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THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Ridvan 1984

To the Baha'is of the United Kingdom

Dearly-loved Friends,

At this joyous Ridvan, the "Most Great Festival", the "Festival of God", as the Baha'i world enters the third and last phase of the Seven Year Plan, we express to your community our deep appreciation for the victories you have won since the inauguration of that Plan.

Few countries in the western world have been so richly blessed by the beloved Master as the United Kingdom; His repeated and relatively long visits there, the outpourings of His love and wisdom, from His earliest contacts with its first believers until the end of His life, constitute a sacred heritage for the friends in those favoured Isles. More recently the precious remains of "Abdu'l-Baha's successor, the Guardian Shoghi Effendi, interred in England, have become a spot of pilgrimage and prayer for believers from all the continents of the globe.

This favoured community - the largest in Europe at the present time - has been given a heavy share of goals to fulfill during the present Plan and has made steady progress in achieving its objectives. Its greatest success has been in bringing before the public, high and low, at home and abroad, not only the plight of our persecuted and martyred brethren in Iran but, to an unprecedented degree, the aims and purposes of Baha'u'llah's Faith; voices have been raised on our behalf for the first time from the floor of the House of Lords and the House of Commons; through all channels of the media - television, radio, and the press - the name "Baha'i" and what it stands for have been trumpeted as never before; and more recently a unique proclamation of the Faith took place through a number of consecutive talks on the British Broadcasting Corporation programme "Reflections" heard all over the world. Surely such achievements have brought joy to the beloved Master and the Guardian!

Your emergence from obscurity, which will increasingly bring you into the limelight of public attention, makes imperative the consolidation of your community not only as a teaching force, but in all those aspects and attitudes of life which will distinguish you as a new race of men, already practising the new modes of life which bear the hallmark "Baha'i".

While constantly pursuing these essential and permanent objectives, the goals assigned to you in the Plan must be achieved with special attention being given to:

Achieving 256 firmly founded, vigorously functioning, Local Spiritual Assemblies, distributed throughout the various parts of the United Kingdom;

Ensuring that all 489 districts are opened to the Faith ere the termination of the Plan in 1986;

Adopting a programme of Local Assembly development aimed at ensuring that all meet regularly, hold the Nineteen Day Feasts and observe the Holy Days, adopt extension teaching goals, encourage the friends in the Baha'i way of life, and where there are children in the community, organise classes for their Baha'i education;

Acquiring modest Baha'i Centres in the Orkneys, the Shetlands, and the Western Isles;

Encouraging cooperation between the believers in Northern Ireland and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland in the teaching work on both sides of the border.

Some heavy numerical victories still remain to be won and time is running out; we feel confident, however, that the British Baha'i community, which has always risen vigorously to the challenges faced in many previous Plans, will triumph over the present difficulties. Our loving prayers will be offered at the Holy Shrines for success in every field of your endeavours.

With loving Baha'i greetings,

The Universal House of Justice

National Spiritual Assembly A Persian Family for Every District

In an effort to help the United Kingdom community to reflect the true diversity among its people, and to show forth the various qualities of each, we are conscious of the need for a greater balance in each of our communities throughout the United Kingdom. We should avoid at all cost communities which reflect a stereotyped image such as "young Persian students" or "elderly English ladies".

Likewise the mixed qualities and capabilities of all groups are needed to make a community complete. We are eagerly hoping to see a greater balance of nationalities, ages, families and individuals in each of our districts throughout the United Kingdom.

In many of our districts there are no family groups and thus a certain stability is lacking. Goals won are quickly lost when there is no family present who are willing to put their roots down deep within the fabric of local society.

Aware of this situation, and others relating to our larger communities, we feel that it is incumbent upon us to appeal to our Iranian brothers and sisters to assist us in consolidating and stabilizing our hard-won victories, and we are therefore making a plea for one and we are therefore making a plea for one Iranian family to put down its roots in every district of the country.

Such a dispersement throughout the country would bring a stable, loving home to each of our goal areas and give a focal point to each embryonic community. In so doing, each Iranian family would shine even more brightly like the light in the darkness, as Shoghi Effendi envisaged.

It is the desire of the National Spiritual Assembly that every effort be exerted to encourage such families to enrich the community life in every district so, that the light of Baha'u'llah can become firmly established, and bring blessings upon themselves and the communities they so lovingly serve.

Please Note

Applications are requested for the position of Records Assistant at the

National Office. Applicants should have a good knowledge of English, be competent typists and have some experience of computers. Applications should be sent to: Mr Jiyan Ghadimi, 27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD.



From the Editor

Dear Friends

Ridvan is here— in many ways the pivotal point of the Baha'i year. It is a time to take stock of the work we have done for the Faith over the previous year, to review our progress in the current plan, to congratulate ourselves on victories won, to chastise ourselves for those opportunities we have let slip through our fingers, to look to the future and to participate in the sacred process of electing our divinely ordained institutions— a freedom and priviledge which not all Baha'is are at present able to share.

Ridvan is a festive time, an occasion for celebration of the public declaration of the Blessed Beauty. It is also a time to pre-examine our commitment to His Revelation. If we were summoned to a reckoning now, could we give a sufficiently good account of ourselves before the Concourse of Holy Souls who have preceeded us? Could we comfortably take our place beside those who have given their lives for the Faith? Can we afford to rest for a moment when so many of those who share our planet are struggling in the daily worsening ignorance of the advent of the Messiah for whom they have prayed for centuries. We know Who He is. How long are we going to remain silent?

You the believers of the British Isles, are to be praised for your wonderful response at the Area Conventions, for your contributions to the Fund, for your unstinting efforts in the 90 Day Campaign which have brought so many fruits, and for your submissions to the Baha'i Journal. The Editorial Staff have been delighted and moved by your trust, frankness and support. Our grateful thanks are made to you all.

Other Baha'i communities were given their destinies, the British Community has earned hers through sheer hard work and sacrifice in the past. Let us be worthy of our destiny!

Happy Ridvan!

You Deserve It!

THE EDITOR

A Statement of Policy

The editorial board wish to draw to the attention of the friends the following points:

DEADLINES In order to increase standards of presentation and efficiency the Baha'i Journal is being printed by an outside printer. This means that our deadlines for receipt of material for inclusion must be strictly adhered to. If material is late for whatever reason it may be considered for the following issue.

CONTENT It would be appreciated if material submitted was either typed or neatly written and that the matter of the dignity of the Faith was kept in mind.

EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY The Editor reserves the right to regect, cut or alter any contribution submitted for publication in the interests of deadlines, topicality, appropriateness, standards or dignity.

Please try to adhere to these brief guidelines. Should you wish further guidance you may phone Richard Boyle at the National Office (01-584-2566)

DEADLINE 11 MAY

No material received after this date can be considered for inclusion in the next issue.

P.S. The Editorial Staff would like to thank the believers for their warm support of the Journal, for their helpful criticism, for the generous flow of contributions and for the many offers of help through the application forms. It is still not too late to fill in a form should you wish to work, report, write, type or draw for us! At the moment we have a special need for a persian typist.

The following contribution has no title. It speaks for itself.

On May 24th 1983 I gave birth to my stillborn son, Thomas David, at 10.55am. At 8.15pm on the same day my mother died, after a long, patiently born illness. To try to express my pain, my anguish,

would be futile; to attempt to express my anger and resentment toward God would be meaningless.

I lay in pieces about myself, and to suggest that I might have experienced something wholesome and positive was ludicrous. God could not be a loving God, to deal with me in such a way. I decided that from this point on I would become

self-sufficient; I didn't need God.

Strangely, my greater self was aware of the

blessing in my pain. I wrote a poem the day after Thomas was born which ended with the words, "Yesterday, Oh bright yesterday was a truly beautiful day".

We must move on. How blessed I was in carrying Thomas, whose spirit achieved so much in his nine womb months that he did not have to go through the trauma of an earthly journey. How utterly beautiful, that he was able to share and guide my mother

on the journey that was so

hard for her to face on her own. To become aware and conscious of God's love for me doesn't mean that I no longer grieve and feel the need to hold my son. My body still pains. That loss will be with me in this life always, but words fail hopelessly when I try to express that vastness that has encapsulated me and I truly thank God for this wonderful gift.

I became a Baha'i in August 1982, the month that Thomas was conceived. I really believe the purpose in that, rather than coincidence. Maybe Divine Coincidence. It makes me smile quietly.

We still move on; we cannot be eternally shunning God. No matter to what depths we sink, the Love of God is a reality, self-sustaining. In January

1984 I was taken to the grave of the Guardian. I felt the immensity, the undying love, and within that warmth, I truly became a Baha'i; heart and soul were joined. I wanted to share my joy and love with all the friends. I feel so blessed. I now look on pain and suffering in a more wholesome way. On my return from the visit to the Guardian's grave I felt that I'd had a definite shift in my life. I would like to share with the friends the poem I wrote on my return:

31st January 1984

What is there in that stillness, But quiet grace and loving certitude. I walk upon the earth, It blesses me that I may bare my feet To feel its richness, to immerse Myself in its bounty. Chipped stones and water bound Sods of soil enrich me, Giving light to my emotion. What is there in that stillness But quiet grace and loving certitude. I gaze upon the bird, The reaching trees, feeling both Flight and branch freedom. And there in the heavens My eyes become confused Frightened to abuse the magnificence. And the hint of light, the chinks In the cloud allow me, Raiseme up, letting me flow

> Trudie Roffey, Guernsey

And I, in joy,

into the river,

Whilst the rain beckons

Can bring myself home.

And the sods of soil cling

FEEDBACK

FEEDBACK exists for you the individual believer to voice your opinion about articles which have appeared in the Journal. It exists to help the community to gain a wider viewpoint on those subjects discussed and to further clarify or develop ideas and themes from letters or articles. It cannot function without your help and contribution. If you have something to say about an articl please write to "Feedback", Baha'i Journal, 27 Rutland Gate, London SW7.

NUTRITION & THE FAST

Dear friends,

I found the article by ShivaShirinzadeh-Finch on Nutrition and the Fast very interesting, however, she did not deal with any of the real problems that face an ordinary Baha'i during the Fast and I wonder if you could ask her opinion on these.

1. Many Baha'is lead a very active life, they have a full time job, study, hobbies, housework and Baha'i activities, each of which need attention and they therefore need to be at their peak performance all the time. How then, when your performance drops by 30-50% by mid afternoon during the Fast, do you explain your poor performance to your boss or to your colleagues, to your clients or suppliers? This reduced performance during the Fast reflects badly on the Fast and there is no way the benefit gained from breakfast will last for 12 hours - the sugar level of your blood drops too low.

2. It is apparently as dangerous to drive with low blood sugar level as it is to drive under the influence of alcohol. As most of us have to drive as usual during the Fast, are we not risking our lives as well as the lives of others when driving after more than 8 hours of fasting?

3. Many Baha'is have to train very hard for some sport or other, and it would be fatal to break off training for 19 days during the Fast. As the only time available for training for many of us is the lunch hour, we have to put ourselves

through a vigorous routine of exercise, (in my case marathon training) during this time. Is it wise to ignore the body's warning signals and not take a hot drink during cold weather after training to prevent excessive heat loss and a chill when your body temperature returns to normal or during hot weather to prevent excessive dehydration?

4. Many business appointments, lunches, conferences etc take place during the Fast and it would be rather insulting to our guests if we refused to eat or drink with them because we are on the Fast, leaving them to "enjoy" themselves. How do we cope with this problem?

We would be grateful if you could throw some light on these points or relate your

own experiences.

Anna Ellard

Dear friends,

When asked by the Baha'i News Service editor to write an article on "Nutrition and the Fast" I enquired about the contents he desired to be included. I was told to tackle the problems that Baha'is come across during fasting and was also given examples. Some solutions were offered in "Nutrition and the Fast" which was finally included in the March 1984 issue of the Baha'i News Service. I would like to emphasise that fasting is a very personal and individual experience and what may seem a "real problem" to one person may not be so for another. However I would like to attempt to respond to some of the problems that Mrs Ellard feels are real.

1. Religious fasting, which in our case is only 10-12 hours, is not regarded as true fasting in scientific terms. Fasting experiments often go on for 48-72 hours or longer. According to Derek Miller obese people in America have been hospitalised on a one year fast and allowed only an intake offluid and vitamins (1). There is no evidence that physiologically performance drops by 30-50% after only 7-8 hours of fasting ie. by mid-afternoon, although there may be real psychological influences on performance. It is true that the blood sugar level may drop somewhat by mid-afternoon but this drop does not cause any measurable impairment in performance.

2. Unless a person is diabetic, moderately low blood sugar levelis not dangerous and certainly cannot be compared with the influence of alcohol.

Human beings are remarkably resilient. There are many intricate mechanisms which come into force when the body is severely malnourished let alone going without food for only a few hours.

It is true that the routine of physical training must not be broken, but if one uses the 'lunch hour' for training then this cannot be regarded as running a marathon because in the space of one hour only 10-12 miles can be covered. The body can sustain vigorous exercise for 60-90 minutes (2), but obviously if a person exceeds this period of time they would be performing heavy physical activity and according to Baha'i laws would be exempt from fasting. Generally, however, because athletes are fit and well nurtured individuals they are even more resilient than non-athletes. In any case the body has an excellent storage system for carbohydrates such as sugar.. Carbohydrates are stored as glycogen in the liver and muscles. When the blood sugar level falls low this glycogen is converted back to glucose (sugar).

The need for "a hot drink during cold weather after training" is again I feel psychological. It is in fact the calorie content that is of importance rather than the temperature because it is calories rather than heat which provide the body's energy. Therefore a hot or cold drink would be of equal benefit, but neither can be taken when fasting. Fortunately the stored form of carbohydrate, i.e. glycogen, retains water. The 1975 AAA Marathon championships showed that the athletes on a specially designed high carbohydrate diet were less dehydrated than those who were not on the special diet, (3). The body therefore has its own excellent mechanisms of regulating fluid and blood sugar level. obviously if we have medical problems then we are not obliged to fast and please remember that Baha'u'llah has told us to consult an able physician.

Finally, a chill is a viral infection and unless we are severely undernourished or have insufficient clothing our bodies would not be prone to such viral infections after even vigorous exercise in cold weather.

4. This is a major problem which we all have to overcome. Eating is a very social activity. Often when we are on a slimming diet we feel we are being punished for something. This feeling may be true for fasting too. Could it be that our hosts or guests or colleagues

accept our fasting but never-the-less we feel that they have left us to "suffer" the fast while they "enjoy" themselves? Much depends, of course, on how understanding our friends are. It is a good idea to announce the coming of the Fast to colleagues and friends at work one or two weeks in advance. Often many Baha'is find this a very good opportunity to discuss the Faith by explaining why it is that we fast. Our attitude towards the Fast must be a very positive one. For those who are healthy, fasting is not a health hazard. (Please check your health with your GP). The Fast must not be considered a punishment but rather a blessing because of its effects on our soul. If we feel awkward about fasting then this may transfer to our guests or It is also worth remembering that in many business appointments, lunches and conferences wine and other alcoholic beverages are offered. Should we compromise our principles and drink alcohol in order not to insult our guests or hosts? The world is in a very sick state; corruption, deceit and hypocracy are rife. The Baha'i Faith, if put into practice, will be the remedy (otherwise we would not be Baha'is). fortunate to have found this Baha'i Faith, let us not be apologetic in any

As mentioned earlier, fasting is a very personal experience and I strongly believe that psychology has a very important role to play in our feelings and attitude towards it. We also learn much from each other's experiences. These considerations lead me to invite further articles and comments from psychologists and psychiatrists on the psychology of fasting, and from individuals around the country on their personal experiences. Fasting is not easy for any one, please let us share our feelings and ideas about it.

Shiva Shirinzadeh-Finch

- (1) Derek Miller (Research nutritionist at the University of London)
- (2) Textbook of Physiology", (1980), G.H. Bell et al, 10th edn, Churchill Livingstone London, p68
- (3) "Nutrition and athletic Performance", (1980), Ivan Sharman (editor of Medisport), Nutrition and food, 67, p5-9

A UNIQUE PROCLAMATION IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

"There will be four prayers, all from Baha'i Scripture, given to us by "Abdu'l-Baha some seventy or more years ago".

One would not be surprised to hear these words in a Baha'i meeting, not perhaps in some inter-Faith gathering, butto hear them spoken in introducing the only prayers to be used at a service in Westminster Abbey was a most thrilling experience for the fifty or so Baha'is who were among the congregation of about 400.

The occasion was to mark the beginning of a round Britain pilgrimage to be made by the Reverend Merfyn Temple who, on a bicycle and supported by a display van, will visit towns all round the country over a period of three months with the "Prayer for Peace". At each place of call, the Reverend Temple will gather together peoples of all Faiths to be united in prayer for peace. All along the route, Baha'is have offered help and hospitality. The exhibition van will carry free literature and books for sale, and, at Merfyn Temple's request, a good supply of Baha'i material will be available.

The Very Reverend Edward Carpenter, Dean of Westminster Abbey, offered to launch the Pilgrimage with a service in the Abbey, and suggested that National Assembly member Philip Hainsworth be asked to lead the prayers in the service and that these should be all Baha'i prayers because of their universality. The service organisers also asked that a prayer be chosen by Philip which could be printed in the Order of Service and read by all the congregation. Three paragraphs from one of the Master's prayers were chosen for this communal prayer.

The Dean opened the service with a welcome and an introduction to the Pilgrimage; a small choir from a girls' school associated with the abbey sang an arrangement by Donald Swann of the Prayer of Peace, and the Reverend Donald Reeves, replacing the Right Reverend George Appleton, who had been taken ill, spoke on the significance of prayer for peace. This was followed by the Baha'i prayers and the atmosphere became, particularly for the Baha'is, charged with deep

emotion. Very few chairs in the Nave of the Abbey where the service was held were empty, and the many visitors thronging the main entrance could not fail to be moved as the majestic words of the Master rang out through the Abbey. When the whole congregation joined in calling upon God to "unite all" and "Let the religions agree and make the nations one" and "raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind", the Baha'is present felt privileged to be present on this momentous occasion.

Some extremely well selected and well presented writings on peace were then read by Mrs. Eirwen Harbottle, of the Centre for International Peacebuilding Studies, and this was followed by the Unity Prayer of Baha'u'llah sung to the music of the Brahms Lullaby. For this singing, the acoustics of the Abbey were perfect and brought clearly to the congregation, who for the most part were hearing the words of Baha'u'llah for the first time, the power and sublimity of this well-loved prayer.

Satish Kumar, a Jain, and himself an experienced Pilgrim of Peace, spoke movingly of some of his experiences in other lands and of the great significance of Merfyn Temple's forthcoming pilgrimage. The Reverend Merfyn Temple then expressed his appreciation for the support and the prayers for his pilgrimage and his own understanding of what he was undertaking. The service closed with a blessing by Dr. Carpenter, the Dean.

Hundreds in the congregation heard and read the name of the Faith and of "Abdu'l-Baha for the first time and raised their voices in calling out "O Thou kind Father, O God, Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy Love. Brighten our eyes with the melody of Thy Word and shelter us all in the stronghold by Thy Providence".

It was not the first time that a passage from Baha'i Scripture had been read in that hallowed spot, but it was indeed the first time that hundreds of non-Baha'i voices had been the vehicle. A memorable, subtle and unique proclamation event for 1 April 1984.

THE SEVEN MARTYRS OF TEHRAN

One by one to the Courtyard
In front of a bewildered Multitude
Gathered to see blood spill
Not the events that did ensue
As the first one to the blade did

As the first one to the blade did run, "Haji Siyyid Ali"

Embracing death like a long lost Friend, Like a bridegroom about to Marry.

Next in line came "Mirza Qurban", who was sad he was not the First

And begged his Executioner not to hesitate, but to quickly quench his thirst.

Then "Haji Mulla Ismaili-Qumi", Congratulated his Companions

And while communing with his Loved One, Drank deep of the cup of Martyrdom.

Hardly had the previous fell, Than
"Siyyid Husayn-i-Turi Shizi" did tell
The gathering Crowd of their error, and
into their hearts struck terror.

An officer of the grand Vazir dagger in his hand

plunged toward his victim "Siyyid Husayn" fell

His blood adding to the velvet carpet being embroidered beneath his feet.

His blade hardly lifted the Executioner was halted in his tracks

Another one "Haji Muhammad Taquy-i-Kirmani" charging forward as alion from the forest of knowledge chanting but one verse; "Let me join them".

Dare the executioner strike his blow?
When boldly confronted by "Siyyid Murtada"

Stay thy hand and hold he uttered, more meritorious in the sight of God is my life, let me advance and be first.

The crowd now were Divested of their evil intentions,

Where they expected screams they heard only God mentioned.

What's more, to add to these testimonies of Faith "Muhammad Husayn-i-Marghi" would not wait

let me receive the blow that will open wide Heaven's Gate

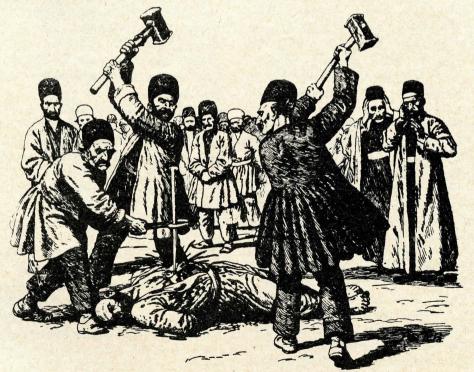
Now there was nothing else to do, 'twas a revelation for all to see

next blow would have to be strong, would have to staisfy all three

Afterwards all seven lay a proof for the crowd assembled to witness

That to the True Lover death is not a separation but a longed for Reunion, with His heart's desire.

Edward Byrne
Portadown, N. Ireland
8th February 1984

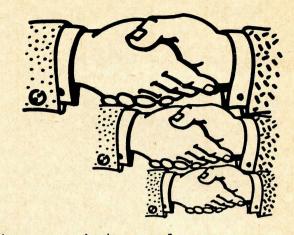


This gruesome illustration, though not of the actual events described, gives some idea of what it must have been like to witness the events described above, though it gives no hint of the courage with which the seven martyrs met their deaths. The illustration is from an Armenian magazine published in 1911.

For New Believers INTER-RELATIONSHIPS Part 2

Even as a new or relatively new Baha'i, you may be invited to chair a meeting, or be elected to the office of chairperson by your assembly - now you get to play verbal target practice - can you get that word fired between John's unending vaguery and Cynthia's point she's obviously dying to make? Will that person stop asking awkward questions so I can close the meeting - the caretaker wants us out five minutes ago and they're still arguing about the meaning of the word "consultation". Here you must have the reactions of a jet-pilot, the politesse of a senior diplomat, the ruthlessness of the Inquisition and a smile that reduces your audience to helpless jelly. On the other hand you may be asked to speak or invite yourself to speak and then you have the problem of what not to say shall I read from notes or word for word, shall I improvise, how can I end it in the middle now that everyone is asleep? "Oy, you, wake up at the back there!" And so on. Suddenly we are all doing things we never dreamed possible, we have to learn so many practical skills, as well as spiritual principles - the art is in basing the former on the latter - and we're not allartists, yet. So much for inter-relationships within our new community - but what about the relationships with the larger community the world, of which we are undeniably an integral part?

We have eschewed the values of the "old world" and have taken on those of the New World Order. We have turned down the option offered to us by our previous existence and have accepted the terms of a new Covenant or Contract, and there's no expiry date. We have regected, with this change, the culture, the ways, the framework of our former lives. In lieu of this we have promised ourselves a part in the future World Order of Baha'u'llah, and that's where the problems often start. Asa yet we are embryonic, as yet we are children of the half-light, neither martyrs nor a new race of men but pioneers and administrators keeping lonely vigil at a dark post getting darker. For all our pains we can show the world outside: seven temples, an archives



building, a shrine and some very beautiful gardens; after that its all metaphysical at present and it is difficult to focus on something so nebulous. "What are you actually doing for the problems of now?" "Well, we have weekend schools, proclamation events and Nineteen Day Feasts..." "Yes, but what are you doing NOW?" Well if we can all be clear in our minds what we are working for, now and in the future, we will not only have a basis for inter-relationships of those within the new order but a further basis for our inter-relationships with those who are not yet part of it. Between the old world hammering at the door and the salvation of this planet is that vaguely defined concept of the future world order in our minds. It is real and it is potent and we would die for it tomorrow, wouldn't we? But it rests on faith, for we cannot see it now, nor can we show anything but a glimpse of it to our friends. Let us be clear - it will come, on that is staked our every effort and our whole lives. Hoow soon it is established though - well, that's in our hands.

We suffer from a duality of existence, we have our own very-well-defined system, our own code of laws and behaviour, our own orthodoxies which include forms of greeting and ways of conducting our meetings; but we still rely for our income and our support on the material provisions of the old world - we have to got to work in it, we have to rely upon the efforts of so many peoplewith whom we have little connection and they obviously share little if any of our values and conventions. In one framework we have no superior individuals - only institutions, and they only hold authority when quorate and in session; yet in the other we are so highly stratified that you can tell which category someone comes from largely by their manner of dress, speech and carriage, the newspapers they buy and which railway coach compartment they sit in. When someone stamps their feet we dance to their tune or our flute is snapped. And if we stamp our feet, others dance to our tune and maybe we get to snap the flute. Very broadly speaking, a Baha'i gives his time, money, love and support to his faith; in the old world these things are devoted to ephemoral, material benefits. A person may work very hard indeed, but if it is for the sheer desire of more money, then we question the morality of that work. Switching, then, from one to the other can cause some troubles and while it is indeed praisworthy to take Baha'i values to the alternative society, the reverse can cause embarrassment and even lose you your voting rights. There is only one real solution and that is to make the whole world Baha'i - that will be a few years coming, so it is suggested that you practice patience and detatchment for

The first area where we are brought into direct contact with thisfundamental duality, especially in the sphere of inter-relationships, is in the family all the more so if this family of yours does not ascribe to your new community. More civil wars have started between the members of one family than between any other catagory. The bitterest hatred arises between blood brothers, the most common form of murder is between spouses, and so on. So, the one thing a family can do without is a difference of religion, it is not so much a difference from a Baha'i viewpoint- but they will not see it that way. Your family is the most difficult set of people to teach the Faith- after all- it is very easy to put on your best face and be sweet and loving to a stranger you meet for the first time in your life and especially when you've got other Baha'is watching on and you want to impress this person so that they will not jump down your throat and make an embarrassing scene. It's not at all hard to make them think that you're calm and even- tempered, spiritual and generous, patient and unassuming seven days a week if they've only ever seen you that way, but your family see you every day, if you live with them- they know you backwards and they've seen those tantrums, those moments of selfishness and they see the disparity between your deeds and your word: "Don't give me that backbiting rubbish, sweetie, I heard you talking about Cynthia only last night."

Many of them are quite likely to see some transformation in your attitudes and life- style and ascribe it to a temporary abberation which will cure itself in due course. They see it as a rebellion, an unconsidered grab at the first thing just to be different- it can be seen as a personal affront. You may get treated with anything from open hostility to mild contempt, from condescension to pity. The Faith may be described as anything from an eclectic sect of Islam to a Persian Temperance Movement and is often confused with other minority persuasions such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Guru Maharaj- jis and, Mormons. You may be ignored by your family or openly insulted: "Are you allowed to eat butter, dear? Do you want your prayer- mat washed, darling?" All this has to be patiently withstood along with the difficulties you may well encounter in the new community and your poor ego may well suffer the most appalling crushes. It is a case for playing it cool, no sarcasm or flippancy must be offered in reply- a favourite line is: "O'h that eastern rubbish!" To which your immediate response might well be: "Well, Christ was hardly born in Bethnal Green was he?" They do not understand the Faith, so you cannot expect them to appreciate it. If they will not listen to your explanations, do not waste your time with them. Try and bring the Faith into the house indirectly, be sneaky- they will behave no worries on that score. Once again, most of us have non- Baha'i family or relatives so we should all be understanding and patient with Baha'is whose activities may well be curtailed or arrested by their family's hostility. Conversely we should not feel guilty if we are prevented from attending Baha'i functions by the actions or attitudes of our own blood. It is better to stay at home and sneak in the odd prayer while keeping the peace, than tearing off to leave the house in uproar, spreading strife and disunity in our wake.



Please Note

There is a vacancy for the position of caretaker at the Manchester Baha'i Centre. The post offers free accommodation. For details please phone Naomi Long on (061)-224-6490

Bahá'í Youth Page

RACHEL IS A PUPIL OF ONE OF THE EDITORIAL STAFF. SHE IS A MEMBER OF A RELIGIOUS MINORITY, BUT SHE IS NOT A BAHA'I. THIS IS HER ESSAY;

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW

My name is Rachel Gold. I am a pupil at at a North-London Grammar School. Although I am only fourteen years old, I have well-formed views on the world:

To find out what the world needs, you have to look at its problems. If you look at the world's troubles you see the main causes of them are jealousy, lack of trust between people and nations, and greed.

What every person in this world would like to see is multilateral disarmament. If each country wants this, why has it not been achieved in the past thirty years? It is because nations will not trust each other enough. This runs so deep, that they will not even say how many nuclear warheads they have. If the number is not known how can the Russians and Americans expect to negotiate fair treaties for peace? With a basic distrust like this there will be no solution this can only make a nuclear war more likely. This would not be the first time a war will have been caused by jea-I hope it is not too late to learn the lessons from past conflicts. Every race is made up of some greedy people. It is amazing what vicious, inhumane acts people will do just to gain power, money and fame. Many people are driven by ambition, which becomes an obsession. This greed and selfishness is found a great deal in world leaders and politicians, who want to make it to the top.

So what does the world need?

Trust, no greed and no jealousy? That would not work either.

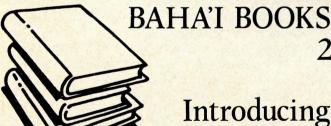
May be, the answer is for a strong leader to come and guide the world on a good and honest path, but, as yet, such a leader has not appeared.

Another one of the world's problems is poverty. In the third world, people are dying every minute, but hardly anything is done to help them in the rest of the world.

In countries like Brazil, twenty per cent of the people are rich and the other eighty per cent are poor. The wealthy do not realize that the poor will not always stand for this. When they get too hungry, they will rise up, so is it a more equal sharing out of the wealth that the world needs?

The main thing that is missing is that the people who care what happens in the world are not willing to do anything about it. What mankind really needs, is people willing to help, protest and do something against the bad in this world.

OVER TO YOU, BAHA'I YOUTH-WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE WILLING TO HELP? WHERE ARE TOMORROW'S LEADERS?



Introducing the Faith

We all know that the best way to introduce the Faith to anyone is to be a good Baha'i, but a carefully chosen book can help people understand the Faith more clearly, answer some of their questions and encourage them to ask more. In Britain we are very fortunate because we have quite a range of introductory books on the Faith - published by Baha'is alike. But we need to use them widely to allow our contacts to get the best out of

them. In this brief survey we will examine nine publications.

1. Baha'u'llah and the New Era: J. E. Esslemont: (nearly 260 pages). This book was first published in 1923 and has certainly stood the test of time - by 1973 it had been translated into 58 languages. It is very clearly set out with sub-headings, a full index and lots of quotations from the Writings. It gives a very good survey of the Faith in 15 chapters, not so much as a reading book but as a reference work. This is a book to give to people with alot of basic questions, people who are very busy and like to dip into things, and public libraries, schools, prisons and waiting

2. All Things Made New: John Ferraby: (nearly 300 pages). This book is similar in many ways to the first, though published in 1957, and does the same job.

It has a very clear contents list and sets out its information in three parts: the Teachings of Baha'u'llah, the Central Figures of the Faith, and the Baha'i Community. Again it is a reference book, though probably slightly easier to read through. These books should never be thought of as replacing one another, but as complementary, as they treat the same subject in different ways. It can be given out as above.

3. The Heavens Are Cleft Asunder: Huschmand Sabet: (nearly 140 pages). Originally published in German in 1967, this book was translated into English in 1975. It is alot shorter than the previous two and is much more of a reading book. It is snappier and deals more immediately with today's problems and how the Faith answers them. The book is largely written to those of a Christian background, and is probably suitable for headteachers, R.E. teachers and other teachers, as long as they are not very strictly religious.

The Light Shineth in Darkness: Udo Schaefer: (nearly 190 pages). Again this was originally published in German, though as several separate works from 1968-1973, and translated and published together in 1977. This book is a bit more specialised and of a more academic nature. The first three sections are for readers of a Christian background, and the last two examine the relationship of Islam to the Baha'i Faith. It is a book about people's attitude to non-Christian religions. It might be all right in a public library. It would be better in the library of a college or university where Theology or Comparative Religion is taught. If your R.E. teacher is an avid reader, they might be persuaded to look at this book, but on the whole, it is probably not the best introductory book for non-specialists.

5. The Renewal of Civilization: David Hofman: (about 130 pages). This book was first published in 1946, but the latest reprint is very recent with an attractive cover photograph of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The book is smaller in size and length than any of the above and is suitable for more relaxed reading. Give it to adults, especially those who think alot but might be put off by a bigger book, and to those with an interest in History as well as Religion.

6. The Earth is But One Country: John Huddleston: (nearly 180 pages). This

book, first published in 1976, is a splendid instrument of proclamation. It combines a depth suitable for the thinker with an easy to follow layout, as well as photographs and maps. Both cover and title are attractive, and there are four interesting appendices. The book shows how the Faith answers today's problems and is a must for libraries and important people like mayors, headteachers and principals - because it is written by a senior executive in the I.M.F. It is also a good choice for anyone in their late teens upwards.

7. The Baha'i Faith: Religion Renewed and the World United: (16 pages) Originally published in 1954, this one is not really a book at all. In fact it is a small yellow booklet which gives a very brief summary of the Faith, its Central Figures and its Principles. Because it is so short and so cheap it can be given out in large numbers to older friends and teachers, and will not take up much of their time or frighten them off in the same way that a thick book might. Keep a handful on you for casual daily use.

The Baha'i Faith: Mary Perkins and Philipi Hainsworth: (nearly 90 pages) Published in 1980 by Ward Lock Educational, as one of a series of books of Living Religions, this book has a very striking cover showing the Shrine of the Bab, is full of photographs, and is divided into Baha'i History, Baha'i Beliefs and Baha'i Life. It could literally be given to anyone - children, youth, adults, your fellow students, your teachers, your local library, your school library, and so on. This book has the advantages of being cheap, easy to read and being published outside the Faith and that must be good publicity for us.

9. Eight Major Religions in Britain:
Jane Bradshaw: This book was published in 1979 by Edwin Arnold. It introduces eight non-Christian religions practised in Britain today and devotes its last chapter to the Baha'i Faith. Give it to your R.E. teacher or your school library — if for no other reason than to show them that the Faith is now an accepted part of British life. It is really a classroom textbook so see if you cannot persuade your school to buy a set.

Right, now, pick ten people you know, choose the most suitable of these nine books for each one, and from tomorrow given them all the surprise of their lives.



Dear Children,

Now is the Festival of Ridvan. It is a very special time of the year and we celebrate for twelve whole days! There are nine Holy Days in the Baha'i Year and three of them come during the twelve days of Ridvan!

The First Holy Day is the First Day of Ridvan, on the 21st April. In 1863, 121 years ago, on that day, our Baha'i Faith was truly born. That was the day when Baha'u'llah first openly declared that He was the Promised One foretold by the Bab. Baha'u'llah was in Baghdad at the time. He had been sent out of Persia for being a follower of the Bab. Baha'u'llah had been living in Baghdad for ten years when a message came from the King of Turkey, the Sultan, who ruled Baghdad as well, that Baha'u'llah and His Family had to move to Constantinople. All Their friends and the townspeople were so sad to hear this news that they surrounded the house where Baha'u'llah was staying. Baha'u'llah and His Family therefore moved out and camped in a large garden for twelve days while Their caravan was prepared for the journey. It would have been a very sad occasion, but Baha'u'llah turned it into the happiest of our Holy Celebrations. With great joy He gave His announcement that the whole world had been reborn. Many people came to visit Baha'u'llah in that place over the next twelve days, including the important officials of the town. The garden became known as the Garden of Ridvan- the Garden of Paradise and so we call our Holy Day the "Feast of Ridvan".

The next Holy Day is the Ninth Day of Ridvan, on the 29th April. This was the day that the Holy Family joined Baha'u'llah in the Garden of Ridvan after packing all Their belongings for the journey.

The third of the three Holy Days is the Twelfth Day of Ridvan, on the 2nd May. This was the day that Baha'u'llah and His Family left Baghdad for the long journey to Constantinople. Many people crowded

the streets to see Them off. For Twelve Days there had been Paradise on Earth and now the troubles of Baha'u'llah and the Holy Family were to begin again.

So, in the coming twelve days, let us all remember and celebrate that wonderful time all those years ago when Baha'u'llah first told the world Who He was - God's New Messenger for today!



BILLABONG is an Australian quarterly children's magazine, aimed for the 5-12 age range. It hopes to provide varied material which can help deepen children's understanding of the Faith.

The magazine includes:

- ideas on teaching.
- guessing games.
- profiles on young Baha'is.
- articles on important Baha'is.
- reports from overseas children.
- crafty ideas, quizzes, puzzles.
- stories and serials.

Each magazine is at least 25 pages long!!!

Subscriptions

The subscription rate is as follows:

surface mail - £8.00.

airmail rate - £12.50.

Please send money to the following address:

Mrs. W. Thorne,

47 Braycourt Avenue,

Cheques can be made payable to Wendy Thorne.

PERSIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

احبای عزیر

مقالاتی که اخیراً از طرف لجنده امور احبای ایرانی درباره آداب و رسوم انگلسی و ایرانی در شما ره های دسامبر ۱۹۸۳ و مارس ۱۹۸۶ اخبار امری بچاپ رسید با استقبال فراوان عدهٔ کثیری از در ستان مواجده گردیده است که بدینوسیلده از لطف همگی تشکر می کنیم ۰

نظر باینکه این لجنه هصمم است که در آینده این دو مقاله را بصورت مفصل و جامعتری با ترجمه به هر دو ربان در یك جلد منتشر نماید از دوستان عزیر تقاضا می نمائیم که پیشنه ادات و نظریات حویش را درباره نکاتی که در آن مقالات گنجانده نگردیده و اطلاع از آنها به ایجاد الفت و تفاهم بیش از پیش احبای فارسی زبان و انگلیسی زبان کمك می نماید عباطلاع این لجنده برسانند و

مشتاقانه منتظم دریافت مکاتبات دوستان عزیسز می باشیم •

با عسرض تحیات بهسائسی لجنه امور احبای ایسرانسی

جروه شرح حال شهدای ایران

بنا بدست ور محفل مقدس ملی ،کمیسیون پژوهش لجنه ملی سمعی و بصری در نظر دارد جزوهای از شرح حال شهدای عزیز و جانفشان ایران تهیده نماید لذا از عموم مسوبین و دوستان آن شهدای عزیز تقاضا می شود شرح حال و عکس و همچنین اگر خاطرهای از ایشان دارند برای درج در این جزوه به آدرس زیر ارسال فرمایند:

Miss Naghmeh Majidi

15 Bolton Road, Harrow, Middx HA1 4SB

در صورت لروم عکس های های ارسالی به صاحبان برگرد آنده خواهد شد .

Below is the English translation of the letter sent to the Universal House of Justice on the occasion of the Naw-Ruz Persian Conference, Naw-Ruz 141.

Beloved Friends,

Over 550 of the worshippers of the Greatest Name, with hearts embued with love and praise (for) and gratitude to the most holy threshold of the Abha Beauty, and obedience and servitude to the exalted precinct of the Universal House of Justice, after visiting the luminous Resting Place of the Beloved Guardian of the Faith of God and placing their faces and brows upon that holy and effulgent Sepulchre and imploring the glorious Lord for confirmation and success, gathered (in Hornsey Town Hall, near London) to celebrate the spiritual festival of the first day of the month of Baha 141 B.E. and in particular to remember and pay tribute to the beloved martyrs and sorely afflicted precious friends in the cradle of the Faith

It was arranged through the initiative of The Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe and the endeavours of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom and attended by Counsellor Adib Taherzadeh and members of the Auxiliary Board and the National Spiritual Assembly.

After Mr. Simon Mortimore, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, welcomed the friends, Counsellor Taherzadeh, with elequence of speech and effectiveness of elucidation, invited the high-minded friends who enjoy the freedom of life and conscience in this country to a new effort, a firm resolution and a strong pledge for service to the exalted Divine Threshold and participation for the (successful) accomplishment and completion of the goals of the Seven Year Plan and the counter-balancing of the deprivation of the beloved Persian friends in these days (for service) and encouraged them to arise even as lovers and in a spirit of sacrifice, contribute generously to the Funds.

After hearing the Divine verses and the loving counsels of the Supreme Body; with hearts enkindled with the flame of attraction and love, the friends turned to the direction of that august Body seeking confirmation; and looking for Divine bestowals and loving kindness to

envelope these wanderers of the Abode of the Beloved in particular those sanctified souls who have arisen as pioneers either before or during this spiritual gathering.

The meeting concluded with an address by Dr. Ridvan Moqbel who encouraged the friends to sacrifice and service (for the Cause of God).

COMPLEMENTARY CULTURE

From all parts of the country comment and appreciation has come to the notice of the Committee following the recently-run articles in the Baha'i News Service (December 1983 and March 1984) upon the

domestic and social habits of U.K. and of Iran.

Do the friends wish to add any further examples - of 'typical' examples not mentioned in either piece - and where commentary and explication might prevent/diminish misunderstanding?

If so, please write-briefly and clearly, as it is proposed to expand and republish the two articles, in both languages, and with the addition of such extra material now submitted, as a booklet: an aid for our continued practice of a positive approach to integration and to broadening of that common purpose we all strive to achieve i.e. unity in diversity.

Community News

BRENTWOOD

Baha'i seasons

MUSICAL group Fire and Snow is performing a presentation of the Baha'i faith on Saturday, March 17 in Brentwood.

Entrance to the conert — The Seasons of Man — at the Old House in Shenfield Road at

spm, is free.
Fire and Snow consists of
two Britons, an American, a
Keynon and two Indians,
whose musical backgrounds
range from playing with the
Leeds Symphony Orchestra to
folk and rock bands.

This is the first time an article has been printed in the Brentwood area about the Baha'i faith. Another example of the proclamation and publicity that a group like Fire and Snow can bring.

OMAGH, COUNTY TYRONE

The Baha'i group in the goal district of Omagh were recently asked by the local Rotarians to provide a speaker for a lunchtime meeting.

Dr. Iain Palin, from Londonderry, was invited to give the talk and he and Dr. Rustam Jamshidi of Omagh attended the Rotary Club on Thursday March 22nd.

Rotary clubs exist in many parts of the country, to bring together businessmen and prominent citizens, and they hold regular lunchtime meetings where speakers are invited to address them on a variety of subjects. As a rule they steer clear of politics and religion so to be invited to give a talk on the Faith was very

welcome.

In this case some thirty prominent citizens of Omagh, the county town of Tyrone, heard an introductory talk - and the Rotarian invited by the Chairman to propose the vote of thanks to the speaker was a Catholic priest!

This reverend gentleman spoke highly of the Baha'is having first come across the Faith while at school in Londonderry and kept an interest in it since. He applauded the world-embracing view, and the need to respect the followers of all religions, sympathised with the plight of the Baha'is in Iran, and concluded by wishing "God's blessing on your work".

ARFON

Saturday 24th March was one of the most significant dates yet in the history of the Welsh Bah'i community with the opening in Bangor of the first Haziratu'l-Quds in Wales. In the presence of Keith Best M.P. and the Deputy Mayor of Bangor as well as the representatives of a number of other local bodies and groups, a plaque commemorating the opening was unveiled by Mrs. Mehri Mahboubian-Jones. This was done in recognition of the sacrifice of our bretheren in Iran. The Local Assembly had asked Mehri to perform this duty for them since it was when she was a student at Bangor University in 1980 that she received the news of the martyrdom of her brother Yad'u'llah in Iran. Many of the assembled guests and dignatories were visibly moved by the ceremony. Already there has been extensive media coverage of the event beginning with a radio interview in Welsh on the 22nd on Radio 4 (Wales), followed by a T.V. interview, again in Welsh on the main evening news on the Welsh Fourth Channel on the 24th and an English language item on the BBCl regional Welsh Fourth Channel on the 24th and an English language item on the BBCl regional Welsh news on the 26th. Further press coverage is expected in the Welsh weekly newspapers in the forthcoming week.

EPSOM AND EWELL

The Assembly of Epsom & Ewell, which had set up a memorial fund in the name of Vi Andrews, informs the friends that the fund amounted to £90 and will be donated to the Capital Projects Fund.

EDINBURGH

The Edinburgh Baha'i community has had a successful start in its 90 days campaign. Since hosting the Area Convention, they have had a consultation meeting with two members of the National Assembly and have organised several successful social events.

Edinburgh Baha'is are actively participating in the teaching campaign. Two people have pioneered and the LSA is helping the an proclamation work. Several individuals have contacted the Baha'is for information on the Faith. Amongst them is a university professor who is writing a book.

Most recently, for the first time, the assemblies of Glasgow, Stirling and Edinburgh met together.

This historic event will surely create more cooperation and unity in Scotland.

NEWCASTLE, N. IRELAND

A historical event at Newcastle, Co. Down, N. Ireland, yet again. The First North/South Youth Spring School organised by the N.Y.C. of Dublin, took place during the weekend 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th March.

The presence of Counsellor Adib Taherazadeh who gave most of the sessions, inspired nearly sixty young Baha'is visiting from all around Ireland, and miles away - America, Edinburgh and sunny Italy. All in all it proved to be an immensely rewarding weekend.

Although tummies grumbled, as it was during the fast, the spirit generated throughout the four days was marvellous. Several close friends of the Faith attended. At the end of the School a cable was sent to the World Centre. Many

thanks to those who organised the School and to those who came.

LUTON

On Monday 5th March 1984 two Baha'is from Luton met the members of the European Parliament, Dr. Otto Van Habsburg and Mr. Peter Beazley at the Chiltern Hotel, Luton. Mr. Beazley the M.E.P. for the area has constantly given his support in defence of our beleagured brothers and sisters in Iran and has kept in contact with the Baha'is throughout these times of darkness and persecution.

A while ago a letter was written to Ayatollah Khomeini on behalf of Mr. Beazley and his colleague Dr. Habsburg to express their concern over the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran and recently they invited the local Baha'is to meet with them in Luton to discuss this issue. They both showed a lot of kindness towards the two representatives and expressed intent to carry on their support of the Baha'is in Iran as much as possible.



Please Note

In the first issue of the Baha'i Journal we published an article entitled "From Dublin to Canberra - The Antipodean Connection". In the rush to get the issue to the printer in time we omitted the fact that the article had been written by Hand of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone. We appologise for this ommission.

There will be a weekend "school" for all those interested in helping to produce the Baha'i Journal. Topics to be covered will include journalism, photography, editing, features writing and artwork. Would all those who are interested in attending this weekend course please contact: Richard Boyle, c/o 27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD The course will take place over two days for some subjects. If anyone is interested in producing artwork for printing (posters, pamphlets etc.) not neccessarily for the journal would be welcome. The course will take place at the Baha'i Centre. Please inform Richard of your intention to attend this course as soon as possible.

International News

ITALY

Professor Alessandro Bausani, member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy, was recently awarded the Pakistani "Crescent of Distinction", one of the most important honours bestowed by the Government of Pakistan. It came as a result of Prof. Bausani's activities to make known the Urdu language and literature. A second signal honour came in July 1983 when the renowned historian was made a national member of the Academy of Lincei, an ancient order of scholars founded in 1603, one of whose first members was Galileo.

UNITED STATES

"The National Leader", an important weekly newspaper widely circulated among black Americans, reacted favourably to a press release about Counsellor Magdalene Carney's appointment to serve at the International Teaching Centre. article in the "Leader's" 20 October edition carries pictures of Dr. Carney, Mr. Glenford Mitchell, member of the Universal House of Justice, and Dr. Alberta Deas and Dr. Robert Henderson, both members of the National Assembly of the United States. Under a banner headline stating "Baha'i Religion Draws Many Non-whites", the favourable piece stresses black participation in the Faith, especially in America. author is intrigued by the calibre of early Baha'is, mentioning the Hand of the Cause Louis Gregory; Robert Abbott, founder of the "Chicago Defender"; Alain Locke, the first black Rhodes scholar; Robert Hayden, famed poet; Harvard-trained lawyer, Matthew Bullock; and musician, Dizzy Gillespie. He interviews Dr. Wilma Brady of the National Spiritual Assembly and Dr. Alberta Deas in connection with her work at the Louis Gregory Institute, and marvels at the development of the Faith in South Carolina, noting that not all black Baha'is "represent a well-heeled middleclass with ... good education". observes that South Carolina Baha'is

include "unknown farmers sharecroppers and poor people, both rural and urban".

BELGIUM

Respect for the Faith has been enhanced by recent developments in Antwerp. course is offered in the Faculty of Comparative Religion in which the Baha'i Faith is taught by Prof. M. Mazgani of Holland, at the requestof the National Assembly of Belgium. He travels each week to Antwerp to deliver his lecture as part of a curriculum which includes all major religions.

During a recent change in the curriculum, courses were divided into two categories -- A: The Great Religious Messages (Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam); B: Movements of Lesser Importance (in which the Baha'i Faith was included). The National Spiritual Assembly reacted immediately, and after an exchange of correspondence and interviews, the Faith was moved to category A.

FRENCH ANTILLES

The two island groups which will become the two National Spiritual Assemblies of Guadeloupe and Martinique at Ridvan made important gains in January. requisite number of 12 Local Assemblies was achieved on Martinique, while Guadeloupe formed its 19th Local Assembly. Three Assemblies remain to be formed before 20 April in the two major islands and smaller dependencies that constitute the territory of Guadeloupe. The mother Assembly of the French Antilles will go out of existence on creation of the two National Assemblies in the Overseas Departments of France.

IVORY COAST

The much-appreciated Baha'i singer, Mrs. Ranzi Caisuof Togo, appeared on television in Ivory Coast on 18 December in a 45-minute broadcast entitled "Who Are You?" The evening before, she had appeared in concert of the French Cultural Centre in Abidjan.

In the television appearance Mrs.Caisu was able to speak about the Faith, answering delicate questions with skill and tact. It was the occasion for letting her many fans know that the serenity and joy of living she

demonstrates in her performances derive from her Faith. Several other Baha'is were able to appear with her on the screen and to express Baha'i principles. loyalty to Government, and several books on the Faith were given to the Minister, among them a child's prayer book in Samoan and English.

UGANDA

Soon after the lifting of the ban on the Faith in early 1979, the community of Chelekura (home of Counsellor Kolonario Oule) made the momentous decision to build a large, permanent Baha'i Centre which includes an office and a store. Over 25,000 bricks were made by hand. The whole community, even small children, were involved, carrying water, sand, firewood, etc. to the building site. Dedicated Baha'i women carried water (to be used in brick-making) on their heads early in the morning before going to the fields and late in the evening after returning. Youth spent long hours preparing the mud and molding the bricks. The task was formidable, as the building measures 22 by 45 metres. The walls are now complete and the construction of the roof is under way. The building of the Haziratu'l-Quds has had the effect of proclaiming the Faith throughout the area. It is a unique thing to have the whole community involved in its construction. For aspects of the work they could not handle themselves, Baha'is have contributed to the fund in the form of cows, goats, turkeys and chickens, to pay for the materials and the contractor. They expect to complete and dedicate the Haziratu'l-Quds in loving memory of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga before the end of the Seven Year Plan. This will be the first permanent Centre built with durable materials to be erected in Uganda other than the National Centre at Kampala.

TUVALU

Mr. Uaelesi Taafaki, member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Tuvalu and Assistant Chief of Police in Funafuti, was approached by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu for information about the Faith and Uaelesi's trip in Haifa for the International Convention last Ridvan. The Prime Minister asked for a detailed report on the visit, and in a personal interview, Mr. Taafaki obliged, giving him also some stones from the Holy Land. They discussed the Baha'i concept of

NORWAY

The highpoint of the Baha'i Winter School in Gjovik, southern Norway, was the offer by a believer to pioneer to Tromso, making possible the formation of Europe's northernmost Assembly by Ridvan.

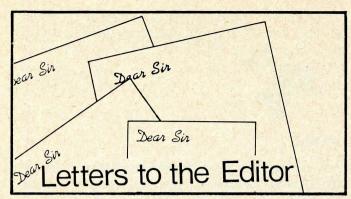
EL SALVADOR

The civil troubles of El Salvador could not prevent the holding of a "very successful summer school" in January, dedicated to the late Counsellor Raul 275 believers came to the Technological Institute in Santa Tecla from 29 December to 1 January. With the help of Counsellors Witzel and Ahmadiyyih, the school evolved into a teaching project named for the well-loved Mr. Pavon. A goal was adopted of forming the 15 Local Assemblies called for in the Plan and still lacking. Seven were assured after the first fortnight. team of 50, after a weekend orientation, enrolled 131 new believers and opened two localities.

ZAIRE

The December youth bulletin of Central South Zaire, "Badi", tells of the result of an entry-by-troops campaign in the Malemba Nkulu zone. A group of six friends formed two groups "proclaiming the Faith with joy and courage, and going on foot for many kilometres". Each group contacted more than 1,000 persons and enrolled more than 200. Twentytwo new Assemblies were formed and 66 new localities opened. One of the team resolved to travel and deepen believers of the 66 localities for a five month period.

Also in Central South Zaire, a summer school in November in Lubumbvashi brought Baha'is and non-Baha'is from all the Shaba region. 120 persons took the eight courses of the three-day programme. All those present signed a greeting sent to the World Centre.



Dear Friends, Allah'u'Abha,

Spirits are soaring in our community as a result of the National Exhibition visiting Llanelli at NawRuz. There has been so much antagonism here towards the Faith in the past but at last new horizons are opening up. Posters were put up in local shops, the community centre and the library. People have suddenly become aware of what we stand for. I was stopped twice in the street by people wanting to know what "One Planet, One People, Please" meant on my lapel badge. A headmaster wanted a detailed explanation about the Faith as a result of us asking for his leave of absence on Holy Days. His teacher also wanted to know about our beliefs. When I was talking about 'friends bringing an exhibition to our library' to a lady on the bus, the man behind said to his wife "Aah, Baha'is!"

So you see, friends, all these little instances are mounting up so that more and more people are getting to know about the Faith. If things aren't moving in your area, now, remember that they will soon in the near future. If it can happen to us, it can happen to you! With loving greetings, Jan Fussell

Dear Sir,

The Article by the Persian Affairs Committee on Iranian Baha'is and their culture, gives me the opportunity to say how much I love being almost the only Britisher in our Cambridge Baha'i Community! Their warmth, generosity and kindness towards me has been quite overwhelming. I feel I understand their inquisitiveness, it is only concern lest I should not be happy!

They are beautiful people and they have become my "Family" in every sense of the word.

Baha'i love,

Mrs. Christine Courtney

Dear Editor,

The following thoughts were stimulated by the article on Persians in Britain, in the March issue of the B.M.N.S. I hope it will be of assistance to the Persian friends to share these thoughts.

No human being wishes to feel isolated or lonely and we often seek comfort in familiarity. Perhaps it is a mistaken belief that the friends can find it in towns and cities already overpopulated with Baha'is. They may have closer contact with Persian speakers but can still feel quite isolated.

From the description given of the Persian "character" I wish to respectfully suggest that they are searching for these things in the wrong places, and that they can be found, often, in those seemingly isolated but important goal areas.

Looking at Wales for an example many of the Persian traits can be found here among the Welsh. Hospitality (particularly amongst the older generations) and inquisitiveness are examples. In the valleys any stranger can expect a warm greeting and enquiry as to how they are and if they like it here, and invitations to 'pop in' for tea often follow. Persian politeness would not go unnoticed either.

Combine these with the knowledge that there are physical advantages, e.g., housing is cheaper, and Baha'u'llah says that the country is the home of the soul. Financial burdens could be eased by moving out of the towns. Relatives and friends who have to remain in the cities can quite easily be visited, and, thankfully, the telephone keeps us in contact when necessary.

The Baha'is in these areas, often struggling to maintain these goals, would welcome these friends who would have a valuable contribution to make and every assistance would be given to help them set up home and integrate with local people.

For those dear friends who really do want to show the world it is but one country, come and see for yourselves. This is an open invitation to contact us and come for a weekend's trial. You may be pleased with what you find and decide to stay. With much love,

Christine & Rafi Abbas

Dear Baha'i Friends, There is a young Baha'i in Finland, Miss Paula Nyman, who wants to come to London in order to learn the English language and work as an au pair.

Miss Nyman wants to know whether there areany Baha'i familiesin London who would be willing to employ her.

Miss Nyman is 23 years old and knows some English. If it would be possible for you to assist her in this matter, she would be very grateful.

With loving Baha'i greetings, National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Finland, Sirkka Salmi, Secretary

Dear Friends,

I have just returned from travel teaching in Central African Republic. There I met a young Baha'i man from Gabon, who lives in Bangui now. He is studying law and he asked me if I could find him a Baha'i pen friend who would like to correspond with him in French and English. He is:-Mbiackoy-Mandangui, Edouard, B.P. 1411, Bangui, Central African Republic. Warm Baha'i Greetings, Heather M. Morfoot.

Dear Editor,

Most of us have been to the fireside which is well supported by Baha'is but rarely by contacts. Then if a contact turns up, the poor chap is overwhelmed by beaming Baha'is.

We become disappointed and maybe stop going. Someone in the community persuades us to go again - we go and quite enjoy meeting our Baha'i friends, perhaps somebody gives a good talk which we have not had before, we deepen a little, the prayers are good, and yet we leave with a restless feeling.

Could it be that our teaching prayers need more direction, and more action from us. Our prayers are answered but as the Celestial Hosts are not directed to a particular person the results are not readily seen.

If you feel frustrated at firesides are you being guided to get up and ACT. Go and join a group or a class, improve yourself in another way. Those who are happier staying at firesides can pray that you are given the opportunity to teach. Ruhhiyih Khanum has frequently told us that we must join various organisations.

Why do I suggest this? Last night was the first of a series of planned family

firesides. Unfortunately none of those who were invited could come along (know the feeling?) At first it seemed unfortunate that I forgot to tell my wife well in advance - so she had agreed to read poems at a Mothers' Union meeting. She was nervous, and asked for my prayers, and of course I included prayers for teaching. After the meeting the vicar spoke to my wife for 30 minutes about the Faith, and this in a goal area to be opened by Ridvan.

Perhaps my wifre or I should be out for all our future firesides, whilst the other one is plugged into the power source at home!

Not all of us want to join a class or a club, but perhaps couples with young children should encourage each other to go out once in a while - whilst their partner stays at home and prays for teaching opportunities to arise.

In these days of slogans and gimmicks may I suggest:-

'NOBODY TURNING UP TO YOUR FIRESIDES FOR SPIRITUAL ILLUMINATION - THEN SEND A BAHA'I OUT ON A PRAYER (WANDER) LEAD TO LIGHT THEM UP" Allah'u'Abha Warmest love, Michael Melville

Dear Baha'i Friends,

My husband and I would like to send our sixteen and thirteen year old sons to England for a fortnight this summer. We should like them to stay with a Baha'i

family preferably with children of their own age. We should also like them to be able to attend Baha'i summer schools in England for a part of this stay. Therefore we would like this stay to coincide with the last week of the summer term. We should be grateful if you could place an advertisement to this effect in the next issue of your paper. Thank you for your help.

With our Baha'i love,
Aazel Passy Mesbah,
44b. rue de Bourgfelden,
e68220 Hegenheinn,
France.

Dear Friends,

The recent message from the Universal House of Justice regarding involvement of Baha'isinthe social and environmental activities of our society, invoked me to write about voluntary work for good

causes. Those of us who have free time, particularly dear Persian ladies, could do a great service in this field. Hospitals, meals on wheels and many other organisations in most towns and cities are in desperate need of help. The byproduct of this rewarding work is many fold, meeting new people and making friends who could be receptive souls for teaching the Faith (other volunteer workers). Besides the service has a therapeutic effect on everyone, specially those friends who constantly think about the situation in Iran, the fate of our loved ones or in some cases the financial losses. This service is not demanding, half or one day a week or even less is mostly what is required. Surely many people can spare the time.

Inquiries could be made through Citizens Advice Bureau Libraries or Social

Services.

Warmest Baha'i Love, Pouri Habibi, Stafford.

A few words of thanks -Dear friends. Allah'u'Abha,

Even though the following passage was written to the Baha'is in America, perhaps if the Guardian were alive today he would have given the same tribute to our National Assembly the committees and all those who have participated in the 90 day campaign, for all the hard work and

sacrifice each one has given.

"The resourcefulness which thenational representatives of the American believers have, in recent months, so strikingly demonstrated, as evidenced by the successive measures they have adopted, has been matched by the loyal, the unquestioning and generous support accorded them by all those whom they represent, at every critical stage, and with every fresh advance, in the discharge of their sacred duties."

Passage from Advent of Divine Justice,



Please Note

Persian Studies — Fellowships and Bursaries 1984/85

Applications are invited from British and Commonwealth subjects for a number of Fellowships or Bursaries awarded by the British Institute of Persian Studies. These grants are intended to aid scholars who wish to pursue research in any field of Persian and Iranian studies concerned with the arts, archaeology, history, literature, linguistics, religion, philosophy, and cognate subjects.

Grants will be available for those wishing to study original material within Iran and in universities and other learned institutions outside Iran.

Fellowship grants of up to £3000 and bursaries or travel grants with a limit of £1000 each are available from 1 September 1984.

Application forms may be obtained from the Assistant Secretary of the Institute, Mrs M E Gueritz, 13 Cambrian Road, Richmond, Surrey TW10 6JQ. All applications should be returned to the Assistant Secretary as soon as possible and not later than 1 May 1984. Applications should be submitted through the Office of the Registrar at least two weeks before the closing date.

If anyone is interested in forming a Baha'i Computer Users Group would they contact: Richard Boyle, c/o National Office, 27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD. The object of the group would be primarily to examine and promote the use of computers in teaching the faith both as the end product themselves or as a tool in assisting with other fields such as video.

Please state the make of your computer (if any), what peripherals (printer, discs etc) you have access to, what software which may be of use and your level of expertise at programming.

NATIONAL CONVENTION

ROYAL HALL HARROGATE

27, 28 & 29 APRIL

CAL	ENDAR OF EVENT
	S
MAY 2	Picnic at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire - 3pm. Details from Chesterfield 205273
MAY 13	Baha'i Bazaar to raise funds for the Universal House of Justice. Starts lpm at Sheep Fold, Borwick, Carnforth, Lancashire. Tel. 0524 732757. Please bring articles for sale, money and an empty stomach!
MAY 25-28	BAHA'I INTERNATIONAL MAY SCHOOL "The Spiritual Kingdoms of God and Man - The pathway to peace" To be held in Felixtowe, Suffolk. Details 0206 869267
JUNE 30- JULY 6	Swiss Summer School. Topic: "Baha'i Literature" (in English) Speaker Adib Taherzadeh. To be held at Tagungszentrum LLandegg, CH-9405 Wienacht/AR, Switzerland.
JULY 7-15	Italian Summer School, Southern Italy. Details and booking from- Nura Mazzoni, Tel. 0971 43187 Potenza.
JULY 21-25	Spanish Summer School, Valencia.
JULY 28-AUG 4	Scottish Summer School. Details to follow.
JULY 29-AUG 4	Swiss Summer School, Topic: Arts & Music, (in English) Address and details see above.
AUG 9-12	"SOUL WARS" The first ever Sussex Youth Conference. Details to follow.
AUG 9-12	Junior Youth Summer School, 29 Newtondale, Sutton Park, Hull. For boys 8-11, the aim is to give a deeper understanding of the Faith. Outings and involvement in the local Baha'i community part of course.
AUG 11-19	Irish Summer School, King's Hospital School, nr Dublin (as last year).
	£80 Irish (much less in Sterling) Details from Summer School, Registrar, 24 Burlington Rd, Dublin 4, Ireland.
AUG 18-23	£80 Irish (much less in Sterling) Details from Summer School,
AUG 18-23 AUG 18-25	£80 Irish (much less in Sterling) Details from Summer School, Registrar, 24 Burlington Rd, Dublin 4, Ireland. Swiss Summer School, Topic: Shoghi Effendi (in English)
	£80 Irish (much less in Sterling) Details from Summer School, Registrar, 24 Burlington Rd, Dublin 4, Ireland. Swiss Summer School, Topic: Shoghi Effendi (in English) Details & address as above.
AUG 18-25	£80 Irish (much less in Sterling) Details from Summer School, Registrar, 24 Burlington Rd, Dublin 4, Ireland. Swiss Summer School, Topic: Shoghi Effendi (in English) Details & address as above. First Welsh Summer School. Details to follow. Italian Summer School, Northern Italy. Details and booking from

IS THIS REALLY ALL THAT IS GOING ON IN THE UNITED KINGDOM BAHA'I COMMUNITY? ONE GOOD WAY OF ENSURING SUPPORT FROM OTHER BAHA'I COMMUNITIES IS TO ADVERTISE YOUR FORTHCOMING EVENTS, WHETHER SOCIAL, FUNDRAISING OR TEACHING INT THE BAHA'I JOURNAL!

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