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BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by

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

No. 92

Bahá'í Year 108

OCTOBER 1951

THE AFRICA PROJECT

A Summary of Developments

'Auspicious rays God's dawning Revelation which first struck corner vast dark spiritually decadent continent course Bahá'u'lláh's Ministry, which warmed illuminated its northern southern fringes concluding years Heroic Age Faith must now penetrate its heart, brighten its jungle fastnesses, envelop it with splendour their radiance course present succeeding epochs Formative Age Bahá'í Dispensation.'

April, 1950: The Africa Project was first mentioned by our beloved Guardian in his cable to the British Bahá'í Convention, when he called on the British Bahá'ís to undertake a Two Year Plan, after a year's respite, which would include the formation of nuclei (Bahá'í Groups) in three dependencies of the British Crown in Africa, and the translation, publication, and dissemination of Bahá'í literature in three African languages besides the three languages already undertaken. He mentioned that this work would associate the British Bahá'ís with their sister Communities in Egypt and the United States. The three territories later chosen for this work were Tanganyika, Uganda, and the Gold Coast.

August, 1950: The Guardian called on the American and Persian Bahá'ís to give their 'valued' and 'utmost' assistance to the British Community in this crusade, and he especially appealed to American Bahá'ís belonging to the Negro race. He later explained that this assistance means sending pioneers and sharing in the financial support of the Africa Project.

September, 1950: The British National Assembly sought and received our Guardian's permission to send pioneers to Africa during the respite year.

December-January, 1950-51: The Africa Project was launched four months earlier than the Guardian had originally asked. Two pioneers went to Tanganyika — Jalal Nakhjawani of Persia arrived in East Africa by air on December 18th, and Claire Gung of Britain set sail on January 4th. Jalal is now settled with his family in Dar-es-Salaam, while Claire is matron of a school in the mountains of Lushoto.

January, 1951: The Guardian unfolded the prospect of the first African Teaching Conference, which he said would lead eventually to the 'initiation (of) undertakings involving collaboration all National Assemblies Bahá'í world.' This cable, which was addressed to the American National Assembly, also included these soul-stirring words: 'Acclaim simultaneous inauguration Crusade linking administrative machinery four National Assemblies East West within four continents and birth first International Council

World Center Faith (as) twin compelling evidences resistless unfoldment embryonic divinely appointed World Order Bahá'u'lláh.'

April, 1951: By Ridván the Africa Project was well advanced. Two pioneers had reached Tanganyika and an Indian Bahá'í had arrived in Dar-es-Salaam to live; four National Assemblies had joined forces to carry out the Project; and thirty-two pioneer offers had been received from believers in these four National Communities. The Guardian described the Africa Crusade, in his cable to the British Convention, as 'constituting spiritual landmark process awakening African peoples, marking opening glorious chapter evolution World Faith Bahá'u'lláh. He indicated that the 'First All African Teaching Conference representative black white races' should be held during the Centenary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Prophetic Mission (1953).

May, 1951: The Guardian took swift action to enlarge the scope of the Africa Project. He called on Egypt to send pioneers to Libya and Algeria; on Persia to despatch pioneers to Somaliland, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia; and he enlisted the Indian Community to pioneer in Zanzibar and Madagascar. Thus, five National Assemblies now stood joined in this vast enterprise embracing ten virgin territories. He also assigned to the British National Assembly seven African languages, bringing to twelve the number of languages for translation of small Bahá'í pamphlets.

June-July, 1951: Ten pioneers — Persian, Egyptian, and British — departed for East Africa and settled in Tanganyika and Uganda.

July, 1951: The Guardian approved that Kenya should be reinforced by the British Community. One British Bahá'í had already lived there for several years.

The first declaration of a new Bahá'í was received, that of Mr. P. K. Gopalakrishnan Nayar of Dar-es-Salaam. On hearing the news of his acceptance our Guardian cabled: 'Overjoyed initial victory.'

August, 1951: The Guardian assigned Liberia to the American Community as a virgin territory to pioneer. He also clarified that the African Teaching

Conference is to be held between January and March, 1953.

Finally the eyes of the European Bahá'ís were directed to the Africa Project by the Guardian's cable to the European Teaching Conference. In his own words, the Project presents them with a 'challenge at once severe, soul-stirring (and) inescapable.' He also welcomed with 'feeling particular gratification' the participation of Portuguese believers in the Africa Crusade, which he said now embraces 'well-nigh (a) score of dependencies (in the) African continent.' These Portuguese Bahá'ís have settled in Angola and Mozambique.

September, 1951: To-day there are two Bahá'í Groups in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika, and Kampala, Uganda, numbering eight and five believers, respectively. Pioneers will soon arrive in Kenya, the Gold Coast, Liberia and Northern Rhodesia, and pioneer projects are being developed for the other territories named by our Guardian.

There are twenty-five countries in Africa to which the Faith has been taken or soon will be.

These may be summarised as follows:

COMMUNITIES WITH ORGANISED ASSEMBLIES

Egypt, Sudan: National Spiritual Assembly.

Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tunisia: Local Spiritual Assembly in each country.

DEPENDENCIES ASSIGNED TO FIVE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Uganda, Tanganyika, Gold Coast, Kenya: British Isles.

Somaliland, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia: Persia.

Zanzibar, Madagascar: India, Pakistan and Burma.

Libya, Algeria: Egypt and Sudan.

Liberia: United States of America.

OTHER DEPENDENCIES INCLUDED IN THE AFRICA CRUSADE

Morocco, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Belgian Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia.

OTHER COUNTRIES WITH BAHÁ'ÍS

South Africa. AFRICA COMMITTEE

FROM THE GUARDIAN

On August 16th the National Assembly cabled the Guardian:

'Joyfully announce acceptance first declaration Tanganyika from Gopalakrishnan Nayar.'

The Guardian replied on August 21st:

'Overjoyed initial victory, love.'

In reply to certain enquiries sent by letter the Guardian cabled on August 26th:

'Centenary celebrations Ridván. Teaching Conference may be held any time between January and March, 1953. Substitute another language for Somali.'

From Summer School the following cable was sent:

'170 British overseas friends joyfully gathered Summer School, send devoted loving greetings. Earnestly studying theme 'unfolding vistas of world civilisation,' also Africa project with cordial co-operation African representatives. Aware immense honour responsibility determined complete plan. Humbly beseech prayers confirmation Bahá'u'lláh.'

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PROGRESS ON THE SHRINE

'Announce National Assemblies East, West hallowed historic enterprise, which posterity will hail most befitting tribute by present generation builders embryonic World Order Bahá'u'lláh memory Prophet Herald Bahá'í Dispensation, now entering new stage development presaging approaching hour final consummation. Owing magnitude task undertaken, manifold responsibilities already shouldered Bahá'í Communities East, West, no further step beyond construction arcade, erection crowning parapet, originally envisaged. Sudden unexpected worsening international situation, necessity effect economy, exigencies attending rise World Administrative Centre Faith, impelled me subsequently place contract Italy provision stones required both octagon, dome, leaving resumption construction work indefinite future date. Am now encouraged, owing response recent call, take eagerly anticipated decision commence construction octagon, first major unit superstructure sacred stately edifice, designed support drum, pave way erection dome last remaining unit entire enterprise. Contract approximately thirty thousand dollars just placed Holy Land for construction octagon, including eight pinnacles, following completion structural work commenced last June. Further consignment hundred twenty tons, comprising lower part octagon, pinnacles, four complete façades, door, window frames, arrived Port Haifa. Invite valiant co-sharers holy enterprise join me prayers its uninterrupted prosecution, speedy fulfilment hopes cherished both Bahá'u'lláh, Abdu'l-Bahá, glorification eternal resting place Primal Point, bosom God's Holy Mountain.'

SUMMER SCHOOL

Sessions were devoted to the theme 'unfolding vistas of world civilisation.' Each week followed the same pattern, opening with the 'Vision of the Prophets'; leading to 'The Dawn of the New Day'; the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant; gradual emergence of World Order through the nascent Institutions of our Faith; and closing with a glorious promise of the future.

High-lights of the well-planned evenings were films of the Shrine of the Báb and the Africa sessions.

In so limited a space it is impossible to befittingly impart impressions of this Summer School, so packed with events which can never be forgotten. A few can be listed. Our happiness in welcoming dear friends from Persia, Switzerland, Holland and France; the beauty of the wedding in the flower-decked lounge, heavily fragrant with attar of roses sent by the groom's mother from Shiráz; the day when, at the invitation of the Lord Mayor of Hull, through Councillor George and Mrs. Margaret Spruit (who met Bahá'u'lláh when she was a child of five) ten Bahá'ís visited the Guildhall, were introduced to the Council and took tea in the Mayor's private parlour.

Further joy was occasioned by three declarations; greetings from dear absent friends; greetings from our beloved pioneers in Africa; and the announcement of December 7th as the sailing date of Ted Cardell, bound for Nairobi.

Amidst farewell greetings there was a new note, indicative of an ever widening vision and activity.

ALMA GREGORY.

POTENT INSTRUMENTS

We are to be allotted one column in each issue of *Bahá'í Journal*, in which we hope to give passages and references which may help every believer to increase his knowledge, to enrich and strengthen his consciousness as a Bahá'í and to make him an even more potent instrument for teaching the Faith.

'Those who participate in such a campaign, whether in an organising capacity, or as workers to whose care the execution of the task itself has been committed, must, as an essential preliminary to the discharge of their duties, thoroughly familiarise themselves with the various aspects of the history and teachings of their Faith. In their efforts to achieve this purpose they must study for themselves, conscientiously and painstakingly, the literature of their Faith, delve into its teachings, assimilate its laws and principles, ponder its admonitions, tenets and purposes, commit to memory certain of its exhortations and prayers, master the essentials of its administration, and keep abreast of its current affairs and latest developments. They must strive to obtain, from sources that are authoritative and unbiased, a sound knowledge of the history and tenets of Islám — the source and background of their Faith — and approach reverently and with a mind purged from pre-conceived ideas the study of the Qur'án which, apart from the sacred scriptures of the Bábí and Bahá'í Revelations, constitutes the only Book which can be regarded as an absolutely authenticated Repository of the Word of God. They must devote special attention to the investigation of those institutions and circumstances that are directly connected with the origin and birth of their Faith, with the station proclaimed by its Forerunner, and with the laws revealed by its Author.' Shoghi Effendi in 'The Advent of Divine Justice.'

'Oh ye who are firm in the Covenant: 'Abdu'l-Bahá is constantly engaged in ideal communication with any Spiritual Assembly which is instituted through the divine bounty, and the members of which are in the utmost devotion, turning to the divine kingdom, and are firm in the Covenant. To them He is heartily attached and with them He is united by everlasting ties. Thus correspondence with them is sincere, constant and uninterrupted.'

'We, verily, have chosen courtesy, and made it the true mark of such as are nigh unto Him. Courtesy is, in truth, a raiment which fitteth all men, whether young or old. Well is it with him that adorneth his temple therewith, and woe unto him who is deprived of this great bounty.' Bahá'u'lláh, 'Epistle to the Son of the Wolf.'

'O people of God! I exhort you to courtesy. Courtesy is, in the primary station, the Lord of all virtues. Blessed is he who is illumined with the light of courtesy, and is adorned with the mantle of uprightness! He who is endowed with courtesy is endowed with a great station.' Bahá'u'lláh, 'Tablet of the World.' (Might not courtesy be taken to include punctuality, answering letters received, consideration of one another in all ways?)

CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE.

FOR MEDITATION

Whosoever is firm in the Covenant and Testament is to-day endowed with a seeing eye, and a responsive ear, and daily advances in the divine realm until he becomes a heavenly angel.

The National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of South America and Meso America

We are very pleased to publish below the first letters received by our National Assembly from the newly formed South American and Meso American Assemblies.

May 22, 1951.

Beloved Bahá'í Friends:

On the historic occasion of our first annual Convention, after the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South America, the fragrance of your letter, and of those of eight other National Spiritual Assemblies, was shed upon all those present, lifting our hearts in humble gratitude to the Threshold on High and exhilarating our spirits with love and joy, for we were being welcomed into the arms of the Bahá'í world.

These messages impressed upon us a keener awareness and were a tangible evidence of the powerful spirit of unity which binds together the hearts of the Bahá'ís throughout the earth, and which must ultimately bring to all mankind the blessings of spiritual brotherhood and world peace. The reading of each letter, like the successive unfolding of a universal flower, drew you closer to us and brought to our consciousness an ever-expanding vision of the oneness of that world-wide Divine Organism, unified in the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh, and of which we have the honour of forming an integral part.

Our hearts are over-brimming with joy and gratitude that, under the unerring, guiding hand of our beloved Guardian, and with the vigilant care and constant nurturing of our valiant, self-sacrificing, lion-hearted parent community of North America, we were able, together with our sister National Spiritual Assembly of Central America, to achieve the treasured goal of raising to eleven the number of sustaining pillars of the future Universal House of Justice and of constituting yet another landmark in the ever-evolving development of our beloved Master's Divine Plan for the diffusion of the Cause of God throughout the world.

With the unfailing Divine confirmations of the Blessed Perfection, the sustaining assistance of an ever-watchful Master and the wise guidance of our beloved Guardian, may we be enabled to render a worthy share to the world contribution of devoted service to the sublime Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and successfully fulfil the sacred and enormous tasks which lie ahead in the path of our new-born mission.

May the Beloved bestow upon you and your community His abundant Celestial blessings and confirmations and crown your blessed heads with the diadem of outstanding and eternal victories in His Holy Path.

Devotedly in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

MANUEL VERA,
Secretary

July 1st, 1951

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Deeply aware of its high station as a sister pillar amongst those mighty columns already erected in the name of Bahá'u'lláh, and fully prepared to spare no effort in the universal goal which is ours to attain, in co-operation with the Beloved Guardian and our devoted and selfless partners, the National Bahá'í Assemblies of the world, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Meso America and the Antilles wishes to initiate its career by sending you its most loving greetings, and its great appreciation for the beautiful thoughts and inspiring messages conveyed to us on the occasion of the recent Convention held in Panama City.

This new instrument of God, this infant National Assembly cannot help but be impressed, guided and inspired by the stirring deeds and the miraculous accomplishments of those other Assemblies which have gone before, blazed the way to a new and different kind of civilisation and laid the foundations for a world encircling divine edifice built on love and justice, cemented with fraternity and co-operation, and adorned with beauty and virtue.

Our hands are joined to yours and we are happy and proud to take up the tasks so clearly outlined before us.

Sincerely, in the Service of Bahá'u'lláh,

ELENA MARIA MARSELLA,
Secretary

New Publications

'BAHA'I PRAYERS.' 100 prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This is an enlarged version of our previous publication.

Cloth, 4/-.

'BAHA'I PRAYERS' FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS. Obligatory prayers, prayers for the Fast, Marriage prayers, Tablet of Ahmad, etc. An enlarged version of our previous publication.

Paper, 2/6.

'BAHA'I PRAYERS' (Combined version). The above volumes bound as one book.

Cloth, 6/-.

'PARIS TALKS.' Talks by 'Abdu'l-Bahá given in Paris and London. A new edition.

Paper, 6/6.

Cloth (available soon), 9/-.

World Centre Funds

Mr. Norton reports that £806 2s. 11d. had been received for the Shrine of the Báb Fund by September 12th, of which £670 2s. 3d. came from individuals and £136 os. 8d. from Assemblies. £700 has so far been sent to the Guardian. He has also received £50 10s. for the International Fund.

Additions to the Community

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

Beth Simpson, Bournemouth
Aileen Beale, Bournemouth
Ernest Miller, Liverpool

We regret the omission of Kathleen Hainsworth (Youth) of Bradford from previous lists.

LOCAL ASSEMBLY NEWS

LIVERPOOL. A Bahá'í home is available to which the friends can bring their contacts and hold firesides. Well organised firesides, held in an atmosphere of freedom and homeliness, provide a focal point for personal teaching activity. A goal for consolidation is 15-20 new believers. Public meetings are planned for this year and educational circles are to be contacted.

SHEFFIELD. The recently acquired Centre at 23 Spooner Road, Sheffield 10, is now in use. A formal opening took place on September 16th, when Hugh McKinley visited the friends. Arrangements are in hand for a public meeting to be held and wide publicity will be given.

NEWCASTLE. As part of the personal teaching campaign individuals of the community are to attend meetings arranged by religious and non-religious organisations in order to win friends and, where possible, offer speakers. Iraj and Lily Ayman from Edinburgh visited the friends during September, and met contacts.

BLACKBURN. Personal teaching by the friends is making headway. Two of the contacts are shortly to visit their son who is at the British Consulate in Haifa.

MANCHESTER. The Friends report that the exhibition of Faiths of the British Commonwealth, held for a week in their Centre, was worthwhile. Many people visited the exhibition and attended the evening public meetings at which representatives of the various faiths spoke. Much publicity was given to the Bahá'í Faith. The Friends were grateful for the encouragement and support given by the Region.

EDINBURGH. Public Meetings are held every Friday evening. Firesides are held frequently in the homes of believers and contacts. Two of the friends recently attended the court of appeal for conscientious objectors and during the recesses were able to speak of the Faith to several people.

GLASGOW. A series of eight study classes have been arranged with a theme—'What Modern Man needs to know about Religion.' Children's Classes are held every Sunday. Janet Ross Howitson from Huntingdon, Long Island, U.S.A., spent two days with the Friends.

Notice to Summer School Guests

A number of people wished to have the recipe for Malt Bread, as served at Thwaite Hall. This recipe, also those for Cheese-Semolina Cutlets and Cornflake Biscuits, may be obtained from the Secretary of the Summer School Committee, 49 Sandbourne Avenue, London, S.W.19.

FROM THE GUARDIAN—continued

The Guardian replied on September 2nd:

'Assure attendants school abiding appreciation noble resolve fervent prayers.'

We have also received from Lotfullah Hakim, the following copy of a cable sent by the Guardian to the American National Assembly.