

Third session Intercontinental Conference, Chicago

1958 May

Notes by Emma Jones^{1,2}

The session began with devotions—prayers said in English, Spanish, French and Persian.

Announced by Mr Borah Kavelin (chairman) “that we will see about the cost of reproducing [the] Guardian’s great map—will consult with the Hands in the Holy Land.” Gratifying spirit manifest in outpouring of volunteers for service on many fronts.

One purpose of the Conference was to raise funds to help complete the Temple in Africa taken care of by their Conference. Australia and Frankfurt need help. 900 attending the Kampala Conference raised \$300,000 and \$30,000 raised in Australia.

Approximately \$14,000 pledged by individual Persians for Crusade goals; and many have also volunteered to pioneer in our Crusade territory. One has pledged \$120 per month for rest of Crusade—about \$7,500.

“They cannot go until they are replaced in weak LSAs—they cannot be broken.” This is the Guardian’s instructions. Mr Kavelin, made very clear and emphatic.

One older pioneer said, “As I get older I find moving around in the Faith keeps me from getting in a rut.”

One Negro, who had been for 52 years a Baptist minister, and only two months in the Faith, said he is going and will light where his wings fall.

Madame Varqá brought messages from Rúhiyyih Khánum and herself. Said, “One day in London Rúhiyyih Khánum was speaking—“This is important today, the only thing we can offer the Guardian is our souls, and to volunteer and pioneer and work, and work.” In the Holy Land a year ago, the Guardian said, “At first it is one pioneer, and then a group is formed, and then an LSA and then an NSA. In Baghdad, in the Garden of Ridván, we will have an International Congress of Bahá’ís—(60 NSAs and 200 countries must be represented). It will be a congress not a conference, and he shook his finger when he said this. (He shook his finger emphatically). Last year Salzburg had 3 LSAs and this year a NSA.

Francis Johnson spoke re American Indian work. Told what Dorothy Baker said Shoghi Effendi said to her when she was on her pilgrimage to Haifa, about the Indians: that we have

¹ Notes taken by Emma Jones, of Escondido, California, at the 3rd session of the Intercontinental Conference, Sunday the 4 May 1958 in Chicago, Illinois.

² This document is from the Emma Maxie Jones Collection, https://bahai-library.com/emma_maxwell_jones_collection, prepared by E. Jones, M. Thomas, and J. Winters (2021-2022).

really made [a] little beginning. Pioneering among the Indians would require the same dedication required of pioneers who went to Africa. We will have to have marked enrolment in the ranks of the Faith from among the Indians. Francis Johnson said the committee is better equipped than ever before to help the pioneers. Ethel Murray made the translation into Cherokee possible. She is pioneering among the Indians at Cherokee, South Carolina. Edna Atkinson is the pioneer among the Indians at Macy, Nebraska; and the situation there is very RUGGED. This is the most difficult teaching task on the homefront. The Indian work is the only remaining task of the original 7 year plan. The greatest memorial to Shoghi Effendi would be the completion of this task—the one that the Guardian had [set] his heart on. Mr & Mrs Madoni are going to Gallup to replace Grace Dean who leaves because of [ill] health.

Mrs _____ of Canada said the Indians there are 300–400 years behind. Whites cannot live on reservations. Have to make contacts with Indians on [the] outside. Now [we] have two Indians enrolled. Their Bahá'í Council met on the 9 April to decide about Bahá'ís being able to go onto the reservation, and their decision reads “All members of the Bahá'í World Faith be free to come to the Pecan reservation in Canada when the Indians ask them to come.” The council voted and recorded the above statement. Now have one Indian on the reserve and one other ready to go to another reserve to pioneer. Mr and Mrs Chas. Pulley cannot pioneer, but have pledged \$50 a month assistance for one who can.

89 volunteered this morning for pioneering.

Mr Bert Reskowsky (of Canada) spoke re Costa Rica: “Pioneering is moving from the lower self to a higher self.” After being a long time in Costa Rica, Shoghi Effendi sent him to Czechoslovakia and Austria to teach. He says the Bahá'ís there in Czechoslovakia are made from the same wood as [the] Dawn-breakers. He asked them about negotiating with the government for recognition of the Faith and they were very happy and said go ahead!—they were not afraid. And, believe it or not, the government has recognized the Faith. We must be diplomatic! He said, “Pray for Bahá'u'lláh to send you a heavenly host, and the little fellow will arrive soon and you will no longer have a split personality, because He will direct you and you will not need to worry about putting the Faith first!”

Hand of the Cause, Leroy Ioas: “With no little emotion I arise to speak after this demonstration of volunteers to carry the Banner of Bahá'u'lláh to various places. This causes me to recall Shoghi Effendi's joy over the pioneers and their service. I am particularly impressed with the Negroes who have arisen to serve in the South. Shoghi Effendi referred to the Negroes as the ‘apples of my eyesight’. The entire structure of the Faith is built for one purpose—to carry the Banner of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the world. One evening Shoghi Effendi came to dinner and there were no pilgrims present. I asked Shoghi Effendi how he was feeling, and he said, ‘Well.’ He pushed away his plate and silver and did not eat anything, and said he had bad news

that day. A cable stating some pioneer friends on a certain island had been deported and the new native Bahá'ís [have] been put in jail. 'And I have another cable stating that an American pioneer in Africa had passed away.' Shoghi Effendi said, 'What will these pioneers think if their Guardian sends them out to be put into jail?' I said, 'Shoghi Effendi, how can you feel that way? They go gladly and willingly to serve Bahá'u'lláh, and they are happy to make the sacrifice.' Where ever you serve the Holy Spirit is with you."

Hand of the Cause, Horace Holley: "Shoghi Effendi said the American Bahá'í Community would have to be the reservoir to provide pioneers for the rest of the world to carry the Crusade. He repeated many times this statement. Our capacity to send out pioneers depends upon our capacity to confirm new souls. All cannot go out, but all can contribute to the unity of our communities and arise above personal harassments, support the institutions and contribute to the confirming of souls."

Hand of the Cause, John Robarts: "Every minute of this Conference has been a great inspiration. I am trying to get as much as possible to take back to Africa. Shoghi Effendi meant to disperse not only to far away places, but to centers in the US. Shoghi Effendi said 'people in cities are immersed in gross materialism, not so in the small places.' An African went to his first Bahá'í meeting, and after listening for about an hour, said, 'Do you mean I would love all people if I become a Bahá'í? But I cannot, because there are some I cannot love.' But after a while he came to my house and said, 'I used to go to bed at night nursing my hate feelings, but now I have learned to love.'

Then an official came from the school and wanted to know about the Faith as such a change had come over this teacher, and he became a Bahá'í."

"Africans are pure hearted. Can be brought in and then taught. One of the tribesmen of the Paramount Chief came in and made his declaration and brought his two wives and they smilingly signed cards. When the Chief comes in he has 80 wives. In Kampala a Bahá'í murdered his wife and went to the authorities and said as a Bahá'í he would take his punishment and was sent to prison. In there he confirmed 26 souls and they wrote the Shoghi Effendi asking permission to form an LSA, but he lovingly told them to return to their communities and teach the Faith."

Hand of the Cause Dr Giachery: "I cannot express enough my gratitude for Shoghi Effendi singling me out to come here on this occasion. Only my wife knows. When I received the message from Shoghi Effendi to come here I felt so unworthy and cabled this to Shoghi Effendi and he replied: 'You deserve the honor, and in my wisdom I have chosen you', and I feel so humble. I have an invisible bond. The demonstration of love and affection is for Shoghi Effendi, not for me. I take all this love as a tribute to him. As Shoghi Effendi's personal representative in the Holy Land his interest centered particularly on Institutions of [the] Twin Cities of 'Akká and Haifa. [A] few years ago Shoghi Effendi sent a gift of a photograph of Mt. Carmel taken about

1900. It was a dry rocky mountain; no buildings, no vegetation. The only building on Mt. Carmel was the Carmelite monastery¹ on the NE side of the mountain. Going to Haifa from the beginning of his stewardship of [the] beloved Shoghi Effendi the mountain has undergone [a] tremendous transformation. In the Jewish language Mt. Cannel means ‘vineyard of God’. All the Holy Ones of God have trod on the mountain. *Gleanings*, pp. 14–16 is the Tablet of Carmel.² A profound document upon which is based [the] whole transformation of Mt. Carmel. Memorize it if possible, and you will understand better the meaning of the Institutions, particularly the phrase regarding the sailing of the Ark and the Book of names. This is the Charter of the Institutions of the Faith on Mt. Carmel. Of all the religions, dead or alive, the Bahá’í Faith is only one that has both administrative and spiritual centers[,] on Mt. Carmel[,] [in] one spot. Other religions are like [a] dismembered body—scattered institutions. This is very important point in teaching the Faith. [The] Holy Land, the land of Bahjí, [is] penetrated by Spirit and Power emanating from Their remains and Their Being. Shoghi Effendi wanted to impress with the spiritual power of the Center of Mt. Carmel. Bahá’u’lláh pitched His Tent on it and on one occasion revealed the Tablet [of Carmel] which is [the] Charter, and is midway,³ and one time pointed with His finger showing ‘Abdu’l-Baha where He wanted the Shrine of the Báb and this place is now marked by a clump of cypress trees towering over the Shrine of the Báb. (The trees mark the spot where His tent was pitched.)⁴ In barely 50 years [there has been] a remarkable transformation. The original one story [structure] of local stone [was constructed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá] (refer to *God Passes By*). ‘Abdu’l-Baha said every stone is a tear. After the beginning of the stewardship of Shoghi Effendi this transformation took place. Those who shared bread with Shoghi Effendi at the table noticed the faraway look and could not understand. He was seeing something not now but looking into future centuries. That is why [the] Faith has such a strong foundation. We can never do anything worthwhile to express to Shoghi Effendi our gratitude to pay for his supreme sacrifice. He erected a strong foundation to withstand [the] storms that are to shake the world. His vision was millenniums ahead. Nothing can shake them (the foundations). He built institutions and embellished them. Wish I could show motion picture showing these buildings, but because of mechanical difficulties it is impossible. I hope that in the future you can take the trip to see the testimonial and memorial Shoghi Effendi has built; every tree, every flower, every pot, was placed by him personally or under his direction.”

“The Golden Dome—the Queen of Mt. Carmel—crowned with His Glory. The National Archives [Building], the first [of] a series of five buildings he had planned to erect. This arc begins where the Shrine ends and covers about 300 meters or 900 ft. It is visible from ship and

¹ The Stella Maris Monastery is a 19th-century Carmelite monastery located on the slopes of Mount Carmel, 2 km NE of the Shrine of the Báb. It is on the headland at the north-western end of the range.

² Bahá’u’lláh, *Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 1–5.

³ It is the location of the proposed Bahá’í Temple site, 1.4 km NE along the headland at the north-western end of the range from the Shrine of the Báb.

⁴ These trees (there was an existing clump of them) are on the south side of the Shrine of the Báb, it is not the Temple site.

land. The world center has started to rise from [the] Guardian's initiatives. In several messages since 1949 when he embarked upon erecting the World Center in Haifa \$250,000 is the established value of property at the World Center. The efforts, and labor, and anguish, expressed in money, would be an astronomical figure. Shoghi Effendi knew exactly what had to be done. Divine inspiration, not always [the] orthodox manner, but the quickest, best manner, was his way. Whenever you enter the Shrine or garden you are overcome with Spiritual Peace and calm you cannot describe. Not only Bahá'ís feel this, but others who come from all over world feel so keenly the repose no other where found. 792,000+ visitors to the Shrine since the beginning of the Crusade, until 4 November. Visitors are coming now by the thousands and remaining longer. The Minister of Agriculture and his wife told two newsmen, both members of [the] Parliament of Iran, all four Muslim, and one of them and arch-enemy of [the] Faith, came. They were surprised they were admitted. When asked to remove [their] shoes at [the] entrance, they were a bit disturbed, but when it was explained that in Muslim mosques it was done, they acquiesced, and when they entered the wife whispered to her husband, 'Isn't it beautiful? Why can't we do something like this at home at our shrines?'"

"Sometimes it is flooded with light on occasions, and [it] can be seen from Haifa. Mayor of Haifa requested that during the first anniversary of celebration of their nationhood (?), to please keep the lights burning. It was their expression of love for what [the] Bahá'ís are doing there."

"There is one house where 'Abdu'l-Baha lived, and [where] Shoghi Effendi lived for 36 years. Rooms of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'u'lláh and the Greatest Holy Leaf [are] all kept as during their lifetime."

"Millie Collins contributed funds for land on top of Mt. Carmel,¹ which² was not easy to get, and through efforts of Leroy Ioas it was possible. Someday in future, the Temple will be there. The most sacred spot in Holy Land is the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, near [the] old city of Agrippa,³ site of Crusaders. Bahjí is a little bit out of [the] city, about 4 miles.⁴ For a long time the Mansion itself was in the hands of Covenant-breakers, until about 1946, and it was in terrible disrepair. But Shoghi Effendi has rebuilt it, and it is magnificent now. It was surrounded by sand, but now embellished. Since the beginning of the Crusade, through the generosity of a descendent of Bahá'u'lláh, it is now possible to obtain and beautify the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh. When you enter the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh it is different from the Shrine [of the Báb]—an overpowering feeling makes you feel so small—like a pebble—you feel the immensity of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation through the Tomb. Much has been accomplished since the beginning of the Crusade."

"On Shoghi Effendi's part especially, the band of Covenant-breakers was evicted—a terrible

¹ On top of the first ridge, along the headland at the north-western end of the range.

² The land.

³ Not Agrippa, the city of Acre or 'Akká.

⁴ 1.6 km from the edge of the old city of 'Akká.

fierce battle.¹ This desecrated building² came down piece by piece. It was attacked with such fury—[it] was completed in 10 days instead of regular 30. Even the dust was removed. Everything was removed. Shoghi Effendi said [a] very long high terrace should be built—about 27 or 30 ft high—runs along a long path that leads to [the] Collins gate—being completed and landscaped with flowers and lampposts. When standing on [the] terrace you have all the gardens under your scrutiny, the Shrine, the gardens, the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, and you see the two centers are connected—a not visible bridge (spirit) connects the two centers. A beautiful new door at the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh turns it into a beautiful garden of flowers. If emotion overtakes you, you have to stop, and bow your head to the ground and await strength to go on and then you take a few steps more to enter the Shrine where you let emotion overtake you. The chandeliers, rugs, flowers,”

“The Archives [Building] contains photos of pioneers, individual and families; martyrs, knights; incorporations, marriages (recognized by countries). All these here for eternity. If you want the privilege of seeing the incorporation papers of your LSA—hurry and it will be placed in [a] golden frame on a table (during [the] crusade).

There was a plan of embellishing the Tomb with something monumental, and he (Shoghi Effendi) had a clear idea of what he wanted, and I hope it can be carried out. Then Bahjí will be the most beautiful spot in the world. New land is being bought—deals are through the government. Since the formation of the State [of Israel], the population is pushing from every side, so we must hurry to protect the mountain.³ Shoghi Effendi was farsighted and assured the friends it would be protected.”

“The [Bahá'í] endowments include the rights of 7 NSAs there.⁴ Can withstand assaults from every source because of being so secure. The endowments of 5 1/2 are increasing every day.”

“The officials of the government [deserve] our gratitude. The Guardian says ‘protect the dignity of the Cause at any cost.’ The Israeli people respect the Bahá'ís. We have no taxation there. Where ever the Hands in Haifa go they are greeted with courtesy and pleasure and a willingness to assist. Shoghi Effendi had precedence over ALL other religious heads in Israel because he was the head of both the Spiritual and Administrative centers.”

To speak of the Guardian was very difficult for Dr Giachery. He could not tell of the Guardian's life. “The Guardian's days started very early and ended late, with no time for repose or amusement in the worldly sense. The administration of the affairs is in the hands of the Custodians. The brain, the center of the entire Bahá'í World Centre—the delicate machinery

¹ Legal.

² An addition built by the Covenant-breakers.

³ Mt. Carmel.

⁴ Land has been purchased and registered in the name of some NSAs.

which operates on the [basis of the] revelation of Bahá'u'lláh—is in the presence of broad foundation laid by Bahá'u'lláh, ‘Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi.’”

“I have one request. I am the treasure[r] in the Holy Land and assisted by Miss Revell. The funds are greatly needed. Keep the flow! Bahá'í Custodian's Fund is [a] title recognized by the Israeli govt. Please [use] it!”

“From the World Center is where allocations for other projects are made all over the world.”

Dr Giachery wept.

9 volunteered for the Indian homefront.

Mrs Mehrangiz Munsiff¹—a double Knight of Bahá'u'lláh—has opened two fronts to the Faith—the newest is Spanish Sahara—the third request of Shoghi Effendi of her.

AFTERNOON Session:

Sydney is short about \$4,500. Frankfurt is hoping enough friends will be present to subscribe enough to fulfil that objective.—by Borah Kavelin.

Hand of the Cause, Horace Holley: “re Temples. Looked up references to House of Worship to find out exactly the purpose and meaning and function of the Temple as through the years much mythology had developed, such as that over each door to be the name of a religion so that those of that religion could enter in that door! Among the Institutions of Holy Books is foundation of place of worship in order for humanity to have place of unity. Real Temple is Word of God—all must turn to it—centre of worship. Temples [are the] symbols of [the] Divine Uniting Force that man may recall [the] fact [that the] Law has been revealed for them and they must turn to it. That is why Bahá'u'lláh commanded a building for worship. ‘... *ages of darkness have passed away, and the century of Light has come.*’” ‘Abdu'l-Baha²

“Shoghi Effendi afforded relief, sustenance, education, solace, and security. Interior is not to become a conglomeration of religious services—various avenues of approach converging under the dome. Will not serve as entrances for each religion.”

“Tablet of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá stating there were to be 9 doors, galleries, its beauty, etc.³ Its mystery great and cannot be unveiled yet. The five buildings are one for orphans; a hospital; (or dispensary for the poor; a college; a hospice; and a home for the aged; thus fulfilling the principle that science and religion becoming handmaids to each other.⁴ No instruments whatever

¹ Mehrangiz Munsiff (1923–1999).

² *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 66.

³ See ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 71.

⁴ “I hope that now in America they will build a Temple and gradually add to it the hospital, school, university, pharmacy and pilgrims' house with the utmost efficiency and thoroughness.” (‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas*, vol. 3, p. 627.

[in the Temple]. Readings from all Holy Books of extant religions; Old and New Testaments; Qur'án; and Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. Create a commotion that would attract the hearts of the people. Represents wholeness of life—spirit and science; worship and faith. Fulfils a service to mankind. Unity and progressive revelation are not in the revelations of the past. The wholeness of life represents the one eternal religion of God; and immeasurable spiritual experience. Eventually Temples will not be built only in the continents but in every city. There is only one POWER that can redeem humanity from its own sins, and bring about the establishment of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.”

Borah Kavelin: Mr Holley suggested that B. K. fill in the gaps in Mr Holley's talk, so B. K. had nothing to say, except that Temples are beacons to the world.

Lloyd Carpenter spoke on the needs of Canada: Need a Negro couple for either Anchorage or Fairbanks; couple to settle outside village of Barrow.

Several pioneers spoke, mentioning their experiences, qualifications, bounties bestowed, and the joyous reward of serving; Mrs Munsiff; Ted Cardell; Phillip Marangella; Arden Thur; Mrs Ruth Blackwell; Elizabeth Cheny; Jenabe Caldwell; Dale Tup(?); greetings from Sofia by friend of Miss Jack; Mr A. S. Petzhold; Mrs Samandari Banani, (granddaughter of the Hand of the Cause) from Turkey; Mr Juan de la Peña of Mexico; Mrs Catherine McLaughlin.

An announcement made over loudspeaker: A Col. Prima of Brazil who is at the YMCA Hotel wants to meet a Bahá'í as he has heard of [the] Faith and wants to know more about it.

It was arranged that at the close of the session, after the closing remarks by the five Hands of the Cause present, that the prayer “The Remover of Difficulties” would be said in as many languages as represented at the Conference. This to follow immediately, without any spoken words, after Dr Giachery finished speaking.

Mason Remy spoke briefly of gratitude of the spiritual outpouring.

John Robarts told of incidence related by Rúhíyyih Khánum and closed with this: “The destiny of our own souls is secure only by reason of love, service, and dedication of our selves.”

Horace Holley stepped to the microphone and called Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá three times. This was a soul stirring experience, and the refrain rang clear as a silver bell throughout the entire auditorium, moving everyone deeply.

Leroy Ioas was next and told several things that Shoghi Effendi had said about the Crusade and teaching: “Now we will have to wait and see what the friends will do.” I thought how can Shoghi Effendi be sure and publicly state these victories will be won, and then he said a year later: “The friends didn't think I knew that I was talking about, but if they order their lives according to the plans I give them, they will gain the victories.” Regarding the 4th phase, just ahead, Shoghi Effendi said: “Most spectacular, most powerful phase of the Crusade, and the

Supreme Hosts will go ahead of them in this great spiritual drama”.

The audience rose when Dr Giachery went to the microphone to give us his parting message, so full of love, humility, devotion [and] dedication.

“To start something is easy; to end it is most difficult because it must end well. I wish it had been spared me to do this as I have been under very strenuous emotional strain for several months. Friends, dear friends, I’m not going to urge you, you have had enough. I’m leaving with you deep in your hearts this experience of three fleeting days together. I’m leaving in your hearts Shoghi Effendi, who knows the degree of faith, of sincerity, of sacrifice in each heart. It is today, just today, the 4 April; six months ago, Shoghi Effendi disappeared from our midst. This morning after I finished my brief remarks on the Faith, a few dear friends said: ‘We wish you had spoken about Shoghi Effendi.’ I couldn’t. What was there to say? No every day expression could tell you what Shoghi Effendi was.—He [had] a happy nature, loving, tender; he was a true brother as he always signed; a unique figure, no other like him. He showed it in every moment of his life. When he made his decision his life was utterly devoted; work, work, work, no holiday, no rest. He forged in his delicate and powerful hands the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh. No pictures of him as Guardian. Those who had the privilege of seeing two Holy pictures can combine them. He had the heart and grace of Them both—ready to smile, ready to fire, a humorous way of addressing, an inward chuckle at times and an inward tenderness nowhere else found. A tremendous capacity for work—sometimes before sunrise to [the] very end of day, and sometimes past midnight,—always in the service for the friends. This can never be equalled. His vision did not belong to a human being. He saw the future. That is why he warned; he saw perils—that is why he urged. He did not receive any personal reward. He was pointing to a spiritual salvation. He chided sometimes the American friends. He was aware of material progress and he was afraid; he saw the dangers and he warned us more than any other country in the world. Comfort and spiritual growth do not go together. We used to think he was sitting on a cloud pulling silver strings to have things done. His vision was of a seer. He plotted and charted the way of every Bahá’í. That was Shoghi Effendi. We cannot honor Shoghi Effendi even until out last breath. Physically he looked frail. Sometimes when we three walked after him, we three tall men, Leroy, Mason and myself,—we thought he was a giant. He was powerful in his domain from pole to pole; from Greenwich to _____. He was a great general. For reason[s] beyond my control I’ve had to look through his papers. Everything was in order. How much he must have suffered with the disorderliness of all the world. This is so hard to end. This is the eternal bond between you and me—Shoghi Effendi.”

Dr Giachery spoke with great emotion, and at times it was very difficult for him to continue. The entire gathering was stirred to their inner beings.

The closing prayer was said then in 14 (I counted) languages.