

Bahá'í Journal

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K Homell

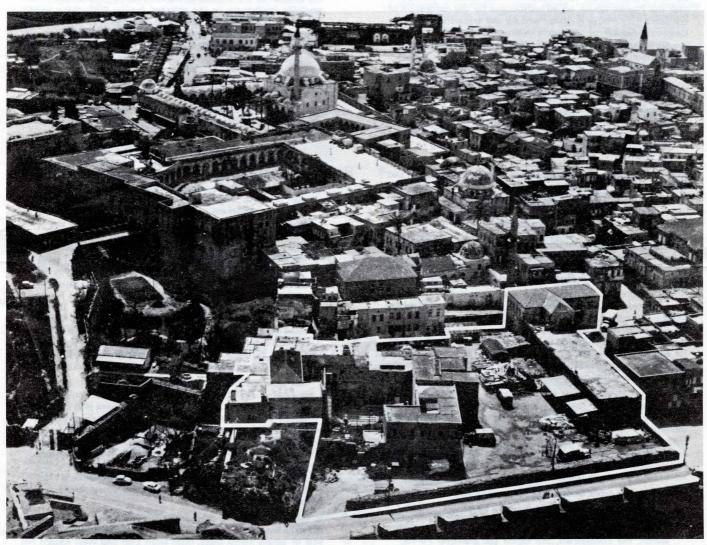
For circulation among Baha'is only.

No. 227

Jalál 132

April 1975

THE HOUSE OF 'ABDU'LLAH PASHA



Some of the most poignant, dramatic and historically significant events of the Heroic Age of our Faith are associated with this house, which derives its name from the Governor of 'Akka who built it and used it as his official residence during his term of office, from 1820 to 1832. It stands just inside the north-western corner of the sea wall of 'Akka, in the close neighbourhood of the citadel where Bahá'u'lláh was confined. The main building is L-shaped, facing south and east on its outer prospects. The structure, though chiefly on two storeys, is irregular and on the inside angle has balconies, uncovered stairways, a bath house and a well. The entire property comprises large courtyards and is bounded on the west, or seaward side by a wall, which turns due east at its southern angle and continues towards the heart of 'Akka, forming after a few yards, the wall of a narrow street; at the eastern terminus of this wall, and within the property, is an imposing house which was occupied by that Governor of

'Ak ka whose incumbency coincided with 'Abdu'I-Bahá's residence in the main building, and whose northern windows permitted him to maintain a constant surveillance of 'Abdu'I-Bahá's activities. Beyond this house is a small mosque. The eastern boundary of the property is a row of houses giving directly, on its western aspect, to the courtyard and offering many additional vantage points for observing the Master. A similar row of houses extends from the north-eastern corner along the northern boundary until they terminate at the longitudinal wing of the main building which, at this point, projects northwards into several conjoined buildings, making a large irregular outcrop on the northern boundary. The western end of the northern boundary is a short stretch of wall completing the enclosure at the north-western corner of the west wall. Large stables, coach houses and store rooms line the southern boundary.

Page Two

In this house, fifty lunar years after the Báb's martyrdom, in January, 1899, the casket containing His sacred and precious remains was received by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who successfully concealed it until it was possible to inter it, with all honours, in its permanent resting-place in the bosom of Carmel. In this house 'Abdu'l-Bahá was confined during the period of his renewed incarceration. Shoghi Effendi, in **God Passes By**, testifies to the conditions of His life at that time:

"... Even His numerous friends and admirers refrained, during the most turbulent days of this period, from calling upon Him, for fear of being implicated and of incurring the suspicion of the authorities. On certain days and nights, when the outlook was at its darkest, the house in which He was living, and which had for many years been a focus of activity, was completely deserted. Spies, secretly and openly, kept watch around it, observing His every movement and restricting the freedom of His family..."

Yet during these troublous times, and from this house He directed the construction of the Báb's sepulchre on Mount Carmel, erected under its shadow His own house in Haifa, and later the Pilgrim House, issued instructions for the restoration of the Báb's holy House in Shíráz and for the erection of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the world in the city of 'Ishqábád. Again the Guardian is our reference for the Master's ceaseless activity at that time:

". . . Eye witnesses have testified that, during that agitated and perilous period of His life, they had known Him to pen, with His own Hand, no less than ninety Tablets in a single day, and to pass many a night, from dusk to dawn, alone in His bed-chamber engaged in a correspondence which the pressure of His manifold responsibilities had prevented Him from attending to in the day-time."

It was in this house that His celebrated table talks were given and compiled, to be published later under the title Some Answered Questions. In this house and in the darkest hours of a period which the beloved Guardian describes as "the most dramatic period of His ministry", "in the hey-day of His life and in the full tide of His power" He penned the first part of His Will and Testament, which delineates the features and lays the foundations of the Administrative Order to arise after His passing. In this house He revealed the highly significant Tablet addressed to the Báb's cousin and chief builder of the 'Ishqábád Temple, a Tablet whose import can be appreciated and grasped only as future events unfold before our eyes, and in which, as testified by Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Baha' "in stirring terms proclaimed the immeasurable greatness of the Revelation of the Bab, sounded the warnings foreshadowing the turmoil which its enemies, both far and near, would let loose upon the world, and prophesied, in moving language, the ascendancy which the torch-bearer of the Covenant would ultimately achieve over them."

During the twelve years of His residence in this house, 'Abdu'l-Bahá demonstrated the true nobility of His divine nature, overcame hatred with love, pursued without rest against evermounting opposition, the direction of His Father's Cause, maintained in the face of fanaticism, jealousy and bitterness His unceasing care of the poor and sick and overcame, with unruffled equanimity, the severest crisis of His life. The Guardian's words testify to these things:

". . . At His table, in those days, whenever there was a lull in the storm raging about Him, there would gather pilgrims, friends and inquirers from most of the afore-mentioned countries, representative of the Christian, the Muslim, the Jewish, the Zoroastrian, the Hindu and Buddhist Faiths. To the needy thronging His doors and filling the courtyard of His house every Friday morning, in spite of the perils that environed Him. He would distribute alms with His own hands, with a regularity and generosity that won Him the title of 'Father of the Poor'. Nothing in those tempestuous days could shake His confidence, nothing would be allowed to interfere with His Ministrations to the destitute, the orphan, the sick, and the downtrodden, nothing could prevent Him from calling in person upon those who were either incapacitated, or ashamed to solicit His aid. . .

"So imperturbable was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's equanimity that, while rumours were being bruited about that He might be cast into the sea, or exiled to Fízán in Tripolitania, or hanged on the gallows, He, to the amazement of His friends and the amusement of His enemies, was to be seen planting trees and vines in the garden of His house, whose fruits when the storm had blown over. He would bid His faithful gardener, Ismá'íl Áqá, pluck and present to those same friends and enemies on the occasion of their visits to Him."

In this house was born the child ordained to hold the destiny of the Faith in his hands for thirty-six years and to become its "beloved Guardian", the child named "Shoghi" by his Grandfather, who grew up under His loving and solicitous care and became the recipient of His Tablets.

When Baha'u'llah ascended, in 1892, the Mansion at Bahji remained in the occupancy of the arch-breaker of the Covenant, the Master's half-brother Muhammad-'Ali, and members of that branch of Baha'u'llah's family. 'Abdu'l-Baha and the members of His family, including His illustrious sister the Greatest Holy Leaf, remained in the House of 'Abbud, which continued to be 'Abdu'l-Baha's official residence. In the course of the fifth year after Baha'u'llah's passing the marriage of 'Abdu'l-Baha's two eldest daughters took place and it quickly became apparent that the portion of the House of 'Abbud available for occupation was woefully inadequate to the enlarged family. With characteristic vigour 'Abdu'l-Baha took action and in the months preceding the birth of Shoghi Effendi arranged to rent the main building, and subsequently the subsidiary wings, of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá's house and He established it as His official residence. Thus it came about that, in 1897, Shoghi Effendi was born in the same house (in an upper room of the wing facing south) that witnessed events of such vital importance to the Faith and the future of mankind.

The Guardian's childhood and upbringing in that house are referred to by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih <u>Kh</u>ánum in '**The Priceless Pearl'**:

"It may sound disrespectful to say the Guardian was a mischievous child, but he himself told me he was the acknowledged ringleader of all the other children. Bubbling with high spirits, enthusiasm and daring, full of laughter and wit, the small boy led the way in many pranks; whenever something was afoot, behind it would be found Shoghi Effendi! This boundless energy was often a source of anxiety as he would rush madly up and down the long flight of high steps to the upper storey of the house, to the consternation of the pilgrims below, waiting to meet the Master. His exuberance was irrepressible and was in the child the same force that was to make the man such an untiring and unflinching commander-in-chief of the forces of Baha'u'llah, leading them to victory, indeed, to the spiritual conquest of the entire globe. We have a very reliable witness to this characteristic of the Guardian. 'Abdu'I-Baha' Himself, Who wrote on a used envelope a short sentence to please His little grandson: 'Shoghi Effendi is a wise man - but he runs about very much!'...

"In those days of Shoghi Effendi's childhood it was the custom to rise about dawn and spend the first hour of the day in the Master's room, where prayers were said and the family all had breakfast with Him. The children sat on the floor, their legs folded under them, their arms folded across their breasts, in great respect; when asked they would chant for 'Abdu'l-Bahá; there was no shouting or unseemly conduct. Breakfast consisted of tea, brewed on the bubbling Russian brass samovar and served in little crystal glasses, very hot and very sweet, pure wheat bread and goats' milk cheese."

It was to this house that that historic first group of pilgrims from the West came to see the Master in the winter of 1898-1899, and in which many more from both East and West sought His presence. Some of them have left memorable descriptions of their experiences with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His household in that home. Ella Goodall Cooper, one of the very earliest American believers, records the following:

"One day . . . I had joined the ladies of the Family in the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf for early morning tea, the beloved Master was sitting in His favourite corner of the divan where, through the window on His right, He could look over the ramparts and see the blue Mediterranean beyond. He was busy writing Tablets, and the quiet peace of the room was broken only by the bubble of the samovar, where one of the young maidservants, sitting on the floor before it, was brewing tea."

Thornton Chase, the first American believer, records in his memoir 'In Galilee':

April 1975

"We did not know we had reached our destination until we saw a Persian gentleman, and then another and another, step out at the entrance and smile at us. We alighted and they conducted us through the arched, red brick entrance to an open court, across it to a long flight of stone steps, broken and ancient, leading to the highest storey and into a small walled court open to the sky, where was the upper chamber assigned to us, which adjoined the room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The buildings are all of stone, whitewashed and plastered, and it bears the aspect of a prison.

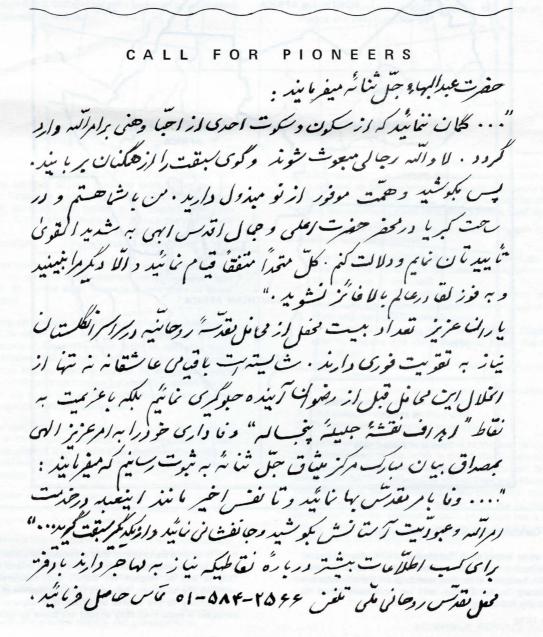
"Our windows looked out over the garden and tent of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the sea side of the house. That garden is bounded on one side by the house of the Governor, which overlooks it, and on another by the inner wall of fortification. A few feet beyond that is the outer wall upon the sea, and between these two are the guns and soldiers constantly on guard. A sentry house stands at one corner of the wall and garden, from which the sentry can see the grounds and the tent where 'Abdu'l-Baha meets transient visitors and the officials who often call on him. Thus all his acts outside of the house itself are visible to the Governor from his windows and to the men on guard. Perhaps that is one reason why the officials so often become his friends. No one, with humanity, justice, or mercy in his heart, could watch 'Abdu'l-Baha long without admiring and loving him for the beautiful qualities constantly displayed."

Mary Hanford Ford published an account of her pilgrimage to this house in 'Star of the West', vol. XXIV:

"The little room in which I stayed and in which the significant conversations with 'Abdu'I-Bahá took place, was of the simplest description. The floor was covered with matting, the narrow iron bed and the iron wash stand with larger and smaller holes for bowl and pitcher were of that vermin proof description with which I had become familiar. Everything was scrupulously clean, and there was an abundant supply of sparkling water for bathing and drinking. A wide window looked over the huge town wall upon the blue Mediterranean and before this stretched a divan upon which 'Abdu'I-Bahá sat when He came to see me."

The palpable victory which 'Abdu'I-Bahá had wrested from the persecution, intrigue, hatred, vilification even, directed against Him during His twelve years in the House of 'Abdu'Iláh Páshá, was signally apparent when, upon His release from incarceration in 1908, He moved to His new residence in Haifa. At that time the future Guardian was a boy of eleven, but his appointment, although a carefully guarded secret, had already been made by 'Abdu'I-Bahá in the part of His Will and Testament revealed in that house.

As we contemplate the extraordinary focussing of powerful forces and events upon this house, we eagerly anticipate the day when it will be restored and made ready for pilgrims, who may inhale from its atmosphere, its grounds and sacred walls, the fragrance of a glorious past.

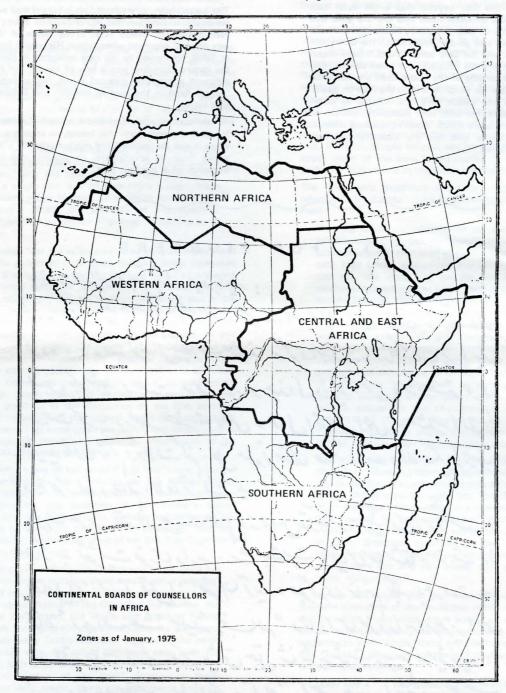


UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ANNOUNCE NEW PLANS FOR AFRICA

On 6 January 1975 the Universal House of Justice wrote to all National Assemblies announcing their plans for the formation of new National Spiritual Assemblies in Africa, (and also one in the Near East) and a new zone for the Continental Boards of Counsellors for Africa.

The new National Assemblies in Africa will be Dahomey; Togo; Niger; Liberia and Guinea; Sierra Leone; Gambia; Upper West Africa, and a new National Assembly will be formed in Jordan. This increase of five assemblies will raise the total number of National Assemblies throughout the world to 119 at Ridván, 1975.

The Continental Board of Counsellors for North-Western Africa will be divided into Northern and Western African zones. Some of the present Central and East African zone will go to each new Board. The number of Auxiliary Board members will be increased to twenty-seven for Protection and forty-five for Propagation.



Guidance for Baha'is (Marriages)

"Further to your letter of 5 September 1974, the Universal House of Justice has now had an opportunity to consider your question about believers attending weddings of Bahá'ís who are marrying contrary to Bahá'í law, and we have been asked to convey to you the following.

11 November 1974

If it is known beforehand that a believer is violating such laws, it would be inappropriate for the friends to attend the ceremony. This is out of respect for Bahá'í law. However, if, without realising the situation, believers find themselves in attendance at a ceremony in the course of which it is apparent that such a violation is occurring, they should not make an issue of it."

"THE MORNING OF YOUR LIVES"

International Teaching Centre message given by Hand of the Cause of God Mr A. Q. Faizi at the Hawaii International Youth Conference.

The title comes from a letter from Louis XIV to his young daughter. She had decided to become a nun and wanted her father's permission and blessing. He wrote to say - 'I am very glad that you are consecrating your life for the service of Christ. Even more glad because it is in the morning of your life. I am in the evening of mine and can do nothing.'

A story in the Koran . . . Mohammed says when God created the Universe, found it perfect, and decided to have a representative on earth, He chose Adam to whom He taught divine knowledge and asked the angels of heaven to bow down before man. All obeyed except Satan, who said 'Adam is created from earth and I am from fire.' Please consider this point - ever since mankind has had a divided nature, earth and fire. The beloved Master describes the difference. Earth has the characteristics of being faithful, patient, generous. Faithful, as thousands of treasures are deposited there for all eternity ... Patient, although you tear it into pieces it accepts seeds and gives back so much . . . Generous, give it a piece of stick and it will change it into a growing tree. Fire has the characteristics of being angry, devastating, and insatiable. It reaches everywhere in its thirst for danger and will devastate. All of us should adopt the characteristics of the earth. Servitude is the only path of success we can ever tread . . . the only path where every step is illumined by the tablets and example of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Every other path becomes an egotistical path which is doomed to failure.

A new age is dawning upon the world. We are in the twilight of that age. Man has invented instruments to fight against nature, but also has destroyed himself too. The path of servitude gives us a way to explore our own hearts and souls without which we will never be anything. We must reach the rank destined for us. The youth must be careful about the current movements in the world today. All around us is a failing and dying civilisation – the dead body of which gives rise to many new movements and thoughts. We must realise the exalted position and destiny of man. He is the symbol of the whole universe – a miniature universe. He must explore himself, his talents, potency and powers to use in the path of God.

Youth is the greatest opportunity given man, to prepare himself for his life, every moment of every day. In the age of achievement - manhood - he will reap the preparation of his youth. A moment of these days (that is, the dawning of a new age) is worth one hundred years of the future. Please do not transfer such moments to low aims and desires - be grateful that you were born in this day. People will come in flocks for remedy and healing . . . prepare yourselves for ten years previous. Follow the dawnbreakers and 'Abdu'l-Bahá'. . . can a moth ever be separated from the candle? Walk in the shoes of the Master that is the only way for us!

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE, THE CHILDREN

The children are the fruits of our lives. Upon the attention we give to their needs and our observation of their development will depend the advance of our teaching work. They are the mirrors of our lives and they reflect this light upon others; if our actions to them are loving and coupled with the knowledge of God, then their lives will "... help the world, will spread civilisation, will help the progress of science, and cause the arts to develop". ('Abdu'l-Bahá – 'Paris Talks' p. 80).

A gardener takes great care to prepare the spot where he will put his plants. He ensures that external conditions are right before planting. We know what happens if one only of these factors is changed!

We should all try to prepare an atmosphere for the children in the community in which they may grow and develop. What is meant by atmosphere? Does this mean only to welcome them and make the children feel wanted? That might be the outward attitude, but how are we reacting inside? What are our inner feelings? Are the children upsetting us by making a noise? Do we have to stop talking to settle a child down? Are they preventing us from gaining spiritual accomplishments?

The young are our future and reflect our past. If we want change - to lose the negative aspects of our personality, then we must put this change into practice by showing the children our positive qualities. Did you know that a child up to three years of age absorbs everything about him?

Why does a child cry? The reason might be physical or emotional; the latter being so this sensitive creature might feel unwanted and unloved by the people around him.

What better method is there to draw the children into community life than to include them in the Feasts? Bahá'í Administration (p. 28) describes the atmosphere that should prevail: "The believers of God, must assemble and associate with each other in the utmost love, joy and fragrance" and if this atmosphere prevails the child will grow, develop and progress spiritually. The quotation goes on to say: "They must conduct themselves (in the Feasts) with the greatest dignity and consideration..." Certainly, this heavenly atmosphere can be dissipated by the little ones crying or shaking the donation box in the middle of a prayer, and so on. A community should endeavour to be patient and train their children and, where this positive attitude takes place, the community will lead others in this field of service.

Here are some things a family or community can do to help the children to become Baha'í's:

- The children should be absent from school on Baha'i Holy Days. (Write to the Child Education Advisory Committee for guidance, if required).
- 2. These nine Holy Days should be a community gathering or a party with the children involved in the preparations.
- 3. Hold and maintain children's classes.
- The older children can assist and give the Feasts; many are able to prepare and serve the food, select the readings and read them.
- 5. Older children can teach the Faith and sometimes they can be present at the firesides.
- 6. The older children may be appointed to committees in the community.
- 7. The children can give to the Fund.
- 8. The children can pray and meditate.

The children in our community serve as the best gauge to measure the advancement of the Faith in the United Kingdom. If they are happy, well-adjusted and outgoing, it is obvious that they are loved at home. If they want to attend Feasts and long to become Bahá'ís, and if the community loves them, our contacts, their teachers at school and the world at large see all this. Everyone in the community, teenager, youth and adult has a duty to the young. They ask us to be loving, patient, helpful, forgiving, and expect from us a model of behaviour.

"This is the work of a true Bahá'í, and this is what is expected of him. If we strive to do this, then we are true Bahá'ís, but if we neglect it, we are not followers of the Light, and we have no right to the name." ('Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 81).

CHILD EDUCATION ADVISORY DEPARTMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY SERVICE COMMITTEE



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ARGENTINA: Dr Rahmatu'llah Muhajir -

In the course of his South-American tour, Dr Muhájir paid an intensive visit to Argentina, which resulted in many confirmations as he stimulated the friends to a deeper sense of love, unity and comprehension of the Teachings. He entered the country from Paraguay in the north-east Chaco Indian area where he was hailed in the newspapers as 'the messenger of peace'. His arrival at the airport and a press conference were televised. Dr Muhájir was graciously received by the Governor of the Province who was accompanied by his Ministers of Economics, Welfare and Government. This interview was also televised. Dr Muhájir presented the "Proclamation of Baha'u'llah" to the Governor. The Baha'i delegation included a member of the National Proclamation Committee and representatives of both the Mataco and Toba Indian tribes. Throughout his stay the films of Dr Muhájir's arrival, as well as those of the press and official interviews, were repeatedly shown on local television. No proclamation event has been accorded greater publicity in the Chaco.

AUSTRALIA: Recently a cyclone designated 'Tracy' swept through the Darwin area. Prompt and efficient action by the National Assembly in contacting believers in the stricken area enabled them to report that all were safe. The National Spiritual Assembly was deeply touched to receive cabled assurance of prayers from the Universal House of Justice, as well as from the National Spiritual Assembly of Persia. Many believers throughout Australia contacted the National Office offering financial assistance and accommodation to Baha'is evacuated from Darwin. Through fast and effective teamwork, members of the National Assembly and staff at the National Office were eventually able to establish contact with believers in the area hit by the cyclone, some of whom had been evacuated and some of whom remained to assist in relief and restoration work. The National Spiritual Assembly was greatly relieved to receive the following cable signed "Darwin Baha'i Community": "Appreciate loving concern, all Baha' is safe, Assembly functioning, thanks unfailing protection Abha Beauty.'

BOLIVIA: The first stirrings of mass conversion among the Indian peoples of Bolivia were felt approximately nineteen years ago. Since then, the Bolivian Baha'i community has grown to 35,000 of which approximately 95% are Indians, mostly of the great Quechua and Aymara tribes. "A total of 750 Local Spiritual Assemblies and more than 4,000 localities in such a short period of time gives some indication of the immense possibilities for further growth and development," the National Spiritual Assembly states. "However, a continued lack of sufficient numbers of Baha'i teachers and administrators is presently threatening to interrupt the steady advance of the teaching work now in progress." For this reason the National Assembly launched "a one-year massive project, eventually to include all feasible teaching media, and calling for the combined assistance of Baha'is from other countries willing to leave their jobs and studies for at least that period of time." Short-term resident teachers who can spend a minimum of three months are also welcome, and early arrivals may benefit through participation in a pilot project scheduled for May.

A challenging opportunity is provided to lend assistance to the important work of serving the Cause in the country that has the greatest percentage of Baha'ı Indian believers of any western nation.

SAMOA: After attending Summer School in Samoa a team of eight New Zealand youth spent the month of January visiting communities in American Samoa and Western Samoa.

In American Samoa they participated with local Bahá'ís in seven fifteen-minute television programmes of Bahá'í devotional readings and also, at the specific request of the television studio, in a half-hour entertainment programme. The programmes were filmed without cost to the Bahá'ís and are clearly identified as being 'presented by the Bahá'í community of Samoa'.



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Sixth Australian Bahá'í Youth Conference

THE FUND

There are three ways to make contributions to the FUND

- 1 Directly to the National Treasurer:-
 - Mrs Betty Goode 8 Knowle Road, Stafford Tel: Stafford 62157
- 2 By Bank Giro, directly to the Bank, which is

The National Westminster Bank 186 Brompton Road, London SW3

Our account no. is 18188443

3 By Post Office Giro. Our number is 43 301 4008

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- A All cheques and postal orders should be made payable to 'NSA of the Bahá'ís; please NOT to 'Betty Goode'.
- B They should be crossed.
- C It is not wise to send paper money or any money through the post unless it is registered.
- D Receipts are sent automatically for money sent directly to the National Treasurer, unless the donor specifically requests that one not be sent. With the increasing numbers of friends, it helps the Treasurer if a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed for the receipt. It really does save much work and is greatly appreciated. Receipts are not issued for Giro payments.

PAYMENTS BY COVENANT

Friends wishing to donate by Deed of Covenant, please write directly to the National Treasurer.

FOR THE PERSIAN FRIENDS

Huququ'llah payments are handled by:

Mr John Long 2 South Street, Oakham, Rutland.

BIRTH

MARRIAGE

22 March 1975:

Jennifer Bennett to Noushin Farhoumand, in London.

DEATHS 22 November 1974: Ruth Gillibrand, in Southport. 11 January 1975: Janet Linn, in North Berwick. 8 February 1975: May Netters, in Nelson.

The deadline for the next issue of the Journal is:

10 MAY 1975

NOTICES

Material should be sent to the Editor:

Lois Hainsworth (Mrs), 27 Rutland Gate, London, SW7

SUMMER SCHOOL, TIVERTON

9 - 23 August, 1975

Registrar:

Miss Mona Rushdy, 29 Mason Street, READING, BERKS, RG1 6PD.

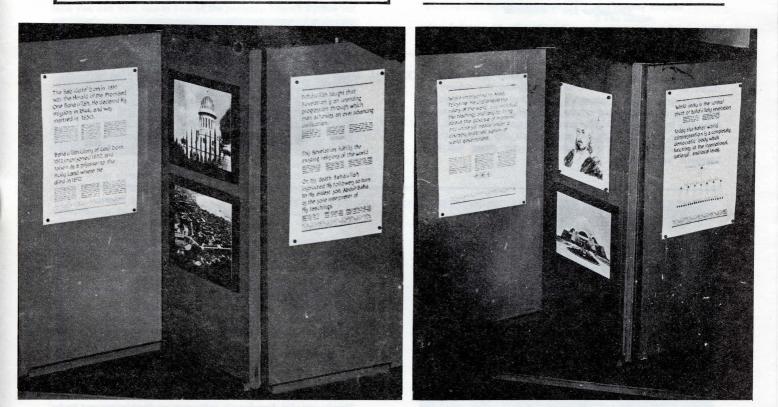
Telephone: Reading 580825

SUMMER SCHOOL, LEICESTER

26 July - 9 August, 1975

Registrar: Miss Mary Prince, 248a London Road,

LEICESTER LE2 1RJ. Telephone: Leicester 70519



AUDIO VISUAL MATERIAL A simple display has been prepared by the Department intended for assembly by local Assemblies and Groups, using 2" x 1" battening and hardboard. Plans are soon to be made available through the Sales and Audio Visual Departments. Assemblies and Groups will be able to purchase their own materials.

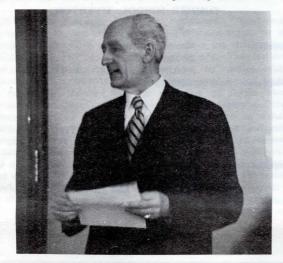
STUDY WEEKEND ON EDUCATION NORTHAMPTON - FEBRUARY 22/23

A warm and enthusiastic atmosphere characterised the recent weekend conference organised specifically on the subject of education. Bahá'ís had come from Scotland, Northern Ireland and many parts of England to participate in a well-organised and interesting series of sessions.

Before going any further it is necessary to state the gratitude felt by those present to the Northampton Assembly for its smooth handling of the event. Over a hundred Bahá'í's attended; their disappointment at the absence through illness of both Adam Thorne and Joe Foster being compensated for by extra sessions taken by Counsellor Eric Blumenthal.

Peter Jenkins gave a lucid and factual account of the work done by the Religious Education Advisory Committee. His refreshing style of presentation was used to guide those attending logically through the committee's terms of reference and to enumerate the achievements and pitfalls relating to each.

Alicia Cardell, on behalf of the Child Education Advisory Department, explained the several sources of education which should be working to help our children flourish in the way God intended. She listed the services performed by the department and explained its needs. For those not yet blessed with children of their own, this session was most enlightening.



Counsellor Eric Blumenthal

The remaining sessions were given by Dr Blumenthal, who unfolded certain basic facets of practical psychological theories not incompatible with Bahá'í ideals. Dealing with such a vast field as that of human behaviour, his talks necessarily covered only certain aspects of the subject. One facet upon which he dwelt at some length was that of analysing the reasons for naughty or anti-social behaviour in children, and the cure for this — the cure depending on the diagnosis of the child's aim in behaving in this way. Dr Blumenthal did not have enough time adequately to deal with the goals which the parents should actively inculcate, but that which he did cover was both idealistic yet practical.



Conference on Child Education in Northampton

His explanations of children's thinking was primarily aimed at the parents of children; the parents being, after all, the child's first educators. Among the Bahá'ís attending were a certain number of professional teachers, who expected him to talk on teaching methods in the classroom. Dr Blumenthal was well aware of the difficulties facing teachers in the application of Bahá'í principles in non-Bahá'í schools, and there was felt a need for another conference on this subject.

To show the thinking behind his education ideas, Dr Blumenthal quoted from Bahá'í Scripture. It is a fact that most of us need a speaker to draw our attention to passages which we could read for ourselves – for example in "Bahá'í References on Education", available from the Publishing Trust. There is a danger, however, that, because Dr Blumenthal's ideas have been formulated within the context of the Bahá'í Writings; they may be taken as Bahá'í ideas, and it is important for the friends to remember that Bahá'u'lláh has given us broad concepts of education and the nature of man, within which ideas like the American ANISA project and Dr Blumenthal's theories can flourish.

All that has been said so far is perhaps secondary to another process which took place over the weekend — the education of those children present. A frenzy of activity — paper, books and paintbrushes being among the tools — was brought to a climax when the weekend ended, appropriately, with a display of paintings and a series of songs, conducted by Sylvia Schulman Benatar.

When it is remembered that every word uttered by the Manifestation of God is Education for mankind, we realise that we were every one of us educated in innumerable ways during this weekend.



Lunch at the Conference

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Unexpected and unsolicited publicity for the Faith appeared in the Guardian on 15 March in a column entitled London Letter. The Bahá'í Representative at United Nations had made a statement about the Arab boycott which was quoted, thereby giving a good impression of the status of the Faith in Israel and at UNO. A certain amount of detail was also printed. As the affair is political, the friends should not enter into any correspondence with the Press on this matter, but refer any enquiry to the National Office.

The community of Windsor and Maidenhead have had much success on their local 'Hospital Broadcasting Associations' radio service. One of the Bahá'ís writes: "As it is run by social workers, there are no really difficult questions asked, and I feel anyone could be confident of having a successful interview. They like to talk to local people about their interests and anything different." We suggest that other communities try their luck with this medium. Congratulations to Windsor and Maidenhead for their initiative! The friends in Solihull gained considerable publicity in their local paper when they presented the Public Information Committee Folder to a feature writer. A three-quarter page article was published with detailed quotations from the Writings of Baha'u'lláh, historical information and teachings, as well as an excellent photograph.

Please note that PIC Folders can be obtained by sending your order enclosing 38p per folder (including information sheets) or 16p per empty folder, to Miss Mahnaz Alai, c/o Knight Lloyd Burnham, 159 New Bond Street, London W1Y 9PA. These figures include VAT, postage and packing. Cheques and postal orders must be made out to the NSA of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom.

Thank you for keeping us informed of your press and radio successes, all of which are playing an important part in bringing the Faith out of obscurity. Please continue to send the cuttings to us for our records. We are compiling a set of press releases to cover the main events of the year and these will be sent to press officers or secretaries as soon as possible.

April 1975

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

With the new streamlined committee structure we are looking forward to a period of intensive activity. The new unit committees covering larger areas will be able to draw on more manpower to help work out and bring to fruition their teaching plans. The benefit of bigger areas will give everyone the chance to mix with and meet more of the friends, as well as to become aware of others' responsibilities in the Five Year Plan and how they can help. Also many who have served on the former unit committees are now able to offer time as well as experience to teaching activities. All this must bring about much more intensified teaching activity and through this we will all be able to welcome many more people into the Faith.

The first major project designed to help with this effort is the



You will all have been reading in the Nineteen Day Newsletters details of the various activities which will make up the project. Information has been sent out to you as soon as it has been available.

The idea for this project stems from one of our goals in the Five Year Plan which is:

"In association with the National Spiritual Assemblies of Scandinavia and Iceland, develop teaching projects for the expansion of the Faith throughout Arctic and Sub-Arctic Europe;"

So by joining in this project you can help directly towards winning one of our goals!

On the homefront the Orkneys and Shetlands lie in our own "Sub-Arctic" region and in fact plans for teaching, including their own Five Year Plans, are well under way. This part of the project is being linked with teaching efforts in areas on the Scottish mainland so that if you have a long holiday you can join in the programmes in all the areas and if you have a shorter time you can visit one or two of the projects. There's a place for everyone!

As we have mentioned before a cheap way of travelling in the Highlands is to get a Travelpass. This year the Scottish Youth Hostels Association have a scheme whereby for £26 you can obtain a Highland Wayfarer Holiday Package which includes:

Travelpass 75 ticket (which covers all travel by bus, rail and boat in the area)

Youth Hostel overnight vouchers for seven nights Guide Book Timetable Hostel Map.

For further details send a s.a.e. to:

S.Y.H.A. National Office (H.W.), 7 Glebe Crescent, Stirling, FK8 2JA.



In Northern Ireland the unit committee has been making preparations for a 'Walk and Talk' project and this needs a group of people to visit all the Youth Hostels proclaiming the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to those they meet.

Other activities will be taking place in goal areas in Wales, Devon and Cornwall and South West England and a highlight here will be a musical tour which will back up these activities and give extra stimulus to the proclamation work.

Many people of all ages are needed to make these projects a real success. Can you give some of your holiday to help with this vital teaching work?

There is still time to join in! Send your offer to the National Teaching Committee Secretary: Mrs Wendy Thorne

2 The Gillies, Rannoch Drive, Mansfield, Notts.

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITIES

ABERDEEN/DEESIDE: To open Deeside to the Faith of Baha'u'lla'h is at present the main goal of the Aberdeen Baha'i' community. Prayers for the bounty of God to smile on this aim have been followed by efforts to meet with people from the area in the hope that the spirit of the Faith will reach them.

The little town of Banchory has been chosen for our concentrated efforts. After some visits carried out prayerfully to try and find the facts about and the feeling of the goal town, the Aberdeen Bahá'ís booked a large room in the village hall for regular performances by their own musical group. So far two informal meetings have been held and more are planned.

To entertain is a wonderful thing in itself, but the aim has been to entertain and also to meet with people from Banchory, as well as to establish the name 'Baha'i' there.

This aim is being fulfilled, for the 'ceilidhs' attracted many of the young people from Banchory. Judging from their encouraging applause, they have been entertained; judging by the freedom with which they call for favourite songs, sing the choruses and clap in time to the music, communication as well as entertainment is taking place, and they certainly know the name Baha'í.

The songs vary from traditional Scottish songs and ballads, songs like Negro Spirituals to songs directly about Bahá'u'lláh and the Bahá'í Faith. The first ceilidh was favoured with a large audience completely filling the room, and the second one (which was during the Intercalary Days) was blessed by an enthusiastic, relaxed audience. Some friends of the Aberdeen Bahá'ís came from Aberdeen to the ceilidh and this was an added bounty. Thus by trying to perform a useful service which itself has been worthwhile, the Bahá'ís seem to have given a favourable impression of the Faith to the people of Banchory. How this town develops now will surely depend upon the fruits of combined prayer and work.



Friends at the Isle of Man project

Page Ten

BELFAST: As most of you know we live in a rather strange city — unless one has a car, transport is difficult unless one lives near a bus stop and even then will there be a bus? We are sorry that our news comes so seldom, but would like to thank all the friends who have prayed for us so faithfully during our radiant but difficult years.

Since the declaration of Billy Bilbraithe, we are overjoyed to have another Bahá'í family - one now on each side of the town where a fireside is held each Thursday night.

Garry Villiers Stuart holds a meeting every Wednesday at midday and one of us keeps the centre warm on Wednesday nights. The Belfast Telegraph prints a Baha'i quotation ohce a week and we are now ready for the masses – more prayers please!

Before setting off on Pilgrimage our beloved Board Member Beman Khosravi and his wife, Marian, gave an intercalary party in their home – a delicious fork supper; soft music; fellowship; all sorts of impromptu entertainment; everything that their love could think of including driving half of us home in such intense fog that no taxi would dare to drive!

BOURNEMOUTH: The weekend of 22-23 February will long be remembered by the friends who attended the weekend school conducted in the home of Mr and Mrs Azizi by Mehrangiz Munsiff. Prior to the weekend school, Mrs Munsiff was the speaker at our Friday evening fireside meeting, and an advertisement in our local paper brought along two new faces making a total of seven contacts present.

For the deepening weekend which followed, on the subject of 'Prayer and Meditation', friends gathered from Salisbury, Winchester, the Isle of Wight and Poole, and many hours were spent listening to the words of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi – all guiding us to a deeper understanding of the spiritual path. Mrs Munsiff urged the friends to become more devoted followers of Bahá'u'lláh by studying His life recorded for posterity in Nabíl's narrative. It is hoped that the fruits of the weekend will be seen by the results of future proclamation and teaching events in the area. It is not possible adequately to describe the spirit of love generated in the hearts by the devoted and ceaseless energy of Mrs Munsiff.

We were also very privileged that weekend to have Greta Fozdar with us for a short time, during which she gave an inspiring talk on the growth of the Faith in Borneo where she has been pioneering for some years with her husband and family. We were also very happy to have with us David and Barbara Lewis.

The Bournemouth Youth Committee organised a bazaar which raised the sum of £18 during the course of the weekend, for donation to the Three Year Youth Campaign Fund.

ISLE OF MAN: The second project on the Isle of Man'since the start of the Five Year Plan was manned by Baha''s from Liverpool, Belfast, Chester, Knowsley and Edinburgh. Molly Hughes had managed to get a vacant shop in the Marina Colonnade absolutely free of charge. It was an ideal base where posters and literature were displayed.

We were able to make coffee and interested passers-by were invited in for refreshment and to view the pamphlets.

Both the Saturday and Sunday evenings had been advertised in the local paper, five non-Bahá'ís attended the first meeting when

Hooman Momen gave a talk on the history of the Faith and its principles, Garry Villiers-Stuart and Margaret Burnett entertained with music and songs.

On the second evening Molly showed slides of her pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Catherine McLean Beattie declared on the Sunday night which was a very joyous occasion.

The newspaper and radio station were both contacted and a report of the weekend activity was posted to both before we left the Island. We were delighted to receive a cutting from both local newspapers of our Bahá'í activity.

GLASGOW: We have again been able to organise radio interviews, in this case to publicise World Religion Day. The first of these interviews was given by Dennis MacEoin who spoke on Radio Clyde on 17 January. The interview was broadcast three times between 6.30 and 9.30 a.m. The second interview, by Sohrab Sabet, was on the BBC Radio 4 (Scotland) religious programme on Sunday morning, 19 January. This interview was broadcast twice. Both interviews were used to publicise the World Religion Day meeting and to give a brief summary of the philosophy behind World Religion Day.

Mr Nuri Sabet was the speaker at the meeting and the ratio of seekers to Baha'i's was high, although the total number of those present was rather small. This last fact could possibly be attributed to the extreme weather conditions prevailing that weekend.

GUERNSEY: A most generous offer has been made by a Bahá'í family in Guernsey to help the teaching work there. They run a hotel and are offering holidays to Bahá'ís at £10 per week for bed, breakfast and an evening meal for the period 1 October to 30 April and a 10% reduction from 1 - 31 May. The fare from Weymouth to Guernsey is £10. Enquiries to Pauline Senior, 92 Fort George, Guernsey.

This island is in great need of teaching help and if you can take advantage of this generous offer and take your holidays there, you can at the same time serve the Cause.

GUILDFORD: We have continued with our series of public meetings around the new Borough boundaries and the Waverley District, with an intensive street teaching campaign leading up to Ridván.

During the Fast the youth committee arranged a community supper which was well attended and plentiful; they were able to send ± 7.50 to the National Fund.

Our Naw-Rúz Dance was wonderfully attended and enjoyed by all. We sold only fifty-two tickets and catered for eighty people, but, in fact, more than a hundred friends turned up.

This caused us some embarrassment on the catering side, but we think we gave value for money to the non-Bahá'ís present, in view of the labour involved, Fiona and Denis' excellent 'cabaret' and the quality of the food, so we were delighted to be able to send nearly £30 to the Capital Projects Fund.

LEICESTER: On 8 March the Leicester friends held their first public meeting in the Five Year Plan goal-town of Loughborough at a room in the John Storer House Wards End. The meeting took the form of a panel of four speakers giving short talks on "The Spiritual Life", "Women's role in the Faith", "Administration"



Deepening weekend at Bournemouth



First Spiritual Assembly of Tunbridge Wells

and "The Family Life". The seven contacts who were there asked many interesting questions at the end of these talks, and they seemed satisfied with the answers. We were very grateful to Sylvia Benatar, Wendy Thorne, Michael Bayfield and Adam Thorne for coming to help us make the meeting such a success; Robert Lewis was the chairman. We hope to hold further meetings in different places in Loughborough during the coming months.

NORTHAMPTON: When the unit committee set phased goals for local assemblies, Northampton decided to make a determined effort to achieve the set tasks. This entailed proclamation activities in Northampton and Wellingborough, but enthusiasm took us to Kettering as well.

The mayors of Northampton, Wellingborough and Kettering were offered proclamation books and each agreed to receive the Bahá'ís. The first visit was to the Mayor of Northampton whose wife is West Indian, and this visit was reported with a photograph in the local newspaper. The second visit was to the Mayor of Wellingborough where a great deal of curiosity was shown in the Faith and a detailed press report appeared in the Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough editions. The visit to the Mayor of Wellingborough was followed up one week later by a public meeting given by Geoff Bridle. The final Mayor to be visited was the Mayor of Kettering and, this time, a press kit was presented to a journalist of the local newspaper.

The libraries of Northampton, Wellingborough and Moulton were all presented Bahá'í books. In addition, a large number of local clubs and societies were offered speakers, many of whom accepted the offer. The first to be visited was a Methodist Midweek Club in Wellingborough. The second was the 'Business and Professional Womens' League' in Northampton where they requested a slide show and talk on 'Irán', but were soon demanding to know about the Faith. As time ran out, the speaker was invited to return and talk about the Faith in more detail. Two more clubs will be visited in March.

Recently one member of the community offered to show slides of Irán, Turkey and Israel and talk about 'Islám' to the Religious Studies department of Northampton College of Education. The speaker was introduced as a Bahá'í and in the introduction was invited to return and talk about the Bahá'í Faith. Shortly afterwards the National Conference on Education addressed by Counsellor Eric Blumenthal was held in the same college and the local press reported an interview with Counsellor Blumenthal. Approximately a hundred Bahá'ís attended the conference on education and were thrilled and inspired by the sessions.

READING: On 11 February we sponsored a public meeting in Reading at which Richard St. Barbe Baker gave a talk on "My Life – My Trees". The meeting was well attended, there being some forty non-Bahá'ís present, and in spite of his 85 years and his recent serious operation Mr Baker spoke with vigour for over an hour and then answered several questions. The meeting was advertised in the press, forty notices were posted in the town and 2,000 leaflets were delivered through letter-boxes. Before the meeting Mr Baker was interviewed by a reporter from the Reading Evening Post and that paper subsequently carried a ten inch, two-column report of the interview and the meeting, with an excellent photograph of Mr Baker.

WAVENEY: We recently received a most exciting communication. It all started on 21 December, when, as part of a day's varied entertainment laid on for children and adult visitors by the Bahá'ís at Lowestoft's Boston Lodge Youth Centre, about thirty bottles were filled with quotations from the scriptures of the Faith and drawings of temples. The highlight of the succeeding hours was a trek by the entire party to England's easternmost spot, Ness Point, near the northern end of the town, to cast the bottles, with loud accompanying cheers, into the gusted waters of the North Sea. As prayers were said, many must have wondered what the outcome would be; how far, in fact, the bottles would carry their precious contents.

Well, the fate of all except one bottle is still unknown; but this one made a really inspiring trip — right across the ocean and north to Eiderstedt. Jerhard Fernck, a West German, found the bottle, sent on behalf of four-year-old Reuben Morgan, of Henham, Suffolk, and replied to its call in his native language. Waveney Bahá'ís are still not sure what he said, but an interpreter is being approached and they are hoping for further developments. Certainly a second message will go to Herr Fernck. But this time, the friends hasten to add, not by bottle!

Baha'i Publishing Trust

STOP PRESS. NEW POSTAL CHARGES

The huge, indeed savage, increases in all postal charges which came into effect on 13 March have caused us to suspend all present prices and urgently to review our selling policies. The results of this review have already been communicated to all assemblies in the United Kingdom for sharing with the believers in their areas; they are summarised here for the benefit of others.

Small Order Charge: The small order charge is increased to 50p and is now applicable to all orders which do not exceed £5.

Imported Books: In the course of repricing these, we have now covered discount to assemblies on those items on which they did not previously receive discount.

Postage or Carriage: We will continue to pay postage on all our own publications and those imported when sent to addresses in the United Kingdom, but we can no longer afford to distribute 'post free' the publications of other United Kingdom publishers (e.g. George Ronald, Volturna Press, Neville Spearman). In future, therefore, these will be charged 'postage extra' to addresses in the United Kingdom. Goods sent outside the United Kingdom are all 'postage or carriage extra'.

The effect of these changes is to make it more desirous than ever that you channel your purchases through a local assembly.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust

2 South Street, Oakham, Rutland, Leics. LE15 6HY England

The Onward March of the Faith

This sixth compilation of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi has been issued by the Universal House of Justice in order to prepare the believers for that 'increasing hostility' to which the beloved Guardian drew the attention of the friends in his cable of 4 June, 1957, shortly before his passing.

The Universal House of Justice writes that 'the time has come for them (the friends) clearly to grasp the inevitability of the critical contests which lie ahead', and this selection of Writings will give support, protection and guidance in the coming difficult times.

The National Assembly has made an especial appeal to the friends to arrange meetings to study this compilation, which contains quotations of great power and strength, and which, if properly understood, will add greatly to our capacity to teach and protect our beloved Cause.

Copies of the compilation may be obtained from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, at a cost of 17p, but friends in assembly areas should order through their assemblies as this will considerably save on the cost of postage.

Young People write about Religion

The Publishing Trust had a request some time ago from the Headmaster of a Newcastle High School asking whether any young Bahá'ís would like to submit contributions for an anthology he is preparing on the above theme. The age limits he has in mind are eight to eighteen years.

During the course of last year the Trust was able to provide quotations to this same Headmaster for an anthology on comparative religion, to which we were able to add extra explanatory notes.

This opportunity for young Baha'is to write short articles on their Faith for this second anthology is one which we hope will be taken up, and contributions should be sent to the Secretary of the Publishing Trust – Mrs Lois Hainsworth, 27 Rutland Gate, London, SW7 – as soon as possible.

Religion - A Journal of Religion and Religions

In its efforts to stimulate trade to the book trade, the Publishing Trust has, during the past two years, put advertisements in "The Spectator" and also in a magazine called "Religion". This is a beautifully produced and erudite magazine which costs £3 per copy, and which, of necessity, can only have a limited circulation, but it will most certainly find its way into university libraries and into the hands of all thinking people who have any interest in comparative religion.

The Trust has for the last two issues bought the inside back cover as advertising space for some of its publications and we regard this as an important proclamation service. It is hoped eventually that we may be able to have an article published in the magazine. Examples of the type of article in the current issue are "Communication with the fertility god via hallucinogens in Tsongaland", "On the Mahāyāna and Wittgenstein", "Cross and crucifixion in Christian iconography" and "Seven decades of writing on Greek religion".

The National Assembly has sent copies of this magazine to the Public Information Committee and the Religious Education Advisory Committee in order that they may study means of taking full advantage of this proclamation and publicity opening.



Investment Scheme

The appeal for additional loan capital has now reached the magnificent total of £26,000 out of the £35,000 sought when the appeal was launched. With rapidly rising costs due to the high rate of inflation now prevailing, further loans are now badly needed and we appeal to every Bahá'í to consider whether they can respond to this appeal so that we may continue the flow of that most precious of all teaching material — books. Loans can be in any amount of £25 upwards in multiples of £25 and bear interest @ 7½% on a 10 year loan and 8% on a 20 year loan; we are deeply appreciative of the generosity of those who have felt able to make their loans interest free.

New Items

The following new items may now be ordered:

- B 110 The Christianity of Jesus. A new printing of this popular book by the late Richard Backwell has been published by The Volturna Press and is available from us. £1.00
- B 117 Comprehensive Deepening Program. Published by the US Trust. £5.00
- B 121 Bahá'í World. the new Volume XIV. Published by the Universal House of Justice. £6.00
- P 102 Selected Prayers. A selection printed in large type for easy reading. BPT. 13p
- P 103 A Bahá'í Puzzle Book for Young People. Produced and published by the NSA of the Hawaiian Islands. 30p
- P 104 Analysis of the Five Year International Teaching Plan. Produced and published by the Universal House of Justice. 95p
- L 83 World Order Magazine Editorials. A selection of six significant editorials. US Trust. 65p

Compilations made by the Universal House of Justice

Reprints of those of which the first printing had been sold out have now been made and all six of those so far published by us are now in stock; they are:

P	51	No. 1 Local Spiritual Assemblies	10p
P	80	No. 2 Continental Boards of Counsellors	and their
		Auxiliary Boards	10p
Ρ	82	No. 3 Lifeblood of the Cause	17p
Ρ	92	No. 4 Bahá'í Writings on Music	10p
Ρ	96	No. 5 National Spiritual Assembly	35p
Ρ	104	No. 6 The Onward March of the Faith	17p

These have all been produced in a uniform format and have proved so popular that the first has now run into three editions.

The further compilation made by the Universal House of Justice to supplement our "Pattern of Bahá'í Life" and published under the title of:

P 98 Living the Life 20p

has been produced in the same format as:

P 4 Pattern of Baha'i Life, which is still available for 10p

Expected early May:

B 2 The Hidden Words. By Baha'u'lláh. A new edition is now at the printers and delivery is expected early May. The paperback is bound in an attractive stiff imitation leather grained material new to this country called 'Pattin' and this time we have also produced a red cloth bound 'library' edition. BPT Cloth 800 Paper 400