifa, the port in Palestine closest to 'Akká.[1]

The final letter regarding Bahá'u'lláh's banishment to 'Akká which has come to light in the course of research was written by Gobineau to Prokesch-Osten on 18 November 1868. 'I have received a long letter from [Bahá'u'lláh]', he writes. 'He is in St. Jean d'Acre, held prisoner in a barracks which stands in ruins, along with some of his companions—men, women, and children ...' Gobineau then describes the situation in 'Akká as related to him by Bahá'u'lláh.[2]

Concerning the reasons for this exile, Gobineau writes that he is willing to believe Fu'ád Pásha, who had assured Prokesch-Osten that 'the money and intrigues of the Persian legation [in Constantinople] have nothing to do with this matter; what then remains is a Turkish brutality, committed without the least excuse.'[3] The missionaries' conjecture that the Bahá'ís wish to convert to Christianity is '*par trop ridicule*', he writes, 'when one believes that he is God or companion of God, and leaves his country and suffers all of the persecutions of the world for this [belief], then he does not convert to another faith.'

Gobineau states he is attempting to do what he can to help these unfortunates, '... but you know how much chance I have of being understood'. He then adds that Bahá'u'lláh has asked him to convey his gratitude to Prokesch-Osten for the latter's interest in his situation and that of his companions.

Gobineau emphasizes in closing that he cannot recommend this affair to Prokesch-Osten enough, '... for I fear that my book [i.e., *Religions et Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale*], by calling attention to Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alí and his followers, had something to do with their persecution. I feel obligated by my conscience.'

The motives for the exile of Bahá'u'lláh and his followers from Adrianople to 'Akká are portrayed in the writings of those European diplomats acquainted with the situation as essentially political rather than religious in nature. The Ottoman officials recognized that both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, in upholding the sovereignty of the Imamate, denied that the Caliphate was divinely ordained.[4] The misgivings of these officials were exacerbated by various accusations which followers of Ṣubḥ-i-Azal made concerning Bahá'u'lláh's intentions. Therefore, the Sublime Porte removed what it considered to be a disquieting influence in an already unstable area to 'a less dangerous point' without bothering to examine the charges seriously.[5]

The Austrian ambassador to the Sublime Porte, Anton Graf Prokesch von Osten, as well as several of his colleagues, intervened in an attempt to have the edict banishing Bahá'u'lláh and some of His followers to 'Akká, the 'Bastille

[1] *Cf* Kent D. Beveridge, 'From Adrianople to 'Akká: The Austrian Lloyd', *Bahá'í Studies Bulletin*, vol. 4, no. 1 (March 1986) and sources cited therein.

[2] Gobineau to Prokesch-Osten, 18 November 1868, *Correspondance*, pp. 336–37. The description is very similar to that given in a second letter from 'Abbás Effendi to Rev. Rosenberg which is cited in Momen, *Religions*, pp. 205–6, as well as that contained in the 'Tablet to the Sulṭán of Turkey' quoted in *Bahá'í Scriptures: Selections from the Utterances of Bahá'u'lláh and Abdul Baha*, ed. Horace Holley (New York: Brentano's, 1923), pp. 81 *et sec.*

[3] Prokesch-Osten had obviously written of Fu'ád Pásha's statement in one of his letters not contained in their published correspondence (see p.781, n.8). Blunt's dispatch to Elliot (Momen, *Religions*, p. 192) shows that the assurance was given during the audience on 24 August.

[4] See p.780, n.6.

[5] Various notables in Constantinople had counselled Bahá'u'lláh 'to state your case, and to demand justice'. Bahá'u'lláh's response is quoted as follows: 'If the enlightened minded leaders [of your country] be wise and diligent, they will certainly make enquiry, and acquaint themselves with the true state of the case; if not, then [their] attainment of the truth is impracticable and impossible. Under these circumstances what need is there for importuning statesmen and supplicating ministers of the Court?' *A Traveller's Narrative Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Báb*, trans. E. G. Browne, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), vol. 2, p. 92. Bahá'u'lláh ignored the customs of court life while in Constantinople, which is said to have prejudiced various Ottoman officials against Him (Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 197–99; Taherzadeh, *Revelation*, vol. 2, pp. 55–56).

of the Middle East', rescinded. Yet, despite his great influence at the Court of the Sulṭan and his deep personal friendship with 'Álí Pásḥá, the Grand Vizier, Prokesch-Osten was unable to have the *farman* withdrawn. It cannot be assumed, however, that his actions were completely without effect, for the original decision to disperse the remaining followers of Bahá'u'lláh among various outposts within the Ottoman Empire was suddenly reversed. It appears that diplomatic endeavours on behalf of the Bahá'ís did, indeed, help to mitigate the severity of measures taken against them by the Sublime Porte.

*Anton Graf Prokesch von Osten*
*Photo courtesy Bildarchive of the Austrian National Library*

# 8. FELIX AND ANGUSTIA MADDELA THE FIRST BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE PHILIPPINES

ADAPTED FROM A MEMOIR BY GRACE MADDELA BOEHNERT AND WALTER MADDELA

*Felix and Angustia Maddela*

ALTHOUGH a number of Eastern and Western Bahá'í travellers including Jamal Effendi, Mírzá Ḥusayn Ṭúṭí, Martha Root and Siegfried Schopflocher visited the Philippines for brief periods in the early decades of the twentieth century, and although they carried in their hearts the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and made friends with the local people, no record has been found of natives of the Philippines embracing the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh until Felix Maddela – a truly prepared soul – became a Bahá'í in 1938.

Since the Light of God always finds its way to illumine the minds of men, it is not surprising that it was by a mysterious and unique means that the Message of Bahá'u'lláh became known to the first believer, lodging in his heart, and ultimately, in the years that followed, affecting and changing the lives of many people in far-flung regions.

Felix R. Maddela was born on 30 August 1889 in Bayombong, the capital town of the landlocked Province of Nueva Vizcaya in the northern Philippines. He was the sixth of the twelve children of the late Captain Vicente Maddela and Mauricia Addauan. His father was at one time the Alcalde Mayor of Bayombong, the highest executive of the town during the Spanish regime.

Mr. Maddela graduated from the Philippine School of Arts and Trades in Manila, was awarded a government scholarship enabling him to take specialized courses related to his profession, and immediately after completing his post graduate studies in 1914 he joined the Bureau of Education as a teacher of the Farm School in his home Province. As a school official he was deeply concerned about the welfare of the poor but deserving students. He employed those boys and helped them in their studies. Because of exemplary service, he was promoted to Assistant Industrial Arts Supervisor of Public Schools, Nueva Vizcaya Division.

During the course of his work, Mr. Maddela met and subsequently married Angustia Corales Danguilan, a Domestic Science teacher from the nearby town of Solano. Angustia, the youngest of the three children of the late Enrique Lumicao Danguilan and Melchora Alindada Corales, was ten years his junior, being born on 2 October 1899. Eight children were born of their union, four boys and four girls: Adeline, Orlando, Grace, Luisito, Salvador, Filipinas, Melchora and Amor. Through the industry, patience and perseverance of the couple, all their children were able to acquire a good education.

Mr. Maddela loved to work, believing that work performed in the spirit of service is a form of worship, as the Bahá'í Writings teach. He was a lover of the arts and had many fields of interest: he was an artist, a painter, an architect, a building contractor, a draftsman, a notary public and a businessman, for a time. But most important of all, being an educator, he was a moulder of youth.

Because his services in the public schools were greatly needed, Mr. Maddela, in 1921, declined a lucrative position as Superintendent with the Bureau of Prisons, despite his having excelled all others who attempted the civil service examination. Later, he resigned from the Bureau of Education to become chief of the drafting pool at the Atlantic Gulf and Pacific Company in Manila. The family therefore moved to that city and established their residence at Pasay, Rizal. Angustia began to teach at the Modern Oriental Academy of Manila.

Mr. Maddela was an avid reader and ardent truth-seeker, and remained so all his life. Over the years he investigated and became affiliated with a number of different religious movements, and at one time joined the Legionares del Trabajo, reaching the thirty-third degree, but he grew disillusioned and skeptical, distressed by the fact that the various religious denominations and organizations contradicted one another, although purporting to base themselves on the same spiritual foundation. At one point, Mr. Maddela seriously contemplated committing himself to atheism. This grieved Mrs. Maddela who prayed that her husband would find spiritual fulfilment.

One day, in early 1924, Mr. Maddela returned from work with food he had purchased for the children. The package was wrapped in a piece of old foreign newspaper which by chance carried a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a headline referring to the Bahá'í Faith, and a brief article by Martha Root outlining its principles. Mr. Maddela read and reread this material with mounting fascination but was disappointed to find no address. His enthusiasm about the Bahá'í Faith was so intense that it caused his wife to wonder whether he were taking leave of his senses, but she was gratified that he had renewed his spiritual quest and prayed fervently that this Faith would bring answers to his questions and set him on the right path.

After the family returned to their hometown in 1927 or thereabouts, Mr. Maddela established the Rush Construction Service Company and became an accredited government contractor. As such, he designed and constructed several landmarks in the Province of Nueva Vizcaya including town halls, Rizal monuments, market buildings and schools, some of which still stand today. He searched in vain for a Bahá'í church or meeting hall where he might pursue study of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

In February 1938, when Mr. Maddela was in Manila to supervise construction of the Nueva Vizcaya Pavilion for the Philippine Carnival Exposition, he was inspired to visit the National

Library where, at last, his search was rewarded. A few days before his visit to the library, Mrs. Loulie Matthews, an American Bahá'í who was a passenger on a cruise ship that had called in at Manila for a few hours, had deposited in the library some Spanish pamphlets about the Bahá'í Faith, as she records in her book *Not Every Sea Hath Pearls*. Destiny must have guided Mr. Maddela to the library where his heart leapt with joy to see Bahá'í pamphlets placed side by side with books on the ancient religions. He read all he could about the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and noted down the address through which he could make contact with other Bahá'ís. He wrote immediately to the United States giving the address in Solano. Books, pamphlets and journals began pouring in after a week's time. He read this material intently, jotting down sentence after sentence, writing *ojo* ('mark well') in the margin next to passages that particularly interested him. He began at once to tell his family and friends that he had found the religion he had been seeking. He started holding study sessions in his home and some eager friends came to hear the Bahá'í Message. Sometimes Bahá'í firesides were held in his garden, beneath the banana plants.

There was speculation among some of the townspeople of Solano concerning the nature of the Bahá'í Faith. Some ridiculed Felix and his newfound religion, alleging that he had invented it. The few Bahá'ís were scorned and called 'disciples of Felix Maddela'.

At this time, Angustia had not fully investigated her husband's Faith. Knowing that his wife and children had not shown interest, Mr. Maddela would leave Bahá'í pamphlets and magazines on his table for his family to read. These Mrs. Maddela read secretly in her husband's absence, as she did not wish to let him know the extent of her curiosity. She wanted to find out for herself the truth about what her husband was teaching. After a thorough investigation, she embraced the Bahá'í Faith. Also at this time, Orlando, the eldest son and second child, who was studying for the Christian ministry, was antagonistic to his father's belief. He used to hold discussions with his father, insisting that the church of which he was a member was the true one and no other. Mr. Maddela did not argue but simply gave his son some valuable gems of thought which aroused Orlando's interest and led to his investigating the Bahá'í teachings and accepting them in January 1947.

Shortly before World War II broke out, the Bahá'ís of Solano numbered around fifty, and they had elected a Local Spiritual Assembly of which Mr. Felix R. Maddela was the chairman. The friends were temporarily scattered when war began, and some died during those years.

Although Mr. Maddela lost his sense of hearing, he continued to teach his friends. Unable to travel far, he sent his son in his stead. The other early believers who were deepened volunteered to go out teaching with the younger Maddela. Among them were Messrs. Mariano Tagubat, Federico Cruz, Tomas Alindada, Enrique Cacayan, Maurelio Beuza and Zacarias Tottoc. They traveled to the various towns of Nueva Vizcaya, Isabela and Cagayan in the northern Philippines, the expenses being borne in part by Felix Maddela and in part by the teachers themselves, for the love of God and out of enthusiasm to spread the Faith. These activities were reported to the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, who lost no time in encouraging the friends. A letter to the Spiritual Assembly of Solano dated 9 March 1946 bears a postscript in the Guardian's handwriting, 'I was so glad to receive your letter and wish to assure you in person of my great love for you, my prayers for your success, my appreciation of your constancy and devotion, and of my eagerness to hear regularly of your activities to which I attach the utmost importance. Persevere in your labours, and rest assured that the Beloved is watching over you and is well pleased with you.' It was signed, characteristically, 'Your true brother, Shoghi'. Mr. Maddela, too, corresponded with the Guardian, who assured him of his 'loving prayers' for the success of his efforts 'in the service of our beloved Faith'.

The Guardian urged the believers in Solano to do all they could to spread the teachings, hold regular meetings, and to keep in close touch with the American Bahá'ís. Shoghi Effendi expressed the hope that the American believers would be able to go to the Philippines and help them spread the Faith. Commencing in 1945, after World War II had ended, American Bahá'ís were at last able to fulfil the Guardian's wish. The first to find his way to Solano was Mr. Alvin Blum who was at that time attached to the U.S. Medical Corps.

On 2 December 1946 the Local Spiritual

Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Solano was incorporated with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the first Spiritual Assembly to be recognized by the Philippine Government. Angustia and Felix Maddela were among the signatories to the documents of incorporation.

The second Bahá'í from the United States to visit the Bahá'ís of the Philippines was Michael Jamir. Miss Nina Howard of the U.S. Embassy in Manila came in 1947. On her second visit, after two years, she came as Mrs. Nadler and she was very happy to meet more local Bahá'ís. In the Province of Isabela which she also visited then, she met Mr. and Mrs. Dominador Anunsacioon, two devoted Bahá'í teachers who occasionally came to Solano and with the Maddela family and other Bahá'ís held very happy, spiritually-enriching meetings. Through the initiative of the Maddelas, and with the help of the friends, a Bahá'í Center was erected out of love for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. From the small community of Solano, the Faith in time spread throughout the country, rejoicing the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Maddela. During the visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir in the course of the Ten Year Crusade he spearheaded mass conversion which brought about the propagation of the Faith far and wide.

Mr. Maddela passed away on 24 June 1960, and Mrs. Maddela on 9 November 1982. On his deathbed, Mr. Maddela, with a smile on his face, kept murmuring in his native tongue, Gaddang, 'Bahá'í, Bahá'í, the nine must work together faithfully,' referring no doubt to the Local Spiritual Assembly. At Riḍván 1964 when the first National Convention was called to elect the National Spiritual Assembly of the Philippines, Mrs. Angustia Maddela, who was a delegate, learning of the goal given by the Universal House of Justice of acquiring a Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in every major island of the country, donated a part of her land for the construction of the first such center. Before her passing, she also donated another piece of property, 2 hectares in size, in the town of Villaverde, to fulfill the goal of a Summer School site.

All the children of Felix and Angustia Maddela have become Bahá'ís and they, as well as a number of the grandchildren, have served or are serving in various capacities including membership on the Auxiliary Board and the National Spiritual Assembly. If Mr. and Mrs. Maddela were alive today they would witness with delight and pride the resistless power of the Faith as it penetrates even the remotest parts of the country bringing Bahá'u'lláh's healing Message of peace, unity and brotherhood.

# 9. ROSEY E. POOL: AN APPRECIATION

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY ANNEKE SCHOUTEN-BUŸS

*Rosey E. Pool*

BORN on 7 May 1905 in the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam where her father owned a cigar shop, the first child of Louis Pool and Jacoba Jessurun Pool, Rosa Eva (later 'Rosey' to all her friends), was raised without prejudice against people who differed from her family.

In 1925, while studying to become a teacher of English, she developed a passionate admiration for the work of the American black poet, Countee Cullen, and wrote to him. Soon she was in correspondence with a number of other black poets and later graduated from University in Berlin, where she studied cultural anthropology, on the thesis 'The Poetic Art of the North American Negro'. She visited several other European universities and studied a number of languages.

Rosey's marriage to the young lawyer, Gerhard Kramer, was very unhappy, although she loved him deeply, and after a few months they separated.

As the Nazi party assumed power in Germany and persecution of the Jewish population intensified, Rosey lent assistance by giving to people about to flee the country addresses of Dutch friends so that they would not be sent back by the Dutch authorities at the Border. By the end of 1938 the situation had grown too dangerous for her and she returned to Amsterdam which had become an asylum for refugees from Germany.

Rosey taught English at a centre for refugees and after the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940 she became involved with the work of the underground, but she continued teaching. In December 1942, she became a teacher of English at the secondary school in Amsterdam which all Jewish children had to attend when 'Aryan' schools were closed to them.

In May 1943, Rosey and her family were rounded up and sent to the Dutch transit camp at Westerbork. On 9 July her parents died in Sobibor, followed by her only brother and his wife. In September, when Rosey's name appeared on the list of those who were to be transported to death camps, her friends planned her escape. It was decided that Rosey would not return to the camp from a visit to Amsterdam to fetch a quantity of books for a small library that was to be established. The plan succeeded, and Rosey spent the last nineteen months of the war in hiding in Baarn, writing poems and publishing a number of poetry translations through the underground press.

A few days after the liberation of the Netherlands on 5 May 1945, Rosey was baptized a Roman Catholic, having studied the religion with a priest. She returned to Amsterdam where for two years she taught at a special temporary secondary school for students who had been in hiding. She again got in touch with her American friends who sent her poems to replace the collection she had lost. Soon she was giving recitals of poetry by blacks. She had a wonderfully expressive voice and a warm personal style of reciting.

In this period a former acquaintance, Otto

Frank, came to see Rosey, showed her the diary kept by his young daughter, Anne, and sought her opinion. At first Rosey advised against publishing it, but soon she recognized its importance and offered to help find a publisher. Her English translation of the diary was, however, rejected by the publisher.

By the end of 1949, Rosey had settled in London with her friend, Miss 'Isa' Isenburg, an X-ray technician of German-Jewish descent who had lived in England since 1934. Their flat at 23A High Point was to become the focal point of many activities. They gave parties; friends came to stay with them; African artists gathered there to talk about their work. With two friends, Rosey opened a travel agency, All-ways Travel. She gave short talks for the Dutch BBC radio programme, taught Dutch in evening courses at Holborn College of Languages, served as an interpreter for Scotland Yard, made summaries of English plays for a Dutch theatre office, translated a Dutch musical into English, and kept up her correspondence with an increasing number of black poets.

In 1954, Rosey and Isa took a Mediterranean cruise that brought them to Israel. In Haifa, the women visited the Shrine of the Báb, and later they visited 'Akká. Outside the prison where Bahá'u'lláh had been incarcerated Rosey suddenly had the same vision she had had while undergoing torture at the hands of the Nazis: just as she was losing consciousness, she had felt herself to be on a brightly-lit pathway leading straight to God. Her friend was so alarmed at her emotional response to 'Akká that she discouraged her from entering the prison.

In 1958, Rosey published two anthologies of poetry by black writers, *Black and Unknown Bards*, songs and poems used by a stage group called 'The Company of Nine', and *I Saw How Black I Was*, with Dutch translations by Rosey and Paul Breman. In later years these books were followed by two more anthologies.

From September 1959 until May 1960, Rosey visited the United States on a Fulbright travel grant, lecturing on black poetry at a number of universities, and finally meeting many poets she had known only through correspondence. She returned to the United States several times, usually lecturing on black poetry and organizing workshops for creative writing. She was scornful of racial segregation and when no 'mixed' restaurants could be found she refused to enter those catering only to whites. Often she carried her lunch and ate it on a bench in a bus station or a public park.

While in Huntsville, Alabama Rosey began to investigate the Bahá'í Faith which she accepted on 30 April 1965. On fire with enthusiasm for the principles of the Cause, she taught it whenever possible and visited fellow Bahá'ís wherever she travelled.

In January 1966, Rosey was invited to sit as a member of the pre-selection jury for literary prizes at the First World Festival of Negro Arts, to be held in Dakar, Senegal later that year. Encouraged to do so by a Bahá'í friend, Marion Hofman, she submitted Robert Hayden's *A Ballad of Remembrance*, which had been published in London by Paul Breman. Because she was chosen to sit on the grand jury at Dakar, Rosey withdrew her own anthology of poetry by blacks, *Beyond the Blues*, from competition in the essay category which was open to authors of all races. On 7 April it was announced that the poetry prize was awarded to Robert Hayden, an American Bahá'í. Subsequently, Mr. Hayden was to receive many honours for poetry, and he was appointed (1976–78) to the post of Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., the first of his race to achieve this distinction.[1]

Wherever Rosey Pool travelled during the remainder of her life she gave lectures on the Bahá'í Faith and made herself available for press conferences. In 1970 she fell ill with leukemia and passed away on 19 September 1971. The Spiritual Assembly of Wilmette on 18 February 1971 named for Rosey Pool an award which they presented during an observance of Negro History Week, a fitting memorial to one who brought to many black people an enhanced appreciation of their own history and literature.

[1] See Robert Hayden, 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, pp. 715–17.

# II
# VERSE

I

I do not know him whom I love
But on the wind's breath and the salt spray.
In the east the dawn brings up his name.
The bird calling in the dune-grass
Takes his air in its throat.
The wave combs the driftwood roots
With his fingers. His touch
Lit my spirit's single wisp of tinder,
My sad oil-wick.
His flames lent a wing
To fire a tundra
With the blaze of it.

II

'You! Keep away from my children.
I want you to promise me
you will not speak of these things anymore.
This village is complete without you people.
It will move you on if you don't fit.
Join it—it will take you to its heart.'

To join means silence, shouting a Name
only to the low, tundra trees.
Creeping, they hear us, some
no higher than our feet.
Big tracks link us
to the great heart of the bear.
The lagoon ice crackles
alongside the perfume of spring.
Surely a heart must listen.
Somewhere.

*Excerpts from 'Tundra Pioneers'*
*Poems set in Unalakleet, Alaska*
*Audrie Reynolds (Alaska)*

## Beloved

O Moon of my night's
Sky, how I have sung
This love, my tides in flood,

In ebb, have held
Your face, silver
in the wave's palms;

And in the rivers of my veins
Your image breaks, and forms
Again, tells Your light
From fingertip to brain,
In all my continents, O Moon
Of my night's sky!

*Shirin Sabri (Australia)*

## Monkey Boy

*In Uganda, Museveni's soldiers found children who had lost their families as a result of massacres. One had been raised by monkeys, and seemed in every respect more akin to the creatures which had raised him than to his rescuers.*

The innocent
monkeys suckled him, made
a bed of woven branches
sheltered with dark leaves of shade.

Home among the yellow
bamboo
brushed with wet green blades
of leaf, where mist lapped
slowly under the high flat
roof of trees—
there were none like him.
No brothers.

He shrieks as apes do, grins
with rage, bare teeth, brows
raised, hurls
twigs at us.

Are we so woven
in a web of souls—
not human
without each other?

*Shirin Sabri (Australia)*

## Les martyrs

Leurs yeux ont la lueur du ciel d'espérance,
Et leur regard contemple au-delà du présent,
Un monde oú se retrouveront leurs âmes,
Illuminées d'une auréole rouge.

Leurs membres torturés, écorchés, déchiquetés,
Témoignent de leur désir brûlant
Pour Celui dont le nom, seul, est leur source de Vie.

Ardemment ils s'avancent vers ce cercle d'amour,
Où les attend Celui après qui ils aspirent,
Et leur coeur assoiffé est enfin rassasié.

## The Martyrs

Their eyes reflect light from the heaven of hope
and they gaze beyond the present
to a world where they will rediscover their own souls
illuminated by a crimson halo.

Their tortured limbs, flayed and mutilated,
bear witness to their burning desire for Him
Whose Name alone is the source of their life.

Ardently they advance toward the circle of love,
where He to Whom they aspire awaits them,
and their hearts—the thirst assuaged at last—find
peace.

*M. Lafaille* (*Belgium*)
(*Translation by Debbe Jackson Simons*)

## A la juventud bahá'í

(*escrito para el 'Movimiento Juvenil Bahá'í' de la República Dominicana*)

Enseñadme la Fe de Dios, amados
de mi alma; pues apenas si la he visto.
Con mi débil ojo sólo conquisto
vislumbres de esplendores anhelados,
entre zapata y armazones armados
hoy y ayer. Tan sólo por esto existo:
que os mováis puros entre un pueblo listo
para recibir a héroes esperados.
¦ Sed vos estos héroes, amados! Sois vos?
Secad mis lágrimas, mi alma calmadla.
Seréis los ángeles de la promesa?
Anhelo ver en vida la Fe de Dios
bella en esta tierra. ¦ Formad, alzadla!
Es vuestra esta hora que jamás regresa.

*Rowell Hoff* (*Dominican Republic*)

## Ṣiráṭ

Quddús, Husayn, and all the shining throng
of martyrs hastened—long before their bath
of holy blood—along this very path
that leads to the bridge, and crossed Ṣiráṭ in song.
Plaise God for fiercest hate, for deepest wrong
of blindest hearts most worthy of God's wrath,
that brought these martyrdoms in aftermath
to seal the perfect proof of love so strong.

'Am I not your Lord?' is the Ṣiráṭ.
'Yea, verily, Thou art!' is Paradise,
and naught but true love comes to the bridge's
end.
Beloved, strengthen my love on Thy Ṣiráṭ,
that this soul, too, may blaze in sacrifice.
Then say to me: 'Thou art, indeed, My friend!'

*Rowell S. Hoff* (Dominican Republic)

## Extracto de *La Puerta*

¡Oh mi Señor, mi Amado. Gracias por la merced de
Tu cercanía,
que me ilumina—despierta en mi
aquella dulce y embriagante sensación de proximidad
que me hace eterno en la emoción,
en todas sus manifestaciones.

Ante Tu presencia, confundido como un ave herida
traté de confundirme con la nada ocultándome en mi
ser humano,
pero Tu me purificaste con el don de Merced,
y esa luz intensa me envolvió lentamente
y pude por tu Misericordia
volver mi cuerpo, mi mente hacia Tu individualidad.
Ahora ya puedo sumergirme en el océano de Tu guía.

Mi ser lánguido ha sido vivificado
por medio de la protección de Tu presencia,
que al igual que el esplendor que todo lo invade,
llegó a lo íntimo de mi ser.

¡Oh mi Señor! permíteme ofrecer mi vida en Tu ser-
vicio,
¡Oh mi Amado, la razón de mi existencia.

*Raúl Pavón* (*Ecuador*)

Ô Toi qui m'as ouvert à la Vie
Si tu veux être indulgent

Ô Toi que je prie sous tous les Noms
Aujourd'hui Bahá'u'lláh

Ô Toi en qui j'ai scellé mes pas
Si tu veux bien de moi

Ici en cette enceinte sacrée
Où ta Puissance illumine l'univers

Je te prie Ô Toi Amour des amours
Si tu veux bien entendre

D'accorder la Guérison et la Vie
A celle qui me mena à Toi

Et de m'accorder avec elle
Une seconde dans ton éternité

Ô Toi le Feu de la Vie
Et la Guérison des planètes
En vérité, d'éternité en éternité
Mon Espoir est ta Volonté.

*Alain Fenouillet (France)*

## Pilgrim Eyes

Clear liquid
Flecks of gold tile
Brick shards
Brick dust
rose red petals yellow
orange blossom strewn
green velvet
Threshold.

White plaster walls
blue shutters
Cypress skies
Pilgrim eyes
Separation-haunted
Shrine lit
liquid bright
pilgrim eyes.

*Pamela Joan Carr (Israel)*

## The Court of Love

From the realm of mysteries
I came into the kingdom of existence
Bewildered, distracted, anguished:
Where is my guide, my companion?

To unlock the secrets of eternity
I spent my whole life
Knocking at the august door of reason
Thinking, alas, there was one inside to hear.

Horsemen mounted on the steeds of fantasy,
Gallop aimlessly,
Now here, now there,
Like flies struggling in a well-knit web.

That traveller who, in search of his goal,
Traversed the world from end to end,
When journey was done,
Knew the world was merely a cage.

From out this narrow cage
I spread the wings of love
And soared towards the retreats of my beloved:
Then there was for me no grief
Nor care nor desire.

From the horizon of my heart
The light of my beloved's face mirrored forth
animating, enlivening and illumining the universe.
In its glow the flame of the sun
was nothing but a faint spark.

Now that I have surrendered my heart in love,
My name is trampled in the streets,
But there are others, too,
From the secret of whose hearts
The veil has fallen:
Many are the scandalous lovers in the court of love.

*Hushmand Fatheazam (Israel)*
*(Translation from Persian original)*

## The Image

*How, in bad times, shall the poet be honored? Is poetry equal to the news?... in the middle of nuclear buildup, terrorism gone berserk, just think, poems?*
*Terrence Des Pres*

*Miss Zarrin Muqimí-Abyánih, aged 28, was one of ten women hanged in Írán on 18 June 1983 for refusing to recant belief in the Bahá'í Faith. This poem is based on one Zarrin wrote shortly before her arrest and execution.*

The enigmatic stranger
gazing coolly at me
from the glass
reminds me of someone
I knew in the past,
a once-familiar face
now only a dim memory.

Perhaps she lost her soul one day
in the smoke and din of this vast city
when she was shopping distractedly
for a new dress,
or maybe she thoughtlessly slipped it
with a coin into a jukebox
and, dancing, didn't notice its loss.
Could it be that someone stole it
while she lay sleeping,
just at the moment
when she surrendered
to the enchantment of a dream?

This much is certain:
in the morning
there appeared in the glass
the face of an unknown girl,
her grave eyes glistening with tears
and filled with a terrible knowledge.

*Roger White (Israel)*

Pilgrimage
to the Holy Places—
and back.
So sudden,
so soon,
so quickly over.
Eternity had never been so brief.

*Duane L. Herrmann (U.S.A.)*

## The Homeless

*One April day, somewhere along the road between Toulon and Hyéres, France, a group of Roma sat around their campfire and listened to an introduction to the Bahá'í Faith. When the speaker finished describing the exile and imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh, 13-year old Angelo spoke up: 'But then, Bahá'u'lláh, He was living like a Gypsy!' In recent years, especially in Spain and France, many Roma have become Bahá'ís.*

It was the fire that drew us, the dancing fire,
In the Romani camp, under the evening sky.
Mentioning the Loved One's Name, we never tire.

They welcomed us warmly, but one youth shyer
Than the rest, hung back till we spoke the word *Bahá'í.*
It was the fire that drew us, the dancing fire.

*Tell us!* he begged. As we described the dire
Trials that beset our Beloved, we heard the young one sigh.
Mentioning the Loved One's Name, we never tire.

We told of His exile, how His love would inspire
Response in His captors' hearts. In the dark, did someone cry?
It was the fire that drew us, the dancing fire.

Up the ladder of stars the young moon climbed still higher
As we fell quiet watching the gold embers die.
Mentioning the Loved One's Name, we never tire.

The boy broke the silence, our constricted throats grew drier:
*Bahá'u'lláh was homeless like us!* Recognition aglow in his eye.
It was the fire that drew us, the dancing fire.
Mentioning the Loved One's Name, we never tire.

*Roger White (Israel)*

## As The Wind

Be as unrestrained as the wind, He said
Inspired, a reborn heart would blithely try
Now toss like a kite in a storm-swept sky
Turn, dive, then soar in the gusts overhead
Fully free, but for that last slender line
Trailing to earth, it tenaciously pulls
As if to remind that spirit controls
Only when faith breaks the ties that still bind.

*R. Greg Shaw (U.S.A.)*

## Unità

Mentre nel roseto ronzante
alzo le lodi al Santo dei Santi
nel mondo cade
l'impareggiabile unità
il nocchieto il fico la farfalla
senza meta
il cielo che rischiara
io che prego sottovoce
la luce le cicale insistenti
l'altra metà del globo
le Americhe caotico rombanti
il fuggiasco col cuore palpitante
il suonatore di jazz
la ballerina e la prostituta
all'angolo di strada
siamo un'unica realtà
protesa al punto zenit
dell'Universo
non v'è alcuna imperfezione
o disarmonia
un sovrappiù o un mancamento.
Nessuna differenza incide
il cuore degli uomini
danaro razza sesso moda
resta l'amore che
ci fa fratelli.

*Daniele Giancane (Italy)*

## The Old Custodian

The old custodian
in the garden of Riḍván
with the bent back
would look at me with vivid lights
in his eyes
phosphorescent
when he talked about Shoghi Effendi

—Lemons fell like planets
and there were two benches heaped with oranges—

The kindly old custodian of Riḍván
buckled by the years
but his soul
already in heaven.

*Daniele Giancane (Italy)*
*(Translation by Iskander Tinto and Elizabeth Peedo with Roger White)*

## Goede Raad

Word vooral nooit dichter.
Je weet niet wat het is
je hart telkens en telkens opnieuw
om te ploegen,
je zenuwen bloot te leggen,
je hoofd te vergeten,
op zoek naar dat stralend woord
dat ten enenmale weer kan geven
de grootheid van Hem die je drijft.

*Anneke Buys (The Netherlands)*

## The Valley

*The paths of the past come in*
*from every direction.*

I

We enter the valley on horseback;
Pass through forests of *flamboyan* and *almendros*.

An afternoon sprinkle wets our brow.

Not a cool shower,
but warm and salty
like human tears.

Yes, this must be the Valley of Love.

II

We gather at midnight—our sufferings—
to console each other,
calmed in waters of His Remembrance.
The lonely heart and its company of tears
make camp another night
on the long journey
home
to God.

*C. S. Cholas (Puerto Rico)*

## Meditation While Teaching in Baja California Sur Mexico

I should like to fall
through skylights of prayer
and pierce my heart
with a love free of self.

*C. S. Cholas*

## Gedichten van een pelgrim

I

Kwetsbaar,
tastend in de holte
van Uw Poort
staan wij stil,
opnieuw geboren
in het Eerste Punt,
Belofte van
Uw laatste Woord

II

Ondergeschikt aan
een Goddelijke Beschikking.
Zoekend naar de Ander,
die spreekt
alsof we volwassen zijn:
*O zoon van Geest.*

Op weg
om samen
een wereld te bouwen;
hart voor hart
en plaats voor plaats,
roept Hij ons:
*O bewoners van Mijn Paradijs.*

Tastend naar
gemeenschap,
nog niet beseffend
waar dit zal eindigen
maar uitgenodigd
voor Eeuwig
noemt Hij ons:
*O metgezel van Mijn Troon.*

## Poems of a Pilgrim

I

Vulnerable,
fumbling in the void
of Your gate
we stand still,
born anew
in the Primal Point,
Promise of
Your last Word.

II

Subordinate to
a Divine Decree.
Searching for the Other
Who addresses us
as if we were mature:
*O son of Spirit.*

As we strive
to build a world together,
heart by heart
and place by place,
He calls us:
*O dwellers of My Paradise.*

Searching for
community,
not yet realizing
where this will end
but invited for Eternity
He names us:
*O companion of My Throne.*

*Saskia van Baarda (The Netherlands)*
*(Translation by Christa Wickrama and Leyla Alaie)*

## A Ballad of the Soul in the Half-light

Half holy rang the bells remembered—
Half lead they sounded in his brain;
His once high altar age dismembered,
Its shades enclosed his childhood fane.

The spacious fanes then shared their lore—
He sabbathed in the sand and birches,
Fished for trout from a driftwood shore
And for a Christ without churches.

He followed traces of the flame—
Firesigns for an errant spirit, when,
Still a child, a strange new Name
Lit a fire within him, not from men;

Lit half by pain a path above men's schisms,
Where he learned what all who love should know:
Such light in eyes with pain aligns the prisms
And holy fire may burn us here below.

Where night alarms and morning splendor
Through the heart's green forges pass;
Where earth and fire and water render
The rude and opaque heart to glass.

Where caution trades with wild tosses,
And compassion jousts with a mailéd glove,
Where abundance turns with a run of losses,
And a wondering mind with wondrous love.

Where the world still on severance preys,
Earth grief slowly cedes to laughter.
A severance price the pruned heart pays;
Festivals of light come after.

Yet now such light and love so whole
As foresaw no child nor mother,
Let grief and joy and a tranquil soul
All trespass on each other.

So be swift, O soul, dismiss the chill;
Go where the angel throng is growing:
The signals clear on the Sacred Hill
When the midnight wind is blowing.

*Quentin Farrand (San Salvador)*

## Invitation

Shíráz, Medina and Káshán—I trace with my finger
The stations of Your Via Dolorosa. The place names
Spice the air with heat and half-forgotten things
Leading to this nuptial and confirming feast in Tabríz.

What call of destiny tempts martyrs to their fate?
Ask Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Zunúzí, hung from the same nail
His head protecting Your bare breast.
Is it the promise of eternity on old men's lips?

Who speaks when they are at rest? Is this a quest
For the Holy Grail—A passing glimpse of the inner 'I'?
Or is it that, at this new Cana, the lover's transmutation
Wedded the giver to the gift, becoming indistinguishable?

*Pat Morrissey (Scotland)*

O Gott!

Ich weiß meine Not,
Du hast sie geendet.
Ich weiß meine Schuld,
Du hast sie gewendet.
Ich weiß meine Kette,
Du hast sie gebrochen.
Ich weiß das Wort,
*Duch* hast es gesprochen.
Ich weiß den Weg,
geh' Du ihn mit mir.
Sei Du mein Begleiter,
Ich vertraue nur Dir.—
O Gott, rühre Du meine Augen an,
daß ich aus dem Dunkel
in's Helle kann.
Aus der Not, aus der Schuld,
aus der Kettenhaft,
laß' mich schaun Deine Schönheit
und erfahren Deine Kraft.
Herr, ich danke Dir, daß
Deine Zeit heit Ewigkeit.

*Eve Hemmerlein (West Germany)*

## A Whisper at Dawn

Listen to the wind flowers
Whisper at dawn.
Hear them breathe
The Secret name.
A gate opens
But the hand is gone.
The loosened latch
Speaks
And the restless flowers
Lean Eastward
In an unborn breeze.
See! A white bird flies
Towards the awakening sun.

*Olive V. Applegate (U.S.A.)*

## As I Slept I Dreamed

A dream. A path.
Who is on the path?
Who walks by my side?
It is the Greatest Holy Leaf.
She takes my hand.
'Do not-stumble so,' she says.
'See who waits.
See who waits by the Gate.'

A path. A Gate.
Who is at the Gate?
Who stands there smiling?
It is the Báb.
He beckons.
'Do not tremble so,' He says.
'See who waits.
See who waits in the Garden.'

A Gate. A Garden.
Who is in the Garden?
What voice calls from the Tree?
It is the Nightingale.
He sings.
'There is no fear,' He says.
'Come into the Garden.
See the Roses in the Garden.'

*Olive V. Applegate (U.S.A.)*

## The Hanging

Birth
from a tight circle
with pain, wonder and light
draws her
into this world.

Young girl
embracing life and love
bares her slim throat
and dreams with opened eyes.

Woman
her heart is ready.
Neck tightly circled
with pain, wonder and light.
Too soon
her soul takes flight.
The circle is released.

*Sheila Banani (U.S.A.)*

## From a Prison in Írán

Not long ago
their Hero
saved the world
from a prison cell.

Now,
salvation comes
by their enduring
the crown of thorns.

Hostages to the world,
they've become
the ransom's rose.

Yet,
what price are
we prepared
for them to pay,
what cost their lives
for ours?

Freedom
may be theirs
when ours is won,
their lives released
when ours are claimed.

And the Hero
known.

*Mary Dockens-Lillejord (U.S.A.)*

## The Prisoner

*For Bahá'u'lláh,*
*The Messenger of God*

I

Prisoner, Exile,
Rose, Scion of Law,
Miracle of Reason—

II

Crimson Justice,
Eden's Phoenix, Man's Question,
Heaven's Answer—

*Michael Fitzgerald (U.S.A.)*

## Here I Stand

With Bahá'u'lláh. There is no more I can say.
My whims join me to his grace, my reason accents
the decision of my heart with a fortress that
circumnavigates, embraces and restores Socrates.
Yes, and diminishes him out of sheer forcible
Martyrdom. For Bahá'u'lláh, death on the cross,
at the hands of poisoners, was too easy. These
he overcomes like the sun rising after war.
With him I stand for I am tethered on a tightly
wound knot and rope that has always brought me
home.

*Michael Fitzgerald (U.S.A.)*

Strange, to rise
Newborn
Amidst the ashes
Of the past.
To leave behind
The beaten path
And tread,
With humble feet,
The new.

Strange, to have
Within
A surging sea.
With rising tides
To carve,
Along the shore
A destiny.

*Dagmar Dole (1902–1952)*
*Pioneer from U.S.A. to Alaska, Denmark and Italy*
*(from letter 27 May 1938 to Marion Hofman)*

## The Candle: Heart Opening

Both ends aflame:
this one in midnight hell,
a discordant, revolutionary, smoking gun...
the other in specious paradise,
a sweet-singing, devious, kind-curved houri...

A white-hot candle
with both ends aflame:
our ends meet in the middle ground
of '*whatever lies between them*,'
undeviating heart, flowering
and tasting Glory.

*Andrew T. Moo (U.S.A.)*

Forgotten roads,
empty windows, closed doors.
Red sky at night, fallen shadows.
Hollow rooms, sleeping walls, dirty floors, stale air.
Torn cloth, cold hands, rose petals and thorns.
Unfinished poems, vacant eyes, closed lips.

Evening stars, patient moon, lonely moon.
Running deer, small stream, dusty wind,
Steep road, climbing stairs, starving village.
Small shop, old bread, heavy coins.

The Master smiles. He touches the hands.
He gives the gifts and asks not the same.
Other days, before my time, before my eyes.

Same place, burning candles, weeping candles.
Burning hearts, hungry hearts, cold hands.
Tell me again:
Shrines, graves and Persian rugs.
Gardens, rooms, writings and prayers.
Don't ask my name—*Alláh-u-Abhá.*

*David Foroughi (U.S.A.)*

*Bahá'u'lláh loved the beauty and verdure of the country. One day He passed the remark: 'I have not gazed upon verdure for nine years...'*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá*

Suffused in sensation
of auburn-amber light
sounds of an oakleafed path
fragrance of earth, sumac
and beech, and the feel of
bark, rough as my father's
remembered hand in mine

I am startled arrested by the
sudden sight of berries
clustered and blood-red
among the golden tones of
Fall.

The crimson speaks of You, O
Shipwright and Captain
of the Crimson Ark.

May I feel this beauty for You
and-offer my sensations
as a gift, a sacrifice to
Your long airless time?

Accepting, You become *the eyes wherewith I see, the ears wherewith I hear*, and the
forest path is leading
me to rapture.

Look, Lord! See that
exquisite turbanned acorn,
that field a Persian carpet of
wine and mauve and cream.

Now is that row of misshapen cedars
dark against the yellow woods
become the Pines of Bahjí
and I can only weep and turn
toward home.

When You feel beauty,
King of Kings,
it is more than I can bear!

*Carol Handy (U.S.A.)*

## Poems for the Bahá'í Fast

### I

The prayer-wheel of the year's revolved again.
Before dawn memory returns. Breakfast steams.
Songs drop like wild grapes from the morning air.
We go into our lives as into dreams,
days of mystery, quartz-crystals steeped in light,
our reverie's ginger-scented. Magnetized night
vibrates a charge out of the ground. First thunders strain
toward equinox. Promises to surrender
and be glad scatter from a bride's bouquet.
Afternoons, mired in leaden torpor, haze
hangs in the mind, we almost cease to care.
Prayer, slow fire in the mind to lift our gaze
above the drowsy middle distance. Let
our thirst and hunger fan the crackling husk.
The rasp of flint will kindle that swift flight
to the Kingdom. Flanking dark rushes there
in muffled dampness, swans like clouds adrift
in holy rapture, bobbing white on white.
Paddling and diving, the flock feeds at dusk.

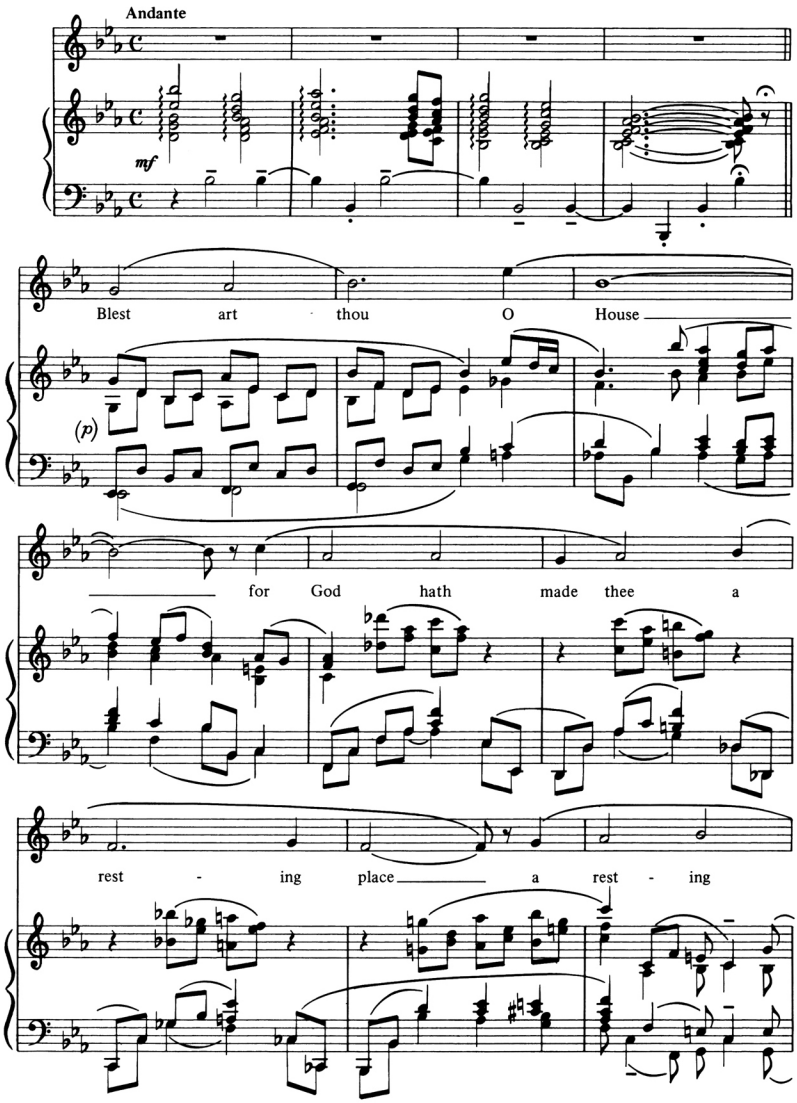
### II

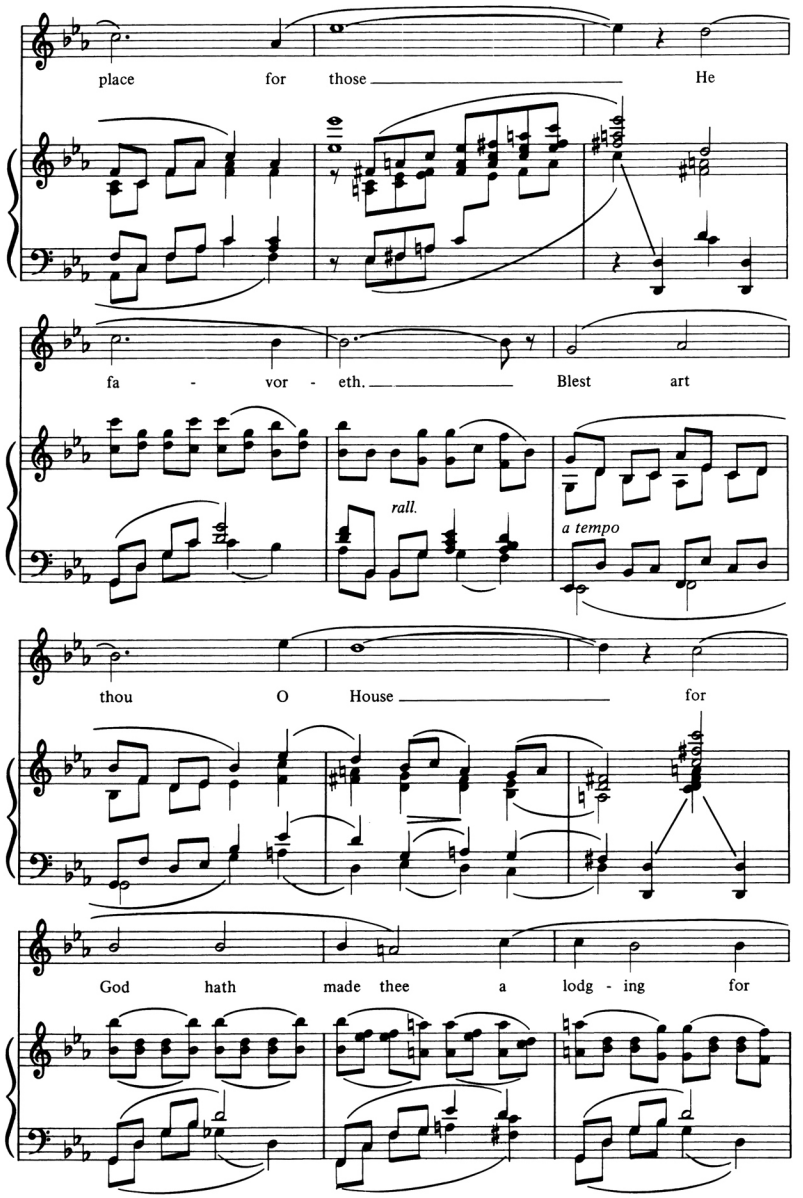
Accretions of the old year are sifted
in this threshing of the will.
From the elements we're divinely rifted
to dance where everything is still.
The bottom of the year's used up
in shifts and shines, like the way sunlight
sparkles in an empty silver cup
or hollow bones ascend to flight.
This rhythm of the soul begins
that world order that before long
will sound a note that will sustain
far-reaching resonance of a gong.
The years are stanzas of a song,
each ending with this same refrain,
the one chime binding the one chain.
So we ascend from dawn to dark
as on a flight of spiral stairs.
The sun traces its lengthening arc
upon the backs of prayers.

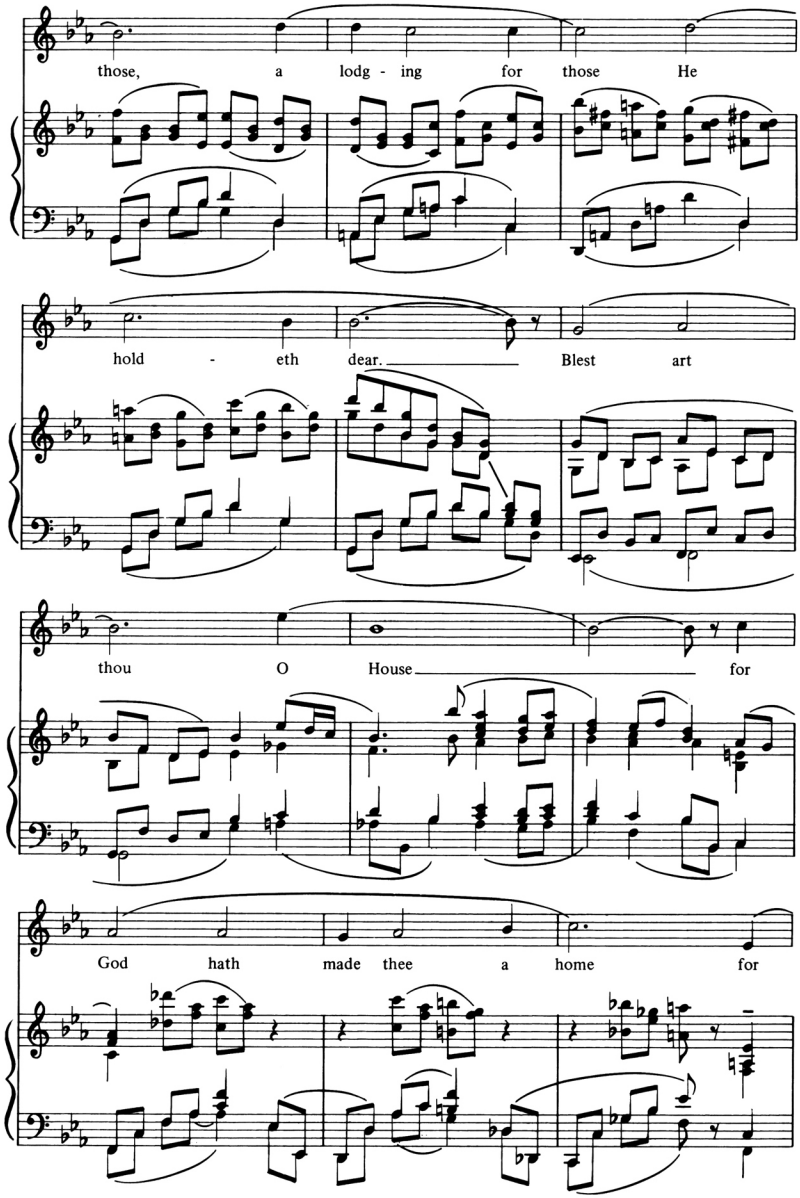
*John Simpson (U.S.A.)*

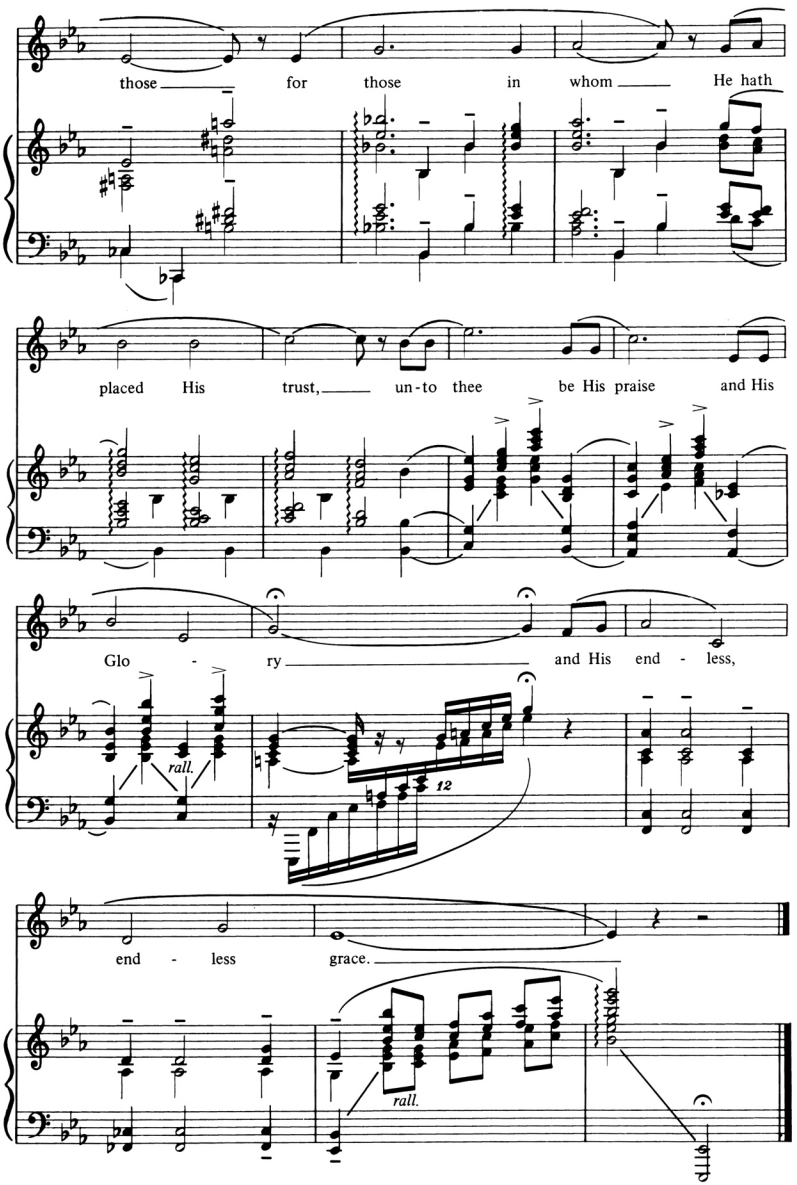
# BLEST ART THOU, O HOUSE

UNITED STATES — Bahá'u'lláh — CHARLES WOLCOTT



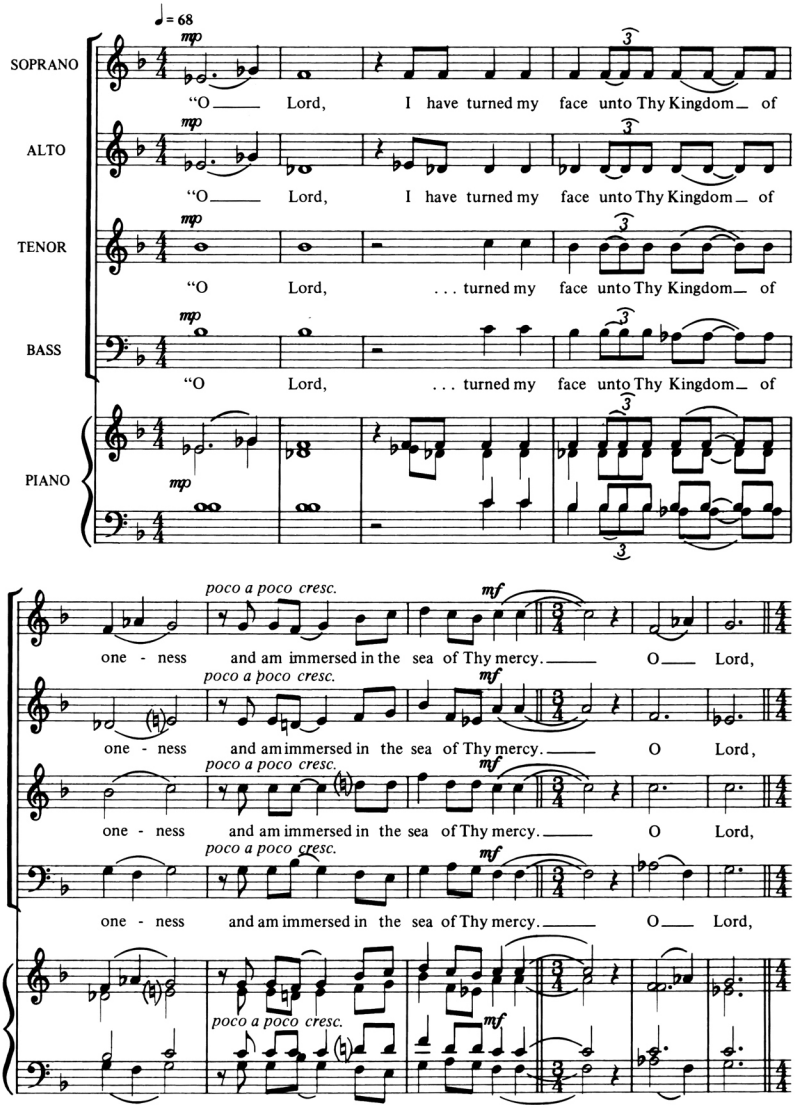

place for those He
fa - vor - eth. Blest art
rall.
a tempo
thou O House for
God hath made thee a lodg - ing for

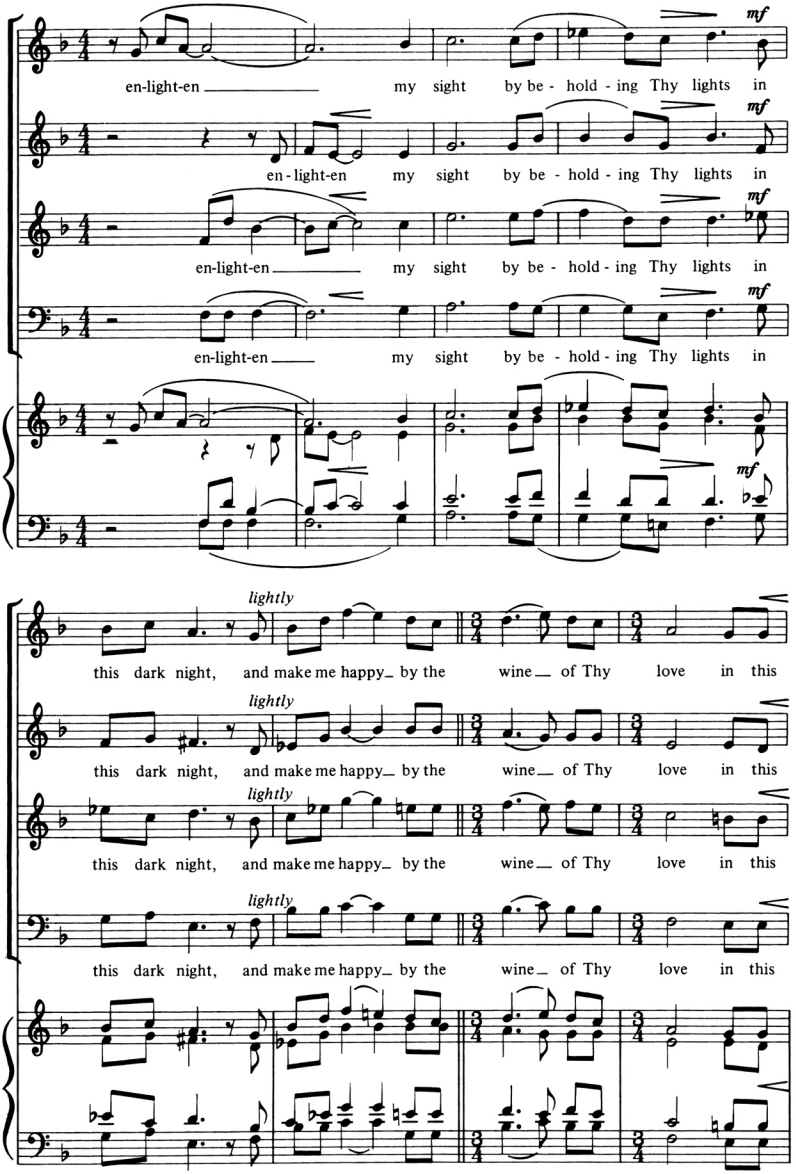

those, a lodg - ing for those He
hold - eth dear. Blest art
thou O House for
God hath made thee a home for

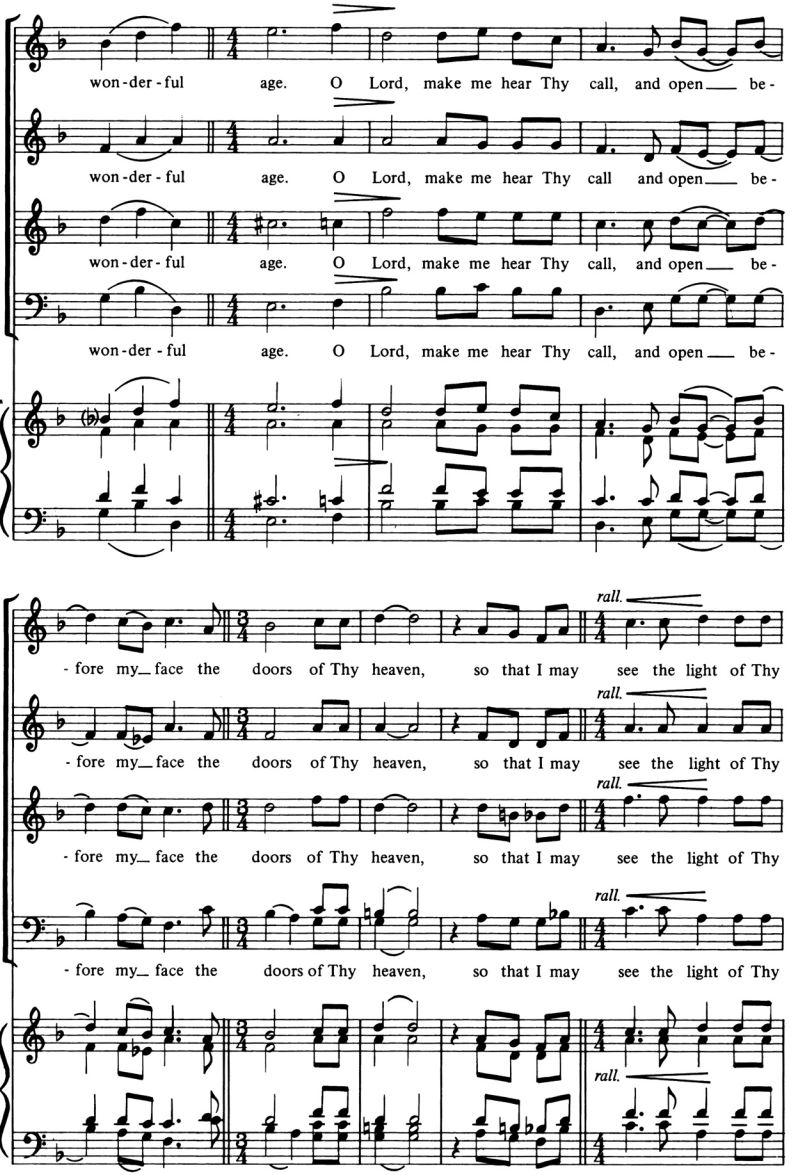

those for those in whom He hath
placed His trust, un-to thee be His praise and His
Glo - ry and His end - less,
rall.
12
end - less grace.
rall.

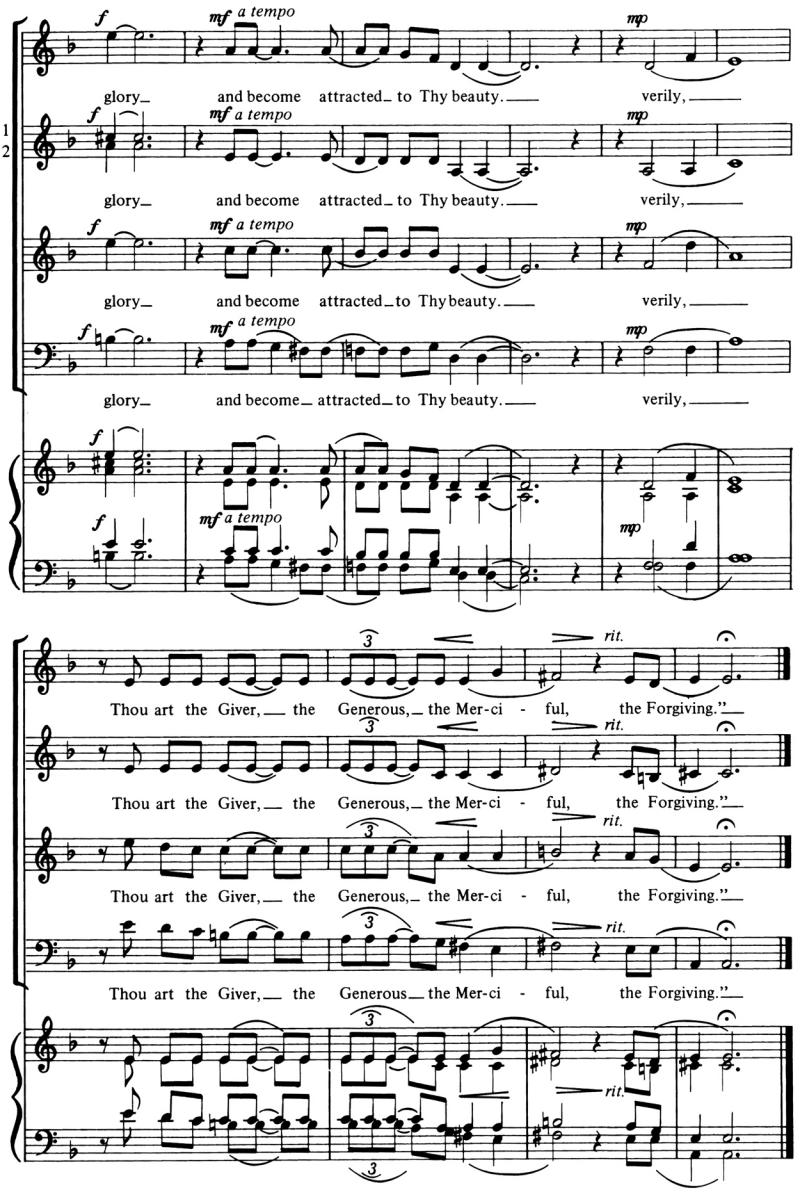
# THE MIDNIGHT PRAYER

JAPAN 'Abdu'l-Bahá MICHAEL HIGGINS




mf
en-light-en my sight by be - hold - ing Thy lights in
en - light-en my sight by be - hold - ing Thy lights in
en-light-en my sight by be - hold - ing Thy lights in
en-light-en my sight by be - hold - ing Thy lights in
lightly
this dark night, and make me happy by the wine of Thy love in this
lightly
this dark night, and make me happy by the wine of Thy love in this
lightly
this dark night, and make me happy by the wine of Thy love in this
lightly
this dark night, and make me happy by the wine of Thy love in this


won-der-ful age. O Lord, make me hear Thy call, and open be-
won-der-ful age. O Lord, make me hear Thy call and open be-
won-der-ful age. O Lord, make me hear Thy call, and open be-
won-der-ful age. O Lord, make me hear Thy call, and open be-
rall.
- fore my face the doors of Thy heaven, so that I may see the light of Thy
rall.
- fore my face the doors of Thy heaven, so that I may see the light of Thy
rall.
- fore my face the doors of Thy heaven, so that I may see the light of Thy
rall.
- fore my face the doors of Thy heaven, so that I may see the light of Thy
rall.

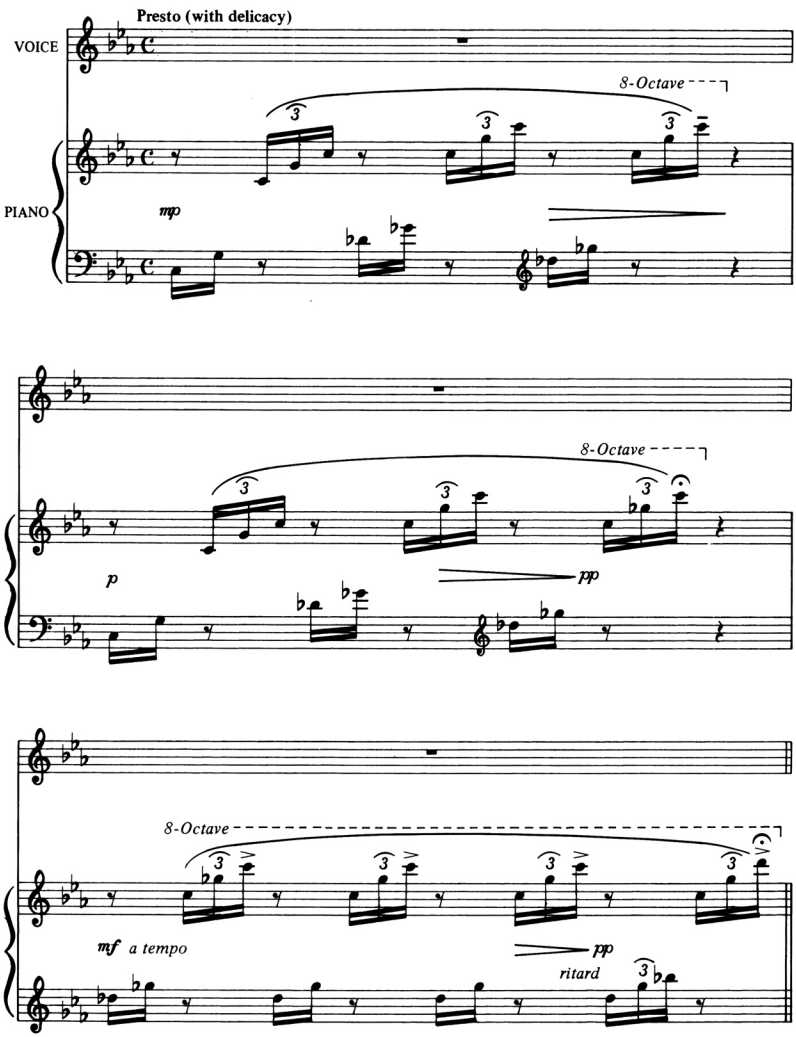

f
mf a tempo
mp
glory_ and become attracted_ to Thy beauty._ verily,_
1
2
glory_ and become attracted_ to Thy beauty._ verily,_
glory_ and become attracted_ to Thy beauty._ verily,_
glory_ and become_ attracted_ to Thy beauty._ verily,_
rit.
Thou art the Giver,_ the Generous,_ the Mer-ci - ful, the Forgiving."_
Thou art the Giver,_ the Generous,_ the Mer-ci - ful, the Forgiving."_
Thou art the Giver,_ the Generous,_ the Mer-ci - ful, the Forgiving."_
Thou art the Giver,_ the Generous_ the Mer-ci - ful, the Forgiving."_

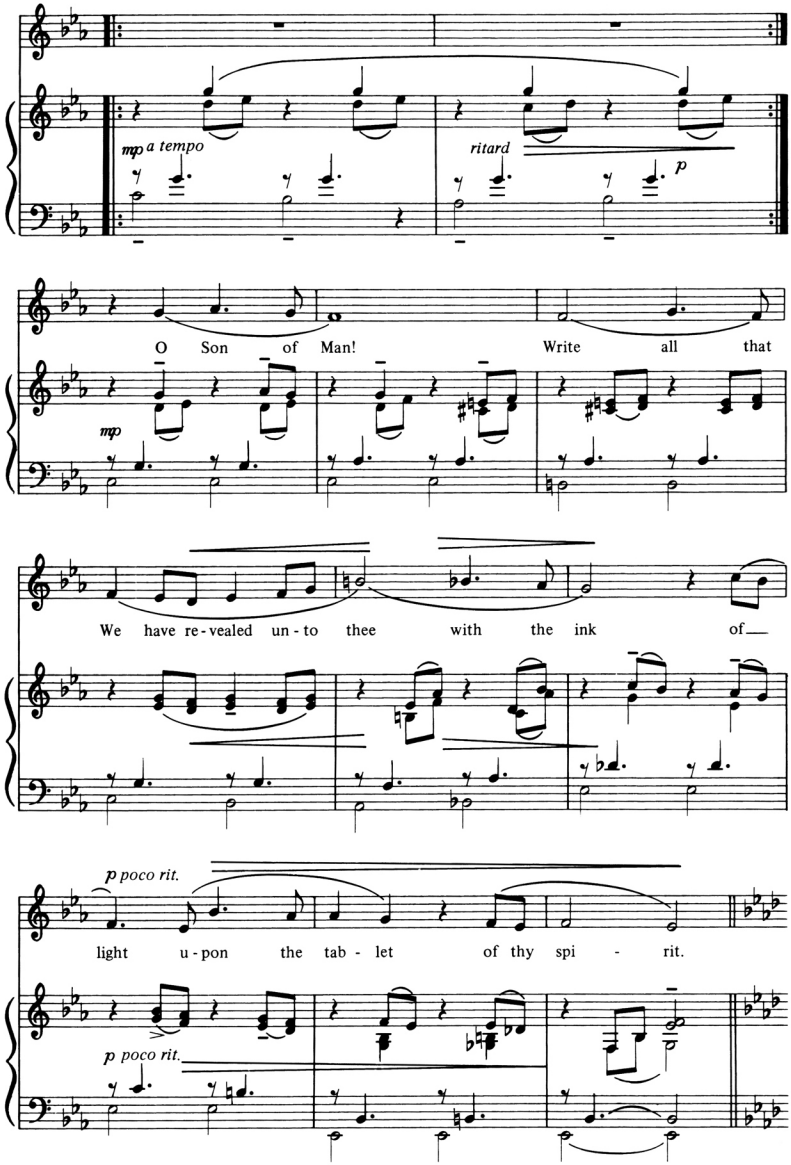
*In memory of the Bahá'í martyrs*

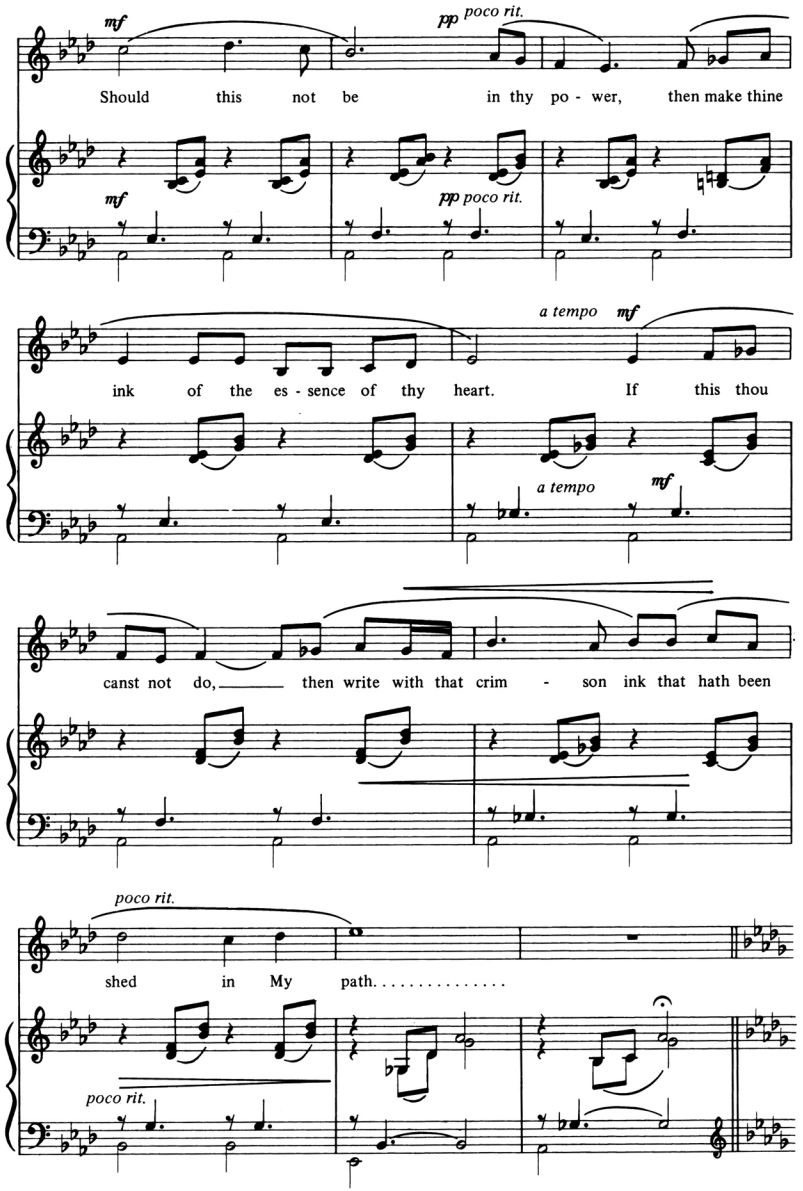
## HIDDEN WORD NO. 71

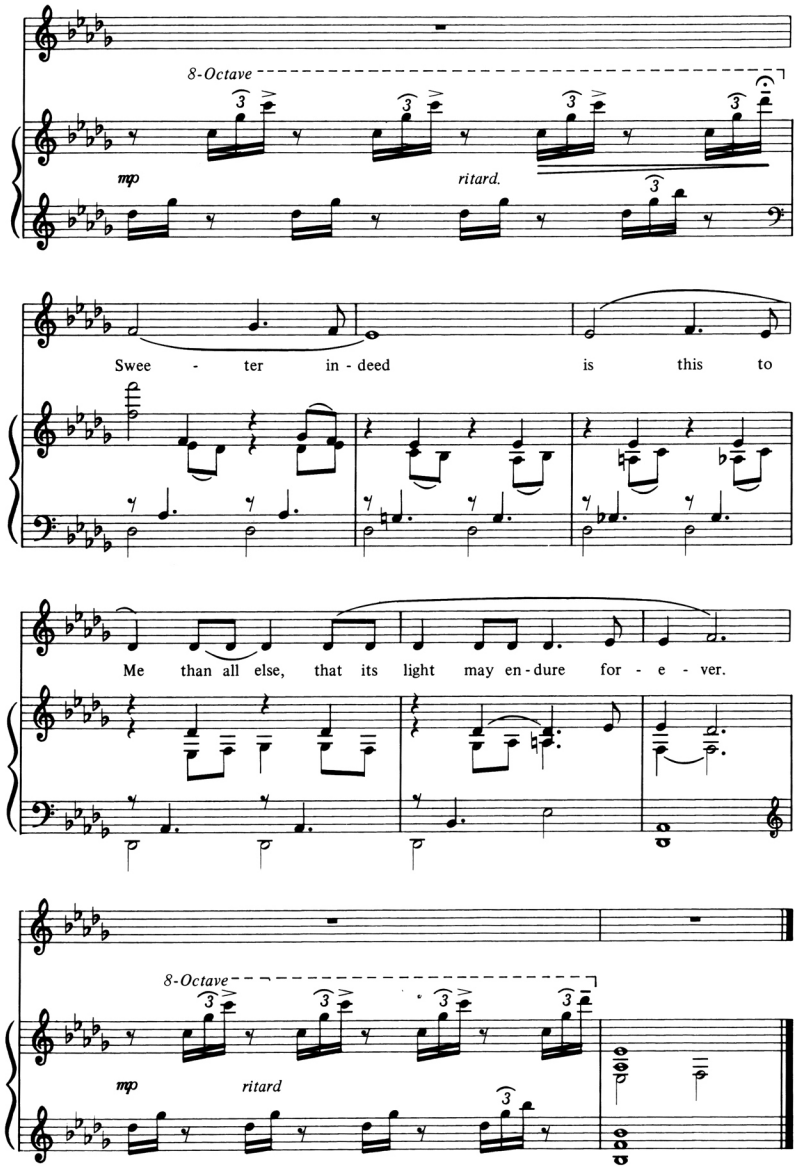
LUXEMBOURG

JEANNE SOUTH




mp a tempo
ritard
p
O Son of Man! Write all that
mp
We have re-vealed un-to thee with the ink of
p poco rit.
light u-pon the tab-let of thy spi-rit.
p poco rit.


mf
pp poco rit.
Should this not be in thy po - wer, then make thine
mf
pp poco rit.
a tempo mf
ink of the es - sence of thy heart. If this thou
a tempo
mf
canst not do, then write with that crim - son ink that hath been
poco rit.
shed in My path.
poco rit.

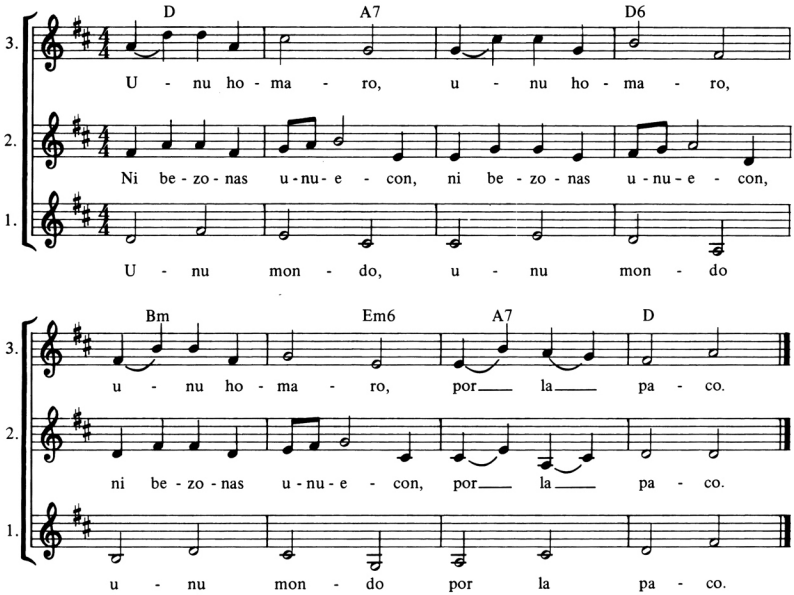

8-Octave
mp
ritard.
Swee - ter in - deed is this to
Me than all else, that its light may en - dure for - e - ver.
8-Octave
mp
ritard

# UNO MONDO

## Esperanto canon

GERMANY

JANET RAWLING-KEITEL




1. One world, one world, one world for peace.

2. We need unity, we need unity, we need unity for peace.

3. One mankind, one mankind, one mankind for peace.