



BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION



The delegates and guests who attended the Fourth International Bahá'í Convention occupied this special platform erected in front of the new Seat of the Universal House of Justice when, on the Ninth Day of Ridván, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, placed a casket containing dust from the Shrines of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in a niche in the new building.



Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom photographed in front of the Shrine of the Báb (l - r) Philip Hainsworth, Barbara Lewis, Keith Munro, Simon Mortimore, Enayat Rawhani, Mary Hardy, Betty Goode, John Long and Ted Cardell.

TO THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTION

Dearly-loved Friends,

The Universal House of Justice takes great pleasure in addressing the members of National Spiritual Assemblies gathered in the Holy Land, in the presence of Hands of the Cause of God and Counsellors from all continents, at this fourth International Convention, pausing with you to review the course and needs of the Five Year Plan as we cross the threshold of its final year.

The opening of the Plan witnessed the eager response of the friends, careful study made by the national institutions of the Faith of its implications and requirements, the establishment of machinery and the setting up of projects to achieve its goals, and the often arduous struggle to fulfil the first of its three major objectives — the safeguarding and consolidation of all prizes won in earlier campaigns. This phase extended in many countries over a period of several months, and in others continued as far as the mid-way point of the Plan.

The middle year of the Plan saw the holding of the International Conferences and those many regional and national conferences which were held concurrently and diffused far and wide the inspiration flowing from these eight major assemblages of the believers. These gatherings motivated a great acceleration of the work and helped the believers throughout the world to arrive at a new realisation of the responsibility entrusted to the followers of the Most Great Name for the spiritual regeneration of their fellow men.

We are now in the last stage of the Plan, and this Convention provides us with a welcome and auspicious hour in which to assess our progress and to direct our thoughts to the complete achievement of the goals.

Of the 130 National Spiritual Assemblies which will be operating during the last year of the Plan, 50 have either achieved or nearly achieved their teaching goals. Of the remaining 80 National Assemblies, some 40 are confidently forging ahead and are assured of victory if the present tempo in their teaching work is maintained. Nine National Spiritual Assemblies are restricted by conditions which make the fulfilment of their homefront goals dependent upon circumstances beyond their control. The remaining 30 national communities are, alas, seriously lagging behind, and only strenuous and sacrificial effort will enable them to win their goals.

The second of the three major objectives of the Plan — a vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá'í community — has seen great but geographically uneven progress. There are now more than 19,000 Local Spiritual Assemblies and the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside is over 83,000. This expansion has been accompanied by an intensification of proclamation efforts and by increased use of mass media such as radio and television.

There have been notable advances in the process of gaining wider recognition for the Cause of God and in fostering cordial relations with civil authorities, a matter of vital importance in these days when there is a growth of opposition to the Faith from those who, misconstruing its true nature and aims, take alarm at its progress.

Some of the most significant achievements of the Plan have been towards its third major objective — the development of the distinctive character of Bahá'í life — and in the consolidation and strengthening of the structure of the Bahá'í community. The beloved Hands of the Cause of God, who have been in the forefront of so many aspects of the work of the Faith, have rendered far-reaching services in this field.

The Local Spiritual Assemblies, focal centres for the teaching of the Faith and the consolidation of the community, are growing in experience, maturity and wisdom, are proving to be potent instruments for nurturing the Bahá'í life and are, in increasing numbers, carrying out plans for the establishment of the Faith in areas outside their own range of jurisdiction, under the over-all guidance of their National Spiritual Assemblies, and with the encouragement and help of the Auxiliary Boards and their assistants. The work of developing Local Spiritual Assemblies is a task without end in the foreseeable future. As the Bahá'í community, which is still very thinly spread around the world, moves continually and with increasing rapidity into new areas, new Assemblies will come into being and will need patient help and training in their sacred duties.

The devotion and self-sacrifice of the friends, which have drawn to them the confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh, have resulted in the very great advances made so far. Evidences of this striving are apparent in the growing number of national communities which, under the wise stewardship and challenging leadership of their National Spiritual Assemblies, are becoming financially self-supporting; in the fact that ever more individual believers are adopting for themselves specific goals and plans of service for the advancement of the Faith; in the settlement of more than 2,000 pioneers during the course of the Plan; in the upsurge of travel teaching individually and in teams; in a greater awareness of the power of prayer; and in many other ways. Three vital aspects of Bahá'í community life which have seen marked progress during the past four years are the development of the services of women and of youth, and the Bahá'í education of children. The youth have long been in the forefront of the teaching work, and now our hearts rejoice to see the women, in so many lands where previously their capacities were largely left unused, devoting their capable services to the life of the Bahá'í community. The education of Bahá'í children is also receiving much attention, which bodes well for the future generations of Bahá'ís.

Experience has shown that active and loving collaboration between the Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies has been a particularly invigorating and strengthening factor in the progress of the Cause in all aspects of the work. Reflecting the growth of the community, the number of Continental Counsellors has been raised to 64 during the Plan, and the number of the members of Auxiliary Boards to 675. Under the authorisation given to them, members of the Auxiliary Boards have till now appointed 3,358 assistants, who are already playing a significant role in the formation and consolidation of Local Spiritual Assemblies and the fostering of the Bahá'í way of life in local communities. Coordinating and directing the work of these Continental Boards from the Holy Land, the International Teaching Centre is now well established in the conduct of its responsibilities, foreshadowing the mighty rôle that it is destined to play in the functioning of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Faith is passing through a time of tremendous opportunity and development, as well as of increasing opposition and of growing complexity in the problems confronting it. These opportunities must be seized and these problems overcome, for so crucial are these times that the future course of human history is daily in the balance. During this year the Universal House of Justice will be consulting on the nature, duration and goals of the next stage in the implementation of the Divine Plan. The firm base of the achievement of the Five Year Plan goals, both those of quality and those of quantity, is therefore the burning necessity of the months now before us. Let us go forward in a spirit of optimism, with confidence, determination, courage and unity. The greater the love and unity among the friends, the more speedily will the work advance.

May the Almighty bless the endeavours of His servants and inspire their hearts to arise in His Cause with that degree of radiant faith and self-sacrifice which will draw to their aid the conquering hosts of the Supreme Concourse.

Riḍván 1978

The Universal House of Justice

TO THE FRIENDS GATHERED AT NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTIONS

Beloved Friends,

We joyfully hail the formation of seven more National Spiritual Assemblies, those of Burundi, Mauritania, the Bahamas, Oman, Qatar, the Mariana Islands and Cyprus; two in Africa, one in the Americas, two in Asia, one in the Pacific and one in Europe, raising to one hundred and thirty the number of pillars of the Universal House of Justice.

Your National Spiritual Assemblies will be sharing with you the message addressed to the International Bahá'í Convention and the news of the progress of the Five Year Plan that was released on that occasion. As you will see, many national communities have already completed, or virtually completed, their Five Year Plan

goals. These communities must now ensure that the pace of expansion and consolidation which brought them victory is maintained so that they will advance strongly into the next plan. They can also, by pioneering and travel teaching, rally to the assistance of their sister communities which still have months of intensive work before them in order to win their goals. It is to these latter communities that we now address our call to redoubled, united and sacrificial effort. We are fervently supplicating at the Sacred Threshold that the followers of the Blessed Beauty will arise with enthusiasm, confidence and consecration to ensure that every goal is attained.

Ridván 1978

The Universal House of Justice

TO THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF CYPRUS

The formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cyprus is an event of historical significance and portent unsurpassed in the long and chequered history of that ravaged island. From long before the classical period until modern times Cyprus has experienced many varied systems of government and religious tradition, its importance to great empires, both eastern and western, being a matter of record. In later times it became the chief depot of the Crusaders and still later shared the magnificence of Venice, the greatest of the city states. Following the great pagan civilisation, two of the world's major religions, Christianity and Islám, established themselves within it and some of the most notable exploits of Christianity's great travelling teacher — the apostle Paul — took place there.

Not, however, until this day, the Day of God, was Cyprus called upon to play its greatest rôle, historically and spiritually, in world history. When the King of kings was sent to His Most Great Prison in 'Akká, a few faithful believers together with the arch-breaker of the Covenant of the Báb, Mirzá Yahyá, were consigned to this island. The baneful influence of that one who set himself up against "Him Whom God shall make manifest" and twice attempted His life is beyond imagination or compute, but it has, through attrition of the years and its own inanition, gradually been dispersed. The victory of the small, vital, totally dedicated community of the Most Great Name in Cyprus is a victory of the Most Great Covenant, which has wonderfully protected and confirmed that community. The first island in the Mediterranean Sea to enter, in whatever unpropitious circumstances, the orbit of the Faith of God, Cyprus is the first in that sea to form its National Spiritual Assembly. Who can doubt that the establishment there of this mighty institution is the greatest single event

in the island's history, and the happiest augury for its future? Although unheeded at present by the majority of the population, the erection of this new pillar of the Universal House of Justice will come to be recognised as an achievement surpassing in brilliance and spiritual import anything of its past.

We therefore call upon your dearly-loved, eager, self-sacrificing community to pursue with increased determination your vigorous teaching campaign, to consolidate and develop your Local Spiritual Assemblies, to establish at least one more during the remaining year of the Five Year Plan and to increase the number of localities open to the Faith. Great efforts should be made, with the help of your parent National Spiritual Assembly in the United Kingdom, to acquire by the end of the Five Year Plan a Temple site and an endowment, properties which together with your National Hazíratu'l-Quds, when acquired, will tend to consolidate your newly-fledged national institution. Above all, you are urged to foster the spirit of love and unity which exists among you, to promote your national community life, to rally behind your National Spiritual Assembly and to do your utmost to understand and carry out its plans, and to present to your fellow Cypriots an aspect of such social and spiritual unity, such radiance and assurance, as will cause large numbers of them to investigate and eventually dedicate themselves as declared believers to the service of the Most Great Name.

We send you our loving congratulations and assure you of our prayers at the Sacred Threshold for the protection of Bahá'u'lláh to surround you and His bountiful confirmations to reward your every effort in His service.

Ridván 1978

The Universal House of Justice

THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

On 25 April all nine members of the National Assembly proceeded to the Holy Land where, after a brief pilgrimage to the Bahá'í Holy Places, they attended the Fourth International Bahá'í Convention in Haifa. On the one hand it was an opportunity for praying and meditating, and on the other hand it was an occasion for hearing the news of the progress of the Faith in different corners of the globe. It was an occasion for the Hands of the Cause of God, members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies (from all over the world) to discuss the needs of the Faith and express their views on how more remarkable victories could be won for the Faith during this final year of the Plan. They had the opportunity of consulting with more than twelve National Spiritual Assemblies on many different subjects. No tongue can explain, nor can any pen describe adequately the spiritual experiences of those who participated on such a memorable occasion. It was their privilege

to pray in the Shrine of the Báb, supplicate at the Sacred Threshold of Bahá'u'lláh, and especially remembered in their prayers was the entire United Kingdom Bahá'í community and development of its Local Spiritual Assemblies.

On 29 April the Hand of the Cause of God Rúhíyyih Khánum opened the Convention and after some words on the spiritual nature of the election guided the entire proceedings of the election of the Universal House of Justice. Twenty-two tellers supervised the casting of ballots by members of 123 National Spiritual Assemblies who were individually called to the ballot box. Among these were natives of many of the developing nations of the world, some of whom were dressed in their own flowing costumes. In the afternoon of that day all gathered at the site of the building of the Universal House of Justice where was witnessed an historic ceremony. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih

Khánum placed the dust from the Holy Shrines in the structure of the Seat for the Universal House of Justice building. She, and Hand of the Cause Dr Giachery, commented on the significance of the occasion. Later, Hand of the Cause Mr Faizi linked the occasion with the one taken place a few thousand years before when God commanded Noah to place the dust of Adam and Eve in the Ark for blessing and security. Today, that symbolic act has been repeated and the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, which is the source from which Divine Guidance will continue to flow, has been so blessed. The following day the chief teller announced the results of the election and it was the privilege of all present to see the newly-elected members of the Universal House of Justice assembled together before them. The newly-elected members of the Universal House of Justice are: Mr 'Ali Nakhjavani, Mr Hushmand Fatheazam, Mr Amoz Gibson, Mr Ian Semple, Mr David Ruhe, Mr Charles Wolcott, Mr David Hofman, Mr Hugh Chance and Mr Borrah Kavelin. Mr Nakhjavani, who polled the highest votes, gave a brief address to the Convention on behalf of all the members.

The Ninth Day of Ridván was celebrated in front of the Pilgrim House by the Shrine of the Báb and the Twelfth Day of Ridván in Bahji while facing the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.

FORMATION OF THE FIRST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF CYPRUS

Hailed by the Universal House of Justice as "an event of historical significance and portent unsurpassed in the long and chequered history of that ravaged island", the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cyprus will be elected at the Convention which is to take place as this Journal goes to press. Meeting on the 20/21 May in the presence of Hand of the Cause Dr Giachery and his wife, Counsellor Eric Blumenthal and National Assembly Chairman John Long, Vera Long and Marion Hofman in the College of Arts and Crafts, Nicosia, the three local assemblies of Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca will be represented by nine delegates. The total number of adult believers on the Island is about forty which is actually a larger community than that of the British Isles of forty-two years ago and comprises believers from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot native residents as well as those of English, Scottish, Irish, Orcadian, Iranian, Ethiopian, Iraqi and Canadian backgrounds. The nine elected delegates are:

Mustafa Salman, Hassan Shashmaz and Eric Hellicar (Nicosia)
Terry Fribbens, Pauline Fribbens and May Moore (Limassol)
Margaret McGill, Margaret Jenkerson and Bill Barry (Larnaca)

John Long, as our representative has taken with him to present to the new National Assembly, gifts for the new National Assembly's Archives and Reference Library, a wall rug for the new Hazíratu'l-Quds and a cheque for £500 for the new National Fund.

After the presentation of the stirring letter from the Universal House of Justice to that Convention, the National Assembly Chairman John Long will read our message to the assembled friends:

It is with hearts full of gratitude and overflowing with joy that we turn to Bahá'u'lláh and ask His blessings on this historic occasion.

We are witnessing the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cyprus, an event which will prove to be a turning point in the history of the island and in the spiritual fortunes of its inhabitants.

Down through the centuries we in the United Kingdom have had links with the people of Cyprus. From the time of King Richard I to the present, our two islands have been linked at various points in the pages of history, but this latest endeavour of bringing into being an Institution ordained to shed the light of Bahá'u'lláh upon all the peoples within its jurisdiction will prove to be the greatest fruit of the intercourse between our two peoples.

Here in this beautiful sea-girt land that has long suffered extreme sorrows and tragedies of such great severity, your small band of devoted Bahá'ís has remained steadfast over the years, firm in your Faith and with your hearts and lives dedicated to Bahá'u'lláh.

In the letter sent to every Bahá'í family in the United Kingdom as the National Assembly left for Haifa, the friends were assured of the prayers of the members while they were in the Holy places and prayers were particularly requested for the last day of Ridván. As the long line of over 800 believers, which included Hands of the Cause, Counsellors, National Assembly members and workers at the World Centre, slowly circumambulated the Harami-Aqdas following the beautiful programme of readings, conversation was stilled and each believer on approaching the gate of the Most Holy Shrine, the Qiblih of the whole Bahá'í world, bent his head as he made his silent pledge to his Lord and sought His blessing. The whole United Kingdom community was very much in the thoughts of its National Assembly and, on their return to Haifa, at the Pilgrim House, they felt the strongest urge once again to go together to pray in the Shrine of the Martyr Prophet of the Faith and pledge themselves to do all in their power to bring back to the whole community the spirit of the Convention they had attended. Although they had to be up at 4 a.m. to travel to the airport on the following morning, they met in solemn session until an hour before midnight to plan how they might, on an individual basis, go round the whole community, calling the friends together to try to recapture some of those precious moments and bring the message of love and joy and confidence to the friends in the United Kingdom.

Assured of ultimate victory you have surmounted the influences of the past, faced the challenges of the present and overcome all obstacles. With the help of the Supreme Concourse you have arisen to serve your Lord and today your efforts have borne fruit as we witness the establishment of this mighty institution of God — the National Spiritual Assembly.

It is with pride and admiration that we acknowledge all the self-sacrificing efforts made by each one of you to bring this momentous day about. To you all we send our deepest love and appreciation and the assurance of our continued prayers for divine guidance in your every effort.

May the Blessed Beauty shower His loving bounties upon you.

* * * * *

It was on Sunday 9 April that the representative of the National Assembly, Mrs Marion Hofman, witnessed the formation of the first Spiritual Assembly of Larnaca which made the establishment of the National Assembly possible, as it brought the number of local assemblies up to three. On hearing this news the Universal House of Justice cabled:

"DELIGHTED NEWS KINDLY EXTEND LOVING GREETINGS CONGRATULATIONS TO SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY LARNACA ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD BOUNTIFUL CONFIRMATION THEIR PROGRESS."

Travel Teachers

As the Bahá'í community in Cyprus is small and overburdened by the exacting nature of the task of ensuring the establishment of a new National Spiritual Assembly, we wish our travel-teachers to bear the following point in mind. Those believers who wish to travel teach in Cyprus, however short the duration of their stay there, should make prior arrangements with our International Travel Teaching Committee. Our International Travel Teaching Committee will then contact the National Assembly in Cyprus with a view to ensuring that the arrangements made are in order without overburdening the friends there. We hope that the friends will appreciate that such a measure is only adopted in consideration of the difficult conditions there.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

STOP PRESS. The results of the election are as follows — two Turkish Cypriots, two Greek Cypriots, two Persian and three British pioneers. For the time being two names may not be published. The other seven are as follows: Mustafa Salman, Eric Hellicar, May Moore, Hasan Shaghriaz, Margaret Hellicar, Terry Fribbens, Parvin Petrou. Eight of the members speak Greek.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Larnaca, Cyprus, was formed on 9 April in the home of Cyril and Margaret Jenkerson, only five months after the arrival of the first pioneers from the United Kingdom. Its membership includes English, Irish, Orcadian, Persian, Canadian and Iraqi believers. The formation of this assembly completed the number required for the election of the first National Assembly in Cyprus. The members are: Cyril Jenkerson, Margaret Jenkerson, Margaret Magill, Sheila Dunn, Moira Macleod, Kehler Barry, Bill Barry, Najla Baghdadi, Laureleagh Sheridan, the ninth member was temporarily in Canada. Marion Hofman, representing the NSA of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom is also in the photograph.

LONGSTANDING GOAL OF EARLIER PLANS UNEXPECTEDLY ACHIEVED

For a long time it has been a goal of the British Bahá'í community to obtain recognition of Bahá'í Marriage, but hitherto it has been impossible to achieve because of the law of the land. Last year when the Marriage (Scotland) Act, 1977, was passed, this was drawn to our attention by the Edinburgh local assembly and Jim Spence. Working closely with Jim, the National Assembly Secretary and the Public Relations Officer followed the matter through and by Rídván it was possible to advise the Universal House of Justice that three Bahá'í Marriage Officers have been approved by the Registrar General for Scotland to solemnise Bahá'í Marriages.

Any Bahá'í living in the United Kingdom may consider having a legal Bahá'í Marriage in Scotland as no residential qualification is necessary. Details of procedure, full instructions and the form of the recognised Bahá'í Marriage Ceremony are available from the National Office.

John More-Nesbit, Scott Thomson and Brian Shepherd have been registered to perform Bahá'í marriages in the areas of Edinburgh and East Lothian, Eastwood, near Glasgow, and the Highland Region respectively, but by special permission they may perform marriages in other areas.

This is a significant milestone in the history of the Faith in Scotland and is a great victory for the whole United Kingdom community.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS AND THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

One of the believers wrote recently to the Universal House of Justice requesting an elucidation of a statement made by it in one of its letters about the relationship between the Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies. The House of Justice instructed us to send the following reply, which is now being shared with all National Assemblies as it will undoubtedly be of interest to the believers in general.

The statement that the Boards of Counsellors outrank the National Institutions of the Faith has a number of implications. A Board of Counsellors has the particular responsibility of caring for the protection and propagation of the Faith throughout a continental zone which contains a number of national Bahá'í communities. In performing these tasks it neither directs nor instructs the Spiritual Assemblies or individual believers, but it has the necessary rank to enable it to ensure that it is kept properly informed and that the Spiritual Assemblies give due consideration to its advice and recommendations. However, the essence of the relationships between Bahá'í institutions is loving and a common desire to serve the Cause of God rather than a matter of rank or station.

It is clear from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, as well as from those of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the interpretations of the Guardian, that the proper functioning of human society requires the preservation of ranks and classes within its membership. The friends should recognise this without envy or jealousy, and those who occupy ranks should never exploit their position or regard themselves as being superior to others. About this Bahá'u'lláh has written:

“And amongst the realms of unity is the unity of rank and station. It redoundeth to the exaltation of the Cause, glorifying it among all peoples. Ever since the seeking of preference and distinction came into play, the world hath been laid waste. It hath become desolate. Those who have quaffed from the ocean of divine utterance and fixed their gaze upon the Realm of Glory should regard themselves as being on the same level as the others and in the same station. Were this matter to be definitely established and conclusively demonstrated through the power and might of God, the world would become as the Abhá Paradise.

“Indeed, man is noble, inasmuch as each one is a repository of the sign of God. Nevertheless, to regard oneself as superior in knowledge, learning or virtue, or to

exalt oneself or seek preference, is a grievous transgression. Great is the blessedness of those who are adorned with the ornament of this unity and have been graciously confirmed by God."

In similar vein, Shoghi Effendi gave this warning to those who are elected to serve on National Spiritual Assemblies:

"They should never be led to suppose that they are the central ornaments of the body of the Cause, intrinsically superior to others in capacity or merit, and sole promoters of its teachings and principles. They should approach their task with extreme humility, and endeavour, by their open-mindedness, their high sense of justice and duty, their candour, their modesty, their entire devotion to the welfare and interests of the friends, the Cause, and humanity, to win, not only the confidence and the genuine support and respect of those whom they serve, but also their esteem and real affection."

Courtesy, reverence, dignity, respect for the rank and achievements of others are virtues which contribute to the harmony and well-being of every community, but pride and self-aggrandisement are among the most deadly of sins.

The House of Justice hopes that all the friends will remember that the ultimate aim in life of every soul should be to attain spiritual excellence—to win the good pleasure of God. The true spiritual station of any soul is known only to God. It is quite a different thing from the ranks and stations that men and women occupy in the various sectors of society. Whoever has his eyes fixed on the goal of attaining the good pleasure of God will accept with joy and radiant acquiescence whatever work or station is assigned to him in the Cause of God, and will rejoice to serve Him under all conditions.

There are many passages on this theme in the Holy Writings, and the Universal House of Justice hopes that these remarks will help the friends to turn to them and understand their purport.

Department of the Secretariat
The Universal House of Justice

27 March 1978

CABLES FROM THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ADDRESSED TO THE UNITED KINGDOM NSA.

"LOVING CONGRATULATIONS STEADY PROGRESS
MARCH (1978) URGE VALIANT VETERAN
COMMUNITY MAKE SUPREME EFFORT ACHIEVE
TOTAL VICTORY."

(4 April 1978)

The Passing of Ernest Gregory

It is with extreme sadness that we share with you the following cable from the Universal House of Justice:

ANNOUNCE PASSING TO ABHÁ KINGDOM
MORNING OF FIRST DAY RIDVÁN DISTINGUISHED
SERVANT BAHÁ'U'LLÁH ERNEST GREGORY STOP
HIS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION GROWTH
BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY AS MEMBER MANY
YEARS NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY AND
LATER MEMBER AUXILIARY BOARD ENSURE HIM
HIGH PLACE THAT COMMUNITY'S ANNALS STOP
HIS STIRLING QUALITIES ENDEARED HIM TO ALL
AT WORLD CENTRE FAITH WHERE HIS LOSS
KEENLY FELT STOP ADVISE BRITISH COMMUNITY
JOIN PRAYERS THANKSGIVING HIS LIFE PROGRESS
HIS SOUL

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

MALTA

As a basis for the formation of two assemblies before next Ridván, a line drawn roughly north to south was made to make two areas, Malta East and Malta West. The list of parishes on each side of the line had to be submitted to the Universal House of Justice for approval and the question arose as to whether, in view of the existence of more than nine believers in the Island, the local assembly of Malta should be re-formed.

The Universal House of Justice cabled:

"YOUR PROPOSAL DIVIDING LINE TWO ASSEMBLY
AREAS ACCEPTABLE AT PRESENT."

(17 April 1978)

There are now two groups in Malta and travel teachers and pioneers are still urgently required.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

A PIONEER FOR LESOTHO

The National Spiritual Assembly of Lesotho is in urgent need of pioneer assistance and the United Kingdom community has yet to fulfil its goal of the Five Year Plan of sending one pioneer to Lesotho. We have been urged by the Universal House of Justice to try to settle a pioneer in that country as soon as possible. We have been informed that it would be especially helpful if the pioneer from this country would be willing to live at the National Hazíratu'l-Quds, paying a nominal rent, and helping as part-time caretaker. Anyone wishing to consult on the possibility of pioneering to Lesotho please contact the National Pioneer Committee

CYPRUS HAZÍRATU'L-QUDS

A very beautiful building has been found in Nicosia and arrangements are being made for its purchase. It will serve as the National Hazíratu'l-Quds for the newly formed National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cyprus. The attention of the community is drawn to this goal of the Five Year Plan which is now an urgent priority. Of the £20,000 which we had intended to pay for this property, some £3,000 has already been received. It is our hope that through the community's prompt response and generous support of the Capital Projects Fund, this important commitment of the United Kingdom Bahá'í community can be honoured.

STOP PRESS. After this issue had gone to press it was learned at Convention that a substantial donation had made it possible to complete this goal and that the property will pass into the hands of the Cyprus National Assembly in August.

BAHÁ'Í NEWS

Many of you already subscribe to the "Bahá'í News" and know what an excellent magazine this is. As long ago as 1925 it was the hope of the beloved Guardian that the "Bahá'í News" would "become the foremost Bahá'í journal of the world" and his wish that this magazine "should arouse interest among believers. . . in every corner of the globe" has certainly been fulfilled. Although it is often referred to as the "American Bahá'í News", it represents the worldwide Bahá'í community and has articles and news of interest for everyone.

It is also a valuable source of historical information, giving many biographies of heroes of the Faith, as well as printing beautiful, and often rare, photographs which make it a magazine to be treasured.

The subscription rate (including postage) is only £4 per year (i.e. for 12 issues). If you do not already subscribe, please send your name and address with your cheque, made payable to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the UK to Mr D. Mehrabi, Carmel, New Scapa Road, Kirkwall, Orkney Isles, Scotland. There are some surplus back copies at 30p each and if you would also like some of these, please inform Mr Mehrabi.



Some of the party of seventy-eight National Assembly members who met at Heathrow Airport, London, to travel together to the Fourth International Bahá'í Convention. The National Assemblies of the United Kingdom, France, Alaska, Iceland, Dominica, Jamaica and Leeward and Virgin Islands are represented in this picture.

REPLACEMENT OF DELEGATES

When, in early 1978, a National Assembly member was appointed as an Auxiliary Board Member, it was found that quite a number of the previous year's delegates had left the country and transferred out, some as pioneers and others for business and study purposes. Some had gone overseas, but could not be traced. There was some guidance given to another National Assembly by the Universal House of Justice so the National Assembly adopted a policy after seeking comment from the House. The following Telex reply was received:

"Eligibility delegates or manner replacing secondary matters left discretion National Spiritual Assemblies. Whatever decisions made must be applied uniformly all cases."

There is no provision in the recommended National Bahá'í Constitution nor in our Articles of Association for the replacement of a delegate and this is, as stated by the House, a secondary matter. The House did indicate to the other National Assembly that certain procedures were generally followed and these were taken as guidelines.

1. If a delegate dies or becomes unable to serve before Convention the believer polling the next number of votes replaces him. Where delegates are allocated on an Assembly basis it is easy to call a new election but where an area convention has elected a number of delegates by plurality vote it is easier, more just and closer to the spirit of the event to take the one on the list who would have been elected had that person who is being replaced not been eligible.

2. It is considered that a delegate becomes unable to serve before or at Convention if he or she transfers membership outside the United Kingdom when leaving the country. A delegate who is on a long-term travel teaching project who has not so transferred his membership, as different from a pioneer who has, does not fall under this designation of being unable to serve, though it is highly desirable for all delegates to attend Convention.

3. A delegate who ceases to be able to serve after Convention by death or by transfer of membership to another country will not be replaced and, if there is a bye-election for a National Assembly member, will not be sent a ballot paper. A ballot will be sent however in such an event to any delegate who is out of the country on a temporary visit or travel teaching project if he has not transferred his membership out.

4. To ensure that the above policy can be implemented, all area convention tellers are requested, after announcing the names of the delegates, to post the complete results of the election in a sealed envelope to the National Office for opening and reference, only if necessary, during the year.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

THE ONWARD MARCH OF THE FAITH

We warmly welcome to the community the following new believers, recorded in the National Office between 1 April 1978 and 12 May 1978.

ADULTS:

Miss Martha T. Annan (Brent); D. A. Buckland (Hastings); Mrs S. Jane Copeley (Newtownabbey); Miss Marianne Crossle (Belfast); E. D. Cotterell (Worthing); Mrs Letitia Curran (Knowsley); Ernest John Davies (Hereford & Worcester); Mrs Dorothy Evans (Anglesey); Thomas William Farquhar (Copeland); Mrs Mæ Fuller (Crawley); Mrs Grace Graham (Newtownabbey); Miss Marie-Therese Le Duff (Adur); Richard O. Morgan (Arfon); Behruz Nassiri (Brighton); Robert Pannell (Vale of the White Horse); Parfrey (Thurrock); Mrs Ponder (Thurrock); Miss Mary Rozetta Reid (Reading); Mrs Dora Smith (Allerdale); Mrs Joyce Curtis Thomas (Swansea); Mrs Joan Wheeler (Mull); John Wheeler (Mull); Miss Kathryn M. Young (Liverpool).

YOUTH:

Miss Yasmin Adeb (Vale of the White Horse); Miss Diba Ansari (Ipswich); Miss Suzanne Bond (Havant); Gareth John Edwards (Aberdeen); Miss Noura Enayati (Oxford); James Connell (Edinburgh); Miss Shan Evans (Anglesey); Miss Farzaneh Faroghian (Kingston); Ms Branwen Jones (Anglesey); Lai Hong Loh (Hertsmere); Mr Ramin Maher (Sheffield); Vahid Mehrabi (Orkney); Owrang Mostael (Kensington & Chelsea); Miss Annwyl Thomas (Arfon).

The gradual increase in the number of new believers is greatly encouraging.

The overwhelming number of requests for information about the Funds prompts me to rewrite an article about the Bahá'í Fund which appeared in No. 228 of the Bahá'í Journal. It has been slightly modified to take into consideration some small changes which have taken place over the years.

There is only one Bahá'í Faith and there is, therefore, only one Bahá'í Fund. Its source is "the body of the believers"; its flow started when the first believer who wished to make a material gift to Bahá'u'lláh gave his or her precious offering so that the Faith would be helped to go forward; its flow continued and grew as more and more souls joined the ever-increasing ranks of the "army of life"; its flow became stronger as more hearts became "on fire" with love for Bahá'u'lláh and His Cause and longed to give of their material resources and, in so doing, demonstrated the measure of their faith.

As the Cause progressed and entered into the Formative Age, when the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh began to be fulfilled, local Spiritual Assemblies and National Assemblies were formed, and eventually the Universal House of Justice was established. The Fund, as it ever will, remained the same, but different "patterns" took shape.

THE LOCAL FUND is money donated by believers to a local Spiritual Assembly and is used for administering the Faith in the area under the jurisdiction of the local Assembly. It goes towards the cost of teaching, proclamation, secretarial expenses, and the thousand and one activities carried out by the local Assembly. The local Assemblies and all the individual Bahá'ís, mindful of the fact that the Faith cannot function properly unless money is donated nationally, donate money to the

NATIONAL FUND which is used by the National Assembly to administer the Faith in the country or area which is its responsibility, and which benefits every single believer in that country or area. For example, it has to pay for the secretariat of the National Assembly, which is in constant touch with both local Assemblies and all the believers. It has to be used to support the upkeep of the main headquarters — the Hazíratu'l-Quds and the National Office. It is used to pay for Journals and Newsletters; has to support the work of the "arms" of the National Assembly — the committees; it helps to support those souls who have arisen to pioneer for the Faith when they are unable to get jobs; in whatever way it is used, it is solely for the furtherance of the Faith.

Regular donations are sent by the National Assembly to the

INTERNATIONAL FUND which is money donated by National Assemblies, local Assemblies, groups and individual Bahá'ís from the whole world. The pounds, the dollars, the francs, the pesetas, the lira, the rials and all the other currencies used in the countries of the world flow into that wonderful reservoir of "wealth" which is so special and which alone has a spiritual foundation. This Fund administers the Faith the world over under the infallible guidance of the Universal House of Justice, and only those "trustees" know exactly how this money is used. Needless to say, it is used for the promotion of the Faith throughout the world.

From the foregoing it is immediately apparent that these Funds are of vital importance, are inter-dependent and need the support of every follower of Bahá'u'lláh.

In addition to these "housekeeping" funds of the Faith, there are others which the friends are asked to support. As the great world-wide Plans of the Faith are achieved and new Plans started, so the special Funds can change according to circumstances. At present the following are some of the Funds the friends are encouraged to support:

INTERNATIONAL DEPUTISATION FUND. This Fund helps to support pioneers at world level and is, therefore, administered by The Universal House of Justice. Its name indicates what it is. Friends who long to pioneer but who cannot go themselves often contribute to this Fund and, in so doing, deputise another to go in his or her stead. Similarly, local Assemblies may wish to send a pioneer, but are unable to release anyone, so they "deputise" another Bahá'í by donating to this Fund.

CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND. Many National Assemblies have been given goals of buying land for Temples, or buildings to be used as Hazíratu'l-Quds. They have also been given goals of helping other National Assemblies in this respect. Money required for this sort of project needs to be donated in addition to the monies needed for the every-day running of the Faith and that is why a special fund is launched. In the United Kingdom we call this the "Capital Projects Fund".

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE BUILDING FUND was opened when the Universal House of Justice commenced the construction of what must be one of the most important buildings the world has known. All monies contributed towards this fund go towards the construction of this most historic building.

TEMPLE FUNDS. At this stage in the development of the Faith only a few Houses of Worship have been built, but, wherever they are, the cost of their upkeep falls mainly on the National Assembly in whose country they stand. The House of Worship for the United Kingdom is the one for Europe, which is in Germany, and it is hardly fair to expect the German Bahá'í community (which is smaller than that of the United Kingdom) to pay entirely for the upkeep of this precious Temple. It is, therefore, important that we take a share of this responsibility and assist our "sister" Assembly in Germany as much as we are able. The National Assembly allocates each year a sum of money for the German Temple, and everyone should try from time to time to send a donation to the Frankfurt Temple Fund. It is also possible to make donations to other Temple Funds.

NATIONAL DEPUTISATION FUND. As the Five Year Plan progressed, the Universal House of Justice made a special call for travel teachers, especially for teams of permanent travel teachers who would assist in countries where most needed to help to win the goals of the Plan. The National Assembly set up this Fund, which, up to the present, has been used entirely for travel teachers. Those who long to travel teach and are not able to do so may deputise other friends to go in their stead.

CONTINENTAL FUNDS. These are the funds which help to assist the Continental Boards of Counsellors, their Board Members and Assistants to the Board Members in their work. It is the European Board of Counsellors which is the main concern of the United Kingdom, and each year the National Assembly sets aside a sum of money to donate to this fund. In addition, sums of money are donated to other Continental Funds. Some of the believers like to support these funds.

THE MOST IMPORTANT FUND. From time to time the friends ask which are the most important funds. The answer really is very simple — they are all important otherwise they would not exist. The Faith has to be administered, it has to develop; it is essential that it goes forward on all fronts. It would be an impossible situation, for example, if there were no money in the National Fund to enable the Faith to function and go forward, yet there were local Assemblies with money to spare in the bank. Similarly, how tragic it would be if the work of the Cause came to a halt at the World Centre for lack of funds, and yet there was money to spare in national and local funds. This is why on occasion it is necessary for the friends to be informed of the situation, and appeals are made both by the Universal House of Justice and the National Assemblies when the situation reaches danger level, so to speak.

The Guardian wrote:

"We must be like a fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows, undeterred by fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good — this is the secret of right living."

Through his secretary he wrote:

"He hopes that the friends will display a certain amount of faith and courage and not fear present economic conditions. We should not let financial considerations hamper our work and discourage us in rendering our services. Giving lavishly during days of plenty cannot be termed sacrifice. It applies only to our activities when depression and economic difficulties seem to block the way. . . Whatever we sacrifice at present is to assure the welfare of humanity and ourselves as members of it in the future."

Only we — the lovers of Bahá'u'lláh — have the privilege to serve Him.

Betty Goode,
National Treasurer,
1, Loddington Lane,
Belton, Uppingham, LE15 9LA

NOTICES

The editorial office continues to be inundated with requests for more or fewer copies of the BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL and changes of address. Distribution matters should be directed to the National Office where the BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL is distributed — the Editor is concerned only with editing.

DEADLINE: As the Bahá'í Journal must now await distribution with other National Assembly material, would the friends please observe the regular deadline dates — six weeks before the first day of the month in which it is scheduled for publication — as follows:

February issue	— deadline	— 15 December
April		15 February
June		15 April
August		15 June
October		15 August
December		15 October

Please send **TYPEWRITTEN** copy (PLEASE) and **black and white glossy photographs** to the Editor:

Lois Hainsworth (Mrs)
136 Thurlow Park Road,
West Dulwich,
London SE21

BIRTHS

[REDACTED]

MARRIAGES

- 11 February 1978: Fernæ Ansari (formerly of Ipswich) to Behnam Golmuhammadi, in Sweden.
- 17 February 1978: Margaret Gilroy to Robert Nocher, in Nithsdale.
- 18 March 1978: Taraneh Shahidi to Arthur Pee, in Stafford.
- 21 March 1978: Angela Moon to John Azami, in Westminster.
- 5 April 1978: Mary Christine Faulkner to Ian Martin Wemyss, in Elmbridge.
- 5 April 1978: Luciana Loi to Enayatullah Besharati, in Brighton.
- 15 April 1978: Ferdous Jalili to Manuchehr Khorassani, in Doncaster.
- 22 April 1978: Shahla Keivan to Christopher Boulton, in Hounslow.
- 22 April 1978: Shahpar Keivani to Iradj Paimi, in Hounslow.
- 29 April 1978: Carolyn Branson to Bibhas Neogi, in Waverley.
- 29 April 1978: Mary O'Malley to Michael Gallagher, in Dulwich.
- 1 May 1978: Mahnaz Shahidi to Richard Purdy, in Westminster.
- 1 May 1978: Teresa Petralli to Nassar Tabatabai, in Westminster.
- 1 May 1978: Katherine Evers to Terry Pickles, in Westminster.
- 1 May 1978: Gail Brand to Martin Cowie, in Hamilton.
- 1 May 1978: Khojasteh Oskins to Michael Freemantle, in Kidderminster.
- 22 May 1978: Lynda Howard to Russell Hill, in Brighton.

IRISH SUMMER SCHOOL
21—28 August
Newtown — Waterford

SUMMER SCHOOL, BEARWOOD COLLEGE, WINNERSH, WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE : 29 JULY — 13 AUGUST 1978

Approximate prices per week are: £25.00 for shared room, £30.00 for single room, £20.00 for children under twelve, under two are free. Superb recreational facilities. For more details write to the Registrar, Mrs Sue Hardy, 36 Summerlea Way, Lodge Farm Estate, Slough, Berkshire.

SUMMER SCHOOL, GLEN ISLA YOUTH HOSTEL, PERTH, SCOTLAND : 17—24 JUNE 1978

The splendid youth hostel in Glen Isla, twenty-three miles north of Perth, has been booked for a one-week Teaching/Study Summer School. There are excellent facilities for all visitors in beautiful surroundings and at very low cost. Accommodation for seventy-five has been booked at the hostel and the costs are £3.30 per day for those under twenty-one years, and £3.50 for those over twenty-one; (these prices include accommodation, three meals a day, youth hostel and car park charges). Teaching events and teams, as well as some deep study of the Faith, will be among the characteristics of this School.

Those interested in attending this Summer School are requested to book immediately by sending a deposit of £2.50 (which will be subtracted from their bill) to: Dr Singaraveloo, 17 Myrtle Park, Crosshill, Glasgow G42, Telephone No. 041-424-3123.

* * * * *

A FORUM FOR BAHÁ'Í HEALTH WORKERS
4/5 March — Manchester Bahá'í Centre

"When you fall ill, refer to the most able physicians. Verily, We have not done away with material means, rather have We confirmed them through this Pen that God has made the Dawning — Point of His resplendent Cause." (Kitáb-i-Aqdas)

"There are two ways of healing sickness, material means and spiritual means. The first is by the use of remedies, of medicines; the second consists in praying to God and in turning to Him. Both means should be used and practised."

(Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Vol. 3)

This first historic gathering of Bahá'ís involved in the health profession took place appropriately enough, during the period of the Fast. A wide variety of interests were represented in orthodox and alternative medicine, and other interested people, not directly associated with healing, attended.

The weekend commenced with a brief survey of some quotations on health and healing. The remainder of the sessions adopted the format of a short talk followed by discussion. Topics discussed were "Fasting", "Healing by Spiritual Means", "A General Practitioner's View", "A Patient's View", "Diet and Prevention", "World Medicine — problems, needs and wants today", and "Teaching and Pioneering Opportunities for Health Workers". Speakers included Dr Shahin Fathe' Azam, Mrs Naomi Long, Dr Ruth Mohammadi, Mr Rahbar Agah, Dr H. Ta'eed, Mrs Margaret Watkins and Dr Farhang Tahzib. Gratitude must be expressed to Farhang Tahzib, who co-ordinated the gathering.

Clearly there was a need for such a gathering — many of us practising in a non-Bahá'í world are faced with problems and dilemmas which sometimes conflict with Bahá'í beliefs.

The Writings available on health and healing, in English, are limited. Many of the quotations we have are responses to queries from individuals, hence care must be taken not to misconstrue them. During the course of the weekend, we all gained a deeper insight into the Writings.

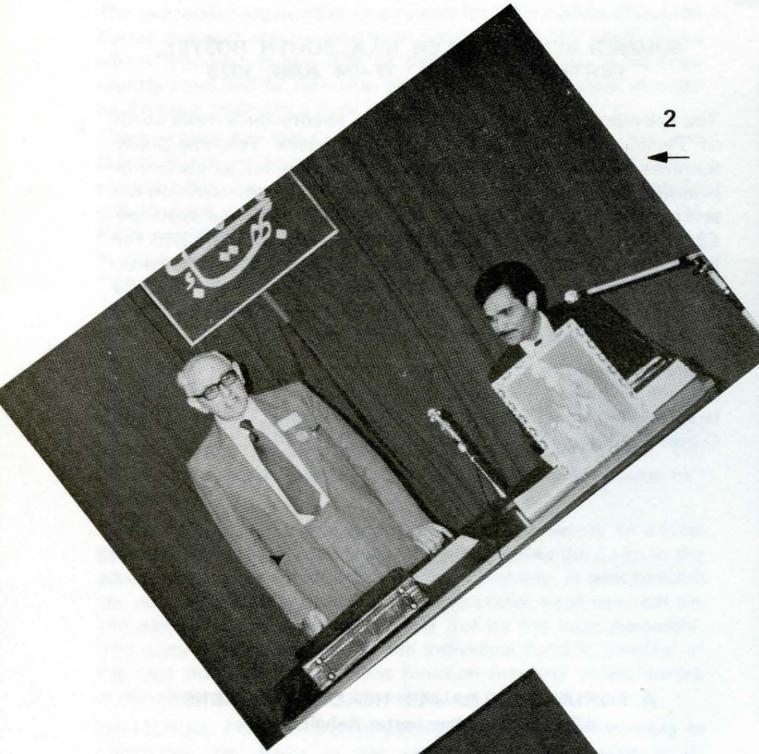
One point which cannot be re-iterated too often is that, as yet, there is no such thing as "Bahá'í Medicine" (just as there is no such thing as "Baha'í Music"). The Writings on this subject are meant to be broad guidelines, the details of which will be elucidated in the future. Medical science, as a whole, today, is very much in a state of infancy.

"The All-knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy."

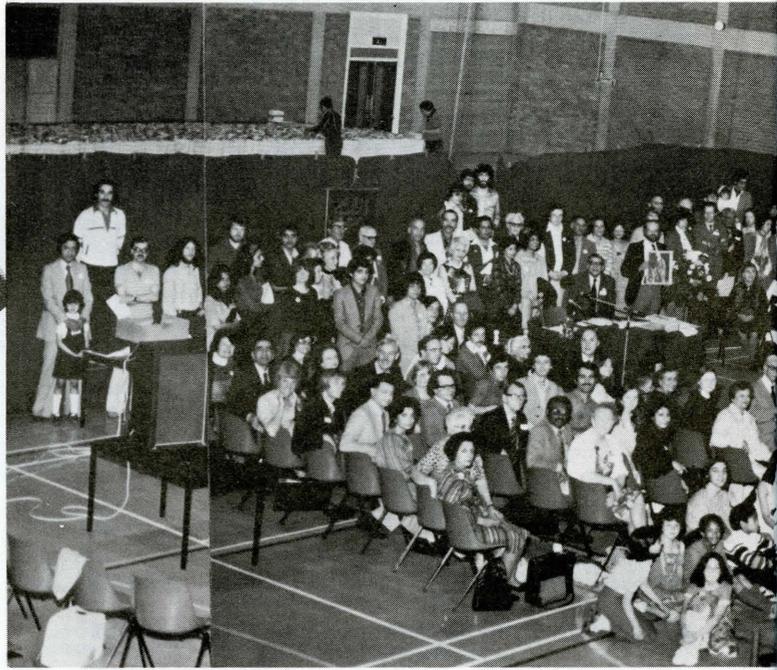
(Bahá'u'lláh)

The priority at this stage in world development is to spread the word of the Divine Physician — the rest will follow in its own good time.

Ruhiyyih Haqqoo



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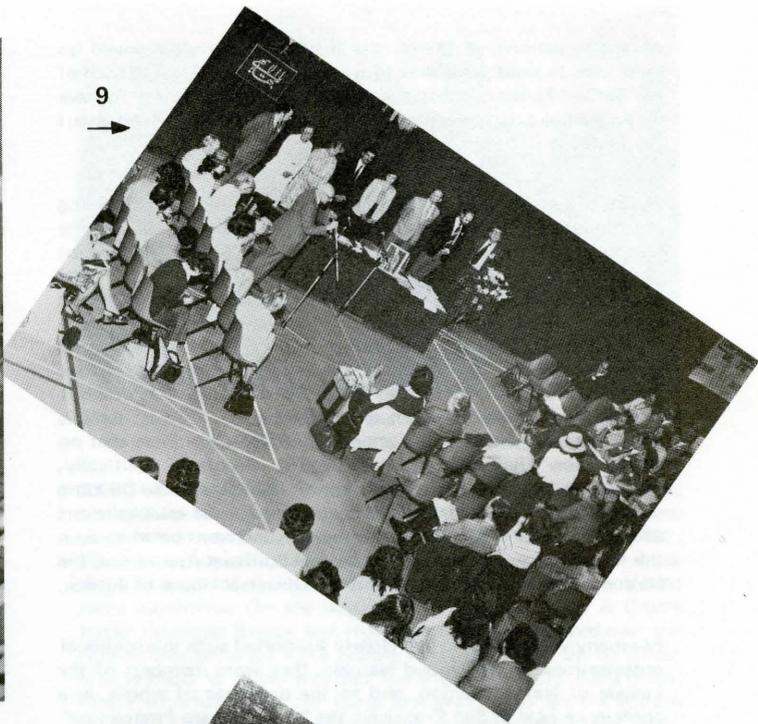
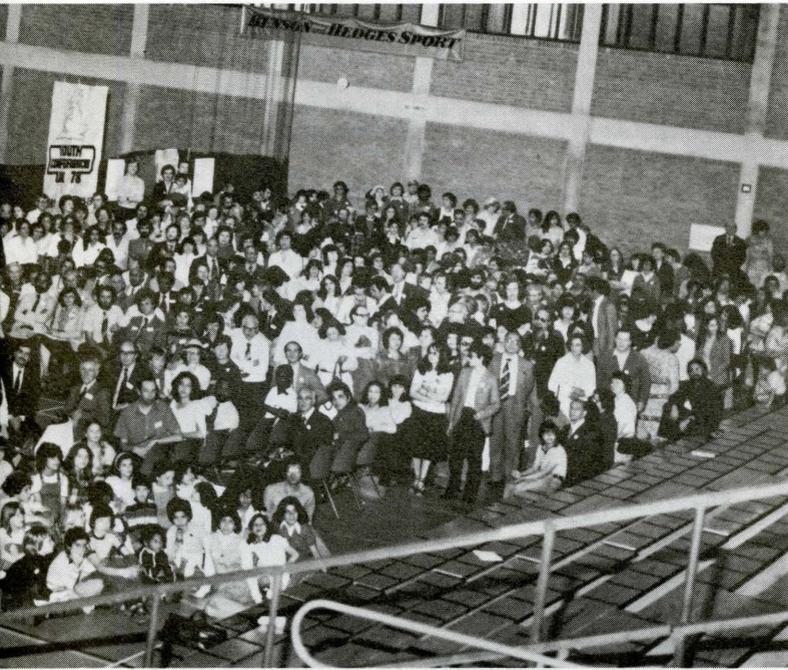


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- 1 Delegates and visitors
- 2 John Long (Convention Chairman) and Enayat Rawhani (Convention Secretary)
- 3 Keith Munro collecting votes for Convention Officers, also (l - r) Simon Mortimore, Kenneth Goode, Louis Ross-Enfield and Betty Goode
- 4 Martin Cortazzi entertaining a children's class
- 5 Hand of the Cause General Alá'í with Philip Hainsworth
- 6 Marion Hofman addressing Convention

Photographs by Brian Bailey, Michael Cooper, Lois h

CONVENTION

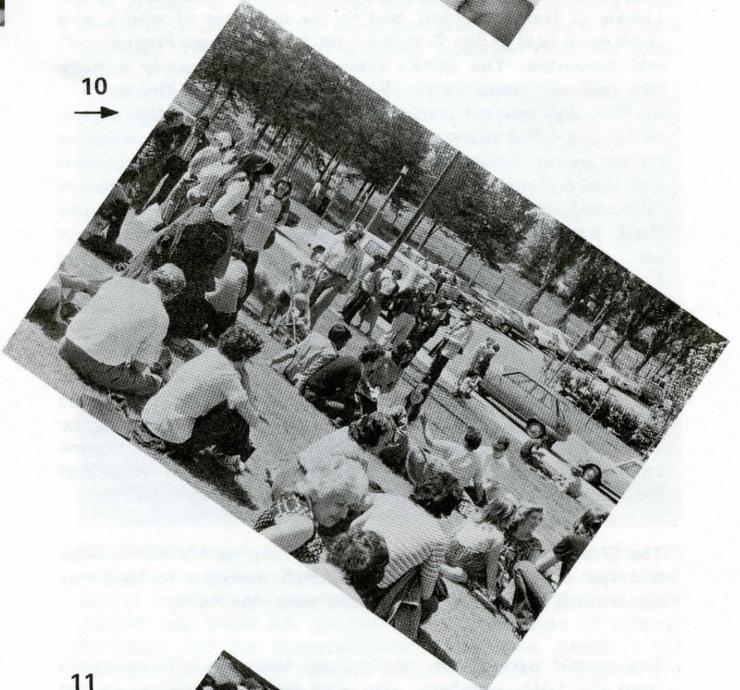


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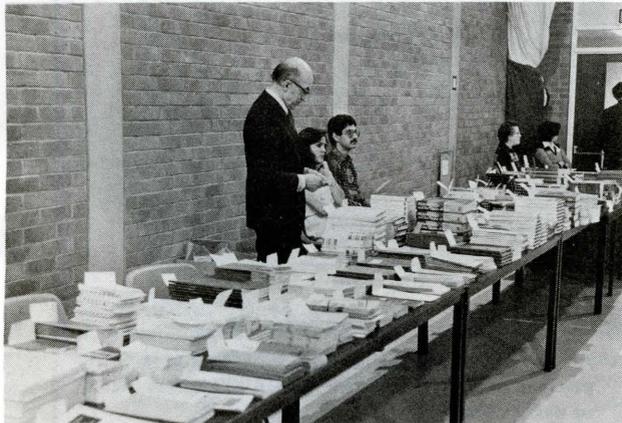
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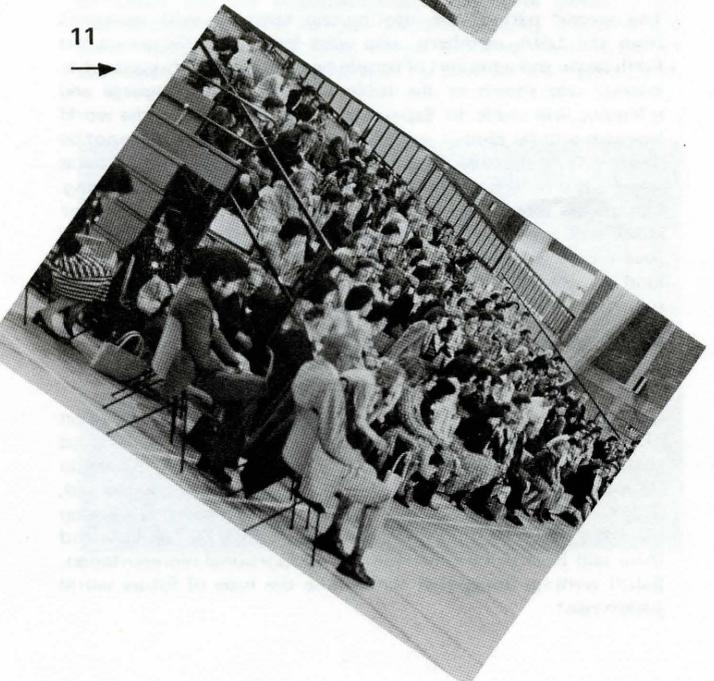
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7 Counsellor Betty Reed with Mary Kouchezadeh at right
 8 A part of the Publishing Trust sales counter
 9 The newly elected National Assembly – John Long (Chairman) at the microphone, (l - r) Simon Mortimore, Betty Goode (Treasurer), Barbara Lewis, Enayat Rawhani (Secretary), Mary Hardy, Ted Cardell, Keith Munro, Philip Hainsworth (Vice-Chairman)

10 Friends enjoying the sunshine during a break

11 A section of the visitors to Convention.

sworth and Goltasht Mossafaie, to whom many thanks.

At the beginning of March the Bahá'ís of Barnet received an invitation to send a speaker to a meeting of the local branch of the United Nations Association, and we were fortunate to have Philip Hainsworth come along and speak to UNA members about the Faith.

Philip began by giving an outline of the Faith and explaining the fundamental principle of the oneness of mankind; this theme having been latent in all past revelations. He defined the concept of progressive revelation, illustrating how Bahá'u'lláh is the fulfilment of all religions. Today we are witnessing the coming of age of mankind, the emergence from the national to the international level. Basically, the problem facing us today is how to live in peace with our fellow man; this is essentially a spiritual problem. Mankind will come to recognise its oneness and attempt to form a civilisation which will reflect this principle. Bahá'ís are seeking to draw to the attention of UNA members that no matter how they may seek to resolve problems politically, ultimately the answer is a spiritual one. Bahá'ís are now building up the institutions which will be necessary for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, he said, and went on to explain the functions and purpose of the Local Spiritual Assemblies, the National Spiritual Assemblies and the Universal House of Justice.

For many years Bahá'ís have closely supported such international organisations as the United Nations; they were members of the League of Nations Union, and to the delegates of which, at a conference held in San Francisco, the "Bahá'í Peace Programme" was presented. The Bahá'í International Community initially had observer status in the Economic and Social Council and in 1974 was granted consultative status. The advantage of this being that when matters of concern are raised, the consultative bodies are not only asked to be represented at national, regional and international gatherings, but also to produce consultative documents which are then circulated by the United Nations itself. Bahá'ís have presented to the United Nations numerous consultative documents, among them statements concerning human rights, racial prejudice, women's rights and the treatment of indigenous peoples in many countries, and have been invited to send representatives to conferences on such issues as law of the sea, crime prevention, world food, science and technology, population, narcotic drugs, youth, the family etc. It was interesting to note, Philip observed, that a UNESCO gathering in 1967 produced a document with reference to racial prejudice which began by stating that all men living today stem from the same race, and that this had confirmed scientifically what had been stated by Bahá'u'lláh more than a hundred years before.

The Chairman of the meeting thanked Philip for his introduction and said it was of great value to UNA members to have this opportunity of learning at first hand about the Faith.

The second part of the meeting was taken up with questions from the UNA members, who were keen to know where the Faith began and what sort of people became Bahá'ís. Considerable interest was shown in the subject of the world language and reference was made to Esperanto. They asked when the world language will be chosen and Philip explained that this cannot be decided until we have some form of world government. It was asked when in terms of years the Bahá'ís visualise this happening. Philip said that it is explicit in Bahá'í writings that the lesser peace will happen within this century and some form of world government will be established, although we do not know what kind of government this will be. It may not necessarily be a sympathetic government and this is one reason why it is of the greatest importance that Bahá'ís spread the message of Bahá'u'lláh around the world as quickly as possible.

One of the UNA members told the meeting that the Association of World Federalists is looking at the possibility of a third chamber at the United Nations and it is feasible that this could form a basis for a future world government. As Philip explained, it is impossible for any form of world government to develop from the present world charter of one country— one vote and there will have to be some form of proportional representation. Bahá'í writings imply that this will be the type of future world government.

The question was raised as to whether there would be any objection to Bahá'ís exerting pressure on governments, for instance in relation to apartheid. Philip said that Bahá'ís were always obedient to governments but that obedience does not necessarily mean that they support every government decision, and said that it is of more benefit to change people's hearts than to try to change the government.

In answer to a question about the Bahá'í attitude towards retirement and a suggestion that it is difficult for young people to find work if the old do not retire. Philip first of all stated that there was no specific teaching on the subject of retirement but on the subject of the Bahá'í attitude towards work he stressed the obligation to work. In a society where the extremes of poverty and wealth have been removed people will work because they want to. Drudgery will be eradicated by technological innovations and people will perform the jobs for which they are best suited. The future educational system will be different from that of today; the purpose of education being to discover and develop the talents and capabilities latent within each individual. This will produce a different kind of society, one in which the material benefits will be available to all peoples, but this essentially materialistic stage will usher in a "dark age" of plenty prior to a bright age based on a spiritual awareness.

The Chairman of the meeting expressed the hope that the Bahá'ís would support their future activities. Philip said he believed the Bahá'ís would give their support as far as possible, but indicated that there may well be occasions when the Bahá'ís might be unable to take part in UNA activities because for the Bahá'ís the needs of the Faith must always take precedence.

Mrs Diana Rameshni, Secretary of Barnet LSA, presented to the UNA members a copy of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Erá, which was gratefully received along with a number of pamphlets about the Faith.

THE FUND

Ways of making contributions to the Funds.

1. Directly (by cheque or postal order) to the National Treasurer:—

**Mrs Betty Goode,
8 Knowle Road,
Stafford ST17 0DN
Tel: Stafford 62157**

2. By Bank Giro directly to the bank which is:—

**The National Westminster Bank Ltd.,
186 Brompton Road,
London SW3**

Our account number is **18188443**

3. By Post Office Giro. Our number is **43 301 4008**
4. The Capital Projects Fund is in a separate account:—

**The National Westminster Bank Ltd.,
186 Brompton Road,
London SW3**

Account number **18188648**

POINTS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT

- A All cheques no matter for which Fund should be made payable to "NSA OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS" (please NOT to Betty Goode).
- B They should be 'crossed'.
- C It is unwise to send paper money or any money through the post unless it is registered.
- D Receipts are only sent if the donation is accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.
- E It is still cheaper to make Post Office Giro payments than to buy postal orders.
- F Friends wishing to donate by Deed of Covenant, please write directly about it to the National Treasurer.

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITIES

ABINGDON: A very successful exhibition was held in the Old Gaol, which is now a sports centre. It was lent to our community by Ted Cardell who also came and gave a slide show. We have also been given permission to display any Bahá'í poster, free of charge, at the centre, as the Manager was so interested in the exhibition. Other activities were a musical evening, which was attended by twelve non-Bahá'ís, a public meeting and a day school, which was attended by Auxiliary Board Member Adam Thorne. In addition, over this period of one week, a number of firesides were held. Altogether thirty non-Bahá'ís attended this series of meetings, only four of whom had previously attended meetings during the previous six months.



CAMBRIDGE: The two photographs above show a part of the exhibition made by the Cambridge Assembly which was reported in the April issue of BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL. The Cambridge friends will be happy to lend the exhibition as they wish the greatest possible use to be made of it. As can be seen, it is excellent — any community wishing to borrow it should get in touch with the secretary of the Cambridge Assembly.

EASTBOURNE: A successful one day school was held in the home of the Azizi family on 26 February which was attended by 103 Bahá'ís and their friends. There were three talks — Sydney Barrett on "Life after Death", Roger Prentice on "Bahá'í Education" and Nabil Mustafa on "The Bahá'í Vision of a World Community". In addition a film was shown about a Bahá'í Exhibition in Teheran, and the school closed with an excellent panel. It was a truly wonderful day which everyone enjoyed. Photograph right shows Roger Prentice giving his talk.



First Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Penwith, Bernard Leach, CH, holding the Greatest Name.

OXFORD: The Bahá'í Society of Oxford Polytechnic organised a slideshow and talk on 23 February when Ted Cardell was invited to show his programme "SOME MEANING TO LIFE". The event was well publicised by posters and handouts, and use also was made of the loudspeakers over which the News is read every lunchtime. On the day of the event two Seals & Crofts tracks (Summer Breeze and Hummingbird) were played over the system; this attracted a few people to the Students' Union Office who wanted to know whether the Musicians were Bahá'ís and others who just liked the songs and wanted to get the Album Numbers. The event itself attracted seventeen searching souls.



SOUTHWARK: A very successful one-day school for children was held in Belair Mansion, Dulwich. Eight communities and several nationalities were represented and the children were divided into three age groups. Classes were given in history, principles and the responsibilities. There were games in the beautiful park and the children had a thoroughly enjoyable and useful day. A Jumble Sale, which included small items for purchase by the children, raised £24 for the Capital Projects Fund.



ONE YEAR YOUTH PLAN

The entire Bahá'í community is deeply aware that although there is but one **remaining year** of the Five Year Plan, there are **yet** many goals to be achieved. This is not a time for despondency, however, since we all know in our hearts that the goals of the Plan, even at this 'late hour', can not only be achieved but can also be gloriously surpassed.

The beloved Guardian said of the United Kingdom Bahá'í community that "the admiration and esteem in which a community, relatively small in numbers, strictly limited in resources. . . is held by its sister and daughter communities in every continent of the globe. . . must be further enhanced". "The historic process", he continued, ". . . must. . . yield such a harvest as will astonish the entire Bahá'í world". With these thoughts uppermost in our minds and with hearts unfailingly prepared to receive the bounteous love and guidance of Bahá'u'lláh, we must ALL make a supreme individual effort to arise and serve the Cause with such vigour and determination as would astonish even ourselves.

The rôle of youth has long been a determining factor in the success of former Plans given to us by the Universal House of Justice. In those countries which have already surpassed the goals of the Five Year Plan, it is evident that youth has played a vital part. Indeed, the Universal House of Justice has written that "the vast reservoir of spiritual energy, zeal and idealism resident in Bahá'í youth, which so effectively contributed to the success of the Nine Year Plan, must be directed and lavishly spent for the proclamation, teaching and consolidation of the Cause".

In order that the youth of the United Kingdom may be given a direct and challenging responsibility in the final year of the Five Year Plan, and may be given the opportunity of contributing effectively to the goals of the National Spiritual Assembly's 'Programme for Victory', the National Youth Committee has devised a ONE YEAR YOUTH PLAN. The goals of this Plan have been chosen because we have every confidence that they can readily be achieved by the dedication so apparent in the youth of this country. They also give an invaluable opportunity for the National Youth Committee and the youth themselves to proceed hand-in-hand in working for the progress of the Faith.

We believe that the One Year Youth Plan will encourage all youth to arise in service at this critical time and will serve as a spring-board for fulfilling ALL the remaining goals of the Programme For Victory.

EMPHASIS ON YOUTH**May 1978 — April 1979****1. OPENING OF DISTRICTS**

It is hoped that the following unopened districts will be opened to the Faith by the youth, either by teaching or pioneer moves:

District	Main town(s)
Basildon (Essex)	Basildon
Boston (Lincolnshire)	Boston
Caradon (Cornwall)	Looe and Liskeard
Clydebank (Strathclyde)	Clydebank
Dunfermline (Fife)	Dunfermline
East Lindsey (Lincs.)	Skegness and Louth
Fareham (Hampshire)	Fareham
Fenland (Cambridgeshire)	March and Wisbech
High Peak (Derbyshire)	Buxton and Glossop
Malvern Hills (Hereford and Worcester)	Great Malvern and Ledbury
Medway (Kent)	Rochester and Chatham
North Shropshire	Whitchurch and Wem
North Tyneside (Tyne and Wear)	Tynemouth and Wallsend
Rossendale (Lancashire)	Rawtenstall
Rotherham (South Yorkshire)	Rotherham
Sandwell (West Midlands)	West Bromwich
Scilly Isles	Hughtown
South Derbyshire	Swadlincote
Southend-on-Sea (Essex)	Southend-on-Sea
South Tyneside (Tyne and Wear)	Sunderland
Tonbridge and Malling (Kent)	Tonbridge and Hadlow
Vale Royal (Cheshire)	Northwich and Winsford
West Lothian	Linlithgow and Bathgate
West Norfolk	King's Lynn

Highlands and Islands: The youth are to open ONE district from the four currently unopened districts of Badenoch and Strathspey (Aviemore and Kingussie), Banff and Buchan* (Banff, Fraserburgh and Peterhead), Lochaber (Fort William and Mallaig) and Nairn (Nairn and Cawdor).

* district with college

Northern Ireland: The youth are to open TWO districts from the twelve currently unopened districts of

Armagh*	Ballymena*
Ballymoney	Banbridge*
Fermanagh (Enniskillen)	Cookstown*
Down (Downpatrick)	Dungannon
Limavady*	Moyle (Ballycastle)
Omagh	Strabane*

* district with college

2. FORMATION OF LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

The youth are to be directly involved in the formation of local spiritual assemblies in the following goal areas of the Programme for Victory, by concentrated teaching efforts and/or by pioneering moves.

District	Main town(s)
Ards (Northern Ireland)	Newtownards
Brecknock (Powys)	Brecon
Brentwood (Essex)	Brentwood
Colwyn (Clwyd)	Colwyn Bay
followed by	
Aberconwy (Gwynedd)	Llandudno, Conwy and Llanrwst
Ettrick and Lauderdale (Borders)	Galashiels and Melrose
Great Yarmouth (Norfolk)	Great Yarmouth
Guernsey (Channel Islands)	
Hartlepool (Cleveland)	Hartlepool
Mendip (Somerset)	Wells, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet and Frome
Moray (Grampian)	Elgin and Buckie
Nottingham	Nottingham
South Kesteven (Lincolnshire)	Grantham and Stamford
Tynedale (Northumberland)	Hexham
West Wiltshire	Warminster and Trowbridge

It is stressed that the formation of local assemblies within the above districts is the goal of ALL youth and not simply those youth resident within the same area as the goal district itself.

3. GOALS OF THE LOCAL YOUTH COMMUNITIES

Where a number of youth are resident within the same administrative area, or where youth from neighbouring administrative areas can meet together, they are to arrange study classes and discussion groups in order to deepen themselves in the Writings and Teachings of the Faith. These meetings should be held as often as possible.

Whenever possible, the youth are to meet together to say dawn prayers.

4. PERSONAL GOALS

Each youth is to ensure that he or she

- attends Firesides and Feasts regularly;
- says the obligatory prayers daily;
- learns a number of Bahá'í prayers by heart — preferably one every Bahá'í month and including the Tablet of Ahmad, the Tablet of Visitation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the obligatory prayers;
- regularly studies the Writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Guardian and commentaries on the Faith — notably the Kitáb-i-Iqán, Gleanings, Some Answered Questions, The Dawnbreakers, God Passes By, Wellspring of Guidance, Pattern of Bahá'í Life, Advent of Divine Justice, The Gift of Teaching and The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá;
- compiles a personal library of Bahá'í books: it should be remembered that these will serve as the individual's guide for the rest of his or her life;
- studies material appropriate to the protection and persecution of the Faith;

(g) takes every opportunity to proclaim the Faith at school, college or at work, and bears in mind the following teaching campaign of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States:

"If only one with soul on fire arose to serve
his heart's desire,
With knowledge, wisdom, love and care,
Seeks someone with whom to share —
One, two, four and eight —
We wouldn't have so long to wait.
We could set the world ablaze
By following this simple phrase:
EACH ONE TEACH ONE, SCATTER THROUGH THE
LAND:
TOGETHER, INDIVIDUALLY, REACH THE HEART
OF MAN.
Each one, teach one, watch our numbers grow;
If each would teach
We'd have One World for Bahá'u'lláh."

(h) contributes as much and as often as possible to the National Fund.

* * * * *

5. NATIONAL YOUTH COMMITTEE GOALS

In order to avoid giving the impression that the National Youth Committee is merely giving the youth a series of goals whilst the committee sits on the sideline and shouts encouragement from a great distance, the committee has agreed to adopt its own goals for the Youth Plan. In this way the committee and the youth in general can truly work hand-in-hand for the progress of the precious Cause in the United Kingdom.

Accordingly, the National Youth Committee will strive to

- (a) arrange at least five of its future meetings before Ridván 1979 in goal areas, in order that the committee members may be given the opportunity to initiate or participate in teaching activities within those districts during the weekends of its meetings;
- (b) arrange at least
 - (i) one teaching event and
 - (ii) one deepening event
 in each of the following areas: Northern Ireland; Highlands and Islands; South and Central Scotland; Northern England; Wales and The Marches; Midlands and East and South and South West.
- (c) produce and publish further topics in the committee's deepening by correspondence series to assist the youth in their personal and group deepening activities; and
- (d) provide as much assistance as possible to the youth in fulfilling the goals of the One Year Youth Plan.

* * * * *

Whilst it is not a specific goal of the One Year Youth Plan, each individual is requested to inform the National Youth Committee of recent or current teaching or deepening activities; give details of successes and apparent 'failures' in these activities; and send his or her comments or criticisms of the National Youth Committee's current or proposed activities.

"...The Bahá'í youth... can contribute so decisively to the virility, the purity and the driving force of the life of the Bahá'í community, and upon them must depend the future orientation of its destiny, and the complete unfoldment of the potentialities with which God has endowed it." — Shoghi Effendi

SCOTTISH SPRING SCHOOL and TEACHING PROJECTS

The school attracted 115 Bahá'ís representing almost all the assemblies in Scotland ranging from Shetland Islands to Dumfries and the Orkney Islands to Mull. The theme of the school was "The Gift of Teaching". The idea was to make the school a springboard for teaching projects in goal areas in the West of Scotland. Five projects were organised and a total of sixty-eight people from the school supported the projects. The school was greatly enhanced by the presence of our two Auxiliary Board Members and by generous and inspiring telegrams from the Universal House of Justice, the National Assembly and from our "twin" school in Henley.

The school was organised and planned by a committee of three people, one of whom has been a Bahá'í for only six months, whose average age was twenty-two years. The school was organised in two months and was run entirely by youth.

The football match we had organised was featured in an interview broadcast twice on Radio Clyde and press releases on the game

were sent to over thirty local newspapers in Scotland, and to television and local radio stations.

Dunoon, Oban, Dunbarton, Dumfries and Etterick and Lauderdale were the focus of the teaching projects. Edinburgh Assembly produced about 8000 invitations which were delivered throughout the areas and which included details of the meetings, telephone numbers and a list of Bahá'í principles. In Dunoon a steady stream of people visited the exhibition, many more would have seen twelve very large Bahá'í posters which were prominently displayed throughout the town. Dunoon is an American base of 1300 sailors. The captain of the ship announced to the full 1300 people at morning assembly the details of our week's activities. In Oban the spirit was such that one travel teacher from Glasgow who intended supporting the project for a week-end has now pledged himself for six months!! Plans of a concert in Galashiels in Etterick & Lauderdale attracted a mini-bus load of twelve Bahá'ís from Aberdeen although this meant a journey of over 550 miles in a week-end.

BRIAN O'TOOLE

HUQUQU'LLÁH

در توجیه مناسبت مبارک ترموز سوم شهر اشته ۹۹ خطاب بمجلس ملی ایران میفرماید:

قوله غزبیانه: سؤال در باب انتقال خانه مسکونی والیبه مخصوصه واثاث البیت از

طریق ارشاد بفرشته که آیا وراثت هم از تادیبه حقوق آنها معافند یا خیر فرمودند:

خانه مسکونی واثاث البیت واسباب کار چون نصب قاطع از حقوق الله معاف

گشته در حین انتقال نیز از تادیبه حقوق معاف است.

In April 1977 the first Bahá'í Studies Seminar took place at the University of Lancaster and there was a similar seminar in April 1978. Peter Smith convened both and his summaries of the two events follow:

BAHÁ'Í STUDIES SEMINAR, LANCASTER, April 1977.

The Bahá'í studies seminar was held at the University of Lancaster, under the joint aegis of the Department of Sociology and the Department of Religious Studies. It was attended by academics from Belgium and the Netherlands as well as from the United Kingdom and consisted of a number of papers presented by individuals involved in "Bahá'í Studies".

Denis MacEoin (University of Cambridge) presented a paper: "The eighteenth century reformation in Shi'ism — its background and influence", in which he emphasised the need to study Shaykhism in the context of the contemporary developments in Shi'ism and described the factors which led up to the revolution in Shi'í thinking, which was in progress at the time of Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í's arrival at the Shi'í Shrines in Íraq in the 1790s. In particular, Mr MacEoin stressed the conflict between the Usulí and Akhbari schools of thought and the central concern with the search for a living source of authority in the absence of the Hidden Imam.

Moojan Momen presented an account, "Some problems connected with the Yazd episode of 1850", in which the marked discrepancies of dates for Váhid's stay in Yazd immediately prior to the Nayríz upheaval were described and an attempt made to unravel the true chronology. Dr Momen also presented extracts from his work on the records of the Church Missionary Society pertaining to the activities of a group of Bábís in Isfahan in the 1870s and to the encounters between various missionaries and the Bahá'ís, particularly 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in 'Akká, also in the 1870s.

Peter Smith (University of Lancaster) presented a paper, "The routinisation of charisma? Some comments on Peter L. Berger's 'Motif messianique et processus social dans le Baháisme' " in which he reviewed the work of the American sociologist Peter Berger on the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths. Mr Smith argued that in a modified form the approach taken by Professor Berger was of value in the study of Bábí-Bahá'í history and demonstrated its applicability with respect to the evolution of certain historical "motifs" and to changes in leadership.

This seminar, as far as is known, is the first University sponsored academic study of the Faith ever held, and was in response to the present situation in which no less than six people in Europe are engaged in doctoral research into aspects of the Faith.

BAHÁ'Í STUDIES SEMINAR, LANCASTER, April 1978.

This year's Bahá'í Studies Seminar at the University of Lancaster was again held with the co-operation of the Departments of Sociology and Religious Studies whose support is gratefully acknowledged.

The historical papers ranged considerably in time and locale: from the reactions of Shaykhi leaders to the emergence of the Bábí religion in the 1840s (MacEoin), through the time later in the century when the Persian Bahá'í community came into contact with Christian missionaries in Írán (Momen) and established a community in nearby Ishqábád in Russian Turkestan (Lee), to the development of the Bahá'í Faith in the West, specifically in turn-of-the-century America (Smith), and Finland in the 1950s (Peltola). A common theme which might be discerned in most of the historical papers is the way in which Bábí and Bahá'í communities have evolved into relative independence from their various milieus: from a movement within Shaykhism to an independent religious community bitterly condemned by the new Shaykhi leadership; from a *de facto* part of the newly established Persian Shi'í community in Ishqábád to an independent religious community officially recognised by the government and possessing its own distinctive institutions; from a loosely organised part of the "cultic milieu" of early twentieth century America, to a more tightly organised community with a stronger sense of its separate identity and mission; and from an individualistic "Bahá'í Society" whose members retained nominal membership of the state church, to

an independent religious community officially recognised by the Finnish authorities. In two of these cases (Lee, Peltola) governmental recognition has been an important feature in this evolutionary process, whilst in the Bábí case governmental and clerical opposition was a major factor; in two cases (MacEoin, Smith) internal tensions within the community contributed significantly, and in the 'Ishqábád, American and Finnish examples external directives from central Bahá'í authorities were important.

In Denis MacEoin's (Cambridge) paper, "The Shaykhi reaction to Babism in the early period", which was presented for him in his absence, the emergence of the Bábí religion from Shaykhism in the years following the death of Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashti in 1843 was described, as was the reaction of those Shaykhis who refused to accept the Báb's claims. In particular the position of Háji Mullá Muḥammad Karim Khán-i-Kirmáni, who was eventually able to establish his ascendancy over the Shaykhi sect (and whose descendants have retained that leadership to the present day) was examined. It was argued that Karim Khán modified some of the more controversial Shaykhi teachings in order to affect a rapprochement with the orthodox majority and to "distance" the Shaykhi community from the Bábís as the latter increasingly came into conflict with the traditional authorities of religion and state.

Moojan Momen's (Cambridge) paper, "Early contacts between Christian missionaries and Bahá'ís in Persia" documented the contacts between the two groups from the Bábí period up to about 1910. Special emphasis was given to the perceptions of the Bahá'ís which the British (in Southern Írán) and American (in the North-West) missionaries formed. It was argued that in both cases a similar pattern was discernable, that is: initial sympathy for an oppressed community which was seen as a liberal group within Persian society as a whole, from amongst whom Christian converts could be won, followed by strain as the missionaries realised that the Bahá'ís were rivals in the field of conversion.

Anthony Lee (Los Angeles) presented a paper, "The rise of the Bahá'í Faith in 'Ishqábád from its beginnings to the Russian Revolution", in which he reviewed the history of a community which he described as being the "most complete Bahá'í community which has ever existed", enjoying an unparalleled degree of official recognition and social prestige; having a well developed and close-knit administrative and social network; and possessing a number of institutions: House of Worship, meeting hall, schools, clinic, library, and printing press, the combination of which was unique. Particular attention was given to the events relating to the murder of the prominent Bahá'í, Háji Muḥammad Ridáy-i-Isfáhání, in 1889, which led to the recognition of the Bahá'ís as an independent religious community by the Russian authorities. Lee's paper was also interesting in its use of the techniques of oral history, he having conducted extensive interviews with former members of the 'Ishqábád community.

Peter Smith (Lancaster) in a paper entitled, "The American Bahá'í Community, 1896-1925: emergence from a cultic milieu", sought to identify the main themes in early American Bahá'í history, giving particular attention to questions of authority. Part of the paper consisted of a description of the gradual emergence of a national administrative structure, centering on the Bahá'í Temple Unity. It was argued that as many early American Bahá'ís came from a particular religious background (the Metaphysical Movement) which inclined them towards suspicion of "organisation", tensions were engendered within the American Bahá'í community by this emerging administration. These tensions came to a head at the time of the First World War, after which there was a greater acceptance of organisational forms which presaged later developments during the period of the Guardianship and which marked the American Bahá'í community's emergence from a cultic milieu.

Harri Peltola's (Helsinki) paper, "The history of the Bahá'í Faith in Finland: a case study in the sociology of counter-cultures", presented an historical account of the Finnish Bahá'í community from its earliest converts, through the establishment of the Helsinki "Bahá'í Society" in the 1950s, to the modern community, officially registered as an independent religious grouping. Mr Peltola also outlined the research methods he proposes to employ in the extended study of the Finnish Bahá'ís on which he is at present working, in particular discussing the sociological concept of the "counter-culture" as a means of analysing the modern Finnish community.

A very different area of interest was opened up by Denise Mossop (Lancaster) who presented a paper, "The Mediator rôle of Bahá'í: a comparison of Sufi and Bahá'í mysticism" in which she attempted to show that despite superficial similarities in terminology and expression, Sufi and Bahá'í mysticism were dissimilar. Whilst Sufism was essentially a sectarian development within Islám which stressed the importance of the inner spiritual path (*tariqa*), at times in contradistinction to the outer law (*shari'a*) enjoined on the majority of Muslims; Bahá'í attempted to join inner path and outer law in a single unitary religious system, thus adopting a mediatory stance.

Papers

The paper by Lee represents a revised version of a paper presented at the third annual meeting of the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith, 30 December, 1977 – 1 January, 1978, Vancouver, B.C.

At present copies of the papers by Lee, MacEoin, Momen and Mossop are available at cost from the individuals concerned. The papers by Momen and Smith will appear in a forthcoming publication edited by Moojan Momen, entitled "*Studies in Bahá'í History*" and published by George Ronald of Oxford.

LONDON YOUTH CONFERENCE



Barbara Zaeri speaking at the conference; Andrew Goodwin in the Chair.

On 5 March 1978 some of the youth in London met at the National Centre for a one-day conference on the importance, and ways, in which some of the local goals could be achieved. The morning session started at 10.30 a.m. and consisted of two talks. The first was given by Enayat Rawhani on "The Importance of Achieving the Goals". He said that we are privileged to have our goals, and that our own personal plans should be sacrificed for the plans of the institutions. This was followed by a very moving talk given by Zebbie Whitehead, who told us of his memories of the beloved Guardian of the Faith.

As the conference took place during the Fast, during the lunch break we walked through Hyde Park, savouring the smells of the hamburger stalls.

The afternoon session started with a talk by Mary Hardy, who gave some sound advice on how to teach. The friends then broke up into small discussion groups to consult on different aspects of teaching. Each group gave a summary of the results of their discussions to finish the session.

Following this, the friends were organised into teaching groups to visit local goal areas. One of these groups went to Stevenage the following weekend to fill in questionnaires on the Faith. It achieved a 38% positive response from the total of eighty people who were interviewed.

Andrew Goodwin

INTERNATIONAL NEWS



IRAN: A report on Bahá'í children's classes in Iran illustrates a special consideration for those who may be planning to inaugurate similar classes elsewhere.

"In Iran we have many examples over the past fifty years of non-Bahá'ís who have sent their children to Bahá'í classes. Many of those children are now responsible officers of government, and wherever they are, they are very sympathetic and helpful to the Faith. . . We have quite a number of non-Bahá'í children attending classes in various towns with the consent and persuasion of their parents.

MALAWI: Two pioneers to Rhodesia, Mr and Mrs Philip Harvey, were able to undertake a week-long travel teaching trip to Malawi during the summer, thereby helping to fulfil one of the Five Year Plan obligations of Rhodesia. The Rhodesian National Assembly, which arranged the trip, has found it increasingly difficult for its own believers to get permission to travel in Malawi.

The Harveys were also able—accidentally—to assist Malawi with one of its own Five Year Plan goals: contact with the higher echelons of the police and government.

While lunching at the home of their hosts, a police inspector arrived with instructions to convey "the strangers" to the office of the Commissioner of Police. The commissioner was shocked when he saw Mrs Harvey, since he did not know a European woman intended to travel in the sometimes troubled countryside. However, the Commissioner knew of the Faith, applauded its aims, and expressed the desire not to hamper the Harveys' movements. When, upon his advice, they agreed to cancel an overnight stay in a more unstable part of the country, he was very relieved. Meanwhile, Mr Harvey, preparing to leave the Commissioner's office, picked up a small bundle of Bahá'í pamphlets and turned to go. But the Commissioner extended his hands, saying "My hands are begging for your gift." He took the pamphlets, and said, "Not only will I read these, but my deputy and my assistant shall read them thoroughly also."

When the police inspector returned the Harveys to the home of their hosts, Mr and Mrs Luka Mlungu, he asked the family: "How are you going to feed these Europeans?" When told that the visitors would share African food with the family, the inspector was astonished. Even the most dedicated missionaries never did this; it was unheard of!



Over 150 Bahá'í youth from every Central American country and from Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and the United States attended an International Bahá'í Youth Conference 6–9 January in San Jose, Costa Rica. The conference was sponsored jointly by the Continental Board of Counsellors for Central America and the National Spiritual Assembly of Costa Rica.

On subsequent days in Malawi, the Harveys travelled by car and on foot to many villages, among them Chilemele, Umi, Jali Paluse, St Mary's, Zomba, Zamasiya, Limbe, and Livalo. The Area Teaching Committee for the region, which held its first meeting after the Harveys arrived, accompanied them on many of their trips. Some of the meetings were held in the new regional Hazíratu'l-Quds at Umi, some in the homes of Bahá'ís in the villages, and some along the roadside.

"We went to Malawi to help and to encourage the Bahá'ís", the Harveys said in their report. "We wanted to give, but we also received. We received a great uplift in our hearts at perceiving the love for and devotion to Bahá'u'lláh of the entire Bahá'í community, and we look forward eagerly to repeating the experience and renewing the association with this particular part of our Bahá'í family."

NIGERIA: The National Spiritual Assembly of Nigeria has reported that between January and September 1977, a total of fourteen villages have been opened to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Eleven of these villages have now elected local spiritual assemblies and in six villages local Bahá'í Centres are under construction. Teachers in the field commented to the National Assembly that there is every indication that the Cause could spread much further in the area in a short time.

PARAGUAY: Last November saw the initiation of the national radio project of Paraguay, with transmissions in six cities. Three times a week five-minute programmes proclaim the Faith. During a visit of Counsellor Mas'ud Khamsi the radio series was initiated with an interview of twenty minutes with Mr Khamsi on the most popular radio station of the capital on 1 November.

Following up this proclamation, two members of the radio committee were interviewed for thirty minutes on another radio station in Asuncion, held on 7 November.

In view of the fact that there is only one television channel in Asuncion, this has been an enormous proclamation at no cost at all to the Fund.

THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS by Udo Schæfer

Reviewed by Hugh McKinley

Human contention has found no magnetic centre greater than Theology; no subject more demanding of precise intellectual definitions than that God Who abides above consciousness, depth, breadth and height; no message but the Message of Jesus, '... "that ye love one another even as I love you"', about which to set up barriers, initiate pogroms, prosecute religious (sic) wars, and disseminate unloving sectarianism.

All this is minutely — and even rather too personally — displayed in Dr Schæfer's book and, while the author's sincerity is undoubted, the vigour of his exposure of today's German Protestant negative theology might well have been deflected to allow us more detail of that living, organic Order that Bahá'u'lláh, Christ returned, has brought as "sole refuge" for a distracted humanity.

For Europeans, there is much of contemporary interest. For practising Christians, less so. And, throughout, there is no mention of the Orthodox (Eastern) Church that, rightly or wrongly, regards itself as the sole custodian of the only True Christian Faith. The Eastern Church was never Evangelical — with the one exception of the mission to Russia (a highly successful one) — and Greek Orthodoxy has sedulously occupied itself with preserving the Byzantine Christian heritage. In the days of the great Church Councils, Christendom was one and, though frequently excommunicate, varying groups or their leaders still regarded themselves and their opponents as all parts of the one Christian body. Protestant sectarianism has become far more virulent than this and it is rather to the healing call of the Lord of the Judgement Day that Bahá'ís and those interested in this latest Revelation of God's purpose for mankind may best turn:

"O Concourse of priests! The Day of Reckoning hath appeared, the Day whereon He Who was in heaven hath come. He, verily, is the One Whom ye were promised in the Books of God."¹

Vis-à-vis the purely conventional Christian viewpoint, there is a wealth of material for those able and willing to enter these water-logged fields of theological dissention. In his treatment of Islám the author is explicit, positive and enlightening; but again rather too much concerned with the 'erroneous' conventional Christian standpoint for the full impact of the Arabian Prophet's

manifestation to be felt as it was by those who came directly under His sway.

Although personal confrontation and the refutation of unsound doctrinal stance is stimulating, one is reminded, reading this closely-argued, closely-written analysis of current Christian waywardness, of the words of Bahá'u'lláh that, "if you talk to a stone for a thousand years, it will still remain a stone."

THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS is, therefore, an interesting addition to Bahá'í literature; a source of information on current metaphysical speculation rather than a direct presentation of the Call of God. As the blessed Báb revealed:

"The Day of Resurrection is a day on which the sun riseth and setteth like unto any other day. How oft hath the Day of Resurrection dawned, and the people of the land where it occurred did not learn of the event. Had they heard, they would not have believed, and thus they were not told!"²

One returns, exasperated by human presumption, abashed by God's unceasing mercy, to the original Scripture of the Bahá'í Revelation after this deadly insight into the roots and causes of European social unrest and moral collapse; glad to have been informed, overwhelmed by the bounty of having been permitted to attain unto belief:

"The Hand of Omnipotence is stretched forth from behind the clouds; behold ye it with new eyes. The tokens of His majesty and greatness are unveiled; gaze ye on them with pure eyes. . . No man's acts shall be acceptable, in this Day, unless he forsaketh mankind and all that men possess, and setteth his face toward the Omnipotent One."³
Bahá'u'lláh³

References

- 1 THE PROMISED DAY IS COME — Shoghi Effendi. (U.S. 1941) p.105
- 2 SELECTED WRITING OF THE BÁB (Haifa, 1976) p.78
- 3 THE PROMISED DAY IS COME, p.80

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FILLING A LONG FELT NEED

We are delighted to announce that new editions of PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS and of GLEANINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH are now available.

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Compiled and translated by Shoghi Effendi

The complete works of Bahá'u'lláh, numbering above 150 considerable items, are unique for their variety, range, volume and profundity. The accurate translation of them all, including Tablets (or letters) perhaps yet to come to light, is a task which may not be completed for many decades.

To meet a growing need, particularly in the West, for an authentic rendering from the original Persian or Arabic of Bahá'u'lláh's chief teachings, the beloved Guardian set himself to translate some of the most important works and to make a compilation of the weightiest, and most significant passages.

These he brought together for publication in 1939 under the title "Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh." The 165 sections of the book, varying in length from a few lines to more than six pages, are taken from almost the full range of Bahá'u'lláh's works.

The most extensive selections are from the Book of Certitude (Kitáb-i-Iqán) from which he took 23 passages, totalling about 50 pages, combining them into six sections. The largest number of sections, at least nine, he chose from the Most Holy Book (Kitáb-i-Aqdas). Probably more than one hundred works are represented with one or more passages. Some 21 different recipients are named in the text, some several times, ranging from the Sultan of Turkey to Bahá'u'lláh's own 'postman' named Salman.

A Distinct Pattern

The arrangement of the book seems to follow a distinct pattern, though with much overlap of content, with a brief prelude and nine parts:—

Prelude

Section	Nos.	Subjects
i	1—2	Of God
ii	3—24	Day of God and ending of the Cycle of the Prophets.
iii	39—53	Bahá'u'lláh Himself and His Mission
iv	54—69	Leading scenes and incidents in his Ministry
v	70—97	The New Order and the high station of man revealed therein.
vi	98—121	The Kings and religious leaders in their reaction and attitude to the Cause
vii	122—125	The particular relation of man to God in this age
viii	126—150	Spiritual requirements of a true teacher
ix	151—165	Life and character of the true believer on earth

Arrangement of the Passages

It is clearly possible to discern connections between the parts forming this pattern. An attempt to trace a reason for the arrangement of the passages within each part can also be rewarding. The connections may in places be hard to make out, indeed the arrangement may be based at times on relative importance or the wish to associate passages together which treat of similar subjects. There is much overlap, though no duplication, and the dazzling wealth of the passages implies that any particular arrangement discerned cannot help but omit numerous aspects of great significance.

Memorable Passages

Many numinous passages stand out in the memory even after one reading. One such selection of longer passages, might include:

i. The opening prayer (1); ii. Tablet of Carmel (11); iii. Ridván Tablet, Colloquy with His Pen (14); iv. Tribute to Christ, the noblest ever penned (36); v. Afnán Tablet (43); vi. World's equilibrium upset (70); vii. Meaning of Divine Unity (84); viii. Prerequisites of peace (117); ix. Elected representatives of the people (120); x. The way of the righteous (130); xiii. Intone the verses of God (136); xiv. Rose garden of unfading splendour (151).

Indeed in this book are to be found a great number of the distinctive Bahá'í sayings which we should commit to memory, allow to take root in our innermost being and use to inspire us with compelling creative wisdom in our teaching work. For this reason "Gleanings" is the book of all books for reading first and last, when we plan our daily service to God and when we bring ourselves to account each night.

Subjects for special study are numberless. They can be taken one by one and traced through the book in many varied contexts. Such subjects would include: 1. The names and attributes of God. 2. The unity of God and His manifestations. 3. The commands of God, the true spiritual directives of the age. 4. The will or purpose of God. 5. The soul of man. 6. The duties of man. 7. Human needs. 8. Practical guidance. 9. Ingredients of the divine remedy for a lamentably defective society. 10. Consequences of failure to respond.

Choicest, Noblest Book

In this choicest, noblest of all books we have a fully authentic repository of the greatest utterances of God's Word for this age. Behind the perfections, vigour, scope, profundity of the words themselves stands the Author in the Glory of His unity with God expressing the utmost measure of truth the Tongue of Power can speak to mankind for at least a thousand years (165). The tone of the utterance varies, ranging from that of ringing command and sovereign authority through moving poetry, mystic import, cool diagnosis, divine wisdom, clear philosophy, to tender appreciation and heart-rending poignancy. Priorities are emphasised, spuriousness demolished and the challenging, startling not disdained.

Constant Endeavour

When God tells us about Himself, about His chosen Intermediaries, about His purposes in creating the heavens and the earth, about the potentialities of man and man's true reality, about the achievement of His great plan for mankind, what else is there to do but listen attentively and try to understand?

"Surely in this book better than in any other we can strive to obtain a more adequate understanding of the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's stupendous Revelation" which the beloved Guardian insisted "must remain the first obligation and the object of the constant endeavour of each one of the Faith's loyal adherents" (Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh p.8).

"Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My words, that ye may unravel its secrets, and discover all the pearls of wisdom that lie hid in its depths." (85)

"PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS"

By Bahá'u'lláh. Translated by Shoghi Effendi

This volume of 184 prayers and meditations, revealed at different moments during the 40-year long banishment of Bahá'u'lláh from His homeland, is an anthology selected by the beloved Guardian and originally translated for publication and devotional use during the American first Seven Year Plan. The words that Shoghi Effendi then wrote, in April 1938, are surely as relevant now as ever they were then: 'Community . . . believers . . . must at so critical stage in fortunes declining civilisation seek purge galvanise their souls through daily prayer meditation that can best sustain them in discharge task still initial stage development.' 'Summoning their aid vitalising influence "Prayers and Meditations" which Author their Faith Himself unto Bahá'u'lláh that He may draw nigh unto them.'

Indeed the Guardian had 'every hope that the perusal of such a precious volume will help to deepen more than any other publication, the spirit of devotion and faith in the friends, and thus charge them with all the spiritual powers they require for the accomplishment of their tremendous duties towards the Cause.'

Since fewer than half the contents of this book are available within the covers of any other three Bahá'í books taken together we need to ponder well if we have so far either not taken steps to possess a copy or if we possess a copy but do not constantly peruse it.

True, the volume contains the Obligatory Prayers, the Tablet of Visitation, the short Healing Prayer, the special prayers connected with the Intercalary Days, the Fast, Naw-Rúz, Ridván, dawn and death, as well as those prayers we so want to have by heart as soon as we meet them in our own more familiar smaller prayer book. But how much more there is to feed our hunger for spiritual information and spiritual sustenance! Surely every chief aspect of Bahá'í principle and teaching is reinforced in a new way:— the colloquy and relationship between the Supreme Revelator and His Creator; the bewildering power of the Almighty, His attributes and exaltation above the realm of being; the relative unreality of creational existence, yet the tender acceptance by a loving God of all that His creatures can offer in praise and service; the brutal facts of everyday living of the early believers in exile and at 'Akká, and the contrast with the Covenant breakers; the exhortation and reminders to those same believers in which Bahá'u'lláh Himself also indicated that His tribulations served but to advance His Cause — these are but a few of the themes.

The prayers include about a dozen written as if from a woman's heart, and many paragraphs well within the range of a child's appreciation. There are also a great many that are intimate to Bahá'u'lláh Himself but yet help us to our own self-knowledge and spiritual development. Then too there are a half dozen lengthy meditations which are unique in the whole range of written records of man's spiritual adventure. The two longest (No. 176 with 49 paragraphs and No. 184 with 22 paragraphs) contain some of the most astonishing, loveliest and most challenging statements in all Bahá'í literature. Consider the content, cadences and completeness of the opening paragraph of 176 or the breath-taking truth of the necessity of the 'letters of negation' set out in paragraph 3 of 184, or the transcendent vision contained in paragraph 5 and the paean of vital thanks in paragraph 9 of that same prayer.

There are so many ways of reading and enjoying the contents of this precious book that it seems wrong to suggest any, yet some people may be grateful at least for some spring-boards to their own further plunging into this Ocean's depths. Although each prayer stands by itself as a perfect whole, and should be perused and studied thus, yet there are also other ways of diving for pearls.

(a) A study of the attributes of God, their variety, range and cogent, cumulative effect. Some may be new to us and can richly reward meditation, e.g. 'The Enlightener of all creation' (47), 'The Source and Centre of my soul' (111), 'The King of eternity and the Quickener of every mouldering bone' (38), 'The Fountain of my life' (88), 'The Well-Spring of all Lights' (43), 'The Help in Peril' (54), 'Lord of the Judgment Day' (55), 'Whom nothing whatsoever can frustrate' (11), 'The Supreme Helper' (6) and many others.

(b) Selection of a specific Bahá'í teaching such as the transcendent unity of God, man's essential impotence, the Covenant, progressive revelation of the Word of God, the Báb and His promise then tracing it through the book and allowing the cross comparison of the passages so found, each similar yet different, to play upon and enrich each other adding meaning and value.

(c) The perfect blending of the different kinds of prayer (some have identified nine such kinds) especially in the Long Obligatory Prayer and its remarkable thematic variations, its unity in diversity, its changes in pitch and intensity, in depth and scope.

(d) A straight search for perfectly phrased, astonishingly logical and gloriously fuller amplification of truth in gemlike utterances that occur all through the book, e.g. 'The light of Thy tenderness' (1), 'The Law that streameth from the good-pleasure of Thy will' (11), 'Whose love is my begetter' (98), 'Whose love is the radiance of my heart' (104), 'O Thou Who art my God and throbbeest within my heart' (44), 'Nearness to Thee is the true life of them who are Thy lovers' (55), 'The wine of Thy tender mercy' (12), 'The living waters of Thy love' (6).

(e) The soul-moving range of Bahá'u'lláh's own expression of Himself and His circumstances, e.g. His return to Baghdád from self-imposed wandering in the wilderness (145), His humility before the servants of God and their tie with the Creator (179), His readiness for every sacrifice (111), The vexing troubles afflicting Him and those with Him and their effect (151), beautiful statements of the purpose and the effect of sacrifice (65, 91).

(f) The simple felicity of phrasing and the cadences are often most stirring and invite the reminder that prayers are aided by adding the sense of hearing to the sense of sight in conformity with the sense of the words. Some examples: nos. 10, 29, 150 especially paras 2 and 5, 161 and also 133, 155, 165, 171, 172 and 173 that may already be familiar. In passing we may note the universality of the actual words used, their concreteness and divine simplicity of meaning.

(g) Whole paragraphs of most memorable content occur in many of the prayers and each of us may like to build his own private anthology of them. Some that stand out are: 58 paras 3, 4, 8; 10 para 1; 11 para 3; 12 para 1; 31 paras 1, 2; 38 para 12; 74 para 3; 93 para 3; 97 para 2; 102 para 3; 105 para 4; 108 para 5; 116 paras 1, 123 para 1; 135 para 3; 140 para 2; 150 paras 2, 5; 156 para 2; 161 para 2; 176 paras 17, 18, 39; 178 paras 3, 4, 6; 179 paras 4, 5.

(h) A particularly interesting study is the concept 'remembrance of God' and the meanings it gathers to itself in the different contexts of its appearance, e.g. 37 para 2; 56 paras 6, 7; 78 para 1; 79 para 3; 85 para 3; 101 para 5; 107 para 1; 114 para 6; 176 para 28. To quote one passage: 'Enable us, O my God, to live in remembrance of Thee and to die in love of Thee, and supply us with the gift of Thy presence in Thy words hereafter' (85 para 6).

Among the most comforting statements are the sure promises of answers to prayer (154 para 2, 161 para 2) and assurances that He will never forsake us (10 para 3; 169 para 2).

'How can I choose to sleep, O God, my God . . .' (172).

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