

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES
BM/BAHAI, LONDON, W.C.1

No. 114

Bahá'í Year 110

MAY, 1954

THE GUARDIAN'S CONVENTION MESSAGE

On the eve of this Ridván Festival marking the opening of the second decade of the second Bahá'í century, and coinciding with the termination of the first year of the World Spiritual Crusade, I hail with feelings of joy and wonder the superb feats of the heroic company of the Knights of the Lord of Hosts in pursuance of their sublime mission for the spiritual conquest of the planet. The first twelve months of this decade-long enterprise, unexampled in its scope, significance and potentialities in the world's spiritual history and launched simultaneously, amidst the climax of the world-wide festivities of a memorable Holy Year, in the American, the European, the African, the Asiatic and the Australian continents, has witnessed the hoisting of the banner of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in no less than a hundred virgin territories of the globe. The total number of the newly opened sovereign states and dependencies, comprising Principalities, Sultanates, Emirates, Sheikdoms, Protectorates, Trust Territories and Crown Colonies, scattered over the face of the earth, represents almost seven-eighths of all the territories, exclusive of the Soviet Republics and Satellites, destined to be opened in the course of an entire decade. The northern frontiers of a divinely guided, rapidly marching, majestically expanding Faith have been pushed, in consequence of the phenomenal success recently achieved by the vanguard of Bahá'u'lláh's crusaders, beyond the Arctic Circle as far as Arctic Bay, Franklin, 73 degrees latitude. Its southern limits have now reached the Falkland Islands in the neighbourhood of Magellanes, the world's southernmost city. Other outlying outposts have been established in places as far apart as Sikkim at the foot of the Himalayas, the Lofoten Islands in the heart of the European Northland, Fezzan on the northern fringe of the Sahara Desert, the Andaman Islands and the Seychelles, the penal colonies in the Indian Ocean, the three Guianas and the leper colonies on the Atlantic Coast, the Faroe and Shetland Islands, the wind-swept and inhospitable archipelagos of the North Sea, Hadhramaut on the sun-baked shores of the Arabian Peninsula, St. Helena isolated in the midst of the South Atlantic Ocean and the Gilbert Islands, the war-devastated sparsely populated Atolls situated in the heart of the Pacific Ocean.

God's infant Faith, confined during the first nine years of its existence to its birthland and the adjoining territory of 'Irág, reaching, in the course of the thirty-nine years of Bahá'u'lláh's Ministry, to thirteen other

lands, enlarged, during 'Abdu'l-Bahá's twenty-nine year Ministry, through the opening of twenty additional countries, only succeeded, after the lapse of three-quarters of a century, in including within its orbit thirty-five countries within both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

The subsequent quarter of a century, constituting the first Epoch of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation, witnessed the planting of the banner of the Faith in over forty territories of the globe, raising the number of countries including within its pale, on the eve of the Centenary Celebrations of the Declaration of the Báb's Mission to seventy-eight. The nine-year interval separating the first from the second Bahá'í Jubilee was signalled by the spiritual conquest of no less than fifty countries of the globe, whilst the first year of the Ten-Year Plan has been immortalised by the opening of one hundred countries, swelling the number of the sovereign states and dependencies enlisted under the standard of the Cause of God to two hundred and twenty-eight. All territories in North, Central and South America; all sovereign states and principalities on the continent of Europe, excluding the Russian Republics and Satellites; all territories on the Asiatic continent, with the exception of Tibet, of Bhutan and of the Soviet Republics; all the islands of the Mediterranean; all the islands of the North Sea, with the exception of Spitzbergen; all African territories with the exception of Spanish Guinea; all the islands of the North and South Atlantic Ocean except Anticosti and St. Thomas; all the islands of the Pacific Ocean except Comoro Islands, Cocos Island, Nicobar Islands, Hainan Island, Portuguese Timor, Chagos Archipelago, Loyalty Islands, Marshall Islands, Admiralty Islands, Mariana Islands, are now included within the orbit of an irresistibly unfolding, rapidly consolidating, world-girdling Administrative Order.

The number of the European, the African, the Asiatic, and the American-Indian languages, including seven supplementary languages, into which Bahá'í literature has been and is being translated, is over forty-two, raising the total number of the translations undertaken since the inception of the Faith to one hundred and thirty.

The African Campaign, outshining the brilliant success of the enterprise launched in Latin America, throwing into shade the splendour of the victories won in recent years on the European continent, eclipsing all

previous collective pioneer undertakings embarked upon in the Asiatic and Australian continents, has almost doubled, in the course of a single year, the number of territories opened since the introduction of the Faith in that continent over eighty years ago. The total number of converts to the Faith belonging to the African race has passed the six hundred mark. The total number of African Bahá'í centres has now been raised to over one hundred and ninety. The total number of the tribes indigenous to the soil of that continent represented in the Faith is now over sixty.

A single territory out of the forty-five territories already opened to the Faith in the African continent, situated in its very heart and which, a little over two years ago did not possess a single Bahá'í, now boasts of over five hundred coloured converts, who are settled in over eighty localities, are drawn from thirty tribes, are provided with thirteen local Assemblies, and anticipate the immediate formation of about ten additional Assemblies. This same territory has, moreover, distinguished itself throughout the entire Bahá'í world through the despatch of nine members of its mother Assembly for the purpose of pioneering in neighbouring centres, as well as in territories situated on the eastern and western coasts of the African continent. A number of the newly-won recruits in some of these territories have, moreover, been instrumental in winning the allegiance of some of the members of their race, and have, in their turn, succeeded in opening no less than three neighbouring territories in that continent.

Contact has been established with no less than twenty-two American-Indian tribes, raising the total number of tribes contacted throughout the Western Hemisphere to thirty-four. The first Greenlandic, the first Pygmy, the first Berber, the first Fijian Bahá'ís have been enrolled, swelling the number of races represented in the Bahá'í World Community to thirty-five.

The opening year of this World Spiritual Crusade has, moreover, gathered significance through the convocation first of the Stockholm, and later of the New Delhi Intercontinental Teaching Conferences, which, together with the two previous Conferences held during the first part of the Holy Year in Kampala and Wilmette, assembled a total of over thirty-four hundred followers of the Faith from more than eighty countries of both the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres and representing the principal races of mankind.

Within the confines of the Holy Land, 'the Heart of the world and the Qiblih of all nations', the erection of the first base stones of the ornamental crown of the Dome of the Báb's Sepulchre which had commenced with Naw-Rúz of the Holy Year, was followed successively by the laying, during the Ridván period, of the first of the twelve thousand gilded tiles destined to cover the two-hundred and fifty square metre area of the Dome and the placing of the stone lantern which marked the consummation of the three-quarters of a million dollar enterprise, and coincided with the closing period of the Year associated with the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh. The site for the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Holy Land has been selected—an area of approximately twenty thousand square metres—situated at the head of the Moun-

tain of God, in close proximity to the Spot hallowed by the footsteps of Bahá'u'lláh, near the time-honoured Cave of Elijah, and associated with the revelation of the Tablet of Carmel, the Charter of the World Spiritual and Administrative Centres of the Faith on that mountain. Funds totalling one hundred thousand dollars have, moreover, been contributed by one of the Hands of the Cause, residing in the Holy Land, and negotiations have been initiated with the Israeli authorities for the purpose of effecting the immediate purchase of the selected site. Measures have been undertaken and Bahá'í Continental Funds inaugurated in anticipation of the forthcoming appointment by the fifteen Hands residing outside the Holy Land of five Auxiliary Boards, one in each of the continents of the globe, the members of which will act as deputies of the Hands in their respective continents, and will aid and advise them in the effective prosecution of the Ten-Year Plan, and will assist them, at a later period, in the discharge of their dual and sacred task of safeguarding the Faith and of promoting its teaching activities. The international Bahá'í endowments, situated in the heart of Mt. Carmel and in the plain of 'Akká, already extending over an area of over three hundred and fifty thousand square metres, have been enlarged through the acquisition of properties overlooking the Resting Places of the Most Exalted Leaf and of the Purest Branch, which, when added to the plots situated on the ridge of Mt. Carmel, on its western extremity and in the close neighbourhood of the Shrine built within its heart—for the acquisition of which negotiations have been set afoot—will constitute an addition of over thirty thousand metres to the vast area of Bahá'í holdings permanently dedicated to the Shrines of the Founder of the Faith and of its Herald. The embellishment of the Haram-i-Aqdas, the outer Sanctuary of Bahá'u'lláh's Sepulchre, already accomplished in the course of the Holy Year commemorating the centenary of the birth of His prophetic Mission, has been greatly enhanced through the laying out, on both its northern and southern sides, of formal gardens, extending over an area of ten thousand square metres, providing a befitting approach to His Mansion and considerably widening the area stretching in front of His holy Sepulchre. The design of the international Bahá'í Archives, the first stately Edifice destined to usher in the establishment of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith on Mt. Carmel—the Ark referred to by Bahá'u'lláh in the closing passages of His Tablet of Carmel—has been completed, and plans and drawings forwarded to Italy for the purpose of securing bids for its construction immediately after the conclusion of the necessary preliminary steps taken in the Holy Land for its forthcoming erection. Israel Branches of the British, the Persian, the Canadian and the Australian Bahá'í National Spiritual Assemblies have now been legally established, recognised formally as Religious Societies by the Israeli Civil Authorities, and empowered to hold without restriction title to immovable property in any part of the country on behalf of their parent assemblies. Contact has moreover been established with the President of Israel, its Prime Minister and five other Cabinet Ministers, as well as with the President of the Knesset, culminating in the establishment of a special Bahá'í Department in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and in

an official statement by the Head of this Ministry to Parliament emphasising the international scope of the Faith and the importance of its World Centre—a series of events that have paved the way for the forthcoming official visit, during the early days of the Ridván period, of the President of Israel, himself, to the Báb's Sepulchre on Mt. Carmel.

The site of the Sýáh-Chál—that pestilential subterranean Pit, the scene of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic Mission, and the holiest place in the capital city of His native land—has been recently purchased, together with the surrounding area, involving an expenditure of approximately four hundred thousand dollars contributed by a Persian follower of the Faith, whilst negotiations have been initiated for the acquisition of the site of the Báb's incarceration in the mountains of Adhirbáyján. Full rights have been accorded to Bahá'í women residing in the cradle of the Faith to participate in the membership of both national and local Bahá'í Spiritual Assemblies, removing thereby the last remaining obstacle to the enjoyment of complete equality of rights in the conduct of the administrative affairs of the Persian Bahá'í Community.

Eleven Temple Funds have been inaugurated, amounting to almost a quarter of a million dollars, for the purchase of land for future Bahá'í Temples in the Western Hemisphere, in the European, the African, the Asiatic and the Australian continents, followed by the purchase of a four acre plot, commanding an extensive view of the Pacific Ocean and the greater portion of Greater Sydney area, and by the selection of appropriate sites outside the Cities of Frankfurt and of Panama City.

The institutions of Bahá'í National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in East and West, already reaching an estimated value of over a million and a half dollars, have been enhanced through the purchase and formal opening of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the Bahá'ís of Paris, destined to evolve into the national administrative headquarters of the French Bahá'í Community, and through the inauguration of National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds Funds in Anchorage, Alaska, as well as in the capital cities of Italy and of Switzerland.

The initial landscaping of the area surrounding the Mother Temple of the West, involving an expenditure of over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, has been completed and been followed by an appropriation of two hundred and twenty thousand dollars by the United States National Spiritual Assembly for the completion of the entire project. The nature of the first Dependency of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Wilmette has been finally decided upon by the members of that same Assembly, in anticipation of its early establishment within the precincts of the Mother Temple of the West. The Local Spiritual Assemblies of San Diego, Sacramento and Fresno in California, of Tucson in Arizona, and of Oak Park in Illinois have been legally incorporated, raising the number of national and local Bahá'í incorporated assemblies in the United States of America and in the entire Bahá'í world to sixty-three and one hundred and twenty respectively. National Bahá'í endowments have been established in Anchorage, Alaska. The Bahá'í Assemblies of Tucson, Arizona and of Sacramento, California, have been qualified to conduct legal Bahá'í marriage services. Bahá'í

Holy Days have been recognised in Los Angeles, California and Castro Valley, California, Niles Township, Michigan, Seattle, Washington, Newton, Massachusetts, Prince George County, Maryland, Cleveland, Ohio, Kenosha, Wisconsin, Maywood, Illinois.

The spiritual conquest of one hundred territories of the globe, the steady rise of the embryonic World Order of the Faith, and the multiplication and consolidation of its institutions have, in the course of the opening year of this World Spiritual Crusade, been paralleled by a no less startling decline in the fortunes of the enemies of the Faith, as evidenced by the removal, by the Hand of Providence, of its arch-enemy in Persia who, for thirty years, savagely attacked its Founders and its chief Promoter, and tirelessly schemed to extinguish its light, dishonour its name and wreck its institutions, as well as by the death of two others, who, in varying degrees, demonstrated their ingratitude and infidelity to the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant.

The opening phase of this gigantic, divinely propelled, world-encircling Crusade has been triumphantly concluded. The success crowning the initial stage in its unfoldment has exceeded our fondest expectations. The most vital and spectacular objective of the Ten Year Plan has been virtually attained ere the termination of the first year of this decade-long stupendous enterprise. The second phase, now auspiciously ushered in, must witness, in all the territories of the planet, whether newly opened or not, an upsurge of activity which, in its range and intensity, will excel the exploits which have so greatly enlarged the limits, and noised abroad the fame, of the Cause of God.

The energetic and systematic prosecution of the all important teaching work both at home and abroad, designed to increase rapidly the number of the avowed and active supporters of the Faith; the preservation, at any cost, of the prizes so laboriously won in the far flung, the numerous and newly opened territories of the globe; the maintenance, by every available means, of the status of local Spiritual Assemblies already established throughout the Bahá'í world; the steady multiplication of isolated centres, of groups and of local assemblies in order to hasten the emergence of no less than forty-eight National Spiritual Assemblies in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres; the prompt conclusion of negotiations for the purchase of sites for future Bahá'í Temples in the American, the European, the Asiatic and the African continents; the initiation of Funds for the establishment of National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in the capital cities of the Sovereign States and in the chief cities of the Dependencies specifically mentioned in the Plan; the speedy fulfilment of the task undertaken for the translation and publication of Bahá'í literature in the languages allocated under that same Plan to various National Spiritual Assemblies; the continued acquisition of Bahá'í Holy Places in Bahá'u'lláh's native land; the adoption of preparatory measures for the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs of Tíhrán and of Frankfurt; the establishment of the first Dependency of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette; the inauguration of National Bahá'í endowments designed to pave the way for the formation of National Spiritual Assemblies; the lending of a fresh impetus to the incorporation of local spiritual assemblies; the establishment of Bahá'í Publishing Trusts—

these stand out as the essential objectives of the phase now unfolding before the eyes of the Bahá'í Communities in the five continents of the globe.

I direct my fervent plea to all the delegates assembled at the twelve annual Bahá'í Conventions to ponder these objectives in their hearts, to dedicate themselves anew to the tasks now challenging the spirit and combined resources of the entire body of the followers of the Faith, to rouse all the communities they represent to assume a worthy share in the common and gigantic effort that must needs be exerted for the attainment of the aforementioned goals, ensuring thereby the uninterrupted progress and the ultimate consummation of the noblest collective enterprise undertaken by the followers of the Most Great Name for the propagation and the establishment of His Faith over the entire face of the planet.

The Guardian announces further progress

A cable to the American National Assembly dated May 4th:

(On the) morrow (of the) close (of the) Ridván period share (with) National Assemblies (of the) Bahá'í world additional glad tidings supplementing (the) message addressed (a) fortnight ago (to) delegates (to) national Conventions East (and) West.

Six-acre (and) five-acre plots (have been) purchased (in) Kampala (and) Panama City (as) sites (of) future Temples (in the) heart (of the) African continent (and) Central America.

First historic African Spiritual Assemblies (have been) formed (in) Johannesburg, Brazzaville, Victoria, Topremang, Casablanca, Tangier, Algiers, Tripoli, Bukora. (In) Uganda alone, eleven additional Assemblies (have been) established, over three hundred (and) eighty additional converts enrolled, raising (the) total (of) White (and) Negro believers (to) over six hundred (and) seventy. (The) number (of) localities (where) Bahá'ís reside (on the) Arabian Peninsula (is) now over fifteen, (in) Egypt (and) Sudan over forty, (in the) British Isles over fifty, (in) Australasia over sixty, (in the) ten European goal countries over seventy, (in) Germany and Austria over seventy, (in) Uganda over eighty, (in) Canada over (a) hundred, (in) Latin America over (a) hundred (and) ten, (in the) Indian sub-continent (and) Burma over (a) hundred (and) thirty, (in the) African Continent over (a) hundred (and) ninety, (in) Persia over six hundred (and in the) United States over twelve hundred, swelling (the) number (of) Bahá'í centres scattered (over the) surface (of the) globe (to) well nigh twenty-nine hundred.

Additional National Hazíratu'l-Quds Funds (have been) inaugurated (in) ten countries (of) Central America.

(The) number (of) Bahá'í books (and) pamphlets for (the) blind transcribed (into) Braille, English, Esperanto, German, Japanese now totals over (a) hundred (and) ten.

(The) President (of the) State (of) Israel, accompanied (by) Mrs. Ben Zvi, visited, as anticipated, (the) Shrines (on Mount) Carmel, following (a) reception (in) their honour (held in) 'Abdu'l-Bahá's house, marking (the) first official visit paid (by the) Head (of a) sovereign

independent State (to the) Sepulchres (of the) Martyr-Prophet (of the) Faith (and the) Centre (of) Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant.

(The) following pioneers (have been) inscribed (on the) Roll (of) Honour since (the) fifth periodic announcement: Bruce Matthews, Howard Gilliland, Labrador; Olivia Kelsey, Florence Ullrich, Monaco; Joan Powis, South Rhodesia; Sohrab Payman, San Marino; Samuel Njiki, Mehrangiz Munsiff, French Cameroons; Gail Avery, Baranof Island; Benedict Eballa, Ashanti Protectorate; Martin Manga, Northern Territories Protectorate; Gayle Woolson, Galapagos Islands; Bula Stewart, John Allen and wife, Swaziland; Charles Duncan, Harry Clark, John Fozdar, Brunei; David Tanyi, French Togoland; Edward Tabe, Albert Buapiah, British Togoland; Kay Zinky, Magdalen Islands; John, Margery Kellberg, Dutch West Indies; Robert Powers, jun., Cynthia Olson, Mariana Islands; Habib Esfahani, French West Africa.

(The) Roll (of) Honour, after (the) lapse (of) one year since (the) launching (of the) World Crusade (is) now closed, (with the) exception (of) pioneers (who have) already left (for their) destination, as well (as) those first arriving (in the) few remaining virgin territories inside (and) outside Soviet Republics (and) satellites.

(The) Concourse (on) High will continue (to) applaud (the) highly meritorious services rendered (by) future volunteers arising (to) reinforce (the) historic work (so) nobly initiated (by the) Knights (of) Bahá'u'lláh (in the) far-flung, newly opened territories. Posterity will likewise record (with) admiration (and) gratitude (the) initial victories destined (to) be won (in the) course (of the) spiritual conquest (of the) continents (and) islands (of the) globe.

Convention Messages

Convention cabled the Guardian on the first day of its meeting: 'Convention uplifted, humbled, wonderful message, streaming power Divine guidance profoundly affecting deliberations. Hearts united ardent loyalty beloved Guardian.' The Guardian replied on April 25th:

'Assure assembled delegates ardent prayers abundant blessings deliberations. Proud recent achievements British Bahá'í Community, cherish great hopes future historic accomplishments.'

On the third day of its meeting, Convention cabled the Guardian: 'British Convention humbly accepts further challenges World Spiritual Crusade, pledges devotion objectives, work, sacrifice joyfully, mobilise spirit resources Community under guidance beloved Guardian.' The Guardian replied on April 29th:

'Welcome pledge delegates. Praying success attainment goals.'

For Meditation

A fleeting moment in this Day excelleth centuries of a bygone age . . . Neither sun nor moon hath witnessed a day such as this Day.

BAHÁ'U'LLAH

Appointment of Board by European Hands of the Cause

The Board consists of Tove Deleuran, Dorothy Ferraby, Angeline Giachery, Anna Grossmann, Louis Henuzet, Marion Hofman, Joel Marangella, Eugen Schmidt, Elsa Steinmetz. Each of these friends received a letter of appointment of which the text is given below:

In accordance with the Guardian's instructions contained in his messages of October 8th, 1952 and April 5th, 1954, we, the Hands of the Cause in the European Continent, have met on this first day of the Holy Ridván and after prayerful consultation appointed you to the Auxiliary Board for this continent.

As members of this body you will act as our deputies, assistants and advisers in the promotion of the interests of the Ten Year Crusade. You will maintain under our personal guidance relations, and co-operate with, all National Assemblies charged with the execution of the Ten Year Plan in the Continent; you will, no doubt, be able to help stimulate weak Centres, Groups and Assemblies through your visits. The members of the Board are to travel for encouragement and inspiration of all activities directly concerned with the Ten Year Plan and will report conditions and submit recommendations to the Hands who, in their turn, will keep in close touch with the existing administrative bodies.

Because of the need for wide travel, we have apportioned the areas of the Continent as follows:

1. Great Britain and Ireland, Faroe Islands, Iceland, Spitzbergen, Lofoten and Norway: Marion Hofman and Dorothy Ferraby, assisting the Hand George Townshend.
2. Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, France, Corsica, Andorra, Yugoslavia (and countries not yet accessible): Eugen Schmidt, Anna Grossmann, Louis Henuzet, Joel Marangella, assisting Hands Hermann Grossmann and Adelbert Muhlshlegel.
3. Spain, Portugal, Balearic Isles, Monaco, Liechtenstein, San Marino, Switzerland, Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, Malta, Greece, Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus: Elsa Steinmetz, Angeline Giachery and Tove Deleuran, assisting the Hand Ugo Giachery.

A fund for the Board's expenses has been initiated in order to facilitate the discharge of its functioning. The Trustee of the Fund for this Continent is the Hand Ugo Giachery.

We are certain you realise the great importance of this appointment and joyfully be ready to render such devoted services as you will be called to perform for the realisation of the aims of the World Spiritual Crusade.

Appointment of Board by African Hand of the Cause

Mr. Musa Banani has appointed the following Board:

John Allen, Elsie Austin, Ali Nakhjavani, Jalal Nakhjavani, John Robarts, William Sears, Mohamad Mustafa Soleiman, Valerie Wilson, Aziz Yazdi.

Areas are allocated as follows:

Elsie Austin: Tunisia, Algeria, the three Moroccos, Canary Islands, Rio de Oro, Spanish Sahara, French West Africa, Gambia, Portuguese Guinea.

Valerie Wilson: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, Northern Territories, Ashanti, British and French Togolands, Dahomey, Nigeria, British Cameroons.

John Robarts: French Cameroons, French Equatorial Africa, Spanish Guinea, West and South Belgian Congo, Angola, South West Africa, Bechuanaland.

William Sears: Union of South Africa, Basutoland.

John Allen: Swaziland, the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, Mozambique.

Jalal Nakhjavani: Tanganyika, Zanzibar Islands, Madagascar, Comoro Islands, Reunion, Mauritius.

A. Nakjavani: Uganda, Ruanda-Urundi, and Northern part of Belgian Congo.

Aziz Yazdi: Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the three Somalilands, Socotra Island, Seychelles.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Supplementary Report

On April 19th we were able to cable the Guardian that all the overseas territories allocated to us were open and that all the home assemblies could be maintained. The Guardian cabled back 'Heartfelt congratulations great victory'. Although it was only by a narrow margin that the home assemblies have been saved, and although only four new towns have pioneers in them, the Guardian considers that we have achieved a great victory.

The last territory overseas under jurisdiction of the British National Assembly to be opened to the Faith was British Togoland. Albert Buapia of Topremang in the Gold Coast on hearing that the Guardian would be glad if one of the new Bahá'ís in Topremang could go to British Togoland set out for that territory immediately and entered it on April 9th. Another new Bahá'í from the British Cameroons has now joined him. Other new Bahá'ís from the British Cameroons have opened French Togoland and French Cameroons, and one has gone also to Ashanti where there was no Bahá'í. Meanwhile Mehrangiz Munsiff has gone to the French Cameroons also, so that altogether seven Bahá'ís from territories under British jurisdiction have become Knights of Bahá'u'lláh since the Annual Report was written. We have also assisted the pioneer in Gambia to obtain an extension of his visa.

Although the British Cameroons has sent out five pioneers, a Local Assembly is being formed at Victoria this Ridván. An Assembly will also be formed in Brazzaville as a result of the efforts of Max Kunyarese there. The momentous journey which helped him and Enoch Olinga to settle is indeed bearing wonderful fruit.

At home, only great efforts have made possible the maintenance of all Assemblies and several have been maintained only by pioneers going to them for a limited

stay. Nevertheless the Guardian considers this a great victory. The Home Front has necessarily had to take second place during most of the year and to have achieved what has been done without losing an Assembly is itself noteworthy. Moreover four towns have been opened to the Faith—Reading, Hull, Leicester and Plymouth. The last was opened by two nurses, who being unable to obtain places to continue their training in Edinburgh as they wished, where they were needed, went instead to Plymouth where their services will also be most valuable.

It was only two days before Ridván that we knew for certain that the Assemblies would be maintained. The thanks of the whole Community are due to all those who have so nobly stepped into the breach at the last minute, and particularly to Dorothy Bechtol, who although only a temporary member of the British Community and not in perfect health, is going to Nottingham to help the active Community there.

In the International sphere, a thrilling cable from the Guardian has been received concerning the Ridván meeting by Continents of the Hands of the Cause. Our own dearly loved Hand of the Cause, George Townshend, had hoped to attend in Frankfurt in spite of his poor health, and arrangements for his travel were complete, when a fall made his attendance impossible. Mr. Townshend has naturally been very disappointed that he has been thus prevented from going.

The search for a Házíratu'l-Quds continues. One property we were investigating, into which we thought we could not settle for less than £17,000—£20,000, the Guardian advised was too expensive, and even had he not done so, we could not have obtained the property as the London County Council eventually refused permission for us to use it as our headquarters. An application to the L.C.C. is now pending for use of a slightly smaller property between Kensington and Gloucester Road underground stations.

Various possible plots of ground in and near Kampala have been described to the Guardian as possible sites for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár there and the investigations continue under the Guardian's guidance. It is thought that a satisfactory plan has been evolved to enable the Cause to own the land through Trustees, but approval by the Government of Uganda will be needed. Laws concerning land ownership are complex, and neither Europeans nor European religious bodies can hold land in the ordinary way, so that great care is needed to ensure compliance with the land laws, while at the same time securing that the land may be used for building a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

The Legal Committee, on which the National Assembly's solicitor serves, has begun drafting a pattern Memorandum and Articles of Association for use by Assemblies strong enough to incorporate. The London and Manchester Assemblies at least should be able to do so when the drafts are ready.

A place at which to hold Summer School has at last been discovered, at Exeter. This is the first Summer School to be held in the South for many years and it is hoped that the Southern Bahá'ís who have felt the Northern Summer Schools to be too far away will make full use of their opportunity to attend this year.

The National Assembly would like to place on record that five of its members have volunteered for pioneer-

ing overseas during the year, although so far none have gone. Two were advised by the Guardian to stay in England, one was advised by the National Assembly to adopt an alternative plan to deputise another pioneer who had already made headway, two are still hoping to be able to pioneer overseas.

Further progress has been made with several of the translations into African languages, although no more completed translations or publications can be announced.

Much has been achieved during the year, and progress made towards some of the goals which have not yet been achieved. But much also remains to be done. The unprecedented victories for which the Guardian told Teaching Conference he was praying have not yet become manifest. May they do so in the coming year.

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly

Hasan Balyuzi—*Chairman*
 Richard Backwell—*Vice-Chairman*
 John Ferraby—*Secretary*
 John Mitchell—*Treasurer*
 Dorothy Ferraby
 Marion Hofman
 Connie Langdon-Davies
 Betty Reed
 Louis Ross-Enfield

AFRICA COMMITTEE

Supplementary Report

We stated in our main report that all our virgin territories in Africa had been opened to the Faith except British Togoland. This being part of the Gold Coast, it seemed necessary to wait until the Government decided on our application for entry permits for Bahá'í teachers before any non-African pioneer could get in, and two American pioneers were waiting for this. However, when the Guardian appealed for pioneers to get into any of the territories in which pioneers had not yet actually arrived, we asked him whether the situation justified an appeal to the very new territories in the British Cameroons and the Gold Coast Colony on behalf of the French Cameroons and the two Togolands respectively. When he cabled Advise send pioneers promptly British Togoland French Togoland French Cameroons' we immediately sent an appeal for pioneers to both these communities. Meanwhile the Guardian had also cabled Mr. Banani, Hand of the Cause in Africa, to expedite the sending of pioneers from British Cameroons to these three territories and his son-in-law Ali Nakhjavani flew over there to help organise this. The result was that seven believers in British Cameroons offered and three were chosen. While Ali was in French Cameroons settling the first one, another appeal came for pioneers also for Ashanti and the Northern Territories Protectorate and two more were immediately ready to leave with the others the next morning—one of these had to be

accepted by cable so he could go. All five were settled in the various territories between April 9th and 18th.

Meanwhile, we had heard nothing from the community in the Gold Coast at Topremang and did not know how they had received the appeal, until on April 19th we received a letter saying they had consulted about it at the Nineteen-Day Feast on the evening of April 8th and the pioneer chosen had set out at 5 a.m. the next day. Surely a true example of 'instant, exact and complete obedience'. We should remember the names of these pioneers, all so new in the Faith and so devoted:

From Topremang, Gold Coast: Albert Buapiah.

From British Cameroons: Samuel Njiki, David Tanyi, Benedict Eballa, Martin Manga, Edward Tabe.

Sponsored by the Indian N.S.A., whose goal it is, Mehrangiz Munsiff has also pioneered to French Cameroons and has already linked up with Samuel Njiki and formed a group there.

Two schoolboys from East Africa have gone to the Gold Coast Colony to a school there and will be a valuable addition to the number of believers in that territory.

The Committee has also been helping Mr. Roozbehyan, the Indian pioneer to Gambia, to settle. He was at first given only a visa for fifteen days, but Gambia being a British colony, letters from our N.S.A. supporting him helped and he now has a permit for three months. We have made an application for a permanent permit for him as a Bahá'í teacher.

The Community in the British Cameroons has continued to grow since we made our main report and altogether twenty believers have been accepted. Therefore although pioneers have gone out, an assembly has been formed in Victoria.

An assembly has been elected at Topremang in the Gold Coast, and one has formed at Brazzaville; this is an Egyptian territory, but the work is done by one of our pioneers, Max Kanyerezi, from Uganda.

Uganda has maintained all the assemblies formed last year and added new ones, making a total of 24. There are now over 670 believers there. As a new development, this year Africans themselves, after a special meeting for instruction, have been supervising the formation of new assemblies, instead of the pioneers. A new assembly has also been formed at Bukoba in Tanganyika.

Nairobi contributed also to the pioneering in West Africa by releasing Aziz Yazdi to do Ali Nakjavani's work in Kampala in connection with the purchase of the *Mashriqul-Adhkár* land and the preparation of the Teso assemblies for formation. Aziz without hesitation left his family and business for over a month, and great thanks are due to him.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

Supplementary Report

ALL ESTABLISHED ASSEMBLIES MAINTAINED

It is with deep feeling that we report to Convention that the 23 established assemblies on the home front have all been maintained this year. We express our

deep gratitude to those friends who have arisen to fill the gaps which existed—and gaps existed even as late as April 19th.

Pioneers who arose were: Aileen Beale, Mrs. Mohtadi, Marion Mihailoff, Joan Benfield, Lilo Jesson, Trudi Scott, Dereck and Doreen Watkins, Dorothy Bechtal, Fred Stahler, Noura Faridian and Ingrid Schoell.

Our assemblies have been maintained once again at the cost of great personal sacrifice.

SPIRITUAL BALANCE SHEET

This Committee was very disturbed by the position which confronted us in the last few months of the year, when it became obvious that once again it would be necessary to appeal for short-term, 'last-ditch' pioneer projects if some of the numerically weaker assemblies were to be saved.

We appreciated that the whole community would share our concern, and we therefore made a thorough analysis of the position to see what had caused these gaps to exist.

The details of this analysis demonstrate very clearly that we can take courage from the achievements of the British Community. Here are the figures, based on information in our possession on April 4th, 1954:

In the last year changes took place in the British community which led to 35 gaps occurring. With the exception of 4 of these gaps, they all occurred in the smaller numerically weaker communities (e.g. Brighton, Nottingham, Sheffield, Glasgow, Cardiff, Torquay, Edinburgh, Bristol).

An analysis of these 35 groups revealed the following: 11 were caused by pioneers arising for the European-Asian fields (including Eire); 6 were caused by death; 18 were caused by *unavoidable departures* (Mr. and Mrs. Hakim from Brighton, Muhammad Karimi from Edinburgh, etc.), *transfers* (Joan Benfield from Cardiff, Prudence George from Edinburgh, etc.), and *withdrawals* (3 people formally withdrew from the Faith last year).

Despite this, we were faced in the last months with the filling not of 35 gaps but 13. Fourteen communities had increased their numbers by declarations.

Although we have no grounds for complacency, we certainly have no grounds to feel discouraged.

LATEST POSITION OF GOAL TOWNS

We have to report two items in connection with Goal Towns—one is the temporary sacrifice of a goal town (a very real personal sacrifice to the pioneer concerned): Fred Stahler has had to be asked to leave Aberdeen, which he opened earlier this year, and go to Newcastle to fill the gap there. Fred offered to go anywhere he might be needed on April 21st. He has now, therefore, undertaken to enter upon a six months' pioneer project in Newcastle, and we have promised to make a special appeal for a pioneer to go to Aberdeen before Fred returns there.

The other news is good—Plymouth is to be opened by two nurses, Miss Khaze and Miss Howaidai, who are taking midwifery training there. Arrangements have been completed for them both to go to Plymouth next month.

Ten Bahá'í Centres now exist, three of which were opened this year—in Leeds, Norwich and Bournemouth.

IMMEDIATE FUTURE

(i) *Goal Towns*

(a) Those opened this year—Our first priority is to re-establish and then strengthen Aberdeen.

The present position in Hull, Leicester and Reading is that the work in all three cities has reached the stage where the support of a second pioneer is needed, and yet further help from those assemblies engaged in extension teaching.

(b) Choice of new goal towns—This will be covered later, but perhaps we should say at this point that four further goal towns will need to be opened during the coming year if we are to ensure even the minimum required in the second year of the Ten Year Plan.

(ii) *Teaching to Reap the Harvest of Sacrifice*

Every year considerable sacrifices are made to maintain assemblies. A tremendous effort is made, and then we relax. But now that we are in the Ten Year Crusade we cannot afford to spend the precious months at the beginning of the year in rest. Key towns—Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff—are crying out for help. Outlying towns—such as Torquay and Newcastle—are suffering through their geographical isolation. Numerically weaker places, such as Blackburn and Bristol, need strengthening. These cities are a constant challenge to us all through the year. There are three positive ways in which everyone can help—those who can do so are asked to visit one or other of these communities; those who cannot visit are asked to correspond with the friends there and share news of the Cause; and those who feel they are too pushed for time even to write, are asked to pray. In this way we shall strengthen the bonds of fellowship, and bring the strength of the whole community to the pioneers and resident believers in these towns.

(iii) *Local Goals*

Later on we shall be talking about goals that can be set locally by each assembly. Here we mention only briefly one or two steps that are necessary before the incorporation of an assembly can take place. First comes stabilisation. That means that the local assembly concerned is able to hold its own against the inevitable changes that occur each year through pioneers arising, people transferring to other towns, or sometimes death. Stabilisation in fact means that we cease to go through the hair-raising experience just before April 21st or 'meeting the deadline'. Part of stabilisation would undoubtedly be the opening of a Bahá'í Centre.

Then comes consolidation, steady growth, the putting down into the native soil of a place, as it were, healthy roots that nothing can shake. That stage must be reached before an assembly can be in-

corporated, before it can take upon itself the responsibilities involved in becoming a legal entity.

Incorporation of our assemblies is a goal of our Ten Year Plan, so we must be ready when the time comes.

CONCLUSION

There can be only one note upon which the Supplementary Report of a National Teaching Community participating in the World Crusade can end: **TIME IS SHORT.** One-tenth of our time has gone. We are now in the second year of the Ten Year Plan. So our last thought is upon the words of our Beloved Master, spoken to the friends in Paris a few days before He left that city: 'Now I say unto you, bear this on your hearts and in your minds. Verily your light shall illumine the whole world, your spirituality shall affect the heart of things. You shall in truth become the lighted torches of the Globe. Fear not, neither be dismayed, for your light shall penetrate the densest darkness. This is the Promise of God which I give unto you. Rise! and serve the Power of God.'

That promise has been made to us too, for *we* have all been called by The Master to 'Rise! and serve the Power of God'.

G. BACKWELL E. GREGORY

R. BACKWELL B. REED

A. BEALE O. SUTTON

Additions to the Community

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

Sarah Irani, Leeds
Rustom Irani, Leeds
Lilo Jessen, Manchester
Doreen Geary, Brighton
Judith Masefield, Oxford
Daniel Jordan, Oxford
Ralph Allan, Glasgow
Norman Tanner, Leicester
David Mumford, Manchester
Ronald Ellwand, Liverpool
Mary Hughes, Liverpool

Correction

One word in the Guardian's cable of April 5th published in *Bahá'í Journal* No. 113, was wrongly transmitted. In the next to last paragraph, for 'Commonwealth' read 'Civilisation'.