

# BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Bahá'í Year 116 No. 142



## MESSAGE FROM THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE TO THE BAHÁ'IS OF EAST AND WEST—

*Issued from their Third Annual Meeting in the  
Holy Land*

Beloved Friends:

The Hands of the Cause gathered in the precincts of the holiest spot on the entire planet have, after long and prayerful deliberations, made plans embracing those final steps which they feel must be taken by all the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in East and West in order to bring to a successful conclusion the World Crusade of our beloved Guardian.

Alarming little time is now left to us in which to accomplish his design. Well aware of the fact that this great Faith of Bahá'u'lláh stands in sore need of the erection of that infallible and supreme legislative body which in the words of the Centre of the Covenant Himself 'God hath ordained as the source of all good and freed from all error', and which the Guardian said 'posterity will regard as the last refuge of a tottering civilization', we have fixed the date for the election of the Universal House of Justice as Ridván, 1963, coinciding with the termination of our glorious World Crusade and the celebration of the Most Great Jubilee commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the declaration of Bahá'u'lláh.

As we look back over the past two years which have elapsed since that unforgettable and heart-breaking moment when we realised our beloved Guardian had been taken from us, we cannot but marvel at the protection which has been vouchsafed this Holy Cause. As one man the believers have rallied to the support of their Faith, closed their ranks, stood firm in the hour of supreme test and arisen to carry forward the World Crusade. The enemies of the Cause have been power-

less to harm it, so complete has been the unity between the Bahá'ís of the world, so strong the confidence and support with which they have surrounded the Hands of the Cause. The numerous properties and resources of the Faith have been completely protected; the Government authorities of the State in which the World Centre is situated have acknowledged the stewardship of the Faith as represented by the Hands of the Cause serving in the Holy Land on behalf of the Chief Stewards; the National and Regional Assemblies have supported, assisted and worked in the closest co-operation with this nucleus of Hands resident at the World Centre; a great wave of pioneers unprecedented since the inception of the Crusade, has arisen and is even now beginning to pour out to those goals most urgently in need of settlers and teachers; the temples, so dear to the heart of the beloved Guardian, are in two continents rapidly reaching completion, and in a third, plans for its erection are now at long last being implemented. Profoundly thankful and encouraged as we are for these manifold blessings showered on us from On High in our hour of greatest darkness and need, we are nevertheless aware that from this instant until the end of the World Crusade there can be no rest for any of us if we are to achieve the goals of the Crusade.

We have therefore formulated the following plan of action which will enable the Bahá'í world to establish the Universal House of Justice in 1963, and which we now share with our fellow believers.

We call for the election in Ridván 1961 of the twenty-one National Spiritual Assemblies of Latin America which will constitute some of the pillars of the Universal House of Justice in that region. This historic decision is based on the fact that we have every reason to hope and believe that the devoted band of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in those countries will succeed during the Ridván period of 1960 in forming those Spiritual Assemblies required of them by our beloved Guardian in the specific provisions he laid down for them in the World Crusade. Reports we have received from the Hands of the Cause who have visited those countries during the past year, as well as from the four Regional Assemblies responsible for the work in that area, have convinced us the time is ripe to make this joyous announcement to the Bahá'í world. We therefore urge the two Regional Assemblies of South America and the Regional Assembly of Central America as well as that of the Greater Antilles, in collaboration with the Hands of the Cause in the Western Hemisphere and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, to concentrate their attention, during the remaining months of this Bahá'í year, on insuring that those local assemblies which form the bedrock of these future National Bodies may be formed next April.

In studying the world-wide state of the Ten Year Plan, we have been forced to realise that the election of



the eleven independent National Assemblies which must, in accordance with the Plan of the Guardian, be established in the European continent before the end of the Crusade, is much more difficult and presents a greater challenge than is the case in Latin America as the local assemblies must be quadrupled rather than doubled. We have therefore set the date for the election of these European National Bodies for Ridván, 1962. It is our conviction that with constant and concentrated effort and sacrifice, our objectives can be accomplished there and the requisite number of local assemblies be brought into being by Ridván, 1961. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ceylon will likewise be elected in 1962.

With the formation of these National Bodies, and we trust, circumstances permitting, of the two others specified in the provisions of the Ten Year Plan, a wide and representative foundation for the Universal House of Justice will have been laid.

We are also happy to announce that another milestone in Bahá'í history will be reached with the election of the International Bahá'í Council during Ridván 1961. The embryonic institution established and so highly extolled by the beloved Guardian will thus enter its final stage preceding the election of the Universal House of Justice. The members of all the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world, duly constituted in Ridván 1960, will take part in a postal ballot to elect nine members to the International Bahá'í Council. This International Bahá'í Council is to work under the direction and supervision of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, serve a two year term of office, and cease to exist upon the occasion of the election of the Universal House of Justice. All the Bahá'ís of the world, men and women alike, are eligible for election. As the Chief Stewards of the Faith are wholly occupied with specific tasks assigned them by the beloved Guardian and perforce assumed since his passing, they should not be considered for election to this Council. Two of the functions originally allotted to the Council by the beloved Guardian, namely, to forge links with authorities of the State in which the World Centre is situated, and to conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with civil authorities will still be discharged, and to them are added the following: To assist the Hands of the Cause in the care of the properties at the World Centre, and in the establishment of the Universal House of Justice; and in any other functions which the Hands may assign from time to time.

We wish to assure the believers that every effort will be made to establish a Bahá'í Court in the Holy Land prior to the date set for this election. We should however bear in mind that the Guardian himself clearly indicated this goal, due to the strong trend towards the secularisation of Religious Courts in this part of the world, might not be achieved.

At this turning-point in the Crusade when all our forces must be unitedly concentrated on winning its goals, the friends should not be deflected from the vital tasks confronting them by discussion of such subjects as can only be considered when the Universal House of Justice is established. Therefore we feel it is necessary to recall the words in the Proclamation we sent out after the passing of the beloved Guardian: 'When that divinely-ordained body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew and the

measures necessary for its future operation determined in consultation with the Hands of the Cause'. This includes the subject of the Guardianship.

Aside from the pressing demands of the world-wide work of the Faith which must be met and administered from the Holy Land, and which require so much attention on the part of the Chief Stewards, plans are being formulated for the Hands to travel to various countries and lend the National Spiritual Assemblies their personal assistance during the months immediately ahead—and indeed until the end of the Crusade. These plans include visits to the Cradle of the Faith, where the vast majority of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh reside, to the Bahá'í communities in the United States and Canada, who constitute the chief prosecutors of the Divine Plan, to the Latin American countries where by 1961 so many National Assemblies must be formed, and to Europe, where another eleven of the future pillars of the Universal House of Justice must be erected by 1962.

In addition to these plans, the Hands, pursuant with the wishes of our beloved Guardian, are contemplating a much more intensive and wider use of the Auxiliary Board members in carrying out the work of the World Crusade, and a much closer co-operation between the Institution of the Hands and the National Spiritual Assemblies.

The importance of the plans made for the election of these National Assemblies as well as that of the International Bahá'í Council cannot be overestimated, because the above plans constitute the end of a forty-two years long prelude to that glorious consummation which will take place with the election of the Universal House of Justice in Ridván, 1963. Through the creation of this mighty institution, the Formative Age of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh will have entered a new stage in its development; the thirty-six years of Shoghi Effendi's heartbreaking, self-sacrificing ministry will bear one of its fairest fruits, and that wondrous prophecy of Bahá'u'lláh be fulfilled: 'Verily this is the day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names'.

On the eve of the great victories which lie ahead and which we will befittingly celebrate on the occasion of the 'Most Great Festival' the 'King of Festivals' the 'Festival of God' Himself, let us recall the glorious appeal and promise in these words of our Guardian: 'Dearly-beloved friends! . . . Ours is the duty to fix our gaze with undeviating attention on the duties and responsibilities confronting us at this present hour, to concentrate our resources, both material and spiritual, on the tasks that lie immediately ahead, to insure that no time is wasted, that no opportunity is missed, that no obligation is evaded, that no task is half-heartedly performed, that no decision is procrastinated. The task summoning us to a challenge, unprecedented in its gravity and force, is too vast and sacred, the time too short, the hour too perilous, the workers too few, the call too insistent, the resources too inadequate, for us to allow these precious and fleeting hours to slip from our grasp, and to suffer the prizes within our reach to be endangered or forfeited. So much depends upon us,



so pregnant with possibilities is the present stage in the evolution of the Plan, that great and small, individuals, groups and Assemblies, white and coloured, young and old, neophytes and veterans, settlers, pioneers, itinerant teachers and administrators, as isolated believers, as organisers of groups, and as contributors to the formation of local or national Assemblies, as builders of the Temple, as labourers on the home teaching front . . . all, without exception and in every sphere of activity, however modest, restricted, or inconspicuous, must participate and labour, assiduously and continually, until every ounce of our energy is spent, until, tired but blissful, our promised harvest is brought in, and our pledge to our Beloved fully redeemed.'

In the service of the beloved Guardian, Rúhíyyih, Amelia Collins, Leroy Ioas, Horace Holley, Shuaullah Alai, Ugo Giachery, Adelbert Muhlschlegel, H. Collis Featherstone, Paul E. Haney, A. Q. Faizi, Hermann Grossmann, A. Furutan, Zikrullah Khadem, William Sears, John Roberts, John Ferraby, Jalal Khazeh, Enoch Olinga, Agnes B. Alexander, Tarazu'llah Samandari, Musa Banani, Hasan Balyuzi.

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh,

Bahjí, Akka, Israel.

4 November, 1959.

#### NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF THE BRITISH ISLES

On the instructions of the Hands of the Faith residing in the Holy Land, the N.S.A. of the United States has circulated to the Bahá'í World the following cable dated 5 November, 1959:

ANNOUNCE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES SELECTION  
HORACE HOLLEY JOHN FERRABY MEMBERS BODY NINE  
HANDS HOLY LAND REPLACING MASON REMEY HASAN  
BALYUZI BOTH UNABLE SERVE PERMANENT CAPACITY STOP  
HASAN BALYUZI HENCEFORTH WILL SERVE AS ALTERNATE  
HAND HOLY LAND STOP HAPPY INFORM BAHÁ'Í WORLD  
HERMANN GROSSMANN PROCEEDING LATIN AMERICA RE-  
SIDE DURATION CRUSADE ASSIST PROSECUTION URGENT  
IMPORTANT TASKS WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

(Signed) HANDSFAITH

O my God! Thou seest us seeking Thy will and gazing to the horizon of Thy mercy, praying for Thy light and seeking Thine illumination.

We ask of Thee, O Thou Beloved of the hearts and Hope of the lovers, to make us pure and without desire, following Thy command, and leaving our faded delights to seek Thy good pleasure. O God, adorn us with the robe of Thy virtues, and illumine us with the light of severance. Assist us, O God, with the hosts of wisdom and utterance, to spread Thy word among Thy people, and to establish Thy command among Thy servants. Thou art He Who is powerful in all things and Thy hand holdeth the reins of all affairs.

There is no God but Thee, the Forgiving, the Loving.

Bahá'u'lláh.

#### AN IMPORTANT DATE IN THE CALENDAR TEACHING CONFERENCE January 16th/17th at Sheffield

#### THE FIRST WEEK-END SCHOOL TO BE HELD IN EIRE

The first Bahá'í Week-end School to be held in Eire has just ended and with the loving wishes of the dispersing friends ringing in our ears, we try to sort out our impressions of a wonderful, blessed, happy meeting.

The Dublin Community and the E.A.T.C. made charming hosts, the hotel was most comfortable, and efficiently run, the programme worked smoothly, and as Adib remarked in his opening speech, we all felt that we were in the midst of an historic occasion—a turning point in the history of Eire.

The Northern Ireland Community nobly supported the Southern Friends, twenty-nine of them arrived by car, by scooter, and by rail. From Edinburgh we welcomed Mr. Robertson, who had flown in bearing good wishes from Scotland, Betty Reid brought greetings from the National Spiritual Assembly, and some of the Eccles community arrived, with good wishes, and a large cake, baked by Gita Chaplin.

The week-end was beautifully planned—the teaching was of such a quality that even the most experienced Bahá'ís could learn something anew and the spirit engendered could be felt throughout all the devotions.

The tiny Cork contingent was welcomed, and Lady Hornwell is returning with them for a while before coming to England.

The European, Asian Teaching Committee represented by Jean Campbell was host for a social evening, and Dr. Afnan's slides, and the beautiful tape recording from British Guinea made a memorable evening.

We were particularly inspired by the Youth of Northern Ireland—Colin King, Dorothy Kennedy, and Tony McCarthy left us with Browning's lines ringing through my mind 'God's in His Heaven, All's well with the world!'

No account would be complete without mentioning the children, their sweet prayers, and the Persian chants thrilled us all, and united our hearts in one miraculous song.

#### NEWS FROM THE BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

##### BOURNEMOUTH

We see that Bournemouth Bahá'ís have been assisting in the Salisbury Week-end School, and we hear that locally work goes on as usual, and that Miss Elsie Cramner has an article on the Bahá'í Faith appearing in the publication called *Prediction*.

##### REPORT OF THE LIVERPOOL ASSEMBLY

At the end of October we had a good gathering at the Centre when Gitta Chaplin came over to present the record from British Guiana, and to show some of the display prepared by the Audio-Visual Aids Committee. To hear the clear voices of the Bahá'ís who took part in the broadcast, reading those soul-stirring words against a background of cocks crowing and dogs barking, was a moving experience.



Madeline Hellaby has had an article on the Faith accepted by the quarterly magazine *Women Speaking*, which is to appear in January. This magazine reports on the progress of women all over the world and has a world-wide circulation. A quotation from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's remarks about the station of women has also been accepted for inclusion in the same issue, space permitting, and later on, Madeline is to write another article on the Bahá'í teaching concerning women.

At the end of November the International Friendship League organised a 'People to People Week', when people were asked to extend hospitality to folk from overseas. We gave an invitation for a social evening to the I.F.L., as a result of which we entertained some students from the Malayan Teachers' Training College at the Centre on the evening of November 27th. We did not intend to do any propaganda, but hoped that they would ask questions—and they did! It was a most enjoyable evening for all of us. We felt that a favourable impression had been made; they took a number of pamphlets away with them, and we gave them the address of the Secretary in Singapore. Their academic year ends in December and so they are returning to Malaya to find teaching posts after Christmas. We feel very encouraged with this venture: one never knows when seeds sown on such occasions are going to take root—and there did seem to be more than just a polite interest! There are also some three hundred students at the College, who no doubt would be interested to know how their colleagues fared in the unknown Bahá'í community.

MADELINE HELLABY  
30 November, 1959.

#### PORTSMOUTH

We are happy to welcome Olive Long back from her long period in a Bath hospital, she is renewed in health and spirits. Our community is blessed by a brand new Bahá'í baby, Christine, daughter of Edgar and Pearl Boyett, a happy event for all of us. People to people week ended with a reception given by the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Portsmouth in the fabulous new Guildhall, where people from many countries were welcomed and entertained by the Lord Mayor. It was a colourful sight to see the many African students in native costume, all in a very happy mood. The two Bahá'ís present felt it was a good omen for the Faith in Portsmouth, and made the work of arranging hospitality well worth while. During the week we had ample opportunity to speak of the Faith, there was a social evening in a Bahá'í home, and an invitation to lunch with Suheil Bushrui, a Bahá'í from Sudan—Suheil is staying in the home of a splendid vegetarian couple, who are now studying the New Era. The week ended with a service for all faiths at the John Pounds Unitarian Church, when the Minister read the Bahá'í prayer for all nations. A social gathering followed the service, where, over a cup of coffee, the two Bahá'ís present met many interested seekers. New seeds have been sown, but we long for more action. Suheil is doing splendid work for the Faith in Southampton, and we anticipate an upsurge of interest in Hampshire in the coming months.

#### READING

The Reading-Twyford week-end school held on November 28th/29th was extremely successful. Twyford made themselves responsible for the main running of the school, owing to the various difficulties that

made such work impossible for Reading at that time. Over the two days some thirty-five people, both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í attended. The meetings were held at Massachusettes House, which is a new adult education centre in Reading. We found a very pleasant atmosphere there, and also at the hotel where the manageress made the visitors most welcome. There were people attending from Bournemouth, Cardiff, Birmingham, London, and Oxford, and everybody was delighted to welcome Miss Kilford, who came from Winchester, and took over a session for Mrs. Slade on the early British Believers. Mrs. Slade was prevented, by illness, from being with us, and we all hope she has now recovered. Miss Kilford kept us enthralled, inspired, and amused by all she told us of the early days of the Faith in England.

The theme of the school was 'Building the World Anew' and from the first session, by Mr. David Lewis on 'The Heroic Age' to the last, on 'The Administrative Order' by Eruch Munsiff, there was a steady, and careful unfoldment of the Faith. There was a session taken by the Youth on the Principles of the Bahá'í Faith which was remarkable in its clarity, and the sense of integrity and inspired purpose lying behind their words, this was matched in the moving address given us by a very new Bahá'í—Mr. Card from Cardiff on 'What is a Bahá'í?'. Perhaps the session which strengthened us most, and seemed to make the greatest impression on the contacts to which we have talked since, was the session on 'The Formative Age', taken by Ian Semple. To assess the stage through which we are passing is a very difficult, and at times, a confusing and disheartening business, but Ian clarified the whole plan so remarkably, and put the such clear crusade into perspective for us, that we, as Bahá'ís were heartened by the prospect confronting us, and the students deeply impressed.

Dorothy Wiggington gave us a delightful hour or so with her slides of Haifa on Saturday evening, the slides are extremely beautiful, with many unusual and particularly interesting shots, and her commentary was very lively and informative.

Friends are busy with plans for World Religion Day, a Forum which will follow a week later, and a One Day School at the end of January.

Reading Community have, this week, welcomed a new believer—Andrew Gash—who has been studying with the Twyford friends at their study courses, and is now one of Reading Assembly. We are full of joy at this Declaration, and feel that Reading will be very greatly helped by Andrew's youth and enthusiasm.

#### ERRATA

The Editors apologise for the mis-spelling on the front of the last issue of *Bahjí*, also for some mistakes over names in the Portsmouth report—Brown instead of Bowen, and Cunningham instead of Curwen. It has been suggested by the Portsmouth news writer that surnames are *printed* in hand written notes in future, this the Editors welcome, as the Journal Committee have all been puzzled on occasions, and we are anxious not to offend any of the friends through the mis-spelling of their names.

The feature 'News From the British Bahá'í Community' is small in this number, because very few reports have been received: May we remind you that the closing date for the next issue is the first post on 5 February please.