

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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CABLES FROM THE GUARDIAN

We regret that the following cable from the Guardian, dated 26th March, 1956, was omitted from the last *Bahá'í Journal*, although circulated to each member of the Community:

'Appeal high-minded vigilant staunch upholders Faith (of) Bahá'u'lláh, scattered (through a) hundred centres (in the) British Isles (to) arise (at) this crucial hour (to) exert (a) supreme effort (in) concluding month (of) second phase World Crusade (to) meet urgent needs (on the) home front, (to) valiantly defend hard-won prizes (and) ensure preservation pivotal centres. Confident His dearly beloved, highly admired British followers will refuse (to) allow any setback (in the) consolidation work (in) their homeland (to) tarnish (the) splendid record (of) pioneer services achieved (in) territories (of the) African Continent. Praying whole-hearted, universal, immediate response. Pledging five hundred pounds meritorious purpose.'

Ziaollah Asgarzadeh

The Guardian cabled on 27th April:

'Grieved passing consecrated pioneer Faith. Long record services highly meritorious, unforgettable. Praying progress soul Abhá Kingdom.'

Bahá'í Holy Days

Under British law, all parents have the right to keep their children from state-aided schools on the Holy Days of their own religion. This is not a matter at the discretion of the headmaster; he has no power to object, although naturally he can expect the parent to explain beforehand on what days the child will be kept from school.

The National Assembly, at the request of the Convention delegates, wishes to urge all Bahá'í parents to take advantage of this privilege. Doing so is a recognition of the sanctity of the Holy Day, a means of bringing the Faith to the attention of others. It demonstrates that the Faith is an independent religion, and leads to a fuller awareness of Bahá'í Community life on the part of the parents as well as the child. It is an opportunity to express the Bahá'í spirit that none should miss. Through it, every Bahá'í family can play its part in furthering recognition of the Faith by civil authorities, to which the Guardian attaches so much importance.

IMPRESSIONS OF FAROE

That the British Bahá'í Community should be spiritually responsible for a county of Denmark is, in the first place, perplexing. I had neglected to think of this until, sailing on the 'Tjaldur' from Lerwick I found myself surrounded by Danes and Faroe people, one Lancashire couple and I an oasis of English speech on board. The fact that the Faroe people are not British, and emphatically not Danish, but are a nation all to themselves and proudly isolated in their island history, is the first fact our Community must appreciate if it is to discharge the task laid upon it in the Ten-Year Crusade.

In Eskil Ljungberg, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, our Community has received a fortunate gift, for he is suited to his post by birth and spirit. Eskil — if he will forgive a familiarity derived from an affection all British Bahá'ís are bound to feel when meeting him — was born in Sweden, and his links in the Cause are deeply connected with the Swedish Bahá'ís, particularly in Stockholm and Göteborg. By this Scandinavian origin, which gives him a knowledge of Danish speech, and an intuitive understanding of Northern traditions and history, Eskil is as well equipped as anyone, not a Faroeman, can be for pioneering in the Faroe Islands. At the same time, he is intimate with our British way of life through many years' residence in England and Scotland in his younger days, and his knowledge of British towns and countryside is wider than that of most British Bahá'ís, while his love for British life is not exceeded by our own. When Eskil arose, in the Intercontinental Conference in Stockholm in 1953, to offer himself as a pioneer to Faroe and spoke these touching words, 'I will willingly go because I love England, I love Scotland, I love the Bahá'ís, and I love Bahá'u'lláh,' I did not then realise as now I do that he is perhaps the believer most fitted in all the world for this particular post.

All this is the God-given background and preparation which Eskil received in his rich and varied life, through the loving guidance of Bahá'u'lláh, that he might be qualified to be the 'spiritual conqueror' of a Viking race linked in some mysterious way to the British Bahá'ís.

Yet this was only the beginning of what he would need. It is probable that no Knight conceives the depth and width of his assignment until, in long solitude, in midnight hours of dedication and prayer, in

utter humility of striving, in the anxious probing of his spirit to reach out and touch the souls of his people, he comes at last to measure all the greatness and challenge of the work Bahá'u'lláh has set him to do. To come as pioneer, alone and unfortified, save by the spirit of faith in the promises of His Lord, and to know that from his first footfall on his chosen ground must arise first, one believer, then a group, then a Spiritual Assembly, and then a flowering community circling round its own Divine institutions of Temple and Hazíratu'l-Quds, must be indeed an overwhelming spiritual experience.

In this early process the Knight is formed. We who come later do not see the upheaval of human qualities, but only the tranquil and assured spirit, luminously clothed in faith and prayer, enduring, patient, continuously striving, firm and equal to the heroic task.

The Faroe Islands have a grandeur of nature, an austere and formidable beauty, which seems all past and future. At Kirkjubour, as one stands by the ruins of Magnus Cathedral wondering at the hardness of Christian teachers of a thousand years ago, looking out as they did at a scene of transcendent loveliness—of islands and sea which can fill the heart with both love and fear—it seemed to me that all this past life had descended into history, whilst the future is still veiled. 'The earth is God's', and its destiny is great, but at this hour it lies virgin.

In Thorshavn, a gaily-painted town sheltered amidst hills and already beginning to grow, in a scattered way, up their flanks, Eskil lives in a community both modern and age-old. The Faroeman is not easy to know, and even less easy to influence. It was many months before Eskil received his first smile from a humble street worker. Even the children watch the stranger with caution and reserve.

In his room high above the town, looking over it to the hills beyond, and to the lovely island of Nolsoy—'Queen of Faroe', Eskil calls her—our Knight of Bahá'u'lláh is the repository of the new cycle. His teaching method is love, love for this unresponsive people, a deep and ever-burning love which, I am sure, is the one key to unlock the potency that God has planted in the Faroe race. We in Britain, for our part, must find ways to support Eskil in his task, and at all times uphold him in our prayers and in our own steadfast faith that the Faroe Islands will, with all the world, find their great destiny in the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh.

MARION HOFMAN

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

MAGNIFIED BE THY NAME

This is a selection of prayers and readings for children, printed in two colours, with decorative illustrations, a photograph of the Shrine of the Báb, and a Bahá'í song approved by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We do not think there is any other Bahá'í book for children quite like it.

Cloth.

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SOME FACTS ABOUT THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

A well-printed leaflet on good quality paper, prepared by the Public Relations Committee to present

the chief facts about the Bahá'í Faith concisely. All local newspapers should have a copy.

Price 1d.

LOCAL ASSEMBLY AND GROUP SECRETARIES

ASSEMBLIES

- Belfast.* Lady Hornell, 127 Fitzroy Avenue, Belfast.
Birmingham. Miss Audrie Rogers, 35 Bayswater Road, Birchfield, Birmingham 20.
Blackpool. Mrs. Prudence Lowe, 6 Mansfield Road, Blackpool.
Bournemouth. Mrs. Cranmer, 41 Woodside Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth.
Bradford. Mrs. Naylor, 4 Derby Street, Great Horton, Bradford.
Bristol. Miss Olive Sutton, 40 Alma Road, Bristol 8.
Cardiff. Mrs. Marion Hofman, 98 Pencisely Road, Cardiff.
Dublin. John Craven, 45 Garville Avenue, Rathgar, Dublin.
Edinburgh. J. Robertson, Esq., 6 Wolridge Road, Liberton, Edinburgh 9.
Leeds. Miss S. Doktoroglu, Oxley Hall, Leeds 16.
Liverpool. Miss S. Farnsworth, 19 Canning Street, Liverpool 8.
London. Mrs. Bobbie Kamming, 21 Princes Avenue, London, N.10.
Manchester. Louis Ross-Enfield, Esq., 32 Inverness Avenue, Manchester 9.
Norwich. R. Cheek, Esq., 192 Dereham Road, Norwich.
Nottingham. Mrs. Beale, 10 Stratford Square, Nottingham.
Oxford. Miss J. Campbell, 106 Banbury Road, Oxford.
Sheffield. Miss M. Shanks, Bahá'í Centre, 23 Spooner Road, Sheffield 10.

GROUPS

- Blackburn.* Mrs. Scott, 20 Mincing Lane, Blackburn, Lancs.
Brighton. Miss J. Glover, 48 King's Road, Brighton.
Cambridge. Mrs. Kathleen Ackroyd, 102 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge.
Cheadle. C. Johnson, Esq., 35 Neal Avenue, Heald Green, Cheshire.
Eccles. Miss F. Massey, 11 Westminster Road, Ellesmere Park, Eccles.
Glasgow. Mrs. Molly Hughes, c/o McNairn, 29 Arlington Street, Glasgow.
Leicester. Mrs. Pat Sinclair, 36 Middle Street, Leicester.
Northampton. Miss V. Rate, 17 Barnwell Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton.
Portsmouth. Mrs. Olive Long, 40 Garnier Street, Fratton, Portsmouth.
Reading. Miss Beryl de Gruchy, 148 London Road, Reading, Berks.
Swinton. Mrs. Pauline Senior, 15 Oaklands Road, Swinton, Lancs.
Torquay. J. A. Povey, Esq., 8 Abbey Place, Torquay.

CONVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

TEACHING

1. To recommend that the National Assembly consider the possibility of their members covering the whole of the British Isles for consultation with the believers and teaching. (*The National Assembly hopes its members will circulate widely during the year. The attention of Regional Committees has been called to this recommendation.*)
2. To urge the National Assembly to undertake vigorously the proclamation of the Faith, bearing in mind the instructions brought back from the beloved Guardian by the pilgrims. (*The Guardian was not reported to have urged wide proclamation of the Faith. The pilgrims' report will be borne in mind.*)
3. To recommend that members of the community, especially those prevented by illness or old age from some kind of activity, should be encouraged to complete files of teaching material on some subject that interests them to send to the National Teaching Committee for circulation to active teachers. (*Referred to the National Teaching Committee.*)
4. To recommend that in addition to urging the friends to increase their personal teaching, the National Assembly take immediate steps to ensure that the circulation of travelling teachers is stepped up. (*Referred to the National and Regional Teaching Committees.*)
5. To recommend that the National Assembly encourage the friends to use the method of combined prayer which has been used successfully in Belfast to aid the teaching of the Faith. (*Referred to the National Teaching Committee.*)
6. Convention is determined to make every effort and sacrifice, both personal and in communities and groups, to ensure attainment of the immediate goals of: 24 Assemblies restored and 6 goal towns developed into Assemblies, in the least possible time before next Rīḍván. (*Noted.*)
7. Recommended that the N.S.A. consider the teaching situation in Ireland in the light of what has been said at Convention by delegates and pioneers and that it gives particular attention to the establishment of a firm Assembly in Dublin. (*Referred to the European and Asian Teaching Committee for comment.*)
8. The N.S.A. is asked to investigate whether it would be advisable to split the Northern Region into two separate regions. (*Done.*)
9. Recommended that more Regional Schools and Conferences of the type held in various regions in the last few months be held in various parts of the country during the coming year. (*Instructions about this have been given to the National Teaching Committee.*)

68 believers, i.e. less than 20 per cent. of the community, participated, that the National Assembly re-adopt the pledge plan for next year in order to stimulate even more donations. (*Agreed.*)

11. To recommend that the National Assembly investigate the possibility of increasing contributions to the Continental Funds. (*Unfortunately this increase has not been possible.*)
12. To recommend that the National Assembly investigate teaching with a view to having as full a policy as possible for the spread of the Faith, even if it means increased spending, provided that this is kept under control. (*See statement circulated on policy for the year.*)
13. To recommend that the National Assembly be asked to study priorities in expenditure for the Faith and make a statement that will guide Assemblies and individuals about this. (*Agreed.*)
14. To pass a vote of warm thanks to the National Treasurer for his work. (*Endorsed.*)

PUBLISHING

15. To recommend that it be considered that the Publishing Trust reprint the book, *Prayers and Meditations*, of which the Guardian has said that it contains all we need for the prosecution of our tasks. (*The Publishing Trust Committee have been asked to investigate this.*)
16. To recommend that the Publishing Trust consider making pamphlets attractive, particularly with regard to printing and quality of paper used, even if this means an increase in price of 1d. per pamphlet. (*Referred to the Publishing Trust Committee.*)
17. To recommend to the National Assembly to produce a small introductory pamphlet approaching the Faith from a non-religious aspect, for example, world unity. (*Such a pamphlet is being prepared for review.*)

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18. To recommend to the N.S.A. to publish in the *Bahá'í Journal* the explanatory diagram used by the National Treasurer in giving his supplementary report on finance. (*Agreed.*)
19. Recommended that the *Journal* include a section on the History of the Faith in each issue. (*Referred to JOURNAL Committee.*)
20. The attention of the N.S.A. is drawn to the widespread demand for the diffusion of personal and local news. (*Referred to the National Teaching Committee for attention in connection with the Bulletin they will be issuing.*)
21. Recommended that the National Assembly takes steps to restore the *Journal* to the standard it had at the time the Guardian praised it highly. It is suggested that the N.S.A. investigate the possibility of appointing an Editor and Committee in one Community, for example, Oxford. (*This is being investigated.*)

FUNDS

10. To recommend, in view of the fact that the resolve method of contribution obtained about 20 per cent. of the total annual income last year, in which only

22. Recommended that a list of addresses to which news should be sent should be published once a quarter in *Bahá'í Journal*. (Referred to JOURNAL Committee.)

CHILD EDUCATION

23. Recommended that the Child Education Committee, or a specially appointed Committee, regard it as part of its function to educate Bahá'í parents on how to bring their children into proper relation to the Faith, and that a session at Summer School to introduce this subject to parents is held. (*This has always been a function of the Child Education Committee, and they have in fact produced a booklet which they have been selling for a couple of years. A Summer School session will be arranged.*)
24. Recommended that the Committee handling this also urge Local Assemblies to help parents bring their children into proper relation to the Faith, and advise Local Assemblies how to do this. (Referred to the Child Education Committee.)
25. Recommended that the N.S.A. remind the Community again of their right to ask that their children be excused school on Bahá'í Holy Days, and to urge Bahá'í parents to take advantage of this right. (Agreed.)

OTHER

26. To recommend the National Assembly to explore the possibility of improving visiting facilities and the present rules for accommodation in the Hazíratu'l-Quds. (*Visitors are warmly welcomed, but anyone wishing to come should telephone first to enable them to choose a convenient time. Provision has now been made for members of the Community each to attend one night in the Hazíratu'l-Quds if they wish.*)
- 27 To express its warmest thanks for the devoted services of the Youth and to ask the National Assembly to give them the biggest possible budget for next year. (*A National Youth Committee has been appointed this year, but unfortunately it has not*

been possible to give it as big a budget as we should have liked to.)

28. Recommended that the N.S.A. prepare and circulate, especially to new believers, a summary of the activities of the British Bahá'í Community since the publication of *The Centenary of a World Faith* in 1944, with a very brief summary of the history before 1944. (Agreed.)
29. The N.S.A. is asked to remind Communities of the desirability of reading and discussing at nineteen Day Feasts the Guardian's messages and major communications from the N.S.A. and Committees. The N.S.A. is asked to investigate the method of presenting these messages used in Oxford with a view to recommending it to other Communities. (*This is being investigated.*)
30. It is felt that the time has come when the N.S.A. should try to bring into being a second Summer or Winter School which will be cheaper and will sacrifice comfort to cheapness, to be especially for Youth but also for any others who wish to attend. The Convention welcomed warmly an offer from Stuart Sweet that his parents would place their hotel at the disposal of the Bahá'ís for such a school in the winter and asked the National Assembly to follow up this generous offer. (*Agreed in principle. The Youth Committee is exploring possibilities.*)
31. Recommended that the N.S.A. take vigorous action to put the use of Visual Aids on a firm footing, bearing in mind the possible uses for children. (*Postponed for further consideration.*)
32. Recommended that a short daily session be allotted for the attendants at Summer School to give suggestions and comments to the Summer School Committee. (*A weekly session for this purpose has been recommended to the Summer School Committee, who have been asked also to provide a box for written suggestions.*)
33. Will the N.S.A. issue a statement on what steps Assemblies should take at Ridván, especially those with only nine members in the Community. (Agreed.)