

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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SEPTEMBER, 1956

FROM THE GUARDIAN

Mr. John Ferraby, Secretary,
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís
of the British Isles.

July 11th, 1956

Dear John,

As a number of questions raised in your communications addressed to the beloved Guardian have been answered by cable or through the Assistant Secretary, I will not go into these matters here, but merely acknowledge on his behalf receipt of the letters from your National Body, together with their enclosures and material sent under separate cover, which were dated as follows: July 22, August 8, 9, 11 (two), 12 (two), and 18, September 7, 9, 10, 23 (three), 26 and 28, October 7 (two), 13 (two), 25, 26, 28 (two) and 29, November 3, 4, 9, 21 (two), 24 and 30, December 1, 2, 9 (three), 19 and 29 (two), 1955, and January 6, 10, 17, 23, 27 and 30 (two), February 10, 16 and 27, March 8, 9, 19 and 29, April 2, 10, 13, 16, 17 and 26, May 4, 14, 16, 31, and June 13, 19, 22 and 29, 1956.

He appreciated receiving copies of the Diary which your Assembly forwarded to him, and which is invariably gotten out efficiently and in a pleasing manner. He thinks the five copies you sent will be sufficient.

The generous spirit in which the British Bahá'ís, hard-pressed as they are to meet the requirements of the work in Great Britain, responded to the needs of their persecuted brethren in Persia, deeply touched him. These evidences of Bahá'í sacrifice and solidarity cannot but nourish the very roots of the Faith and strengthen its institutions.

As he advised you by cable, he felt it unwise to seek to clarify the relationship of the Bahá'ís to the advertised holding of Ahmad Sohrab's conference in Jerusalem. Having a very shrewd eye to his own advantage, it has become obvious that one of the means by which he hopes to promote interest in his conference is to arouse active opposition from the Bahá'ís and create a source of discussion in the press. In view of this, the Guardian has been very careful to have the friends avoid rising to this bait. They should, in their personal contacts with people, and in a quiet manner, point out when occasion arises that the Caravan activities have nothing whatsoever to do with the Bahá'í

Faith and are indeed unfriendly to it. Whatever he does cannot but end in failure, because he has cut himself off entirely from the living tree of the Faith and is wholly insincere in his motives . . .

The persecution of the Faith last year in Persia, although no doubt a great trial to the Persian believers, can be regarded in no other light than as a triumph. The designs of the traditional enemies of the Faith, the mullahs, have been entirely frustrated. The Government has been forced to take action for the first time in its history to officially protect the Bahá'ís and their institutions; and the Cause of God has received a publicity all over the world—entirely free of charge—which an expenditure of many thousands of pounds could not have secured for it.

In spite of the great anxiety and pain which the crisis of last summer caused the Guardian, he could not help being highly gratified that, for practically the first time, publicity of a weighty nature was given to the Faith in such papers as the *Spectator*, the *Observer*, *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*, and that the voices of two such distinguished scholars as Professor Gilbert Murray and Professor Arnold Toynbee were raised in defence of the believers of Bahá'u'lláh and His Faith. This has opened the door on a new phase of the unfoldment of the Faith in the British Isles. However slow the process may seem, the first inklings of its emergence as a public force can now be discerned. . . .

The loss of some of the Spiritual Assemblies in England this year need not be viewed as an unduly horrible experience. It was inevitable that the British Bahá'í Community would have to get itself, once and for all, grounded on the same basis as all other Bahá'í Communities, namely, that of having Spiritual Assemblies function within defined civil limits. Although this seems to have dealt a set-back to the work, it is purely temporary. The localities have perforce been increased, which is a step in the right direction, and which cannot but widen the foundation of the Administrative Order. In those islands more members of the Community will be given the opportunity to serve on Local Assemblies and their committees; and above all, the new crisis which developed because of this change-over once more demonstrated the truly extraordinary and exemplary

steadfastness of the British Bahá'ís which had led them, over and over again, at great cost to themselves, to throw themselves into the breach. Although this is a well-known national characteristic, it provides nevertheless a great example to their fellow-Bahá'ís all over the world. The Guardian knows of no Community, east or west, which so valiantly and so consistently, one might almost say ferociously, has arisen to defend its Home Front. He has the greatest admiration for the spirit which animates them and for their achievements . . .

The Guardian hopes that during the coming year there will be more Assemblies incorporated, as he attaches great importance to this process.

He was delighted that the Irish translation had been completed, and also very happy to hear that the National Endowment for the British National Spiritual Assembly had been purchased. All these signs of life and vitality are greatly to be admired, and prove the intense virility and youthfulness of the British Bahá'í Community.

He was sorry to have to disappoint Mr. — who was so enthusiastic about his own design for the Temple. However, there was no possible question of accepting something as extreme as this. The Guardian feels very strongly that, regardless of what the opinion of the latest school of architecture may be on the subject, the styles represented at present all over the world in architecture are not only very ugly, but completely lack the dignity and grace which must be at least partially present in a Bahá'í House of Worship. One must always bear in mind that the vast majority of human beings are neither very modern nor very extreme in their tastes, and that what the advanced school may think is marvellous is often very distasteful indeed to just plain, simple people.

The Hand of the Cause, Mr. Remey, has now completed a design for the Kampala Temple which meets with the Guardian's approval. It will shortly be ready to be forwarded to the Central and East Africa National Assembly.

It was a great pleasure for Shoghi Effendi to have a number of pilgrims from the British Isles as his guests this winter. They brought with them the spirit of perseverance and devotion so clearly evinced by the British believers; and he feels sure that, upon their return, carried back much of inspiration and encouragement to the friends at home.

Not the least of the landmarks reached on the international Bahá'í scene this year has been the formation of the three new National Bodies in Africa. Your Assembly and the Community you represent have every reason to look with pride and affection upon the development of the Cause in the African continent, and upon the many spiritual children and grandchildren, and perhaps great-grandchildren you have over there. The record has been truly astonishing, and such as to gladden the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Who so ardently longed, Himself, to go forth 'on foot' and carry the Message to yet another of the far corners of the world.

No doubt although the Central and East Africa Assembly is a strong one, it will still welcome and need at least a large measure of moral support from its

parent; and he feels sure that you will always be ready and willing to help in any way you can with advice and suggestions, and perhaps teachers and pioneers and other support as opportunity affords. (As he informed you when you were here, he does not feel the British National Spiritual Assembly can support financially its Central and East Africa one. However, a token contribution would be a kind and appropriate gesture.) In any case, you should keep in close touch with the work there, a work dear, not only to the Guardian's heart, but to all of yours as well.

As regards certain questions raised in your letters:

There is no objection for the time being in going on including in Prayer Books the Prayer of the Báb: 'In the Name of God, the Victor of the Most Victorious', etc.

As regards the question raised in Africa about divorce connected with adultery, these are matters for the future. No action of any new kind should be taken at present.

As regards strikes, the Guardian feels that your own understanding of the matter as expressed in your letter is quite correct, and he does not see the necessity of adding anything to it. We should avoid becoming rigid and laying down any more rules and regulations of conduct.

Regarding taking oaths, there is nothing in the Teachings on this subject. As a Bahá'í is enjoined by Bahá'u'lláh to be truthful, he would express his truthfulness, no matter what the formality of the law in any local place required of him. There can be no objection to Bahá'ís conforming to the requirements of the law court whatever they may be in such matters, as in no case would they constitute in any way a denial of their own beliefs as Bahá'ís.

Concerning the short obligatory Prayer: the Guardian does not wish to define these things at present; the time will come for it in future. The friends need not be too strict about it at present. The Greatest Name is Alláh-u-Abhá.

He remembers you and all the N.S.A. members in his prayers most lovingly, and supplicates for your success and that strength may be given you to discharge your many important duties.

With warm Bahá'í love,

R. RABBANI

Dear and valued co-workers:

The emergence of the Regional Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Central and East Africa, under such auspicious circumstances, and after the lapse of such a short period of time since the inception of the Ten-Year Plan, marks a milestone of far-reaching significance in the unfoldment of the great historic Mission entrusted to the British Bahá'í Community in the vast and far-flung territories beyond the confines of its motherland. It is, moreover, a striking evidence of the exemplary and whole-hearted devotion of its members to that Mission, and of the vigour, the vigilance, the resourcefulness, the tenacity and the courage with which they have conducted this vast and magnificent

enterprise launched in the heart of that continent, in the face of various obstacles and with such limited resources at their disposal. The entire community, now standing on the threshold of still greater and nobler enterprises in other parts of the world, and particularly its national elected representatives, who have so splendidly discharged their responsibilities overseas, and assumed with characteristic resolution, fearlessness and consecration the direction of the manifold activities of so dynamic an enterprise, must be heartily congratulated on so conspicuous a victory, won in such a distant field, within so brief an interval, and at the cost of so much sacrifice, by so limited a number of pioneers, labouring amidst a people so divergent in language, customs and manners.

Its sister communities in both the East and the West, and particularly its daughter communities, now blossoming into new life, and marching forth unitedly and resolutely along the path traced for them in the Ten-Year Plan, cannot but feel proud of the tremendous work first initiated in the heart of Africa by British Bahá'í pioneers and of the organising ability, the sound judgment, the unquestioning fidelity, and the dogged determination that have characterised every stage in the rise, the development and fruition of the first collective enterprise embarked upon beyond the confines of the British Isles by the British adherents of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Though much of the responsibility hitherto discharged by your Assembly, in both the heart of the continent and the territories situated on its eastern and western shores, will now devolve on the newly-established Regional Spiritual Assemblies, the particular Mission you have been called upon, through the dispensations of Providence, to fulfil is by no means concluded. Every assistance within your power, particularly in matters requiring the aid, support and intervention of the authorities at the Colonial Office, and in connection with the translation of Bahá'í literature into African languages, their publication, and dissemination, as well as with any publicity that can be given in the British Press to the marvellous achievements of the numerous Bahá'í communities recently raised up in Africa, and now energetically discharging their manifold and sacred duties all over that continent—such assistance should be constantly and unstintingly extended to these newly-fledged communities which the power of the Most Great Name has called into being at so crucial a period in human history, and at so auspicious a stage in the mysterious unfoldment of God's Plan for all mankind.

While this beneficent, slowly maturing, irresistibly advancing enterprise develops and gains momentum, through the concerted and tireless efforts of its original organisers in the British Isles and those in charge of its immediate destinies in Africa itself, a corresponding endeavour, no less consecrated, persistent and enthusiastic, should be exerted in the islands of the Mediterranean and the Far East, where similar exploits must needs be achieved by those who have performed such unforgettable feats among the Negroes of the African Continent.

Parallel with this highly vital and urgently needed exertion in foreign fields, a further intensification of effort is required on the home front, and particularly throughout the newly-opened islands bordering the homeland itself, now standing in such dire need of a flow of pioneers and a concentration of material resources unexampled in British Bahá'í history. There is no reason to doubt that the phenomenal progress achieved, within the space of a few years, amidst an alien people, and in such distant and backward territories, will be duplicated, nay, surpassed, among people of the same race, speaking the same language, of the same background, and living in such close proximity to the Administrative Centre in the British Isles, provided that a determination no less unyielding and a dedication no less whole-hearted and complete, will be displayed by those who have already won such memorable victories in such far-off and inhospitable regions of the globe. He who in recent years infallibly guided from His realms above the steps of the little band of pioneers and administrators under such difficult and challenging circumstances, who galvanised their souls, blessed their handiwork, raised their status and noised abroad their fame, can well enable them, if they but arise to the occasion now presenting itself, to conquer, with no less rapidity and even greater effectiveness, the citadels of men's hearts, to tear down the barriers which now confront them, and ignite a fire in the hearts of their own countrymen as consuming as the one that has set ablaze, in so conspicuous a fashion, the souls of the African races over the length and breadth of an entire continent.

The rapid increase in the number of the avowed supporters of the Faith, the multiplication of groups, isolated centres and assemblies within the limits of the homeland and its neighbouring islands, must be accompanied by a marked acceleration in the process of internal consolidation, such as the incorporation of firmly established local assemblies, expansion in the publication and dissemination of Bahá'í literature, and the adoption of carefully considered measures aimed at giving a still wider publicity among circles hitherto unapproached, or as yet inadequately informed of the tenets, the aims and purposes, as well as the world-wide achievements of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in both the teaching and administrative spheres of its activities.

The highly gratifying and truly praiseworthy success which has attended, so unexpectedly, the energetic efforts exerted by your assembly in connection with the campaign of publicity initiated for the purpose of safeguarding the rights of our oppressed brethren in Persia must be regarded as a most encouraging sign, and should constitute a prelude and a stepping-stone to a still wider undertaking, aimed at a more systematic presentation of the ideals animating our beloved Cause and of its fundamental verities, and an adequate proclamation of its God-given mission to this distracted, sadly erring, and increasingly tormented generation.

The annals of the British Bahá'í Community, small in numbers, yet unconquerable in spirit, tenacious in belief, undeviating in purpose, alert and vigilant in the discharge of its manifold duties and responsibilities, have in consequence of its epoch-making achievements

been vastly enriched. The process set in motion and greatly accelerated through the successive formation of the Six-Year Plan, the Two-Year Plan and the Ten-Year Plan, must continue unabated and unimpaired. Nay, with every passing day it must gather momentum. Every individual believer must, henceforth, encouraged and inspired by all that has already been achieved, contribute to its future and speedy unfoldment. That the entire Community may befittingly respond to the call of the present hour and bring to a final consummation the Mission with which it has been entrusted is the deepest yearning of my heart and the object of my unceasing prayers.

SHOGHI

Explanation of Certain Paragraphs

1. Ahmad Sohrab, who is arranging a Conference in Jerusalem, is a Covenant-breaker who organised a group known as the New History Society, of which the Caravan Organisation is an offshoot. The ordinary members of these organisations have never been Bahá'ís and are not Covenant-breakers, but the Guardian has warned that we should be on our guard in dealing with them, as a few may have been infected by the Covenant-breaking spirit.

2. The sentence about divorce refers to a particular enquiry about Bahá'í law on the subject from Africa.

3. The Assembly's understanding of the Bahá'í attitude to strikes, which the Guardian approves, is that there is nothing in the Bahá'í teachings making it either obligatory or impossible for Bahá'ís to join a strike and that it is for the individual to decide in the light of the particular circumstances of each case what he considers the proper course of action.

4. The comment about oaths arose from a question from Africa asking what was the correct procedure for a Bahá'í required to take an oath in a British court.

5. The reply about obligatory prayers arose from a series of questions asked by the National Assembly following discussion about whether provision should be made for the friends to say the noon prayer during Bahá'í Conferences.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust

PRESCRIPTION FOR LIVING, by Rúhíyyih Khanum

This book of essays by Amátu'l-Bahá, wife of the Guardian, presents the Faith in a readable way to Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í alike. It shows that the world's problems are fundamentally ethical and religious and that only the regeneration of man can regenerate the organised life of mankind. It discusses love, marriage, death, work, suffering and a host of other topics of interest to everyone. It is an ideal book to give to people whose interest in the Faith has not yet been fully awakened. Published by George Ronald.

Paper 3/6, Cloth 7/6

FOR MEDITATION

How great is Thy power! How exalted Thy sovereignty! How lofty Thy might! How excellent Thy majesty! How supreme is Thy grandeur—a grandeur which He Who is Thy Manifestation hath made known and wherewith Thou hast invested Him as a sign of Thy generosity and bountiful favour. I bear witness, O my God, that through Him Thy most resplendent signs have been uncovered, and Thy mercy hath encompassed the entire creation. But for Him, how could the Celestial Dove have uttered its songs or the Heavenly Nightingale, according to the decree of God, have warbled its melody?

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

THE TEN YEAR CRUSADE

Goals and Progress Report

1. Opening seven European islands and four African territories. (These were opened in the first year of the Crusade but need strengthening.)
2. Consolidation in nine territories in Africa, one in Europe and one in Asia. (More consolidation is needed, particularly in Eire, Sierra Leone and Zululand.)
3. Establishment of Central and East African National Spiritual Assembly. (Done)
4. Purchase Kampala Temple land. (Done)
5. Establishment of National Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in London. (Done)
6. Conversion of Kampala Ḥazíratu'l-Quds into National Ḥazíratu'l-Quds. (In progress)
7. Incorporation of Central and East African National Assembly. (In progress)
8. Establishment of national endowments in the British Isles. (One endowment has been acquired)
9. Establishment of national endowments by the Central and East African National Assembly. (One endowment has been acquired)
10. Translation of Bahá'í literature into 31 African languages. (Twelve have been published and three are with the printer)
11. Doubling the number of Spiritual Assemblies and localities in the British Isles. (There are twenty-six Spiritual Assemblies to be formed or re-established)
12. Establishing an Israel Branch of the British National Assembly. (Done)
13. Formation of European and Asian Teaching Committees. (For the time being one committee has been formed)

BAHÁ'Í FUNDS

At Convention the Delegates asked the N.S.A. to give a list of priorities so that the Friends should be guided in the best way of spending their money for the Cause of God.

Having carefully considered this matter, the N.S.A. feels that no rigid list should be drawn up; the Friends should be free to contribute as they judge best in the light of the needs which are regularly laid before them by their Local Spiritual Assembly and in the N.S.A. Newsletter. We only ask the Friends to bear four points in mind:

1. The beloved Guardian has asked that individual Bahá'ís contribute to the International and Continental Funds.

2. The National Fund is the backbone of the work in this country, and is the primary instrument through which the N.S.A. and its committees can help the Community to prosecute the Ten Year Crusade.

3. There are certain local expenses, e.g. Centre rent, etc., which must be met, as well as the support of local teaching.

4. How a Bahá'í distributes his contributions among these funds is for him to decide—the essential thing is that he (or she) realises the urgent need of *all* of them and gives everything he possibly can for the work of the Cause of God.

The greatest priority of all is for the Friends to teach—to be ready every moment of the day to answer an enquirer or to grasp an opportunity to convey the message, to remember that everything we do or say we do as Bahá'ís, and the world judges the Faith by this.

Such teaching is the best service we can render, and it requires but little money; but the Assemblies, both Local and National need all that you can give them.

THE NATIONAL BUDGET FOR 1956-57

An Act of Faith

In setting its total budget figure for this year at £4,550, the National Spiritual Assembly has demonstrated its confidence in the capacity of the British Community to arise in an unprecedented manner to meet the financial needs of the Cause. Notwithstanding the effort that will be needed to enable us to be financially self-supporting this year, this rate of expenditure will mean but minimum effective working in many fields of activity. With such grave responsibilities for the financial affairs of the Cause, the National Assembly's constant task is to achieve maximum effectiveness with minimum expenditure.

The figures for the national budget set out below were arrived at after the budgets of individual committees and of the N.S.A. itself, had been considered, pruned, reconsidered and repruned. The result is an act of faith, albeit accompanied by the utmost confidence: faith in the British Community to meet this challenge of our national finances and confidence that,

with the guidance and encouragement of our Beloved Guardian, the British Community will go forward with a new impetus to achieve the victory which can be ours!

	£
National Assembly	1,525
National Teaching (including regions)	1,000
Europe and Asia	950
Africa	300
Other Committees	75
Hazíratu'l-Quds maintenance	150
Loan repayment	300
Continental and Intercontinental Funds	100

£4,400

THE CONTINENTAL FUND

The members of the Auxiliary Board and the Hand of the Cause have been working their hardest according to their opportunity to serve the Cause in the British Isles for many months past. The members have visited numerous communities, in addition to their voluminous correspondence, and the recent success we have had has been attributed in no small part to their earnest and enthusiastic efforts. They have journeyed as far as the Orkneys and Shetlands, the Hebrides, Faroe Islands and Norway. They have met their expenses as far as they could out of their own purses but have had to supplement this outlay from the Continental Fund to an amount exceeding £200.

Only about one-quarter of the amount drawn from the Continental Fund for the work of the British members of the Board has been contributed from the British community. Our N.S.A. have little to give. The Guardian made it plain long ago that individuals should give, and it is to ask for such contributions that this note is written. Anyone who can afford a gift is requested to send it to the National Treasurer, earmarked for the Continental Fund.

Until the balance is redressed, travelling by members of the Board will have to be reduced and our spiritual work hampered.

GEORGE TOWNSHEND

"The Voice of Youth"

The National Youth Committee would be grateful for articles for their youth publication from members of the Community of any age. Please send your article to the Editor, Farhad Tehrani, 13 Belsize Avenue, London, N.W.3.

Changes of Address

BOURNEMOUTH: Stuart Sweet, 6 Staunton House, Exeter Park, Bournemouth.

TORQUAY: J. A. Povey, 14 Market Street, Torquay.

AFRICA

From time to time we receive inspiring reports of bright ideas and new ventures undertaken spontaneously by the African Friends. The Victoria Assembly, for example, in the British Cameroons, organised an 'Attendance Competition' with a well-framed photograph of the Master to serve as the trophy. The one who scored the highest marks in attendance at 19-Day Feasts; attendance at Anniversaries, Sunday meetings and Teaching meetings; punctuality, cleanliness, etc., would win the trophy. The competition to be monthly, and to be judged by a specially appointed sub-committee, whose membership would change in rotation among the friends.

From Uganda comes the following remarkable report: 'Rex and Mary Collison and I (Isobel Sabri) have visited the Bahá'í prisoner, Mohamadi Luganda, at the Kitalya Prison Farm and were happy to find that he was very active in teaching the Faith and has confirmed six believers (another eleven declarations have just come in!). Over sixty of his contacts were granted permission to attend the informal visiting period of about one and a half hours which we had with Mohamadi Luganda. The Prison Superintendent has shown every sympathy toward Mohamadi, remarking that he is the best of all his prisoners, and has indicated that the Bahá'ís can visit the Farm any time they wish and in future will be given the use of their schoolroom-cum-chapel and will be allowed to hold regular teaching meetings there which, from all appearances, will be attended by at least a hundred, if not more. We are providing a supply of books and pamphlets to the Prison Library and to Mohamadi.'

Also from Uganda came this most interesting report of a development that may well turn out to be of great historical significance in the development of the Faith there: 'As you know, it has long been felt by all of the friends in Uganda that there is need for a Bahá'í school here. Mr. Gutosi of Mbale has been particularly keen about such a project. It seems from Philip's report that Mr. Gutosi has more or less now taken matters into his own hands, for he has indeed started a Bahá'í school in Bubulo. The school is held in a more or less derelict building granted to him for use by the firm for which he works. He has forty-seven children as pupils. He has hired a teacher to teach. He charges the parents a small fee and himself contributes up to Shs. 100/- a month (quite a sum out here) for the expenses of the teacher and the school. He envisages that this school might in future develop into a fully-fledged Bahá'í institution and has hopes that a number of semi-derelict buildings in its vicinity will be condemned and can be obtained by him to be used as a basis for school buildings. He speaks of having . . . a number of other Bahá'ís teaching there on a full-time basis. We understand that the education authorities have already taken some notice of Mr. Gutosi's school to the extent that they may possibly provide the school with a full-time paid teacher.'

We all wish Mr. Gutosi the very greatest success with his undertaking, and hope with him that in time this school will indeed develop sufficiently to grow from

a school run by a Bahá'í into a 'Bahá'í school' under the auspices of its National Spiritual Assembly.

News coming in since Ridván has been patchy, as most communities are now reporting directly to their own Regional National Spiritual Assemblies, but we can announce that all forty-one Assemblies in Uganda have been maintained, and two new ones formed: Bubulo (Mr. Gutosi again!) and Moni, in the north of the country. In Nigeria the first Spiritual Assembly of that country was elected in Sapele, a town in the delta of the Niger, and three new Assemblies were formed in the British Cameroons: Ekona, Muea and Edibnjock. Angola also had its first Spiritual Assembly, in Luanda; and the first declaration from South-West Africa has been received.

AFRICA COMMITTEE

NATIONAL COMMITTEES

AFRICA. '(1) To carry out the goals of the Ten-Year Plan in Africa under the direction of the National Spiritual Assembly. (2) To obtain translations of Bahá'í literature into African languages and to advise the Publishing Trust regarding their publication.'

Ian Semple (Secretary), Henry Backwell, Dorothy Ferraby.

ARCHIVES. Hasan Balyuzi, Abbas Dehkan, Dorothy Ferraby, Barbara Simmonds.

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL. John Ferraby (Editor), Ian Sinclair, Rose Wade.

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST. 'To be responsible for the policy and direction of the affairs of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly.'

John Shortland (Chairman), John Ferraby (Secretary and Manager), Reginald Coulson (Treasurer and Distribution Manager), Marian Mihaeloff, Rustom Sabit.

BAHÁ'Í WORLD. Representative: Jean Pitcher.

CHILD EDUCATION. 'To study, advise and encourage Bahá'í education of children and provide suitable material.'

Pouran Habibi, Lilo Jessen, Louis Ross-Enfield, Margaret Shanks.

EUROPEAN AND ASIAN TEACHING. 'To carry out the goals of the Ten-Year Plan in Europe and Asia under the direction of the National Assembly.'

Hasan Balyuzi (Chairman), Barbara Simmonds (Secretary), Aileen Beale, Jean Campbell, Egon Kamming, Marcel Mihaeloff.

HAZÍRATU'L-QUDS. Gladys Backwell, Hasan Balyuzi, Dorothy Ferraby, John Ferraby, Bobbie Kamming, Donald Millar.

PERSIAN. Hasan Balyuzi, Abbas Dehkan, Habib Nahai, Asher Nazar, Sirus Sitarh.

PUBLIC RELATIONS. '(1) To advise Local Assemblies about local publicity and public relations. (2) To study ways of developing adequate public relations with the means available. (3) To take advantage of any opportunity which arises for publicising the Faith on a

national scale. (4) To make recommendations about how the Faith can acquire a wide circle of friends in this country.'

John Ferraby (Chairman), Donald Kelly, John Long, Pat Pennington.

REVIEWING. '(1) To review all material for publication except material reviewed by other national committees, letters sent to newspapers and non-Bahá'í publications and material intended solely for local use. (2) To consider literary style and presentation.'

Louis Ross-Enfield (Secretary), Brian Townshend, Isobel Slade.

TEACHING: National. 'To be in charge of carrying out the objectives of the Ten-Year Plan in regard to teaching and consolidation in the areas of the British Isles not included in the European Teaching Plan, and to supervise and direct the work of the Regional Committees.'

Ernest Gregory (Chairman), Marion Hofman (Secretary), Gladys Backwell, Betty Reed, Pat Sinclair.

Regional. 'To carry out the policy of the National Teaching Committee with regard to the goals of the Plan for the year in the Region.'

Northern Ireland. Charles Macdonald (Secretary), Jean Beattie, Nancy Blair, Kathleen Hornell, Jane Villiers-Stuart.

Scotland. George Marshall (Secretary), Molly Hughes, James Robertson.

North-East. Marian Mihaeloff (Secretary), Marcel Mihaeloff, Matthew Hall, Joe Jameson.

North-West. Pauline Senior (Secretary), Habib Habibi, Clifford Johnson, Phyllis Lewis, Stanley Lowe.

Midland. Dorothy Wigington, Emily Eastgate, Dan Jordan, Vera Rate, Ian Sinclair.

South-East. Beryl de Gruchy (Secretary), Jeannette Battrick, Robert Jackson, Bobbie Leedham, John Wade.

South-West. Rosemary Crates (Secretary), Ralph Crates, Alma Gregory, Olive Sutton.

VISUAL AIDS. Betty Reed, John Long, Vera Long.

YOUTH. 'To stimulate youth activity throughout the country wherever there are active youth, to keep the youth of the country informed of youth activities and to encourage them to carry out the recommendations made at the recent Youth Conference. Youth Conferences and Schools may be organised after consultation with the National Assembly.'

Farhang Afnan, Abdol Banani, Marina Nazar, Farhad Tehrani, Iraj Zamiri.

THE COMMISSIONS OF ENQUIRY

(A further extract from John Ferraby's unpublished book *All Things Made New*)

When Muhammad-'Alí saw he had failed to split the Bahá'í Community, he turned his attention to making Turkish officials suspicious of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and in this he succeeded. For a while, not only 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but also the brothers who had deliberately induced the suspicion, were again strictly confined within

the walls of the city. 'Abdu'l-Bahá managed to persuade the authorities to remove the restrictions from them, but He Himself remained restricted.

In spite of this noble intervention on their behalf, His brothers' operations against Him continued. They accused Him of various misdeeds to various notables and officials, adapting their accusations to the interests and prejudices of those they approached. Among their slanders were that He had hoisted the ensign of revolt in distant villages of Palestine and Syria; that He had raised an army of thirty thousand men; that He had exalted to Godhead Bahá'u'lláh, Whom they alleged in making this accusation to have been no more than a retired dervish; and that He contemplated making a new Mecca and Medina of 'Akká and Haifa.

It was natural that such grave charges should disturb the Sultán, who appointed a Commission to enquire into the matter. There followed a period of extreme peril for 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Rumour had it that He was to be exiled to the desert of Tripolitania, or hanged, or cast into the sea. Such evidence of disfavour increased the aggressiveness of His enemies, and even His friends ceased to call on Him for fear of incurring suspicion.

'Abdu'l-Bahá reduced the number of pilgrims coming to 'Akká and encouraged Bahá'ís living there to migrate; He arranged for His mail to be handled through an agent in Egypt instead of Haifa and for all Bahá'í Writings to be removed to a safe place. However, He did not interrupt work on the mausoleum for the Báb's remains. He was constructing on Mount Carmel, which lent colour to the accusation that He was building a fortress there; nor did He arrest for a moment the vast flow of His Tablets to followers and admirers of the Faith. He is reported to have written at this time no less than ninety Tablets in one day with His own hand.

Throughout these years, 'Abdu'l-Bahá remained imperturbably confident. He continued to minister to the sick and the destitute, dispensing alms regularly and generously and visiting those who could not or would not come to Him. When the Spanish Consul proffered an Italian freighter for His escape He declined to leave. Shoghi Effendi writes: 'To the amazement of His friends and the amusement of His enemies, He was to be seen planting trees and vines in the garden of His house, whose fruits, when the storm had blown over, He would bid His faithful gardener . . . pluck and present to those same friends and enemies on the occasion of their visits to Him'.

Moreover, during these troubled times He initiated many important enterprises. The construction of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was started at Ishqabad in Turkistan; the House of the Báb in Shíráz, the second holiest Bahá'í Shrine outside the Holy Land, was restored; the project of building the Mother Temple of the West was conceived; the table talks recorded as 'Some Answered Questions' were given; His Will and Testament, the Charter of the New World Order, was written; and the first institutions of the Faith began to develop.

In the winter of 1907, another Commission of Enquiry, with unrestricted powers, arrived in 'Akká.

They immediately assumed control of the telegraph and postal services, dismissed officials suspected of being friendly to 'Abdu'l-Bahá (including the Governor of the city), took up residence in the home of intimate associates of the Covenant-breakers, and proceeded to call as witnesses the very people who had made the charges they had come to investigate.

The Covenant-breakers were jubilant. Victory seemed to dangle within their reach and excitedly they intensified their activity. Interviews with people they hoped to influence filled gaps between entertainment designed to win favour. Scoundrels were encouraged to believe that the property of the exiles would soon be ripe for plunder. The attitude of the populace to 'Abdu'l-Bahá deteriorated. Rumours, calumnies and insults markedly increased.

Serenely unperturbed and blandly ignoring veiled threats conveyed through a messenger, 'Abdu'l-Bahá refused to meet the Committee or deal with it in any way. A few days before its arrival, He had narrated to the believers a dream wherein a ship had cast anchor off 'Akká. Birds like sticks of dynamite had flown from it to circle round His head as He stood among the frightened inhabitants, but eventually they had returned to the ship without exploding. 'The meaning of the dream I dreamt is now clear and evident', He said, 'Please God, this dynamite will not explode'.

One day, the ship in which the members of the Commission had come and in which they were expected to take 'Abdu'l-Bahá away was seen to be sailing across the bay from Haifa. News spread quickly that the members of the Commission had embarked; the inhabitants of 'Akká waited, some joyfully, some fearfully, for it to call to collect 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Anguish mastered His family and the few Bahá'ís remaining in 'Akká, who wept as they waited for the boat to take their beloved Master away for ever. Meanwhile, 'Abdu'l-Bahá paced the courtyard of His house, silent and alone.

Suddenly it was noticed that the ship had changed its course and was now heading for Constantinople. The dynamite birds, their circling finished, were returning unexploded whence they came. It was learnt later that the precipitate and unexpected departure of the Commission had been brought about by news of an attempt on the Sultán's life. When they reached Constantinople, the government was too preoccupied to deal with their report. It was again brought forward some months later, only to be rendered conclusively ineffective by the success of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, which led to the release of all political and religious prisoners in the Turkish Empire.

Thus was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's confidence vindicated and the scheming of the Covenant-breakers balked.

Additions to the Community

Since the last list appeared in *Bahá'í Journal*, registration cards have been received from the following:

Roshan Aftabi (from India)	Edinburgh
Nahid Poostchi (Youth from Iran)	Newcastle
Zia Rafat (from Iran)	London
Winifred Whelen	N. Ireland
Christine Sweet (Youth)	Bournemouth
Beatrice Brook	Manchester
Murray Devlin	London
Dennis Smith	Manchester
Raffi Mavaddat (from Iran)	Leeds
Muhammad Samimian (from Iran)	London
Leonard Nelson	Norwich
Miriam Smith	Manchester
John Long	Leicester
Charles Macdonald	N. Ireland
Yvonne Macdonald	N. Ireland
Amanollah Vazirzadeh (from Iran)	London
Lavinia Bennett	Blackpool
Thorvald van Heel (from Balearic Is.)	Cardiff
Catharina van Heel (from Balearic Is.)	Cardiff
Mahboubeh Koutchekzadeh (from Iran)	Bournemouth
Gloria Momen (from Iran)	Bournemouth
Claire Copley (Youth)	Belfast
Florence Jones	Manchester
Irene Lloyd	Liverpool
William Kirkwood	N. Ireland
Dora Kirkwood	N. Ireland
Florence Massey	Eccles
Dorothy Morrissey	Eccles
Valerie Morley	Calcot
David Lewis	Cardiff
Lavinia Gardner	Burnley
Hooshang Mottahedeh (from Iran)	London
Jeannie Robertson	Oxford
Jacqueline Thomas (Youth)	Arundel
Derek Parkhurst	N. Ireland
Mahin Modrek (from Iran)	Taunton
Parvin Furutan (Youth from Iran)	Brighton
Farshid Banani (Youth)	Bristol
David Brown	N. Ireland
Gladys Brown	N. Ireland
Janette Langley	Uxbridge