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Bahá'í Year 110

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THE GUARDIAN'S MESSAGE TO CONVENTION

Holy Year 110

Inauguration of the Ten Year Crusade

Warmly congratulate assembled delegates Bahá'í Community British Isles celebrating Most Great Festival Holy Year on magnificent victories achieved African Continent, exceeding highest hopes. Plan formulated two years ago, originally conceived (as a) mere prelude (to the) African Campaign, assumed such proportions, yielded such fruit, (as to) deserve (to) be regarded (as a) distinct stage campaign launched British Bahá'í Community beyond borders homeland. Six Year Plan, first collective undertaking British Bahá'í history, laid (and) broadened foundations administrative institutions destined (to) direct (the) operation (of) future overseas enterprises (of the) British Bahá'í Community. Two Year Plan inaugurated, within African Continent, glorious mission (which) same Community called upon accomplish throughout British Dependencies Eastern, Western Hemispheres. Hour propitious triumphant, richly blessed, British National Spiritual Assembly participate (with) eleven sister National Assemblies East, West (in the) impending world spiritual crusade through launching Ten Year Plan embracing three continents globe, calculated carry stage further their own particular crusade throughout numerous, widely scattered, highly diversified colonies, protectorates British Empire, hasten day be able assume preponderating share such vast, highly meritorious pioneering enterprise.

Momentous Plan which, course coming decade separating them Most Great Jubilee, will demand complete, sustained consecration twofold task consolidation Faith England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland (and) its propagation beyond island home, involves

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| FIRST | Opening following virgin territories: Seven <i>Europe</i> —Channel Islands, Cyprus, Faroe Islands, Hebrides Islands, Malta, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands; Four <i>Africa</i> —British Cameroons, British Togoland, Madeira, South West Africa. |
| SECOND | Consolidation Faith following territories: Nine <i>Africa</i> —Angola, Belgian Congo, Gold Coast, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanganyika, Uganda, Zululand; <i>Europe</i> —Eire; <i>Asia</i> —Hong-kong. |
| THIRD | Establishment National Spiritual Assembly Bahá'ís Central East Africa. |

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| FOURTH | Purchase land anticipation construction Mashriqu'l-Adhkar Kampala. |
| FIFTH | Establishment National Haziratu'l-Quds London. |
| SIXTH | Conversion into national institution local Haziratu'l-Quds Kampala. |
| SEVENTH | Incorporation National Spiritual Assembly Bahá'ís Central East Africa. |
| EIGHTH | Establishment national endowments British Isles. |
| NINTH | Establishment national endowments by National Spiritual Assembly Bahá'ís Central East Africa. |
| TENTH | Translation Bahá'í literature thirty-one African languages: Accra, Afrikaans, Aladian, Ashanti, Banu, Bemba, Bua, Chuana, Gio, Gu, Jieng, Jolof, Kuan-yama, Krongo, Kroo, Liumbi, Malagasy, Nubian, Pedi, Popo, Ronga, Sena, Shilha, Shona, Sobu, Suto, Wongo, Xosa, Yalunka, Yao, Zulu. |
| ELEVENTH | Doubling number Spiritual Assemblies (and) localities British Isles. |
| TWELFTH | Incorporation nineteen assemblies England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland. |
| THIRTEENTH | Establishment Israel branch National Spiritual Assembly British Isles. |
| FOURTEENTH | Formation European, Asian Teaching Committees, designed stimulate, co-ordinate teaching activities Plan. |

Ardently praying decade long crusade, culminating hundredth anniversary declaration Faith Bahá'u'lláh, may witness (in) both administrative (and) teaching fields home front, as well as beyond confines British Isles, fruition potent seeds hands Center Covenant so lovingly, patiently sowed course twice repeated visit heart British Empire. May it likewise carry triumphant conclusion initial epoch unfoldment world-wide mission entrusted British Bahá'í Community amidst peoples, races dwelling Dependencies British Crown, scattered throughout five continents globe.

Note: In the Guardian's book of information and statistics *The Bahá'í Faith: 1844—1952*, fifty-one localities in the British Isles are listed as having resident Bahá'ís, including twenty-four towns with local assemblies.

**SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
BAHÁ'IS OF THE BRITISH ISLES—Ridvan, 110 (1953)**

The Two Year Plan has ended with greater success than could have been anticipated a few weeks ago. At the last meeting of the National Assembly on 12th April, at least three more pioneers or declarations in crucial towns were needed for maintenance of all Assemblies, and more for removal of all major weaknesses. The Assembly had before it a last minute appeal from the Guardian addressed to the entire British Bahá'í Community and sent in reply to a Consolidation Committee cable. Vigorous action was taken to give the Community the opportunity to respond to this eleventh hour appeal and the outcome was five pioneer offers and three declarations, which went far towards placing all assemblies on a firm basis. Some local communities are still weak, but the British Bahá'í Community can enter the Ten Year Crusade knowing that the weaknesses in the twenty-four communities now existing are much less than once appeared likely. During the year thirty-one new believers have been accepted.

In Africa all goals have also been achieved. The Nairobi Community will certainly have an Assembly, and may need to hold an election. A visa has been granted to Mr. and Mrs. Dunne of the United States for the Gold Coast and their arrival there is delayed only by the difficulty of getting a passage from the United States so near the Coronation. The attitude of the Gold Coast authorities has recently seemed more friendly than formerly. We are happy to report also that Madagascar, an Indian goal territory, was opened on 20th April by the arrival there of a pioneer from Britain, Mehrangiz Munsiff. All the goals allocated by the Guardian for opening by this Ridvan were thus open to the Faith on that date. From Uganda comes news of the formation of twelve new local assemblies, an important step towards the future establishment of a National Assembly in Central and East Africa.

Holy Year celebrations reached their culmination with the Ridvan celebrations in London. An elaborate devotional programme for Bahá'ís only was held in a

hired hall on the first day of Ridvan. The Jubilee Exhibition at Park Lane House has been opened and public meetings held each evening. At the time this report is being written, it is too early to assess the success of the celebrations in publicising the Faith, but it is clear that the great amount of work done by the Centenary Committee and its sub-committees is bearing fruit.

Unfortunately Sir Ronald Storrs, who had provisionally agreed to open the Exhibition, was unable to do so as he was not in this country and we were most grateful to Mr. St. Barbe Baker for stepping into the breach. Prominent speakers for the biggest meeting were also not available, but a number of important tributes to the Faith were obtained for inclusion in the Souvenir Booklet.

The British Bahá'ís have been honoured by a request from the Guardian to produce a British edition of his information booklet *The Bahá'í Faith, 1844-1952*, which contains a supplement on the Ten Year Crusade. After several printing delays, single copies were sent to each National Assembly by air mail on 17th April. This is the first booklet by the Guardian for which a British edition has been published at the same time as the American edition.

First steps have been taken towards Inter-National Assembly co-operation during the Ten Year Crusade and the Guardian has made it clear that the British National Assembly will be the consultative body for British territories, but for these only. Plans for prosecution of the Ten Year Plan in Africa are being laid. Now we know also the goals of the British Community in Europe and Asia and at home in the British Isles. We stand at the threshold of a mighty period in British Bahá'í history. May this Convention provide an impetus to the work which will not slacken until victory is gained on the occasion of the Most Great Jubilee.

**Cable sent by Convention, Ridvan 110,
to the Guardian**

British Hand Cause, delegates, friends gathered Convention over-awed significance Plan grateful bounty participation World Crusade.

Though prospect vast, numbers small, pledge total dedication, consecration unwavering service confident Divine Hosts will reinforce our efforts in proportion our steadfastness Covenant.

Humbly beseech your prayers removal difficulties obstacles Bahá'í World Community.

Hearts yearn pay befitting tribute Divine Threshold most Great Jubilee.

The following is a copy of a cable received 8th April from the Guardian in answer to an appeal from the Consolidation Committee for his prayers during the last days of the Two Year Plan.

'Appeal entire community exert supreme effort eleventh hour seal success Plan assure loving fervent prayers.'

Two Cables from the Guardian

The Guardian cabled the British National Assembly on 1st June:

'Urge immediate steps publication pamphlets African languages. Approve approach National Assemblies financial assistance. Myself contributing thousand pounds meritorious purpose.'

Earlier he had cabled the American National Assembly:

'Launching of World Crusade signaled spontaneous contributions delegates assembled Florence (for) purchase land first Italian Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, within stronghold leading community Christendom. Appeal National Assemblies Bahá'í World participate historic enterprise, synchronizing emergence sister Assembly European Continent. Urged in message addressed Hand Cause, Ugo Giachery, selection site. Transmitting one thousand pounds my contribution meritorious purpose Treasurer, Anne Lynch, Geneva.'

I have attended many teaching conferences, many Bahá'í functions, but this of course, is the first inter-continental conference that has been attended by any of us. When I think of all the conferences or Bahá'í gatherings, this one stands out as the one that has evinced the greatest spirit of love, of devotion, of any of the conferences I have attended. The Guardian has stated on many occasions that one of the main objectives in his ministry is to fulfil all the things which the Master Himself had in mind and which He contemplated in various of His Writings. One of the main things which he has had in mind and has been working for since the commencement of his Guardianship is accomplishing all the tasks outlined by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Divine Plan. The Guardian has felt that it has been necessary for us to develop the Administrative Order of the Faith so that it might be used as the channel through which the spirit and power might be disseminated to the world, through the pioneers carrying the Message to the world. He devoted himself during the first twenty years to building up the Administrative Order both locally and nationally. There are times in history when the Cause of God gives to certain people an opportunity to achieve great honour and great glory and an opportunity to be counted amongst the immortals. What there is in you and in me that God has given us the great bounty and great blessing to be able to take part in this, the spread of the Bahá'í Message all over the world and in the quickening of humanity through the breezes of Bahá'u'lláh, is something none of us can understand. It reminds me of an incident when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in America. A great distinguished gentleman, Andrew Carnegie, who was very interested in universal peace and devoted all his wealth and energies to establishing it, had had an interview with 'Abdu'l-Bahá two or three times and, after one of these conferences, Mountfort Mills asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá how it was that a man of the great stature of Andrew Carnegie, who had the wealth of the world almost, who was interested in universal peace and was dedicating his wealth to that purpose, how was it that he did not become a Bahá'í? 'Abdu'l-Bahá answered and said 'The ways of God are mysterious. He generally does not choose to reward a person twice. He has already rewarded Andrew Carnegie with all the things of this world and has inspired him with working for universal peace. But those like ourselves who have nothing of the things of this world, who have no particular position in the world, who are the well-wishers of humanity, Bahá'u'lláh has chosen us to be the recipients of His Grace from on high. If we thank God a thousand times with every breath, we can never thank Him enough for allowing us to be Bahá'ís.' It seems to me that we are in a position where, if we thank God ten thousand times with every breath, we could never thank Him enough for allowing us the privilege to serve in this great Ten Year Crusade. It seems to me the only kind of thankfulness we can show is to teach and to teach and to teach.

The Guardian feels that the pioneers are doing a very great and wonderful service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. They are going from their homes in accordance with the call of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and

in accordance with the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They are leaving their homes and dispersing in order to carry the tidings of the Kingdom of God on earth. The beloved Guardian feels that the work of the pioneers is perhaps the most important Bahá'í work which is being done in the world to-day. Theirs is a very difficult task, but at the same time it carries great bounties because, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá pointed out, they are the associates of the Holy Spirit. The Guardian wished me to assure them that they are not alone in any circumstances. He said one night at table that the Hosts of the Supreme Concourse were anxiously waiting for individuals to arise so that they can come to their assistance and support.

I just wanted to say a word on behalf of the Guardian to the new African Bahá'ís. The beloved Guardian has said that there is nothing which has happened in recent years which has given him so much joy and so much happiness as the knowledge of the spread of the Faith amongst the African people. He has said that the people of Africa have not become contaminated by the material forces of either the East or the West. Therefore, being of pure heart and unsullied by the things of the world, they become the proper instruments to establish the true Bahá'í way of life. Therefore the Guardian is hoping that the new Bahá'ís of Africa will arise and become themselves pioneers to spread the Cause in Africa and ultimately to people all over the world.

I wanted to share with you all a few of the words of the Guardian on the success of the Crusade which is ahead. In the first place, it is going to be necessary for each and every one of us to achieve a complete detachment from the things of the world. Then we must consecrate our life to the teaching work of the Faith and do nothing else. We must consecrate ourselves more than ever before, because he feels that none of us have consecrated ourselves sufficiently to the service of Bahá'u'lláh. Our contact with the spirit comes through prayer and meditation. The Guardian feels we should pray and meditate far more than we do. Then act and do something; prayer and meditation is useless without action. The fact of the matter is, as the Guardian has pointed out, God can only act when people pray and then do something, because He operates through action.

The Guardian feels that we are entering upon the greatest crusade of the teaching of the religion of God that has ever existed in the history of mankind. He said that in no previous religious dispensation of recorded history has there been an equal campaign or an equal crusade to that in which the Bahá'ís of the world are launched in this Ten Year Crusade. In the Tablets of the Divine Plan, 'Abdu'l-Bahá indicated that the initial stage of the work was the establishment of the Faith in some 150 countries of the world, and I presume you have all noted that when we have finished this Ten Year Crusade and achieved the task before us, we shall have established the Cause in 260 countries of the world. This will be the fulfilment of the great promises of the Old and New Testaments and the initial stage of the flooding of the earth with the Glory of the Lord. It will synchronise with that glorious event of the setting of the Throne of God on the Mountain of God, because it

will reach its consummation in the establishment of the Universal House of Justice in 1963. The beloved Guardian looks upon the Tablet of Carmel as the charter for the international activities of the Faith, both spiritual and administrative activities being centred in Haifa on Mount Carmel. The reference in that Tablet to the City of God setting itself on Mount Carmel refers to the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh and the burial of the Holy Dust of Him and the Báb on the mountain or in the vicinity. The Ark of God refers to the Administrative Order of the Faith and the Universal House of Justice. The people of Bahá who are referred to in that Tablet are the members of the Universal House of Justice.

Therefore, friends, think of the privilege we have that these prophecies from the beginning of time are due to be fulfilled and we have an opportunity to be instruments in the Hands of God to fulfil them. This is the Grace of God that has come to a handful of Bahá'is to-day and through the leadership of our beloved Guardian we shall certainly achieve the goals.

THE ROAD TO GLORY

A Statement on the Ten Year Plan

'The purpose underlying all creation is the revelation of this most sublime, this most holy Day, the Day known as the Day of God in His Books and Scriptures—the Day which all the Prophets, and the Chosen Ones, and the holy ones, have wished to witness.'

'This Day is God's Day, and this Cause His Cause. Happy is he who has renounced this world, and clung to Him Who is the Day-Spring of God's Revelation.'

'This Day a door is open wider than both heaven and earth. The eye of the mercy of Him Who is the Desire of the worlds is turned towards all men. An act, however infinitesimal, is, when viewed in the mirror of the knowledge of God, mightier than a mountain. Every drop proffered in His path is as the sea in that mirror. For this is the Day which the one true God, glorified by He, hath announced in all His Books unto His Prophets and His Messengers.'

'It is in our power, should we wish it, to enable a speck of floating dust to generate, in less than the twinkling of an eye, suns of infinite, of unimaginable splendour, to cause a dewdrop to develop into vast and numberless oceans, to infuse into every letter such a force as to empower it to unfold all the knowledge of past and future ages.'

'Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause. This is indeed what profiteth you in this world, and in that which is to come. Your Lord, the God of Mercy, is the All-Informed, the All-Knowing. Grieve not at the things ye witness in this day. The days shall come whereon the tongues of the nations will proclaim: "The earth is God's, the Almighty, the Single, the Incomparable, the All-Knowing".'

'O ye beloved of God! Repose not yourselves on your couches, nay, bestir yourselves as soon as you recognise your Lord, the Creator, and hear of the things which have befallen Him, and hasten to His assistance. Unloose your tongues, and proclaim unceasingly His Cause. This shall be better for you than

all the treasures of the past and of the future, if ye be of them that comprehend this truth.'

'Centre your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumb-founded.'

'Whoso openeth his lips in this day, and maketh mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on high, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light. Thus hath it been fore-ordained in the realm of God's Revelation, by the behest of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful.'

'There lay concealed within the Holy Veil, and prepared for the service of God, a company of His chosen ones who shall be manifested unto men, who shall aid His Cause, who shall be afraid of no one, though the entire human race rise up and war against them. These are the ones who, before the gaze of the dwellers on earth and the denizens of heaven, shall arise and, shouting aloud, acclaim the name of the Almighty, and summon the children of men to the path of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised.'

'O my servants! Sorrow not if in these days, and on this earthly plane, things contrary to your wishes have been ordained and manifested by God, for days of blissful joy, of heavenly delight, are assuredly in store for you. Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious, will be unveiled to your eyes. You are destined by Him in this world and hereafter, to partake of their benefits, to share in their joys, and to obtain a portion of their sustaining grace. To each and every one of them you will, no doubt, attain.'

'I swear by My life! Nothing save that which profiteth them can befall My loved ones. To this testifyeth the Pen of God, the Most Powerful, the All-Glorious, the Best Beloved.'

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

On 17th April it became possible to cable the beloved Guardian, this time informing him that all Assemblies had been maintained through the movement of the following pioneers and another declaration in Nottingham.

Fred Stahler — Manchester to Glasgow
Aileen Beale — Bournemouth to Edinburgh
Muhammad Karimi — Nottingham to Edinburgh, releasing
George Marshall — to return to Glasgow
Hushang Sohrab — Isolated to Leeds
Derrick Watkins — Norwich to Blackburn

Five other pioneer offers were also made which the Committee, for various reasons, found it impossible to accept, but the spirit of love and sacrifice which prompted these friends to arise in service to the Cause of God is deeply appreciated and can never be forgotten.

THE AFRICAN INTER-CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE

KAMPALA, UGANDA, 12th—18th FEBRUARY, 1953

Introduction

Approximately 230 people attended the Conference, including Mr. Leroy Ioas, the Guardian's special representative, nine other Hands of the Cause, seventeen National Assembly members representing American, British, Egyptian and Persian National Assemblies and thirty-three pioneers. The Indian National Assembly was represented by three of its pioneers as no member of the Indian Assembly had been able to attend. Among the attendants were 123 Africans (other than Egyptians) from approximately thirty races and tribes, of whom thirty were from Kampala, two from Dar-es-Salaam and the remainder from Eastern Uganda. Those from Eastern Uganda attended as guests of the Guardian and their presence ensured that a majority of those attending were Africans.

The Conference sessions were held in a large tent in the grounds of the Kampala Haziratu'l-Quds, which proved to be an ideal meeting place. It was both cooler than any hall could have been, and rendered it possible for people to enter and leave without noise or disturbance, which was in keeping with the conditions and the informality of the whole Conference.

Translation into Teso and Persian only was found necessary. The hard work of the various interpreters contributed much to the success of the Conference.

Very early in the Conference it became clear that it would not be possible to keep rigidly to the programme planned, both because time was needed for viewing the portrait of the Báb and because the Conference voted that preference should be given on the first day to African speakers, whose chief interest was naturally teaching the Faith in Uganda. The Conference Officers are to be congratulated on the way in which they adapted the programme as need arose.

Some Highlights of the Conference

The culmination of the Conference came during the evening session of Saturday, 14th February, which was devoted to viewing the portrait of the Báb brought from Haifa by the Guardian's representative. In the morning, Mr. Varqa had given the history of the portrait. At the opening of the evening session Mr. Banani, the Hand of the Cause for Africa, brought in the picture. All filed past it in silence with great reverence and some were moved to tears, so great was the feeling invoked. All must have felt how great was the blessing conferred upon attendants by the Guardian permitting them to view the portrait.

The other outstanding event was the release of the Guardian's Message to the Conference giving the goals in Africa of the Ten-Year Crusade. These were the first goals of the Crusade to be made known, and the message, ably presented by Mr. Leroy Ioas on behalf of the Guardian, set the tone for the whole Conference.

All felt how great a bounty it was that ten Hands of the Cause, including the Guardian's own special representative, should be gathered in Kampala. To many, the opportunity to meet and converse with these de-

voted souls was one of the most treasured memories of the Conference.

Mention must be made of the wonderful gifts presented for the Kampala Haziratu'l-Quds. The Guardian himself sent a copy in gold ink of part of the Qayyum'u'l-Asma, and the friends brought many gifts ranging from locks of the Hair of Bahá'u'lláh to silver ware and carpets.

Another feature was the many messages of goodwill sent from Hands of the Cause, National Assemblies, Local Assemblies, Committees, and individuals throughout the world. It was not possible to read, or even to display, all these, but they demonstrated the extent to which the thoughts of all Bahá'ís were in Kampala that week.

Highlights from the Conference Discussions

This is not the place to report talks given from the platform during the Conference; it must suffice to say that these reached the high standard to be expected from the Hands of the Cause and other experienced speakers who gave them. Special mention must, however, be made of Mr. Leroy Ioas' farewell message, which brought to all a fuller appreciation of the significance of the Ten-Year Crusade and of the Cause of God. We should like also to thank specially Mr. A. R. Yazdi, Mr. H. Sabri and Mrs. Ferraby, who so generously agreed to withhold their carefully prepared talks to make easier the adaptation of the programme previously mentioned.

The discussions produced few concrete recommendations, which were not expected from a Conference of this size constituted from such diverse elements. A noteworthy element was the contribution of the Africans themselves, who showed both their eagerness to help spread the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and their earnest desire to learn more of His Message themselves. A number of offers of money to help this aspect of the work in Africa were made, and five Africans offered to pioneer. Several of the Persian friends also expressed their wish to pioneer in Africa.

Particular interest was shown, both by the Africans themselves, and by those from outside Africa, in the idea of establishing a Bahá'í school in Uganda. Several financial contributions were offered to make this possible, including an offer of £1,000 from one man on behalf of himself and his wife.

The Conference provided an opportunity for pioneers from several territories to report on their work, their victories and their problems, and all must have benefited from this exchange of experience. It was clear how varied were the conditions under which pioneers to different territories taught.

Although all realised that the Conference opened the door to new forms of Inter-National Assembly co-operation, little was said on this subject, probably because it was felt to be more suited to the discussion between National Assembly members and Hands of the Cause which had been arranged to take place outside the Conference sessions.

Activities Outside the Conference Sessions

The consultations between National Assembly representatives and Hands of the Cause and the interviews with Government officials have been reported elsewhere. There were many other activities outside the Conference sessions.

A Unity Feast had been arranged for the eve of the Conference to celebrate the Holy Year, and at this Mr. and Mrs. Banani welcomed the attendants to Kampala. Mr. T. Samandari spoke of his visit to Bahá'u'lláh as a youth.

Previously the Africans from Eastern Uganda had been addressed at their own wish by several speakers, and a memorial meeting for Mr. Fathe-Azam had been held.

Two public meetings took place, one at Makerere College and the other in the tent at the Haziratu'l-Quds. New films of the Shrine sent by the Guardian were seen. An excursion was made to an African village near Jinja, where African singing was heard and some went on to see a performance of African dancing. A choir from an African school sang in the tent at the Haziratu'l-Quds.

Publicity

Some preliminary publicity for the Conference was obtained in the Kampala and other papers published in Africa, and there is no doubt that the Conference made a considerable impression on the inhabitants of Kampala. The local paper, which has a circulation of about 3,000 and appears on alternate days published an attack on the Faith based on isolated sentences from talks given at one of the public meetings. In its next issue, it published a reply which concentrated on demonstrating that the Faith was the reverse of seditious, but prefaced this by the comment that the reply did not answer the charges made. Subsequently two letters to the paper on the matter provided opportunity for two further letters to be sent in reply. It later appeared that Reuter had circulated throughout the world a report that the Uganda Government was concerned about the Bahá'í activities in Uganda. This was quite unwarranted, and in at least one case a prominent paper publishing the Reuter's report published also a letter from us correcting it.

Conclusion

The thanks of all who attended the Conference are due to the Guardian for having made possible their wonderful experience. Never before had so many races gathered together to confer on the promulgation of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. All felt that the Conference marked the opening of a new phase in the development of the Faith.

No record can convey the spirit which made the Conference what it was, and made it so different from all previous Conferences. A few of the outstanding events are described above, but how describe the joy or the value of having breakfast with three Hands of the Cause, of meeting pioneers who had last been seen two years before, of talking to African believers in their own Haziratu'l-Quds, or seeing for the first time those pioneers and administrators whose names had long been familiar? How describe the thrill of mixed racial

meetings in a place where the races held themselves apart, or of talking simultaneously to several believers just arrived from Haifa. The Conference did not consist only of the Conference sessions, nor even solely of the organised activities. The gathering together in one place of so many Bahá'ís from so many places would have been a unique spiritual experience had there been no organised activity whatsoever. To those privileged to be present, it was truly unforgettable. It gave perhaps a slight foretaste of the world of the future, and the spirit it generated must surely help usher in that world.

SOME ANSWERS BY GEORGE TOWNSHEND

Question: What and how is Bahá'í baptism?

Answer: There is no rite of baptism in the Bahá'í Faith. The only baptism recognised is that which is symbolised by the baptism of water and fire revealed in the Gospels. 'Water symbolises the water of life which is knowledge, and fire is the fire of the love of God: therefore man must be baptised with the water of life, the Holy Spirit and the fire of the love of the Kingdom' as 'Abdu'l-Bahá says. (*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 142.)

Question: Must we change our religion to become Bahá'ís?

Answer: As all religions are fundamentally one and the same, the Bahá'í teachings recommend that a man should seek to purify the Faith in which he was brought up of all man-made additions and interpretations until he reaches the original teaching of its Divine Founder. When he has done this he will find that all sectarian differences between the various branches or communions of his Faith have disappeared and that his religion in its purified form is at heart in agreement with the essence of all the other world revelations; and that they come from the same God.

Question: What is the Bahá'í conception of the Trinity?

Answer: The mystery of the Trinity is explained in the Bahá'í Scriptures by the symbol of the sun shining down from high heaven on to a perfect mirror on the earth. The sun represents the Essence of the Godhead, its rays represent the Holy Spirit, the mirror the Essence of Christ. As the mirror reflects the full disc of the sun in its splendour, so does Christ reflect the qualities and perfections of Almighty God. A slightly different figure is used in *Some Answered Questions* by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He likens the Most High God to the Sun, and Christ and the Holy Spirit to two mirrors. If then, He says, we say we have seen the sun in two mirrors . . . that is to say we have seen three suns, one in heaven and the two others on earth, we speak truly. And if we say that there is one sun, and it is pure singleness and has no partner nor equal, we again speak the truth. (*Some Answered Questions*, page 120.) 'Abdu'l-Bahá frequently reminded His hearers that the essential oneness of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is a fundamental of Christianity.

GOD'S INDEPENDENCE OF HIS CREATURES

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

John I:1.

'Say: He is God alone; God the eternal!'

'I require not sustenance from them, neither require I that they feed Me.'

'He shall not be asked of His doings, but they shall be asked.'

'... God would have you beware of Himself.'

Qu'ran.

'The allegiance of mankind profiteth Him not, neither doth its perversity harm Him.'

'Every discerning eye will readily perceive that the Lord is now manifest, yet there is none to recognise His glory. By this is meant that the habitation wherein the Divine Being dwelleth is far above the reach and ken of any one besides Him.'

Bahá'u'lláh (*Gleanings*).

'There is no associate for the Dawningplace of Command in the Supreme Sinlessness.'

Kitáb'i'Aqdas

In every age God *has* revealed Himself—but it is His pure Bounty. There is no necessity and He is not *compelled* to do so, any more than we are *compelled* to accept His Revelation, except that 'if ye do well to your own behoof ye do well,' and that His plan of creation has created us in need of Him, despite our unworthiness, for His mercy preceeds His justice, and in this condition bounty and worthiness are of no account.

In one of His most beautiful prayers Bahá'u'lláh says:

'High, immeasurably high art Thou above the endeavours of the evanescent creature to soar unto the throne of Thine eternity, or of the poor and wretched to attain the summit of Thine all-sufficing glory! From eternity Thou didst Thyself describe Thine own Self unto Thy Self, and extol, in Thine own Essence, Thine Essence unto Thine Essence.*'

So in every age mankind has been free to either reject or accept the path that leads to safety; each generation, in other words, at the time of the appearance of God's Messenger had completely unlimited freedom and divinely conferred capacity to promulgate His Law—this being their truest self-interest. They have never so chosen.

Let us Bahá'is remember this lesson to-day—we are reminded of it by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Tablet 'O Army of Life',—that Bahá'u'lláh is not dependent on His believers to establish His Cause—it *is* established—but that we 'have no place to flee to' save the 'shelter of His shade that shadoweth all mankind.'

CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

Jubilee Souvenir Correction

We very much regret that in printing Mr. George Townshend's article in our Jubilee Souvenir, a line of typescript was omitted. The second sentence of the second paragraph which was printed as: 'In this Bahá'u'lláh reveals that the Day of Judgement and Restitution was about to pass away and a world made

* *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 328.

after God's desire would take its place.' should have read: 'In this Bahá'u'lláh reveals that the Day of Judgement and Restitution foretold in all scripture had now come, that the Kingdom of Man was about to pass away and a world made after God's desire would take its place.'

Election of the National Spiritual Assembly, Ridván 110

Fifty-six voting papers were received, one delegate being prevented from voting by a last minute illness. Two votes were invalid but the remainder of the votes of the offending papers were accepted so that there were 504 votes cast in all. The result of the voting was:

Mr. H. Balyuzi	...	...	52
Mr. R. Backwell	...	...	45
Mr. J. Ferraby	...	...	42
Mrs. A. Gregory	...	...	39
Dr. J. Mitchell	...	...	34
Mrs. D. Ferraby	...	...	33
Mr. L. Ross-Enfield	...	...	32
Mrs. C. Langdon-Davies	...	...	27
Mrs. B. Reed	...	...	19
Mr. H. McKinley	...	...	17
Mr. E. Gregory	...	...	16
Mr. I. Semple	...	...	12
Lady Hornell	...	...	11
Mr. E. Munsiff	...	...	10
Mr. J. Shortland	...	...	9
Mrs. G. Backwell	...	...	8
Mr. H. Hazari	...	...	7
Mr. J. Jameson	...	...	6
Dr. E. Miller	...	...	5
Mr. D. Millar	...	...	5
Miss V. Isenthal	...	...	4
Mrs. M. Matthews	...	...	4
Mr. G. Townshend	...	...	4
Mr. B. Townshend	...	...	4
Mr. H. Backwell	...	...	3
Mrs. M. B. Norton	...	...	3

Two votes each: Mrs. V. Backwell, Mr. A. Banani, Mrs. A. Beale, Miss J. Campbell, Mrs. L. Cranmer, Mrs. P. George, Mrs. J. Giddings, Mr. H. Habibi, Miss B. Hasselblatt, Mr. E. Kamming, Mr. M. Karimi, Mr. M. Mihaeloff, Mrs. J. Pitcher, Mrs. I. Slade, Mr. A. Taherzadeh.

One vote each: Mr. Z. Asgarzadeh, Mr. St. B. Baker, Mrs. M. Balyuzi, Miss B. Belevitch, Mrs. M. Brown, Mr. R. Coulson, Mr. A. Gerami, Dr. G. H. Hakim, Mr. D. Hofman, Mrs. M. Hofman, Mr. A. Joseph, Mrs. B. Kamming, Mrs. V. McKinley, Mr. A. Norton, Miss A. Phillips, Mr. Rustom Sabit, Mr. Ruhi Sabit, Mr. W. Wilkins, Miss A. Williams, Miss B. Yool, Miss T. Agah.

N.S.A. Officers

Hasan Balyuzi — *Chairman*
 Richard Backwell — *Vice-Chairman*
 John Ferraby — *Secretary*
 John Mitchell — *Treasurer*
 Dorothy Ferraby — *Recording Secretary*
 Alma Gregory
 Constance Langdon-Davies
 Betty Reed
 Louis Ross-Enfield

BAHÁ'Í WORLD

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. 'We are overjoyed to announce the successful completion of our Plan', writes Mrs. Hutchinson Smith. 'Much consolidation,' however, requires to be done now. There is usually an aftermath to be strenuously tackled before the colossal problems ahead can be overcome. Our islands alone present a very formidable task, which, if we thought it were left to ourselves entirely, would overwhelm us, but we know that the Heavenly Forces are ranged and arrayed to help us. So with a song in our hearts we eagerly anticipate glorious results.'

Mrs. Fozdar delivered about one hundred and fifty lectures and at least twenty-five broadcast talks during her tour towards the end of 1953.

CANADA. In a recent letter Mr. John Roberts wrote, 'As I dictate this letter on Saturday, 18th April, our line is holding in all our goals and with four believers ready to fill in at any emergency we feel that on Monday morning we shall be able to cable our beloved Guardian the good news that our Plan has been completed.'

'It has been a thrilling few weeks with many moments of almost utter despair followed by unexpected offers to pioneer or new believers coming in in the goal areas. Last June there were sixty-six vacancies and gradually this was whittled down to nine a few days ago. Since then every kind of thing has happened, including the sudden death of one of our pioneers, a sudden heart attack of another, requiring his having to return to his home, expected applicants who did not materialise, but finally victory seems to be assured and inwardly we are happy beyond words but outwardly trying to maintain a quiet calm.'

Toronto has a special fireside every Wednesday morning. Desirous to serve mothers unable to leave their children in the evenings, they call themselves 'The Do Club.' They gather clothing and make parcels to send to Indian and Eskimo children. They also have guest speakers.

CENTRAL AMERICA. The President of the Republic of Panama signed on 16th July, 1952, the necessary documents for the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Central America to be incorporated as a religious organisation of an international character, i.e. in less than fifteen months after its birth.

Goals of their two year plan have been reached as follows:

(1) Each Community to have its own Centre—San José, Costa Rica; Havanna, Cuba; Port-au-Prince, Haiti; Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Port Antonio and Kingston, Jamaica; Colon and Panama City, Panama; San Juan, Puerto Rico.

(2) Communities with fifteen or more members—San Juan, Puerto Rico; Port-au-Prince, Haiti; Kingston, Jamaica; San José, Costa Rica.

FRANCE. The N.S.A. of the United States has been accorded the responsibility during the Ten Year Crusade of assisting France to attain the goal of the formation of its own National Spiritual Assembly. It will be

necessary to establish at least five or six Local Assemblies as a pre-requisite.

Already a building has been acquired in Paris which, serving temporarily as a local Hazira, is suitable for the eventual status of national.

GERMANY. An Assembly was formed in Bonn at Ridvan, a city the Guardian says 'is most important'.

A National Bahá'í Library was scheduled to be opened in Frankfurt at Ridvan, destined to be ranked among the great libraries of Germany. It is to be in three parts—reading room, lending library and general library.

INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BURMA. News in a private letter from India concerning the success of their nineteen month plan is most heartening. All expansion goals in India and Pakistan were achieved; a second Assembly and a group were formed in Ceylon; Sarawak achieved an Assembly at Kuching; all the countries of Africa allotted to India—Somaliland, Zanzibar and Madagascar—were opened to the Faith; pioneers were settled in Nepal and Siam and the number of believers in Indonesia was doubled.

JAPAN. A two-page article on the Faith with a full-page picture of the Bahá'í Temple at Wilmette appeared in the New Year issue of *View Magazine*, the best English language magazine in Japan.

UNITED STATES. The Bahá'í Group at Greenville, South Carolina, has won the right to hold inter-racial religious sessions. To gain this recognition the Chairman appeared before the entire City Council to answer questions and request a ruling in order to avoid violating any City or State laws relating to segregation. This objective has been before the Group for ten years.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS AT BAHÁ'Í MEETINGS

The attention of all local Assemblies is drawn to the fact that under copyright law a fee has to be paid for any public performance of a gramophone record. Any performance is considered public unless it is purely a domestic one and consequently any records played at a Bahá'í Centre or at a meeting in a public meeting place would be considered a public performance. Local Assemblies can obtain from:

Phonographic Performance Ltd.,
144 Wigmore Street,
London, W.1.

an annual licence to play records incidental to religious meetings for a fee of two guineas per year, or licences for playing records at individual meetings can be obtained. Local Assemblies are advised, in making such applications, to state that they are one of the local Assemblies under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles.