



BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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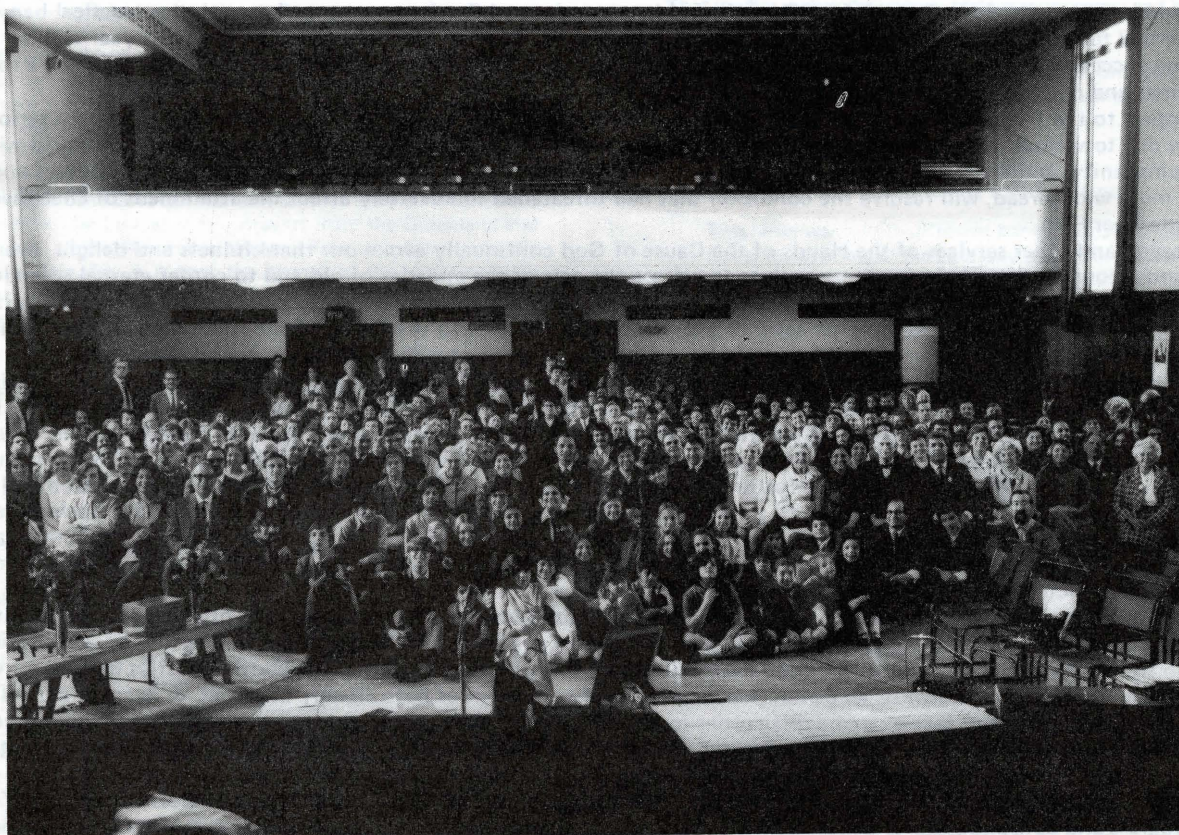
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CONVENTION SPECIAL



ACTON TOWN HALL
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RIDVÁN, 1971

To the Bahá'ís of the World

Dearly-loved Friends,

On November 28th 1971 the Bahá'í World will commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant, the Ensign of the Oneness of Mankind, the Mystery of God, an event which signaled at once the end of the Heroic Age of our Faith, the opening of the Formative Age and the birth of the Administrative Order, the nucleus and pattern of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. As we contemplate the fruits of the Master's Ministry harvested during the first fifty years of the Formative Age, a period dominated by the dynamic and beloved figure of Shoghi Effendi, whose life was dedicated to the systematic implementation of the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and of the Tablets of the Divine Plan — the two charters provided by the Master for the administration and the teaching of the Cause of God — we may well experience a sense of awe at the prospect of the next fifty years. That first half-century of the Formative Age has seen the Bahá'í Community grow from a few hundred centres in 35 countries in 1921, to over 46,000 centres in 135 independent states and 182 significant territories and islands at the present day, has been marked by the raising throughout the world of the framework of the Administrative Order, which in its turn has brought recognition of the Faith by many governments and civil authorities and accreditation in consultative status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, and has witnessed the spread to many parts of the world of that 'entry by troops' promised by the Master and so long and so eagerly anticipated by the friends.

A new horizon, bright with intimations of thrilling developments in the unfolding life of the Cause of God, is now discernible. The approach to it is complete victory in the Nine Year Plan. For we should never forget that the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Crusade, the current Nine Year Plan, other plans to follow throughout successive epochs of the Formative Age of the Faith, are all phases in the implementation of the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, set out in fourteen of His Tablets to North America.

The Nine Year Plan is well advanced, and this Ridván will witness the establishment of seven more National Spiritual Assemblies, five in Africa, one in South America and one in the Pacific, bringing the total number of these exalted bodies to 101. Next Ridván the nine already announced will be formed, together with 4 more, one each in Afghanistan, Arabia, the Windward Islands and Puerto Rico, bringing the total to 114, six more than called for in the Nine Year Plan. The members of all National Spiritual Assemblies which will be elected at Ridván 1972 will take part in the election of the Universal House of Justice at Ridván 1973, when an international convention will be held at the World Centre.

The Mother Temple of Latin America, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Panama, is scheduled to be completed by December 1971 and its dedication will take place at the following Ridván.

The wonderful spirit released at the four Oceanic and Intercontinental Conferences, together with the practical benefits which accrued to the Cause from them, reinforce our high hopes that the four Conferences to be held this year will be resounding successes and result in more pioneers, more travelling teachers, greater proclamation of the Message and a raising of the spirits and devotion of the friends.

Our appeal to the friends in December 1970 for support of the Bahá'í International Fund, which had reached a serious condition due to various unforeseen circumstances, has had a magnificent response from many quarters of the world-wide Bahá'í Community, and we are heartened to believe that this manifestation of devotion and sacrifice, as it continues and becomes more widespread, will resolve the condition that had threatened to adversely affect the attainment of cherished goals of the Nine Year Plan.

The travels and other services of the Hands of the Cause of God continually evoke our thankfulness and delight, even wonder and astonishment. Their deeds are such as to eclipse the acts of the apostles of old and to confer eternal splendour on this period of the Formative Age. On behalf of all the friends everywhere, we offer them our reverent love and gratitude. It is fitting to record here the passing, after seventy years exemplary service to the Faith, of the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander, whose early services in Hawaii were said by the Master to be greater than if she had founded an empire.

Restrictive measures, directed against the Faith, and varying in severity from outright oppression to imposition of disabilities make virtually impossible the achievement of the goals of the Nine Year Plan in a number of countries, particularly in the Middle East, in North West Africa, along the fringes of East Africa and certain areas in South East Asia. It is hoped that those Bahá'í Communities which enjoy freedom to teach their Faith will so far surpass their own goals as to amply compensate for the disabilities suffered by their less fortunate brothers. The army of travelling teachers must be reinforced and the friends, particularly Bahá'í youth, are called to seriously consider how much time they can offer to the Faith during the remaining two years of the Nine Year Plan. Teaching visits of brief or long duration, deputization of others, the undertaking of such tasks as would free other friends for teaching work, are all means of building up, in unison, that final surge which will carry the Plan to victory.

Two major objectives of the Plan are the formation of new Local Spiritual Assemblies and the opening of new localities. 13,996 Local Spiritual Assemblies are called for; 10,360 are now in existence. 54,503 localities must claim a Bahá'í resident; 46,334 do so now. The goal is in sight, the time short. However, the growth reflected in the above statistics has not taken place at all levels and in all areas. For while a number of national communities have already achieved, or even surpassed the goals assigned to them, many face extreme difficulties in attaining theirs. With mutual help and an increase in the momentum already generated there is no doubt that the community of the Most Great Name is capable of sweeping on to total victory, thereby gaining a view of those enthralling vistas at present beyond the horizon.

The twin processes so clearly described by the beloved Guardian in his essay 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization' — the steady progress and consolidation of the Cause of God on the one hand and the progressive disintegration of a moribund world on the other — will undoubtedly impose upon us new tasks, the obligation of devising new approaches to teaching, of demonstrating more clearly to a disillusioned world the Bahá'í way of life and making more effective the administrative institutions of the Faith. The authority and influence of National and Local Spiritual Assemblies will have to be strengthened in order to deal with larger Bahá'í communities; the international character of the Cause will need to be developed, while the international teaching agency at the World Centre, already referred to in previous general letters, will be established. However fascinating such considerations, which are likely to be forced upon our attention in the near future, may be, they must not deflect our energies and will from the immediate task — the goals of the Nine Year Plan. Their achievement is the best preparation for the future and the means of developing new powers and capacities in the Bahá'í Community. We are confident that the Army of Light, growing in strength and unity will, by 1973, the centenary year of the revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, have scaled the heights of yet another peak in the path leading ultimately to the broad uplands of the Most Great Peace.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,
The Universal House of Justice

LETTER TO CONVENTION FROM HAND OF THE CAUSE, WILLIAM SEARS.

Beloved friends and fellow workers:

It is with great joy and expectation that Mrs. Sears and myself look forward to being in Europe this summer, and visiting some of your Countries.

Although the progress on the Homefront goals of local Spiritual Assembly formations has not been as rapid and successful as your National Spiritual Assembly might wish, still the coming two years can witness an unprecedented increase in Assemblies, localities and new believers.

Our Universal House of Justice has written to one of the European Assemblies this very year, pointing out that although the receptivity of the people of Europe has not been as encouraging as you might wish up to now there are "strong evidences" that throughout the world "spiritual receptivity has recently sharply increased and is still rising." Particularly among the young people. "There is no reason to believe," they tell us, that Europe is "excluded from this world-wide phenomenon."

That new "wind of God" which is sweeping the earth is part of the Major Plan of God over which we have no control, as our beloved Guardian so often reminded us. God is preparing the world for our energetic action which can in these days claim the long-delayed and eagerly sought victory. About our part, we can do everything. Our Supreme Universal House of Justice echoes the assurance of our beloved Guardian in that letter to us, in Europe, promising: "..... if the Bahá'ís will but do their part, however unpromising the prospect, Bahá'u'lláh is able to open the doors and change conditions in ways far beyond our understanding."

That, beloved friends, is what I am looking forward to sharing with you in the months ahead: A fresh outpouring of confirmations from the Supreme Concourse. It is my loving request that starting today, each one of the friends in your richly-blessed country will begin to say special prayers each morning and each night, and as often as you can during the day --- even if you only take time to cry out the Greatest Name --- so that the entire continent of Europe can be bathed in our prayers from the Greenland and Barents Seas to the Mediterranean, and from the Atlantic to the borders of Asia. For it is only the powers of the Hosts on High that can, in these closing months of the Nine Year Plan, assure us of complete and total victory.

To my way of thinking, fellow soldiers in the radiant, spiritual army of Bahá'u'lláh, the coming two years offer to Europe one of the most exciting and golden opportunities in the history of the Faith, a chance to demonstrate to the world the majesty and might of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh; by showing the entire planet that, in spite of the inhospitable reception --- the cold, aloof and indifferent attitude of the great bulk of the people --- the love, unity, and sacrifice of each Bahá'í in that continent "twice blessed" by the footsteps of the Beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, will be such as to ignite fresh fires of teaching, pioneering and contributing --- until every last goal has been accomplished.

So take heart and be prepared to gird on your armour, remembering that we, we don't have to do a thing! All we have to do is enlist for two years during the dramatic close of the Nine Year Plan and allow the "Supreme Concourse" to use us as instruments. We will be "astonished" our writings tell us at the victories we shall achieve.

Let us memorize these words of our Universal House of Justice:

"Any evaluation of a situation is entirely misleading if it does not take this supreme power into consideration; whereas constant consciousness of dependence upon Him enables the Bahá'ís to formulate audacious plans and confidently carry them through to completion in the face of seemingly insuperable obstacles.

I am looking forward with an eager heart to joining you in these "audacious plans" that will carry us on forward on a wave of victories --- especially in the face of seemingly insuperable obstacles! That is what makes the victory taste even sweeter; and be sure, we shall have the victory!

With warmest and tenderest love to each one of you, in the service of our Universal House of Justice, on behalf of our beloved Guardian.

William Sears
Hand of the Cause of God

This letter was sent to different conventions and was read out at the opening of the Saturday afternoon session. The opening phrase of the second paragraph did not apply to the British Isles.

Editor,

New Committee Structure for British Isles

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We have watched with interest the operation of your National teaching structure and feel the time has now come to call to your attention the beloved Guardian's clear predilection for a strong central National Teaching Committee, with as many Regional or Area Committees under it as is deemed necessary. We feel sure your own teaching structure would greatly benefit by following this pattern. We feel sure you know that while the Regional Teaching Committees are responsible under the direction of the National Teaching Committee they (i.e. the Regional Committees) are appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly. The beloved Guardian pointed out how injurious it is to efficiency when members of the National Spiritual Assembly must deal with all the details of administration, particularly in the teaching field. A strong National Teaching Committee, directly responsible to your body, should be able, with the aid of the necessary number of subsidiary Regional Committees, to carry out the policies which you establish and make complete reports to you as often as you require. There are other advantages to such a teaching structure, not the least of which is the training of new personnel in Bahá'í administration.

We look forward to hearing from you when you have made the necessary changes.

With loving Bahá'í Greetings,

4th March 1971

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

FOUR NEW COVENANT BREAKERS

National Spiritual Assemblies in Europe.

April 7, 1971.

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We have been advised by the World Centre that some young Bahá'ís in the United States have openly attacked the Bahá'í institutions and have formed a group of their own which they call the "Bahá'í Soul Community". They are trying to recruit members from both Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís. Four of the leaders: Charles Seeburger, Earl Falls, Cynthia McDonald and James Caruana have been declared Covenant-breakers.

Charles Seeburger, the leader of the affair, so it is said, spent some time in the past in Norway and Luxembourg. Also he is reported to have a wide correspondence, so may also be in touch with other countries. If you hear any news of this movement, or of any of the believers receiving letters from any of these people please inform us at once. Will you please warn the believers, most especially the Youth, possibly through a circular or a journal, asking them not to reply if they do receive letters and also to inform you if they hear anything of these people or are contacted by them.

With Bahá'í love,

CONTINENTAL BOARD OF COUNSELLORS IN EUROPE

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT — YEAR 127

Since Naw Ruz the bounties of Bahá'u'lláh have poured down on this Community and produced an incredible series of miracles. One after another the gaps have been filled, a few by timely declarations, but most by pioneers. The proud record of the British Bahá'ís in this field has been enhanced by over a hundred pioneer moves into Goal Towns or weak assemblies since last Ridván. Up till the very last moment the National Office was the centre of drama and suspense, as the number of gaps was whittled down from thirty-seven just over two weeks ago until, with less than twenty-four hours to go, only ten remained to be filled. On the evening of 19 April, the telephone was in constant use with outgoing calls about the moves already in train, and incoming calls from many centres. The day had started with news of a declaration in Dundee at 2 a.m., making the ninth Bahá'í in that Scottish Goal and ended just before midnight with a call from Belfast announcing a declaration. At 11 p.m. Hereford had joyously phoned news of a new believer to ensure the local assembly where earlier there had been despair because no accommodation could be found for the willing pioneer, and in quick succession came calls from Northern Ireland reporting that their two local assemblies in jeopardy, each needing three to save it had both been assured by pioneer moves, most of them with very considerable sacrifice. By the afternoon of 20 April, only Stafford and Peterborough were still one short; a phone call to Prue George in Birmingham brought an instant response and Stafford was assured. At 3 p.m. Trudi Scott from St. Ives called at the Haziratu'l-Quds, en route to visit Bahá'í friends in Canterbury; at 4 p.m. she was on her way to Peterborough to fill the last vacancy.

And so what by ordinary standards appeared an impossible dream had become a reality. On the third day of Ridván we cabled the Universal House of Justice:-

"JOYFULLY REPORT UNPRECEDENTED RIDVÁN VICTORIES TWENTY ASSEMBLIES FORMED INCLUDING OUTER HEBRIDES ALL EXISTING MAINTAINED ENROLMENT NEW BELIEVERS ACCELERATING. LOVING GREETINGS."

Ridván Victories:

The new Local Assemblies formed are:— Aberystwyth, Aylesbury, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Cork, Dundee, Durham, Hamilton, Hereford, Kendal, Limerick, Lincoln, Londonderry, Shrewsbury; in addition the lapsed Assemblies of Aberdeen, Epsom, Peterborough. York and the London Borough of Hounslow were recaptured. All existing Assemblies were maintained raising the number of local assemblies in the British Isles from sixty-nine to eighty-nine.

St. Austell, alone of the goals set for Ridván 1971 was not achieved, so now must be won along with twelve others. They are in England: Derby, Kidderminster, Oakham and the lapsed Assembly of Northampton; in Scotland - Dingwall and North Berwick; in Wales - Bangor and Llanelli; in Northern Ireland - Craigavon; along with the island goals of Jersey, Lerwick and Ryde. Of all these goals only Jersey and Ryde, both of which had local declarations, made any progress last year and most of them have only one or two Bahá'ís. The task, therefore, will not be easy, bearing in mind that no fewer than forty-two of our assembly communities are established with the bare nine believers and are therefore very vulnerable.

Youth Spring Conference:

Over a hundred young Bahá'ís gathered at the King's School Peterborough for the third Spring Conference and National Youth Convention from 9—17 April. From the beginning a wave of enthusiasm surged outwards with ever increasing power, generated by sustained prayer, and a new chapter was written in the Bahá'í history of our islands. From many parts of the city young people were drawn into the activity at the school. They were quickened by the all-pervasive spirit of love and harmony and by Friday evening, following a combined show of the film "It's Just the Beginning" and a stage presentation by the Dawnbreakers, nearly forty of them had declared their faith in Bahá'u'lláh. The Peterborough Local Assembly, newly reformed, is already getting to grips with attendant problems and no doubt Convention will wish to discuss the implications of this first experience in the British Isles of "entry by troops" but all those who were privileged to be present have no doubt that something of very great significance has taken place.



NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Left to right: (sitting) Joe Jameson; Betty Goode, Treasurer; John Long, Chairman; Abbas Afnan
(Standing) Adib Taherzadeh; George Bowers; Charles Macdonald, Secretary, Philip Hainsworth, Vice-Chairman.

The following thrilling cable has just been received from the World Centre.

"LOVING CONGRATULATIONS SPLENDID ACHIEVEMENT BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY TESTIFYING CAPACITY ACHIEVE GLORIOUS DESTINY VISUALISED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN STOP URGE EXPLOIT OPPORTUNITIES MOMENT WIN ALL OUTSTANDING GOALS NEXT TWELVE MONTHS LEND FULL SUPPORT HIGHLY PROMISING FIELD YOUTH IMPOSING ADMINISTRATORS TEACHERS NECESSITY DEVISE ATTRACTIVE PROGRAMMES MAINTAIN INTEREST DEEPEN DEVOTION INSPIRE SERVICE NEW YOUNG BELIEVERS STOP ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD BEHALF DEARLY LOVED STEADFAST DEDICATED BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.

Proclamation Presentation:

Because of his repeated absences from the country presentation of the proclamation book to the Archbishop of Canterbury had been deferred, but eventually the necessary appointment was secured and the presentation was duly made to the Primate of the Church of England at Lambeth Palace on 15 April.

Birthday Greetings:

The birthday of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth 11 falls on the First Day of Ridván and in accordance with custom a telegram of loyal greetings was sent to Her Majesty and brought, through her secretary, a message of cordial appreciation.

Seals and Crofts:

We had the pleasure of a visit from these young Bahá'ís from America, who are members of a well-known musical group. Their records were being released in England, they appeared on several radio and television programmes and were also able to spend a few days with the Bahá'í youth at Peterborough. They expect to return in June and plans are being formed to involve them in proclamation activity.

Covenant-Breakers:

The Cause of God is established on "an unassailable foundation" and is now so powerful that any act of Covenant-breaking becomes ludicrous. The most recent involving a few Bahá'ís in the United States of America, who have been expelled from the Faith by the Hands, is completely absurd, but unfortunately amongst them is a former member of the British Bahá'í Community, Mrs Cynthia Macdonald. The imperative need to inform the National Assembly immediately if she or any of the other named Covenant-breakers should write to any of the friends has been stressed in a special announcement as well as in the Nineteen-Day Newsletter.

Conclusion:

The National Assembly would like to express heartfelt appreciation and gratitude for the loving and loyal support which has been unstintingly given by the entire Community, National Committees, Local Assemblies, Groups and Individual Believers throughout the entire country. We believe now that a new phase has opened and that this truly blessed and closely knit community can advance with confidence and in the remaining two years not only achieve all the outstanding Goals of the Nine Year Plan, but far surpass them.

ANNUAL REPORT TO CONVENTION — 128 ERRATA

Front page, left hand column, line three:—

"released", not "realised".

Page three, whole of right hand column, beginning:—

"a significant development....."

to end of second paragraph on page four:—

"...extend the available accommodation",

should be brought forward and read after:—

"...Castlereagh R.D. and Larne R.D."

which is eight lines from the end of page two.

Page twelve, left hand column, third line from bottom:—

"November 1970".

Telegram from Convention to the Universal House of Justice:—

**CONVENTION INSPIRED PRESENCE HAND UGO
GIACHERY MRS GIACHERY COUNSELLOR BETTY REED
FIVE AUXILLIARY BOARD MEMBERS STOP EARNEST
CONSULTATION MESSAGE CABLE AWARE NEED URGENT
IMPLEMENTATION STOP RESOLVE EARLY REINFORCE—
MENT REMAINING GOALS STOP DEEPLY AWARE POWER
PRAYER DEVISING NEW METHODS TEACHING
CONSOLIDATION ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENCOURAGING
YOUTH MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION GREATLY EXCITED
VISION ENTRY BY TROOPS BESEECH CONTINUING
PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES DIVINE CONFIRMATION
LOVING GREETINGS**

BRITISH CONVENTION

Telegram from the Universal House of Justice in reply:—

**DELIGHTED SPIRIT CONVENTION GRACED PRESENCE
HAND CAUSE GIACHERY STOP DETERMINATION
BRITISH COMMUNITY TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE PROMISE
HOUR HIGHLY PRAISEWORTHY STOP URGE RELENT—
LESS PURSUIT PROMOTION CAUSE CALL DOWN DIVINE
ASSISTANCE MAKE MASSIVE BREAKTHROUGH
POPULATION BRITISH ISLES ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS
HOLY SHRINE**

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

MESSAGE TO YOUTH CONFERENCE IN NAMUR, BELGUIM

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The rapidly growing range and effectiveness of the services of the Bahá'í Youth in Europe over the course of the past few years have given us great encouragement and have raised high our hopes for the progress of the Cause of God on that continent. The Two Year youth teaching campaign on which you are now embarking has within it such potential for the winning of the goals of the Nine Year Plan that we attach to it the greatest importance.

You who are now gathered in Namur in response to the call sent out by the Continental Board of Counsellors have been made responsible for working out the next stages of this audacious campaign, within the framework already agreed between the Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assemblies, and you may be sure that our prayers will surround you as we supplicate the Blessed Beauty to inspire your deliberations, unite your hearts and fire your enthusiasm, so that there may go out from this conference a ringing call, carefully conceived plans and clearly stated objectives, that will not only galvanize the youth of the continent but, through them, impart a mighty surge forward to the teaching work of the entire European Bahá'í Community.

It is our earnest hope that the outriders of this youthful army of Bahá'u'lláh will win such victories by the time of the Conference in Fiesch as will so inspire the far larger band of young Bahá'ís who will be gathered there that a wave of achievement, which will already have started to roll, will at that Conference gain speed and magnitude and revolutionize the progress of the Cause in Europe.

Let those who set their hand to this vital enterprise press confidently forward, undeterred by any obstacles which may stand in their way, joyously assured of the unfailing assistance of the conquering power of Bahá'u'lláh, Whom we will supplicate to guide and reinforce every step you take for the promotion of His Cause.

With loving Bahá'í Greetings,

29th March 1971 **THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE**

Cable from Hand of the Cause John Roberts:—

**LOVING CONGRATULATIONS GREAT STRIDES FORWARD
PRAYERS WONDERFUL CONVENTION DEEPEST LOVE
ALL**

AUDREY (and) JOHN ROBERTS

CONVENTION REPORT

A glow of enthusiasm and joy filled the hearts of the Bahá'ís attending Convention this year — for the first time in many years all the goals set by the National Assembly — to the number of twenty local assemblies — had been achieved. Tremendous efforts had been made and a veritable chess game of pioneer moves had been played at the eleventh hour to ensure that every victory was achieved; in some places last minute declarations had allowed pioneers intended for those places to be moved elsewhere, and the last gap was closed at 4 pm. on 20 April.

Convention was opened by National Assembly Chairman, John Long, who spoke of the unprecedented number of local assemblies formed and new believers welcomed into the Faith during the year, as well as a record number of pioneers, a total during the year of a hundred. He welcomed Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and his wife, Counsellor Betty Reed and the members of the British Auxilliary Board.

After a devotional, the roll was called and Convention Officers elected as follows: — Chairman — Patrick Green; Secretary — Charles Macdonald; Vice-Chairman — Philip Hainsworth.

The exciting Supplementary Annual Report was read by the National Assembly Secretary, this being followed by consultation upon the Annual Report when many questions on the various committees were answered. Committees were appointed for the formulation of messages to the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land, and also Hands of the Cause William Sears and John Robarts from whom messages had been received.

The Ridván Message from the Universal House of Justice and their letter to the British National Assembly dated 4 March were both read to the Convention.

Then followed an address by Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, who was introduced by Counsellor Betty Reed, during which he spoke most movingly of Shoghi Effendi and of the great affection he had held for the British believers — Dr. Giachery told us that "the Guardian always spoke with a light of joy when he spoke of the British people" and admired the incorruptibility of the British character. Shoghi Effendi himself spared neither effort, time nor money in the service of the Cause and this is something we should always remember; every Bahá'í should help the National Assembly in their work for the Cause and give them loyalty. Dr. Giachery also expressed his deep gratitude to all the pioneers who had arisen and then he gave us the joyous news that he and his wife would be spending three weeks in Great Britain.

Following the address by Dr. Giachery, Tellers were appointed, and the election took place while the visitors to Convention sat in silent prayer. The result, given later during the day, was as follows: Charles Macdonald, Betty Goode, Adib Taherzadeh, Patrick Green, John Long, Joe Jameson, Philip Hainsworth, Abbas Afnan, George Bowers. All ninety-five delegates voted, nineteen by post, and all voting papers were valid.

At a National Assembly meeting held during Convention, the following officers were elected:-

Chairman:	John Long
Vice-Chairman:	Philip Hainsworth
Secretary:	Charles Macdonald
Treasurer:	Betty Goode

During the whole of Convention it became very clear that everyone was aware of the tremendous contribution being made by the youth at the present time, and of the enormous potential which lies in the young Bahá'ís. At the same time, expression was given to the need for complete integration within the Faith so that older and younger Bahá'ís could work together for the onward march of the Faith in this country and elsewhere.

The impressive Youth Spring Conference and the unprecedented number of youth declarations made there was mentioned on several occasions and it was felt by everyone that the impetus from this conference must be encouraged in every way.

In the important consultation which followed the election, the two letters and the recent cable from the Universal House of Justice were referred to repeatedly as delegates attempted to "exploit opportunities (of the) moment" to "win all outstanding goals next twelve months". As the community starts this year with only a very few believers in most of the goal towns, the National Assembly was urged to reinforce the weakest places by early pioneer moves so that vigorous teaching could be established. Much attention was also given to the measures to be taken to increase the number of localities. Whilst reference was occasionally made to the new national teaching committee structure called for by the Universal House of Justice, no specific recommendations were made and the National Assembly were given no ideas from the delegates on this subject.

It was generally realised that whilst quick results appeared to have come in parts of the United States of America and even in Peterborough, there had been a great deal of preparation, particularly amongst those actively participating, and the collective use of prayer was frequently mentioned. The "highly promising field (of) youth" and the "necessity to devise attractive programmes" were also carefully examined.

Counsellor Betty Reed, introducing a session on "Youth and Mass Teaching", spoke of the enthusiasm generated at the Youth Conference at Namur in Belgium, which had been attended by 150 youth from fifteen countries and at which a two-year youth campaign had been initiated, and said it was significant that the first impetus from Namur had come to Peterborough.

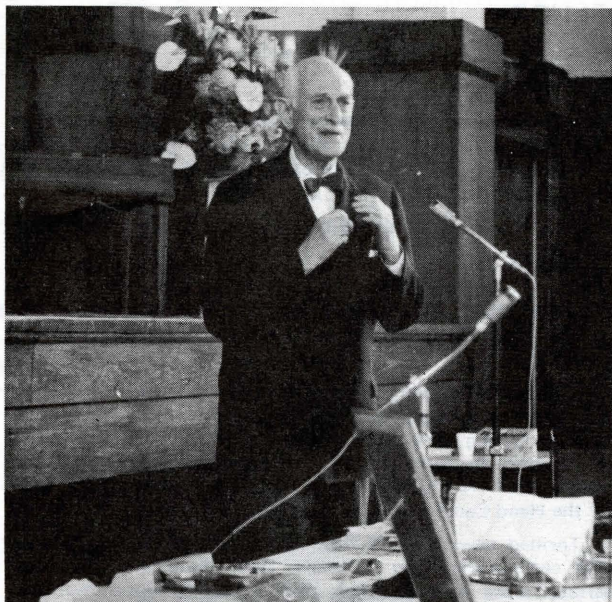
She spoke of the Youth Conference being planned for the end of July and the beginning of August in Fiesch in Switzerland, which 'Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum would attend for the first five days and from which it was planned that teams of youth should travel through Europe on teaching trips. Such intensive teaching was envisaged that a conference of a thousand youth was planned for Christmas, 1971, either in Interlaken or South Germany, and in the spring or summer of 1972 a conference of two thousand youth in Northern Italy.

At the Namur Conference the Youth had given themselves the following terms of reference:-

1. Far more extensive scattering of the seed;
2. Closer contact with every class of society;
3. Greater dispersal aimed at a rapid multiplication of Bahá'í administrative centres;
4. A greater measure of fortitude, patience and perseverance and a refusal to lose heart under any circumstances;
5. Focus on ways and means of awakening the interest of the masses and bringing a greater number of Bahá'ís to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh;
6. Each to play his part independently as well as through their concerted efforts.



Delegates and visitors during a break.



Hand of the Cause, Dr. Giachery, addressing Convention.

The following points had been noted at the conference from a letter addressed by the Universal House of Justice to the German National Assembly:-

1. Baha'is are engaged in a race against time;
2. We need a greater realisation of the power of Bahá'u'lláh;
3. Pioneering;
4. a) Greater warmth and enthusiasm, cordial hospitality;
b) Show the truth of the Faith and its joy by the unity of the friends and a spirit of love and service, aspects better not described but shown;
5. To take the Faith to:-
a) the poor and uneducated in the slums of the great cities;
b) the farms in the plains and mountains;
c) the youth in schools and universities;
d) the youth working in industry;
e) the increasing number of youth who are disillusioned with and are against modern society.

In all these fields we will find many who are ready and waiting for the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

Counsellor Reed finished by saying that the Bahá'í community was an integrated community and was an army of light in dire combat with the forces of darkness.

Various recommendations followed which referred specifically to the use of youth and the early appointment of the National Youth Committee, with a possible consultation with the National Assembly to launch the new youth work.

NEW APPROACHES TO TEACHING

The Sunday morning sessions started half an hour early with the showing of a most moving American film called "Its just the beginning" which underlined the happiness of the American Bahá'í Youth in their Faith and showed a large number of different races against the background of the American Temple and conferences, at one of which 'Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke.

During the day, Dr. Giachery addressed the Convention on a number of occasions, and he urged us to adopt the motto "Time is short" in all our teaching.

An expression of deep gratitude was made to Adib Taherzadeh, for the twenty years of loyal and loving service he had given to the British community. The formation of the new local assemblies in Ireland has assured the establishment of the National Assembly of the Republic of Ireland, and as Adib is a member of the Irish community he will no longer be eligible for election onto the British National Assembly and this will be his last Convention in this country.

Shomais Afnan was asked to speak on her visit to Iran and brought to the delegates a picture of the great difficulties experienced by the Persian believers.

"Steady progress and consolidation, devising new approaches to teaching" were the topics of consultation on Sunday morning, and some far-reaching resolutions were passed.

The Treasurer presented her report which brought home to all the delegates the actual position of the Fund, and this was reflected in some important resolutions. The Treasurer mentioned that she had opened a Giro account and asked everyone to make a note of the number:- Giro Account 433014008. This had been done especially for those people who sent contributions in postal orders, as the combined cost of postage and poundage was greater than the Giro fee.

During the lunch break the National Assembly met and elected officers and announced two important decisions -- firstly that they would hold their first full meeting on the following week-end, starting with a Friday evening consultation with Counsellor Betty Reed, Secondly that the Convention Resolutions would be given priority at that first meeting.

During the general consultation which followed Sunday lunch-time, it was realised that the two-day Convention was far too short adequately to deal with all the agenda items, as well as the many specific recommendations brought by delegates from their communities. When a considerable time is also given to important visitors, the consultative capacity of Convention is further reduced.

CONVENTION CLOSES WITH HOLY DAY CELEBRATION

It was after the moving readings for the Twelfth Day of Ridván meeting which followed Convention, starting at 5pm, and during the refreshments which followed, that the pent-up excitement resulting from victories achieved and the prospect of greater victories to come, was given expression when the assembled Bahá'ís burst into song. Led by guitarists and singers, many Bahá'í songs were sung, with most of the five hundred people present joining in. At the peak of the gaiety, Convention was thrilled by the unexpected visit of Rafi and Mildred Mottahedeh, who brought news of Jamaica and the United States of America. Amongst other overseas visitors were Bahá'ís from Uganda, Asmara, Italy, Turkey and Japan.

It was perhaps the very delight which people experienced in meeting each other, often unexpectedly, that contributed one disturbing element to the proceedings -- it appeared to be impossible to still the noise from the hall outside the main meeting room, and as people continually came in and went out during the sessions, even during devotional periods, the delegates were frequently disturbed. With an average of about seventy delegates in their seats, about 350 in the main hall and over sixty in the outside hall, it was only during the final "song session" that nearly all came together.

It was with deep emotion that all the friends quietly listened to the moving closing words of our respected visiting Hand of the Cause, which brought a most historic and memorable Convention to a close, singing together the "Alláh'u'Abhá" which was born in Africa in 1953 and which now seems to be used universally in such precious moments.

Whilst some remained to attend the youth concert which was open to the public later in the evening, and which was very successful, most of the delegates were away back to their communities by 7pm, resolved to carry to their fellow Bahá'ís their determination to carry out all the wishes of the Universal House of Justice, give their fullest support to the National Assembly just elected, "lend full support highly promising field youth" and take yet another gigantic stride along the "highroad of their destiny".

Telegram from Convention to the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land.

**BRITISH COMMUNITY INSPIRED SERVICE EXAMPLE
SACRIFICE GREATLY LOVED HANDS OF CAUSE
CONVENTION ENRICHED PRESENCE HAND UGO
GIACHERY MRS GIACHERY COUNSELLOR BETTY REED
FIVE BOARD MEMBERS FEEL PRESENT DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTLY RESULTING INCREASED PRAYER DEVOTION
INSTIGATED HAND JOHN ROBARTS ENTHUSIASTICALLY
SUPPORTING COUNSELLORS PLAN EUROPEAN YOUTH
DEEPLY AWARE EFFECT YOUR PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES
ENTIRE COMMUNITY SENDS GRATITUDE LOVE**

BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

Telegram from the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land in reply:-

**GRATEFUL DEEPLY MOVED CONTENTS MESSAGE
CONVENTION HELD PRESENCE HAND CAUSE COUNSEL-
LOR BOARD MEMBERS STOP CONFIDENT INDOMITABLE
SPIRIT FIRM RESOLVE BRITISH COMMUNITY WILL AS
ALWAYS BRING FINAL VICTORY PLAN ASSURE ARDENT
PRAYERS SHRINES LOVING GREETINGS**

HANDS FAITH

CONVENTION PRELUDE

News from all over the world indicated that this year's convention would report massive victories. Here are a few such items.

BELGIUM

"Over 150 youth all European countries gathered Namur. Greatly inspired message. Aware imminence mass conversion. Pledge support two year youth campaign. Blessed presence guidance 3 Counsellors. Spirit unity Conference generating strength all present. Youth galvanized win victories preparation Fiesch. Confident achieving December 71 summer 72 goals..."

BOLIVIA

In the one year preceding the momentous Continental Conference for South America the entire Bahá'í population of South America was doubled. Thirty thousand new believers entered the Faith during that historic year, equaling the number of believers enrolled during the fifty previous years since the Faith was first brought to that continent.

COLOMBIA

A believer in Colombia wrote, "Here in Barranquilla we have been experiencing something that a few months ago would have seemed practically impossible. There are almost 1,000 Bahá'ís here now! In the area, including Santa Marta and the other areas nearby there are more than 1,000! This amazing growth is so exciting and we are all so stimulated by it — The Divine Power pouring out all over the earth is creating an atmosphere of acceptance and comprehension on the part of the people everywhere, it seems. Today, 118 people became Bahá'ís in an area of three or four blocks! Next Riḍván five new Assemblies will be formed in this area and a large group is going out into the Guajira at that time to help with the formation of 120 Assemblies on the Colombian side of the Guajira. Last year there were 57. In the Southwestern area of Colombia, there are 2,700 in Tumaco, a fishing and cannery town on the Pacific! Most of these entered the Faith during 15 days in December.

"...It does seem to me that the time 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of when the people would come into the Faith in troops is here, or certainly on its way. In all the years that I have been here, working with one, two, or at the most, three people; teaching, talking and in general doing everything possible to interest them — this experience of seeing hundreds enter in a couple of hours is something which has to be seen to be believed! It is the most marvellous experience there is, bar none."

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga visited the Dominican Republic in August. Following that visit the spirit of love and dedication among the believers has led them to double their numbers. People of all backgrounds have enrolled under the banner of the Blessed Perfection, the majority of them youth.

JAMAICA

"Hasten share news just received result mass teaching team sent Jamaica from United States. Quote historic beginning mass expansion consolidation St. Elizabeth Parish Blackriver. Over 100 new Bahá'ís two days, teaching..."

"Mass teachers enrolled 200 believers in four days Black River. Overjoyed..."

"Teaching campaign Jamaica gathers momentum. Effected over 300 declarations. Visiting team invited present Faith March 22nd to Religious conference concerned about reducing number Christians..."

"According latest report six hundred declarations in Jamaica, including twenty-eight Maroons, descendants slaves who retained freedom during early period slavery by fierce rebellion and have maintained to date zealously guarded isolated communities several parts island. Declarations Maroons occurred place visited by the Hand Cause Olinga."

"...Thrilled news brought fresh from Jamaica...Enrollment over 700 enthusiastic eager believers. Particularly impressed their serious sense purpose, their own insistence upon needs for deepening..."

MAURITIUS

"Twentysix communities. One hundred seven youth present second National Youth Conference. Read message Universal House of Justice. Animated consultation. Rededication accomplishment Nine Year Plan goals..."

UNITED STATES

"...Statistics homefront assure us at least 130 new Assemblies at Riḍván and additional 100 if groups between 7 and 8 adults can immediately increase their numbers. Youth films just accepted as religious documentary entry finals American Film Festival..."

VIETNAM

"The Stieng new minority group Cambodian border Bihllong Province joining Faith by hundreds. Expecting thousands new Bahá'ís in this Province before Riḍván."



Visitors to Convention