



BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by
The National Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom,
27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD.

For circulation among Bahá'ís only.

No. 235

'Ilm 133

October 1976

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, HELSINKI: 6-8 JULY 1976



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, PARIS: 4-6 AUGUST 1976



POLITICS AND THE ERADICATION OF INJUSTICE

A letter dated 7 July from the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer is published here, with our title and subtitles, because of its urgent and pertinent importance.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

The Universal House of Justice received your letter of May 15 conveying your thoughts on the need for Bahá'ís to become involved as may be necessary in political affairs and to participate in activities aimed at the eradication of injustice. The sincerity which prompted you to write such a letter and to candidly express your sentiments deeply touched the Universal House of Justice. We have been asked to convey its comments to you.

You ask if silence on the part of Bahá'ís will not allow chaos and human humiliation to be a permanent feature on earth, and state that shunning of politics by the Bahá'ís can but weaken the freedom fighters of the world. When viewing the conditions of our society we see a world beset by ills and groaning under the burden of suffering. This suffering, Bahá'u'lláh has Himself testified, is because the "body" of the world, "though created whole and perfect, has been afflicted, through divers causes, with grave ills and maladies", and "its sickness waxed more severe, as it fell under the treatment of unskilled physicians who have spurred on the steed of their worldly desires and have erred grievously." Bahá'u'lláh's statement in this passage concludes with the assertion that the "sovereign remedy" lies in turning and submitting to the "skilled", the "all-powerful" and "inspired Physician. This verily is the truth and all else naught but error."

This Divine Physician has assured us in His writings that God is All-Seeing and All-Knowing and has willed to establish in this Day and among men His everlasting Kingdom. "The whole earth", Bahá'u'lláh has stated, "is now in a state of pregnancy. The day is approaching when it will have yielded its noblest fruits, when from it will have sprung forth the loftiest trees, the most enchanting blossoms, the most heavenly blessings." In order to achieve this purpose God sent us the spirit and message of the New Day through two successive Manifestations, both of Whom the generality of mankind have rejected, and have, alas, preferred to continue in their own blindness and perversity. Commenting on such a world spectacle, Bahá'u'lláh wrote: "Soon will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead." "After a time", He further wrote, "all the governments on earth will change. Oppression will envelop the world. And following a universal convulsion, the sun of justice will rise from the horizon of the unseen realm."

When we turn to His other writings to learn more of His warning that this "present-day order" is to be "rolled up", we read statements and predictions such as these: "The time for the destruction of the world and its people hath arrived." "The hour is approaching when the most great convulsion will have appeared." "The promised day is come, the day when tormenting trials will have surged above your heads, and beneath your feet, saying: 'Taste ye what your hands have wrought!' " "Soon shall the blasts of His chastisement beat upon you and the dust of hell enshroud you." "And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake." "The day is approaching when its (civilization) flame will devour the cities, when the Tongue of Grandeur will proclaim: 'The Kingdom is God's, the Almighty, the All-Praised!' " "The day is approaching when the wrathful anger of the Almighty will have taken hold of them. He, verily, is the Omnipotent, the All-Subduing, the Most Powerful, He shall cleanse the earth from the defilement of their corruption, and shall give it for an heritage unto such of His servants as are nigh unto Him."

From the above it becomes clear that the Hand of Providence is at work, and is engaged in fulfilling God's purpose for mankind in this Age. "God's purpose", Shoghi Effendi assures us, "is none other than to usher in, in ways He alone can bring about, and the full significance of which He alone can fathom, the Great, the Golden Age of a long-divided, a long-afflicted humanity. Its present state, indeed even its immediate future, is dark, distressingly dark. Its distant future, however, is radiant, gloriously radiant—so radiant that no eye can visualize it."

The immediate distressingly dark future

Let us consider the First World War, which Shoghi Effendi has described in his writings as "the first stage in a titanic convulsion long predicted by Bahá'u'lláh." Although it ended outwardly in a Treaty of Peace, 'Abdu'l-Bahá remarked: "Peace, Peace, the lips of potentates and peoples unceasingly proclaim, whereas the fire of unquenched hatred still smoulders in their hearts." And then in 1920, He wrote: "The ills from which the world now suffers will multiply; the gloom which envelops it will deepen." And again: "another war, fiercer than the last, will assuredly break out." After this Second World War broke out in 1939, Shoghi Effendi called it a "tempest, unprecedented in its violence", and the "great and mighty wind of God invading the remotest and fairest regions of the earth." After the termination of this War and the creation of the United Nations, the Guardian wrote in 1948, anticipating "still more violent convulsions" and referred to the "wings of yet another conflict" destined to "darken the international horizon." And finally in his last Ridván Message of April 1957, he left for posterity the following analysis of world conditions in the light of the prophecies and predictions recorded in the writings of the Faith:

"Indeed, as we gaze in retrospect beyond the immediate past, and survey, in however cursory a manner, the vicissitudes afflicting an increasingly tormented society, and recall the strains and stresses to which the fabric of a dying Order has been increasingly subjected, we cannot but marvel at the sharp contrast presented, on the one hand, by the accumulated evidences of the orderly unfoldment, and the uninterrupted multiplication of the agencies, of an Administrative Order designed to be the harbinger of a world civilization, and, on the other, by the ominous manifestations of acute political conflict, of social unrest, of racial animosity, of class antagonism, of immorality and of irreligion, proclaiming, in no uncertain terms, the corruption and obsolescence of the institutions of a bankrupt Order.

"Against the background of these afflictive disturbances—the turmoil and tribulations of a travailing age—we may well ponder the portentous prophecies uttered well-nigh fourscore years ago, by the Author of our Faith, as well as the dire predictions made by Him Who is the unerring Interpreter of His teachings, all foreshadowing a universal commotion, of a scope and intensity unparalleled in the annals of mankind.

"The violent derangement of the world's equilibrium; the trembling that will seize the limbs of mankind; the radical transformation of human society; the rolling up of the present-day Order; the fundamental changes affecting the structure of government; the weakening of the pillars of religion; the rise of dictatorships; the spread of tyranny; the fall of monarchies; the decline of ecclesiastical institutions; the increase of anarchy and chaos; the extension and consolidation of the Movement of the Left; the fanning into flame of the smouldering fire of racial strife; the development of infernal engines of war; the burning of cities; the contamination of the atmosphere of the earth—these stand out as the signs and portents that must either herald or accompany the retributive calamity which, as decreed by Him Who is the Judge and Redeemer of mankind, must, sooner or later, afflict a society which, for the most part, and for over a century, has turned a deaf ear to the Voice of God's Messenger in this day—a calamity which must purge the human race of the dross of its age-long corruptions, and weld its component parts into a firmly-knit world-embracing Fellowship. . ."

Thus we see how the Divine Physician is both the "Judge" of mankind and its "Redeemer".

This same Physician, addressing His followers, "the beloved of the one true God", wrote: "Forbear ye from concerning yourselves with the affairs of this world and all that pertaineth unto it, or from meddling with the activities of those who are its outward leaders. The one true God, exalted be His glory, hath bestowed the government of the earth upon the kings. To none is given the right to act in any manner that would run counter to the considered views of them who are in authority."

In another Tablet He laid on His followers the obligation to "behave towards the government of the country in which they reside with loyalty, honesty and truthfulness." 'Abdu'l-Bahá reaffirmed the same principles. When in America He explained: "The essence of the Bahá'í spirit is that in order to establish a better social order and economic condition, there must be allegiance to the laws and principles of government." And

in a Tablet He referred to the "irrefutable command that the Blessed Perfection hath given" in His Tablets, namely, "that the believers must obey the kings with the utmost sincerity and fidelity, and He hath forbidden them (the believers) to interfere at all with political problems. He hath even prohibited the believers from discussing political affairs."

And finally in His last Will and Testament He wrote: "We must obey and be the well-wishers of the government of the land. . ."

The transformation of the whole of human society

We have also been asked to share with you at this juncture the following two extracts from letters written by the Universal House of Justice, and it is hoped these will help you in appreciating the significant and vital rôle Bahá'ís can and must play in the world today:

"We are told by Shoghi Effendi that two great processes are at work in the world; the great Plan of God, tumultuous in its progress, working through mankind as a whole, tearing down barriers to world unity and forging humankind into a unified body in the fires of suffering and experience. This process will produce, in God's due time, the Lesser Peace, the political unification of the world. Mankind at that time can be likened to a body that is unified but without life. The second process, the task of breathing life into this unified body—of creating true unity and spirituality culminating in the Most Great Peace—is that of the Bahá'ís, who are labouring consciously, with detailed instructions and continuing divine guidance, to erect the fabric of the Kingdom of God on earth, into which they call their fellowmen, thus conferring upon them eternal life.

"The working out of God's Major Plan proceeds mysteriously in ways directed by Him alone, but the Minor Plan that He has given us to execute, as our part in His grand design for the redemption of mankind, is clearly delineated. It is to this work that we must devote all our energies, for there is no one else to do it."

* * * * *

"Bahá'ís are often accused of holding aloof from the 'real problems' of their fellow-men. But when we hear this accusation let us not forget that those who make it are usually idealistic materialists to whom material good is the only 'real' good, whereas we know that the working of the material world is merely a reflection of spiritual conditions and until the spiritual conditions can be changed there can be no lasting change for the better in material affairs.

"We should also remember that most people have no clear concept of the sort of world they wish to build, nor how to go about building it. Even those who are concerned to improve conditions are therefore reduced to combatting every apparent evil that takes their attention. Willingness to fight against evils, whether in the form of conditions or embodied in evil men, has thus become for most people the touchstone by which they judge a person's moral worth. Bahá'ís, on the other hand, know the goal they are working towards and know what they must do, step by step, to attain it. Their whole energy is directed towards the building of the good, a good which has such a positive strength that in the face of it the multitude of evils—which are in essence negative—will fade away and be no more. To enter into the quixotic tournament of demolishing one by one the evils in the world is, to a Bahá'í, a vain waste of time and effort. His whole life is directed towards proclaiming the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, reviving the spiritual life of his fellow-men, uniting them in a divinely-created World Order, and then, as that Order grows in strength and influence, he will see the power of that Message transforming the whole of human society and progressively solving the problems and removing the injustices which have so long bedevilled the world."

You have asked whether it is possible to have a World Federation when not all countries have attained their independence. The answer is in the negative. Both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi likened the emergence of the American Republic and the unification of the "diversified and loosely related elements" of its "divided" community into one national entity, to the unity of the world and the incorporation of its federated units into "one coherent system". Just as the American Constitution does not allow one state to be more autonomous than another, so must the nations of the world enjoy equal status in any form of World Federation. Indeed one of the "candles" of unity anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá is "unity in freedom".

Yet another question is whether it is morally right to remain silent when equality is being abused. The beloved Guardian has given us the following guidelines in letters written on his behalf. "Much as the friends must guard against in any way ever seeming to identify themselves or the Cause with any political party, they must also guard against the other extreme of never taking part with other progressive groups, in conferences or committees designed to promote some activity in entire accord with our teachings—such as, for instance, better race relations."

The Universal House of Justice hopes that you and your Bahá'í co-workers in that land will steep yourselves in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, endeavour to follow in your personal lives the noble standards set by Him, attract the multitudes to the radiance of His glorious Faith, and enable them to warm their hearts and ignite their souls with the flames of that undying Fire which "blazeth and rageth in the world of creation".

We have been asked by the Universal House of Justice to assure you of its prayers on your behalf in the Holy Shrines.

THE ONWARD MARCH OF THE FAITH

We warmly welcome to the community the following new believers, recorded in the National Office from 16 June to 17 August 1976.

ENGLAND — Adults

Stratford Caldecott — Lambeth
J. Chellappoo (Mrs) — Islington
Annamelena Conte (Miss) — Barnet
William Galpin — Poole
E. Chris Jenkins — Stevenage
David Lambert — Wakefield
G. L. Middleton (Mrs) — S. Wight District
Marilyn Tomkinson (Mrs) — Manchester

Martin John Calverley — Cambridge
Shanta Deves Chellappoo (Miss) — Islington
Peter Davis — Chorley
Leon Hall — Mole Valley
Theresa Jayes (Miss) — Northampton
Brian Macdonald — West Wilts
Alexander Odembaseka — Slough
Jean Walker (Miss) — Doncaster

Pauline Calverley (Mrs) — Cambridge
Ruth Connell (Miss) — Jersey
Kathleen Mary Felton (Miss) — Carlisle
Peter Humphrey — Croydon
Fay Jorgensen (Mrs) — Winchester
Danusia Macdonald (Mrs) — West Wilts
Goonasaran Subramaniam — Aylesbury
Tim Wheeler — Camden

Youth

Jane Clutterbuck (Miss) — Worcester

Mary Mostafanejad (Miss) — Plymouth

SCOTLAND — Adult

William Twycross — Monklands District

Youth

John Crombie — East Lothian

Lesley-Anne Farrell (Mrs) — Edinburgh

THE MESSAGE OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE TO THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CONFERENCE IN HELSINKI

With eager hearts we hail the convocation of this first of the twin Arctic Conferences inaugurating the series of eight International Bahá'í Conferences to be held during the middle part of the Five Year Plan. The northern regions of the world were alluded to by Bahá'u'lláh in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, the Mother Book of the Revelation. Their names were recorded in the Tablets of the Divine Plan by the pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who, in one of His other Tablets, supplicated God to "raise up sanctified, pure and spiritual souls in the countries of the West and the territories of the North, and make them signs of His guidance, ensigns of the Concourse on High and angels of the Abhá Kingdom". These lands received the constant attention of Shoghi Effendi, who repeatedly urged the friends to carry the Faith to their uttermost inhabited areas, and who joyfully announced every advance of the Bahá'ís that established a centre closer to the North Pole.

Already touched by the morning light of God's Cause by the nineteen-twenties, the lands of the North were blessed by visits from the indomitable Martha Root, whose love warmed and encouraged the hearts of the handful of believers then labouring in a few scattered centres in Scandinavia and illumined the soul of Holmfriour Arnadottir, Iceland's first Bahá'í. Bursting into blossom under the impact of the rays of the Second Seven Year Plan, these communities received a major impetus from the Ten Year Crusade, of which the European campaign was launched at the never-to-be-forgotten conference in Stockholm in 1953, and which established centres as far north as Thule in Greenland and Sassen in the islands of Spitzbergen. Yet another stage of growth was reached with the Nine Year Plan and the convocation of the North Atlantic Conference in Reykjavik, which marked the

opening of a new phase in the collaboration between the northern communities on both sides of that ocean.

Only thirty-eight years have passed since Vaino Rissanen, the first Bahá'í in Finland, accepted with radiant heart the life-giving message brought to him by Josephine Kruka, the "Mother of Finland", in July 1938, and now the city of Helsinki, the seat of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Finland, is the scene of an International Bahá'í Conference whose deliberations are focussed on the diffusion of the light of God's Faith throughout the entire arctic and sub-arctic regions of the world.

The followers of the Blessed Perfection gathered in Helsinki must direct their attention to the urgent tasks of the second half of the Five Year Plan: to the re-opening of Spitzbergen; the winning of the 34 Local Spiritual Assemblies still to be formed in Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland; the acceleration of the translation and publication of Bahá'í literature; the forging of still closer links of collaboration with the Bahá'í communities of Alaska, Canada and in the continent of Europe; the enlistment under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh of increasing numbers of the Eskimo, Lapp and Gipsy peoples; and the pursuit of the vital and challenging objectives of the Plan beyond the frontiers of their homelands.

It is our fervent prayer at the Threshold of Bahá'u'lláh that this Conference will produce an upsurge of Bahá'í activity throughout the northern lands and in the islands of the North Sea and the Baltic that will outshine every achievement made in those promising regions, and be an inspiration to your fellow-believers in every country of the world.

THE HELSINKI INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í CONFERENCE 5 – 8 JULY 1976

Report by Gerald Warren

'Results' was the keynote of the first of the International Teaching Conferences held at the beautiful Finlandia Hall in Helsinki. Right from the start of the Conference the message from the Universal House of Justice, read by their representative Hand of the Cause Dr Ugo Giachery, called for action:

"It is our fervent prayer at the Threshold of Bahá'u'lláh" they wrote, "that this Conference will produce an upsurge of Bahá'í activity throughout the northern lands and in the islands of the North Sea and the Baltic that will outshine every achievement made in those promising regions. . ."

And results there were which will have certainly pleased our Universal House of Justice. Many valiant offers to pioneer were crowned by an offer to re-open the difficult island of Spitzbergen, 800 miles above the Arctic Circle — a goal specially called for in the House of Justice's message. Then, when the call for those who would be travel-teaching in the sub-arctic regions was made, it seemed that there were more of the 800 Conference participants up on the stage than in their seats. Two weeks of travel-teaching in Northern Scandinavia and Lapland followed the Conference, culminating in the 'Midnight-Sun Conference' above the Arctic

Circle in Bodo, Norway. This extensive teaching project helped to fulfil another part of the Universal House of Justice's message which called for ". . . the enlistment under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh of increasing numbers of the . . . Lapp . . . peoples. . ."

There was also extensive coverage in the Finnish media — Ugo Giachery was interviewed by radio and television and articles appeared in newspapers. The Conference public meeting attracted the astonishing number of 400 visitors who were treated not only to an inspiring introduction to the Faith in Finnish, but also to music and to a much enjoyed talk by the famous jazz musician John Birks 'Dizzy' Gillespie. Then, besides the public meeting, a great deal of individual teaching and teaching by example went on throughout the Conference and even to the stewards and stewardesses on the airplanes returning after the Conference was over.

Having mentioned the visible results of the Conference, no-one can calculate the tremendous spiritual impact which it must have had on the future of Finland and the sub-arctic regions. This spiritual impact was generated by the love and unity pervading all of the Conference sessions whose tone was set by Ugo Giachery in the opening moments when he announced:



The Hand of the Cause Dr Ugo Giachery (representing the Universal House of Justice) with his wife, and the Hands of the Cause Dr Adelbert Mühlischlegel and General Ala'í, with some of the Bahá'ís attending the Helsinki Conference.

"First I would like to ask you a question which 'Abdu'l-Bahá always used to ask: Are you happy?" Who could fail to be happy? There was the presence of three additional Hands of the Cause, General Shua'u'lláh Alá'í, Dr Muhájir, and Dr Adelbert Mühlischlegel; three days of inspiring talks from Hands of the Cause, Councillors, and other fine speakers; beautiful musical interludes; a performance by the children; evenings of entertainment; a bookstall; and of course the opportunity to enjoy Bahá'í fellowship with friends from thirty-five countries around the world.

Finally, no account of the Helsinki Conference would be complete without paying tribute to the hard work and sacrifice of the Finnish Bahá'ís who had the difficult task of organising it all. Their wonderful Bahá'í spirit won the hearts of everyone at Helsinki, and in the future their community is bound to reap a rich reward from their dedicated efforts.



Some of the United Kingdom contingent at Helsinki

THE MESSAGE OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE TO THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CONFERENCE IN PARIS

The brilliance of Paris in the story of European civilisation bids fair to be renewed with even greater splendour during the Day of the Lord of Hosts and the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. The annals of Paris in this Day have already acquired eternal lustre from events of mightier import, of greater universal significance and more sacred character than any which its past history has witnessed. The visits of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of God's inviolable Covenant, alone outshine in historical importance anything in the long history of France, and are immortalised in the greatly-loved collection of His discourses given in that capital city. Beyond this, we recall with awe and pride that it was at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's instruction that the illustrious May Maxwell succeeded in establishing in Paris the first Bahá'í centre on the European Continent, a continent described by Shoghi Effendi as "the cradle of a civilisation to some of whose beneficent features the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh has paid significant tribute; on whose soil both the Greek and Roman civilisations were born and flourished; which has contributed so richly to the unfoldment of American civilisation; the fountainhead of American culture; the mother of Christendom, and the scene of the greatest exploits of the followers of Jesus Christ", and experiencing "the first stirrings of that spiritual revolution" which must culminate in the permanent establishment throughout its diversified lands of the divinely ordained Order of Bahá'u'lláh. This first centre was rapidly reinforced by the conversion of the first English believer and of the first Frenchman to accept the Faith—the distinguished Hippolyte Dreyfus, whose "pre-eminent rôle" it was to kindle "the torch which is destined to shed eternal illumination upon his native land and its people"—and by Laura Barney, whose "imperishable service" was to transmit to posterity *Some Answered Questions*. The steadfastness and devotion of the Paris Bahá'í Community during the dark and sombre days of the Second World War earned great praise from the beloved Guardian of the Faith, while the recent signs of widespread and

effective teaching work throughout France lend wings to the hope that this veteran, sorely-tested and steadfast community is about to gather the harvest of those potent seeds sown and nourished so lovingly by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

It is highly propitious that this city, thrice blessed by the presence of the Master, should be the scene of the first International Bahá'í Conference in France and one of the eight International Conferences to be held around the world during the Five Year Plan. You are gathered in this historic spot to deliberate on the fortunes of that Plan, to derive inspiration from the deeds performed there in the heroic age of our Faith and from your association together, to rededicate yourselves to the service of Bahá'u'lláh and to determine, each and every one, how best you can promote the victory of the Five Year Plan. We call to your attention 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words:

The call of Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá can be heard far and wide. It is my hope that this soul-stirring melody of the Abhá Kingdom may also be raised high in Paris, for Paris is tumultuous in all things. I pray the Almighty that the music and singing of the beloved of God will be so loud that the vibrations thereof may cause the limbs of Paris to quake. I await very joyful tidings from the friends in Paris. Unquestionably the divine melody will in the future be raised in that city, but I long that this may happen in these days of the Covenant, and that you will be the enchanting songsters and the sweet-singing nightingales of that land.

Our hopes are high and we pray at the Sacred Threshold that from this Conference will surge throughout Europe a wave of such sacrificial teaching as will impel large numbers of its diverse and highly-talented peoples to embrace the Faith of God and dedicate themselves to the redemption of mankind under the glorious banner of the Prince of Peace.

THE PARIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: Palais des Congrès: 4–6 August 1976

Report by Lois Hainsworth

We drove to the Paris Conference, and as we left the ring-road at Porte Maillot, we were thrilled to see a banner part-way up the Palais des Congrès, one of the highest buildings in Paris, with letters several feet high saying "Foi Bahá'íe" (Bahá'í Faith) "Conférence Internationale". To see this marvellous piece of proclamation in a place where every driver on the ring-road could not help but notice it was immensely exuberating; but more was to come — we saw first one group, and then many, many more, of people who could not be other than Bahá'ís. It is impossible to convey the feeling of excitement as we walked into the entrance of the Meridien Hotel and found that it was packed with Bahá'ís — the predominant language being Persian. It was really wonderful to meet people we had not seen for a long time — sometimes as much as twenty years — and over and over again we saw tears of joy in the eyes of other Bahá'ís who were meeting friends they had not met for years. Even before the conference had begun, the spirit was there, among the hundreds of Bahá'ís meeting together in several hotels in Paris,

in youth hostels and other accommodation. The final number of registered adults was 6,200 and there were several hundred children.

The organisation was tremendous. Careful plans had been made for the registration of those attending and to a large extent this went very smoothly. The entire basement of the Meridien Hotel had been booked; this included a large conference hall which held several hundred and which was used for musical shows at night and for some of the children during the day, and a large salon for books from many Publishing Trusts. There were also a number of committee rooms and a large area where various countries had their pioneering and travel teaching desks and displays.

The huge Palais des Congrès has a magnificent auditorium which seats 3,700: the armchairs were exceptionally comfortable and each was fitted with earphones for simultaneous translation. The stage itself was enormous — about the size of the stage of the



Some of the friends who responded to the pioneer appeal in Paris, with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in the centre.

Olivier Theatre, not yet opened, at the National Theatre complex in London. Large moveable wings were brought in to reduce the size of the stage so that those upon it would not be dwarfed.

The conference committee had called for help in many ways — looking after books and visual aids, caring for the children, translating, and particularly for controllers and hostesses to guide people to seats and to ensure that there was not too much movement within this great hall during the sessions. This particular group of young people worked very hard indeed — they were on their feet throughout all the sessions and patiently helped everyone.

While the very young children were cared for at the Meridien Hotel, the older children were taken every morning to the American School on the outskirts of Paris. Here they were divided into age and language groups and taught by volunteer teachers and helpers.

All this organisation fell upon the shoulders of a relatively small group of people, drawn from a community of about half the size of the contingent attending from the United Kingdom.

As the main hall held only a proportion of those attending, there were other rooms, all with closed-circuit television, so that everyone could see and hear all that happened.

The morning of the conference dawned and we moved into the halls. Seated, we waited quietly and then the lights in the great hall dimmed; the hall was hushed; on the left of the stage as we faced it, a spotlight fell upon a group of musicians — the Swiss 'Wellspring' group — who played and sang an arrangement of the prayer "Blessed is the spot" — it was lovely — surely never before can so large a gathering of Bahá'ís have been so silent; never before can the atmosphere of a conference have been set so beautifully. Our hearts were full, but there was more to come. On the other side of the enormous stage another spotlight shone upon Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, who led six fellow-Hands across to the centre of the stage where chairs had been set for them.



A small group of the United Kingdom contingent.

The conference was formally opened by Paul Hakim, on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of France, who welcomed Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, the six other Hands of the Cause — H. Collis Featherstone, Dhikru'u'lláh Khádem, General Shu'a'u'lláh Ala'í, John Robarts, 'Ali Muhammad Varqá and Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir — Counsellors and Members of the Auxiliary Boards, National Assembly members and all the friends.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum began by saying that it was "a very great honour and privilege to represent the Universal House of Justice on such a momentous occasion", and went on to read the Message from the House of Justice. Afterwards she spoke at length about her mother and the early believers in Europe and said that she thought "that the reason why the Universal House of Justice gave me the privilege of being here today is because my mother was the first Bahá'í in Europe and established the first Bahá'í centre on this continent in Paris". Later she spoke of the Five Year Plan and the supreme importance, not only of winning the goals, but of surpassing them. She reminded us that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had said "See how the candle weeps away its life and gives its light" and said that having accepted Bahá'u'lláh or having been born into His Faith, we are candles, "so let us forget about whether it is a comfortable sensation or not and give our lives to him".

There followed a slide programme prepared by Paul Vader and a talk on "The Present Day Challenge" given by Nosrat Tirandez. The first morning session closed with a quite unprecedented occasion when a message from Mr Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, was read by his personal representative, Mr Luc Van Bellingham, in which he stressed the importance of the work of non-governmental organisations such as the Bahá'ís. He said that in the transformation which is taking place in the world today it was necessary that problems should not be solved in anger, but through reasoned and concerted determination, which gives an important responsibility to organisations such as the Bahá'ís, and he wished us every success in our deliberations. This example of the Faith's emergence from obscurity was one of the most challenging moments of the entire conference.

The afternoon programme was given up to an analysis of the European goals of the Five Year Plan which was to have been presented jointly by Counsellors Anneliese Bopp and Betty Reed. We learned that Betty Reed was not well and therefore both sessions were taken by Anneliese Bopp, who asked each European contingent to stand when the slide showing their goals was shown. There was a roar of applause for the 800 strong United Kingdom contingent, which appeared to be the largest European group present. We noticed that the slide wasn't big enough to carry all our goals.

On Thursday morning, after prayers and announcements, the official representatives of National Assemblies represented at the Conference were introduced — I counted thirty-six, but I understand there were several more who were not on the platform. After all the introductions, the audience applauded and I was told afterwards by one of the National Assembly members on the platform that the Hands of the Cause and Counsellors seated on the front rows of the auditorium rose to applaud the National Assemblies — a wonderful sign of the oneness of purpose existing between these two institutions of our Faith.

Counsellor Erik Blumenthal spoke on the education of Bahá'í Children — 'The Roses of Thy Garden'. Counsellor Blumenthal is a psychologist and said that it was important that we should

make our children happy — Bahá'í parents must learn to understand their children. He said that all necessary knowledge was in the Writings and that a child needs encouragement just as a plant needs water. There were many things we could do to create a Bahá'í atmosphere: children should be brought into as many activities as possible; parents should read the Writings with them; there should be regular firesides and daily prayers. Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Days should have their part for children and they should be taught to keep the Fast happily.

After this talk we again had the joy of hearing from Rúhíyyih Khánum, but this time her talk was preceded by an unscheduled showing of some slides which had just come from the Holy Land of the site of the Seat for the Universal House of Justice and some plans of the building. When she came to speak, Rúhíyyih Khánum said how very glad she had been that it had been possible to see these pictures as she had wondered how she was "going to convey an idea of the immensity of the hole in Mount Carmel". She said that Shoghi Effendi had spoken of the arc of buildings on Mount Carmel which would be the administrative centre of the Faith and when planning the Archives Building had deliberately chosen the Greek style of architecture — it was thought beautiful 2,000 years ago, it was thought beautiful today and there was a pretty good chance that it would still be considered beautiful in 2,000 years' time.

She spoke movingly of the day when Shoghi Effendi had been to the cemetery in 'Akká to exhume the bodies of Navvab and the Purest Branch, and how he had said that just for a moment the face of the mother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá had been visible under its shroud before it had crumbled into dust. Referring to the Greatest Holy Leaf she mentioned her wonderful service and the poverty suffered by the Holy Family, and she told us touching stories of events in the Holy Land during the years of the second World War.

Speaking of the act of Faith in the building of the Shrine of the Báb and how this had been paralleled in the decision of the House of Justice to build its Seat on Carmel at a time when no-one knows what will happen from one day to the next. Rúhíyyih Khánum said how very badly this building is needed by the House of Justice. When she came back from Africa she found that the old reservoir had been turned into offices, so great is the need for office space. She made a most moving appeal for funds for the building and asked particularly that the children should be helped to catch the vision of what we are doing, recalling a time long ago when her parents were sending money for the building of the Shrine of the Báb and regretting that she herself had not sent her own personal contribution because she had not properly understood. Several times she spoke directly in French, and for a very long period in Persian.

The afternoon was devoted to pioneering and travel teaching and commenced with a talk by Rúhíyyih Khánum on this subject generally, with references to her experiences in Africa, India and South America, and this was followed by a stirring call for pioneers from Counsellor Adib Taherzadeh — these two inspiring talks led to a flow of prospective pioneers to the stage which totalled 379 offers. The love which is felt for Rúhíyyih Khánum was sent out to her in waves from the hall whenever she appeared, but it seemed at one moment after this pioneer call that she would be swept from the stage by a surge of loving friends wishing to greet her.

On Friday morning Counsellor Louis Henuzet spoke to the theme "Trustees of the Merciful" and his talk was about the administration of the Faith and world order. Counsellor Dorothy Ferraby, who was to have chaired this session, had fallen and broken her hip just before the conference and so the only two



Friends gathered on the occasion of the dedication of the new national Hazíratu'l-Quds of France, shortly after the Paris conference.

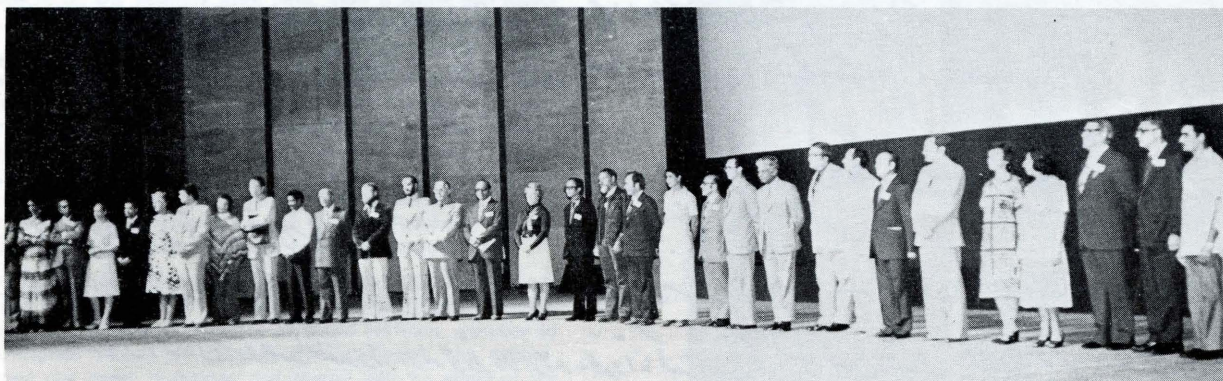
representatives from the United Kingdom on the conference platform had been incapacitated. (The friends will be glad to know that Counsellor Ferraby has had an operation and is now recuperating in a London hospital.)

Later on Friday morning, Rúhíyyih Khánum answered questions which had previously been handed to the platform on a number of subjects, and on Friday afternoon Firooz Kazimzadeh spoke on the "Significance of Opposition". One of his most illuminating statements was that "it is opposition that brings to our side the best luminaries of the old world order", and he quoted Vahid as an example.

Music played a great part in this conference — music of a very fine quality. All the groups were excellent, showing many different styles of presentation — our own group from the United Kingdom, led by Fiona Macdonald, gave a very good account of themselves with some very lively songs. There were also some beautiful solo performances from instrumentalists as well as singers. It would be impossible to list or describe them all, but the brilliant violin playing of Bijan Khadem-Missagh on Friday afternoon was in a class of its own.

During the course of the conference we were able to hear from each one of the Hands of the Cause present, but the main session for the Hands of the Cause was given to John Robarts; and it was Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum who gave the closing remarks. Seated with her on the platform were the other six Hands of the Cause and our final moment of music came from the singers who had performed in the groups — all joined together to sing "Follow Me, be as I am, 'Abdu'l-Bahá", led by Russell Garcia, of New Zealand. The stage darkened, onto the screen was projected a slide of 'Abdu'l-Bahá standing in front of the Eiffel Tower — there were long moments of complete silence, and then, our last memory of the largest conference Europe has yet seen since the World Congress in 1963, came the closing prayer in French.

Paris will surely never be the same again. In addition to the conference itself there was a well attended public meeting; a small group of Bahá'ís was received at the Elysée Palace by the secretary of the President of France; there was unprecedented press coverage. Above all, there was the wave of prayer which must have drawn blessings upon that lovely city, and every Bahá'í who was able to attend the conference will look back upon it as one of the milestones in his or her life.



National Assembly members on the stage of the Palais des Congrès

VISITING THE GRAVE OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

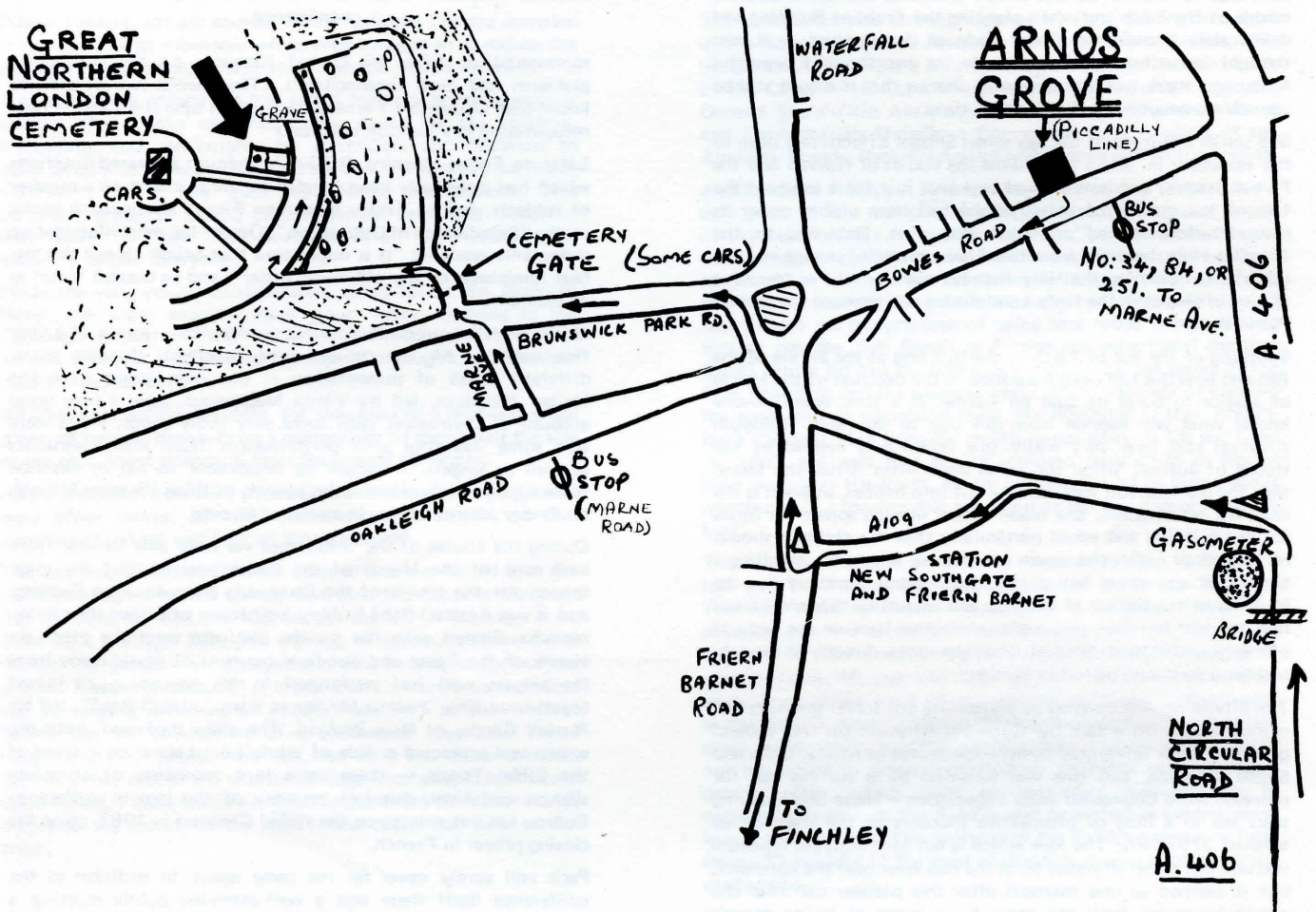
The Grave of Shoghi Effendi is the holiest place in the Western World and we should respect it as such. Many visitors seem not to have understood this so the following notes have been prepared:

1. It is not a picnic site and believers go there for prayers and meditation. Food containers should not be spread out on the balustrade walls.
2. People should not climb the nearby trees to enable them to take pictures.
3. The friends should not pose for photographs against the monument nor should they pour attar of roses on the steps as it damages the marble.
4. At all times the friends should respect the feelings of those who go to pay their respects to the memory of the beloved Guardian and should not allow children to run around making a noise, climbing on the gate and the walls, nor should they play noisy tape-recordings and radios. It is indeed a Shrine and should be so revered.

DIRECTIONS

By Underground: Take the Piccadilly line to Arnos Grove, then go on foot or by bus (about ten minutes' walk), following the map.

By Car: Take the most direct route north to the North Circular Road (A406), travelling by Edgware Road or Gloucester Place and follow the A41 through Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road until the North Circular is reached. Turn right (East) and follow the A406 to Gasworks; then turn left into High Road (A109) signposted 'New Southgate'. Proceed to top of hill, turn right to roundabout then take second left, Brunswick Park Road, to cemetery (See map).



قابل توجه زائرین مرقه مبارک بطوریکه اجدای عزیز اطلاع دهند مرقه مبارک حضرت ولی اراد جل شانه مقدس ترین مکان در این منطقه از اروپا است و بدون تردد نیست نه نهایت احترام بیاید. بمنظور رعایت حال حضرت این مکان مقدس را از زائرین عزیزان حفاظت زیرین جلب نمایند :-

- 1- اجد در این مکان مقدس فقط باز زیارت و دعا و استعاذت حضور بیایند. محوطه متاع بهیچ وجه گشت و نگاه و یا چهره برگزارد یا بهر شکلی نیست. بنابر این از حرف غدا و همراه داشتن قطعه صورت و رادیو یا هر مطلق خود داری شود و هر گاه در حفظ و نظافت متاع مبارک و محوطه آن باید مراقب دولت باشیم.
- 2- از بالا رفتن در فضا و چرخش متاع بمنظور عکسبرداری مطلق خود داری شود.
- 3- در صورتیکه بخواهند عکس بردارند بیستون مرقه مبارک ابدانیکه دانه نشود. همچنین از پاشیدن عطر بر در سنگ مرقه مبارک که باعث ضایع شدن آنها میگردد جدا خود داری شود.
- 4- هنگامیکه از اجد در متاع مبارک مشغول زیارت و تلاوت دعا و مناجات هستند لیست است نهایت سکوت و احترام رعایت شود. بنحویه باید مراقب شد که اطفال سرو صداهای بلند و از دیوار محوطه بالا نروند. مجدداً تاکید میشود که بایستی حال دلت و مراقبت بجهت آید تا حضرت واقعی این متاع مقدس بنحویه شایسته و سزاوار است رعایت شود. با نیت ابدی الهی: محضر مقدس روحانی بجهت ابدی کبر



The Haziratu'l-Quds in the Faroe Islands

CAPITAL GOALS VICTORY ACHIEVED

Haziratu'l-Quds of the Faroe Islands

The name of the property is VAKTARHUSBREKKA and that name also serves for its address in Torshavn. As the accompanying photograph shows, it is a single, detached house comprised of three floors; cellar or basement, main floor and upper. Each of the floors has an approximate area of 60 square metres. The house is nineteen years old and in good condition. The basement floor consists of the furnace plus 3-4 additional rooms which could serve as an apartment dwelling. The main floor has a fair-sized sitting room, kitchen, bathroom. The upper floor is composed of five rooms.

**TOTAL COST £30,000; OUR CONTRIBUTION — £15,000.
BORROWED FROM THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
— £14,000.**

NATIONAL HAZIRATU'L QUDS AND NATIONAL OFFICE

27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD

Telephone 01 584 2566

HAZIRATU'L-QUDS

1. Non-advertised **Public Meetings** are held every Thursday at 8 pm.
2. **Firesides** are held, sponsored by various London Boroughs, every Monday from 8 pm.
3. **Feasts and Holy Days** are arranged by the Westminster Assembly.
4. **Sleeping accommodation** is available for five National Assembly or national committee members. Committees wishing to book rooms for their meetings should do this well in advance with the caretaker; individual members of committees make their own arrangements with the caretaker who allocates the available bed space strictly in order of booking. When the five beds are allocated, individuals must make their own private arrangements. Payment for bed and breakfast is made to the caretaker. No committees meet when the National Assembly is in session.
5. There are presently no display facilities for the National Archives.

NATIONAL OFFICE

1. The **National Office** is normally open from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm on weekdays except on Bank Holidays and Bahá'í Holy Days. Enquiries may be made on weekdays until 8 pm.
2. The National Office is **not** open at weekends.

3. The **National Assembly Secretary** is normally available on the telephone or by appointment between the hours of 2.30 pm and 6.30 pm. Enquiries at all other times may be made to the office staff or to the caretaker. The National Assembly Secretary is **not** officially 'on duty' at weekends.
4. **All correspondence** to the National Assembly on all matters, other than the booking of accommodation, must be addressed to the 'National Assembly Secretary'. Accommodation enquiries may be addressed to 'The Caretaker'. There is now no position of 'Office Supervisor' nor should any correspondence be addressed to 'The Bahá'í Centre'.
5. All **letters for onward transmission**, including those requesting pilgrimages, must be adequately stamped.
6. **Routine enquiries** may be made to the office staff by telephone during hours 9.30 am to 8.00 pm on weekdays and at all other times to the caretaker, but it should be remembered that the calls between 9.00 am and 1.00 pm are the most expensive.
7. Printed directions to the **Guardian's Grave** are available at the National Office in English, French and Persian.
8. The 'Bahá'í Journal' when printed is now always sent out with the Newsletter; the number of Journals required, changes of address, etc., should be addressed to the **National Spiritual Assembly Secretary**.
9. All donations should be sent to the **National Treasurer** and not to the National Spiritual Assembly Secretary.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

INVERNESS SUMMER SCHOOL

Report by Jacqueline Mehrabi

The first summer school to be held in the Highlands of Scotland took place in the market town of Inverness from 10–17 July. At all times the summer school committee and Inverness community combined to ensure a helpful and quiet efficiency and with over 300 registered at the school this was no small achievement! For many it was the first time they had ventured so far north in the United Kingdom and Inverness, with the clear river Ness flowing through the town centre close to the Town Hall where all the sessions were held, gave a gentle and lovely welcome to the friends south of the border as they gathered to meet with Bahá'ís from every district of Scotland and the Islands.

The school had a truly international flavour with people also coming from Alaska, Africa, Canada, France, Panama, Germany and the USA. The Odeida Iriquois and Navajo American-Indian tribes were represented and, at a Unity Feast, entertained us with their chants and dancing, while the friends from Scotland gave renderings in their various native or adopted dialects (including a gaelic song sung by seven year old Taliyyih Rawhani) and the live sound of bagpipes was heard by many for the first time.

The school's programme was very full, there being five sessions each day (lasting through the morning, afternoon and evening). We were blessed by the presence of David Hofman, member of the Universal House of Justice, who addressed the school, answered our many questions and shared with us some of the Writings of the Báb, which will shortly be published.

The Lord Provost of Inverness receiving "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era" from National Secretary Philip Hainsworth. As a result of this presentation 520 column centimetres of publicity appeared in Inverness newspapers.



Two Counsellors attended and inspired the friends — Adib Taherzadeh who gave a series of talks, including several on the history of the Faith, and Isobel Sabri who spoke on 'The Organic Unity of the Bahá'í Faith'. Professor Soheil Bushrui tirelessly gave his knowledge and love throughout the week, and other speakers who increased our understanding of this precious Faith were Board Member Mary Kouchezkadeh, Philip and Lois Hainsworth, Bill and Madeline Hellaby, Peter Smith, May Hofman and Hassan Sabri.

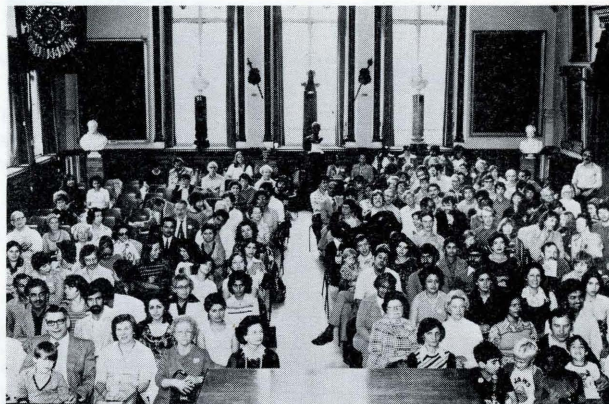
The second session each afternoon was split into various discussion groups, each with a leader. Several subjects were arranged (e.g. art, Islám, marriage, public speaking) but if there was an additional or particular interest then a group gathered to discuss it. As alternatives to these sessions, trips to Loch Ness, the skating rink, a wool mill, the swimming pool and a football pitch were offered. Dori Talbot and her helpers ensured that the children enjoyed to the full their part of summer school and certainly everyone, adult and child, had plenty to occupy them.

One of the evenings was reserved for a public meeting on the Faith, Philip Hainsworth gave a very good talk which produced some heated opposition from representatives of a particular denomination and gave a glimpse of the fundamentalist views prevalent in the north. There was wide newspaper coverage on the school and an excellent radio interview when David Hofman, Philip Hainsworth and Enayat Rawhani were interviewed and were able to explain some of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

One of the most moving occasions of the school was when the Lord Provost of Inverness officially welcomed the summer school participants to his city. He made a ceremonial entrance, preceded by the Scottish equivalent of the mayoral mace-bearer, and the friends stood to receive him. He was welcomed by Iain Palin, chairman of the school, and was greeted by Philip



Friends who attended the Helsinki Conference on the platform at the Inverness Summer School with Philip Hainsworth.



Friends assembled in the Inverness Town Hall

Hainsworth, who presented a copy of 'Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era', explaining that its author, Dr Esselmont, was a Scot. The Lord Provost presented a wooden plaque bearing the arms of his city.

One of the distinctive features of this summer school was that it was not residential. This meant that there were in effect 300 'travel teachers' in Inverness with an opportunity to tell their landladies about the Faith. The seeds sown during this time will, without a doubt, hasten the harvest in this part of the world.

The laughter on the final evening, when a social was held and everyone who had some talent to offer entertained the whole school, must have been heard far beyond the thick walls of the Town Hall. With faces aching with laughter and hearts uplifted by the very high spirit which had been maintained throughout the week, the friends made their long way home, many first travel-teaching in the several unopened and beautiful districts in the north of Scotland.

An appropriate note to end the school was a final short address given by Harold Shepherd, who, with his wife and family, were the first pioneers to Inverness seventeen years ago. Harold commented on the progress since that time and how the Highlands are the gateway to the Islands, where he now lives — Islands of which 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke and which our beloved Guardian said were so full of promise if we only arise to pour our resources and manpower into them. The chairman, Iain Palin, and the committee, together with the Inverness community, are to be congratulated for the excellent organisation of the school, which will surely open the gates for a new surge of teaching in Scotland.

We thank Bahá'u'lláh for the blessings of this Summer School and pray that the spirit generated will indeed permeate the Scottish Mainland and Islands.

LONDON CONFERENCE — 14 August 1976

Following the call of the Universal House of Justice for meetings to be held after each international conference so that the spirit generated at these large gatherings might be passed to those not fortunate enough to be able to attend, our National Assembly arranged such a meeting at a large hall in Brompton Road, Kensington. The Inverness Summer School had followed the Helsinki Conference and this day-long meeting took place just over a week after the Paris Conference.

It was opened by National Assembly Secretary and chairman of the conference, Philip Hainsworth, who welcomed the Hand of the Cause, 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá and Counsellor Adib Taherzadeh, and then told us that of the 6,200 participants at the Paris Conference, 12% had registered from the United Kingdom. Another notable attendance had been from the Republic of Ireland, one-third of whose community had attended.

He then introduced the Hand of the Cause 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá, who spoke about the conference and then gave us news that a house had been bought in Paris as a new Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, which had been dedicated shortly after the conference.

Counsellor Adib Taherzadeh was the next to speak and he told us that he brought the love of Dorothy Ferraby, with news that her operation was to take place that morning, and she was

confident that she would soon be able to move around. He went on to speak of the links which the British people had with the Faith since the days of the Báb; of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visits to this country; of Shoghi Effendi's studies at Balliol College, Oxford, and of his use of our superb language in his many translations; of the significant part which the British have played in the development of our Faith and of the tremendous pioneering record of the friends in this country. He finished by saying that he hoped that this conference would create the same degree of spirit and enthusiasm among the believers as the Six Year Plan, which was the mother plan for the British believers.

Other friends who gave their impressions of the Paris conference were Mary Kouchezkadeh, Mary Hardy, Hassan Sabri (who gave us the last day of his visit before returning to Africa), and Sherier Noorayazin, Secretary of the Bombay Assembly, who recalled that only two years before, Jagdish Gandhi had learned of the Faith in this country and was now a valuable member of the Indian National Assembly.

The last to speak on this morning of reminiscences was Soheil Bushrui, who, we were sad to learn, would be leaving us quite soon and whose last 'public appearance' this was to be. He has visited many communities during his year here and he expressed his gratitude for all the kindness shown to him. We shall all be sorry to lose this lovable friend and his family.

The National Assembly had arranged for rolls, sandwiches, fruit, coffee and soft drinks to be available and the friends had their lunch in the building. Afterwards we returned to the hall, where Fiona Macdonald and a group of young people sang some Bahá'í songs which were much appreciated.

Keith Munro took the chair for the afternoon, which was devoted to pioneering and travel teaching and he called upon several friends who had been serving in these fields to come and speak. For travel teaching we listened to inspiring words from Mehrangiz Munsiff, Richard Hainsworth and Shadab Kouchekzadeh and to stories about pioneering from Joy Behi and Peter Trundle, all of whom gave an insight into this work to those who might wish to join them. Adib Taherzadeh addressed the meeting again and the official part of the gathering closed with a chant.

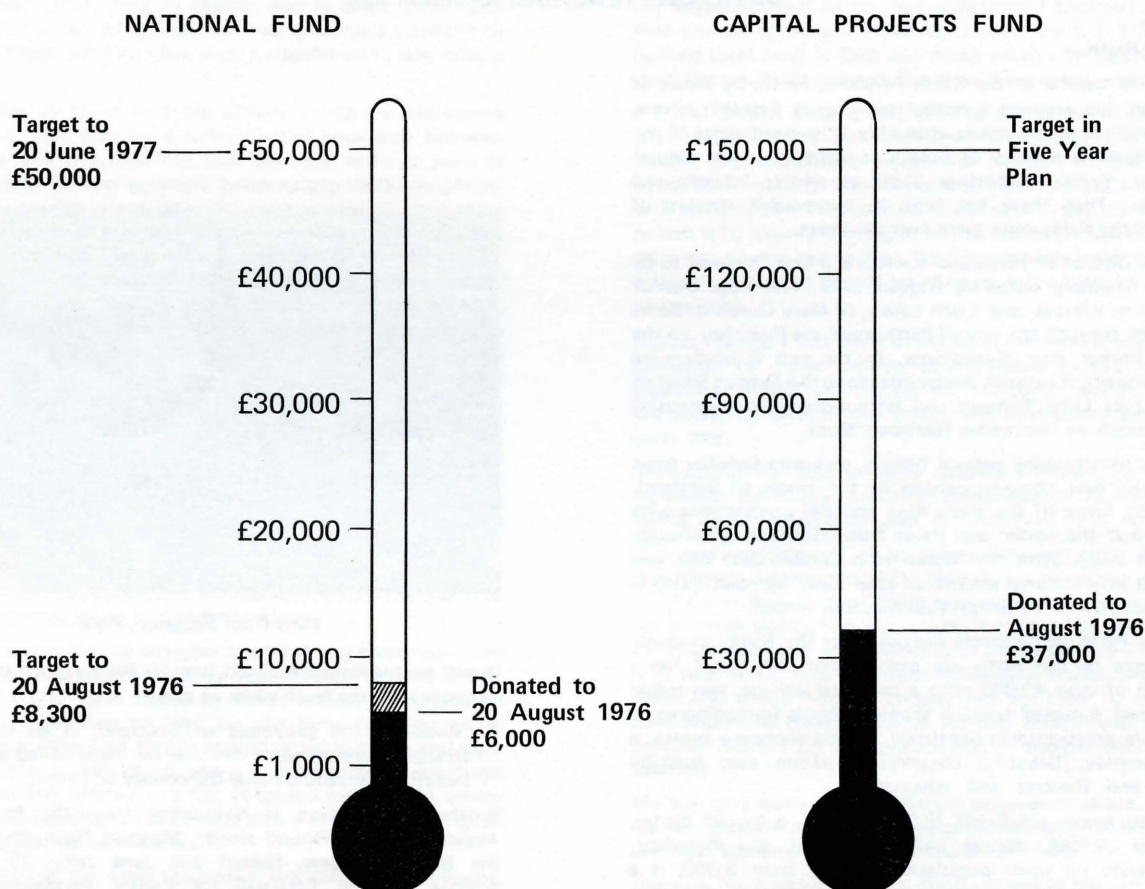
More refreshments were served and the friends continued to meet informally for several more hours to conclude a most successful day.

There were special arrangements for children who were cared for by a team of friends led by Dori Talbot, Malcolm Lee and Alicia Cardell, and there were rooms set aside for books and sales items. For the help of all those who were involved in these activities, everyone was deeply grateful.

It should be said that the success of this meeting was due in no small measure to tremendous efforts on the part of a small group of friends, which included an immense amount of struggling up-and-down stairs with a vast number of chairs. These had been specially hired for the occasion, and paid for by one generous believer.

Report by Lois Hainsworth

THE FUNDS



The budget set by the National Assembly now runs from 21 June 1976 to 20 June 1977 and the amount of money needed from donations is £50,000. This amounts to approximately £960 weekly. Already we are running below target and in only two months donations are more than £2,000 short. With pioneers ready to go overseas this could prove very serious and the National Assembly hopes that everyone will make real sacrifices so that our targets can be met in these crucial stages of the Five Year Plan.

The Capital Projects Fund is in an even more serious state. The target of £150,000 for the period of the Five Year Plan means that £30,000 is about the amount needed each year. By now at least £60,000 should have been donated and it will be remembered that the National Assembly set a special target of £38,000 to be donated by the **Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh LAST YEAR (1975)**. This has yet to be reached! It is obvious that to achieve these rather large sums, very special sacrifices need to be made by all the Bahá'ís in the United Kingdom, for the privilege of sacrifice is not limited to just a few. Universal participation always brings special bounties.

The lovers of Bahá'u'lláh (No. 1 of a new series of true stories)

He was a boy like any other boy. He enjoyed doing all the things that boys like to do. He was just ten years old.

He was a boy like any other boy — except — he believed in Bahá'u'lláh and he loved Bahá'u'lláh very much and he was always happiest when he was doing things for Bahá'u'lláh.

One day he went with his parents on pilgrimage. Whilst he was at the World Centre he saw the excavations being made on Mount Carmel in preparation for the building of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. Although he was only ten years old, his understanding of the importance and significance of what was being done was greater than that of many grown up people. When he was home again after his visit to the World Centre he longed to make a sacrifice for Bahá'u'lláh so he sold his violin and sent the money to the National Assembly to give to the Universal House of Justice.

National Treasurer
Betty Goode
8 Knowle Road
Stafford

BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, HONG-KONG: 27-30 NOVEMBER 1976

The conference will be especially honoured to have 'Ali Akbar Furutan, Hand of the Cause of God, as the representative of the Universal House of Justice.

Hong Kong is in its own right one of the great tourist centres of the world. It is also of fundamental importance to the growth of the Faith in the Far East, being at the door of one of the world's great nations. In a recent letter from the Universal House of Justice we read:

"...the friends should realise the potentialities for the spread of the Faith not only in the Far East, but in the whole of the mighty Asiatic Continent, whose teeming millions remain as yet scarcely touched by the rays of the light of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. . . Who can yet visualise the breathtaking developments that will be witnessed as the fire of the Cause of God ignites the hearts of men and women in all parts of Asia?"

Peltours Ltd have arranged a special tour leaving London on 24 November and returning 3 December. Approximate cost per person sharing a twin room — £393. Details from the National Office.

For those not going by the tour there are post-tour Conferences in Taiwan on 3 December and in Malasia on 8 December.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

A View of Perth

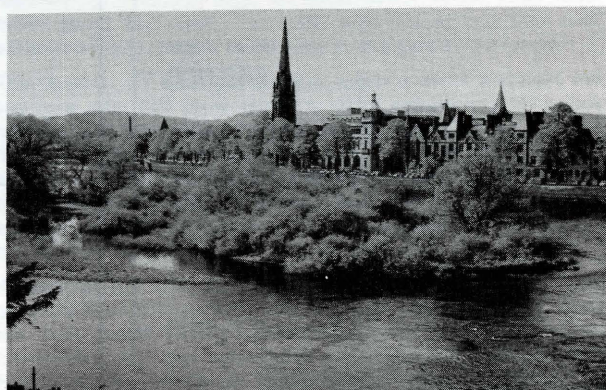
For long the capital of the Scots kingdom, Perth, by virtue of its location, has enjoyed a central position in Scottish affairs. Its convenient location, easily accessible from most parts of the country has on a number of occasions made Perth the natural choice for Bahá'í gatherings such as winter schools and conferences. Thus there has been an appreciable amount of teaching of the Faith done there over the years.

Today the District of Perth and Kinross is a first line goal, to be raised to Assembly status by Ridván 1977. This huge district extends from Kinross, and Loch Leven, of Mary Queen of Scots fame, north through the city of Perth itself, via Pitlochry, to the Highland border near Dalwhinnie. In the east it borders on Dundee, whence it extends westwards along the famous Road to the Isles, past Loch Tummel and lofty Schiehallion, alongside Loch Rannoch to impressive Rannoch Moor.

For all its breathtaking natural beauty, this area benefits from some of the best communications in the whole of Scotland. Perth is the focus of the main road and rail connections with Inverness and the north, and those from Glasgow, Edinburgh, and points south. With nine trains from London each day, and the nearest international airport an hour away by road, Perth is easily accessible. It is a British Rail motorail centre.

What does Perth and Kinross district offer the Bahá'í pioneer? Places where he can settle are many. Perth city itself has a population of over 40,000 with a technical college, two major hospitals and a nurses' training school, schools (including some of the more prestigious in Scotland), a good shopping centre, a sports complex, beautiful countryside within easy walking distance, and theatres and cinemas.

Other main towns are Crieff (6,000 people), a tourist centre, Blairgowrie (6,000), tourist and agricultural, and Pitlochry, which despite its small population of less than 3,000, is a burgeoning resort famous for its theatre and festival. Pitlochry is situated some twenty miles north of Perth on the A9, the main road to Inverness, and on the main rail line north.



View from Bridgend, Perth

It will readily be appreciated that Sir Walter Scott was speaking no more than the truth when he said:

'Amid all the provinces of Scotland, if an intelligent stranger were asked to describe the most varied and most beautiful, he would name the county of Perth'.

Further information is obtainable from the Perth Tourist Association, The Round House, Marshall Place, Perth, or from the Bahá'í pioneers, Robert and June Jelly, 15 Dunbarney Avenue, Kintillo, BRIDGE OF EARN, Perthshire.

PEN-PORTRAIT: District of Nithsdale

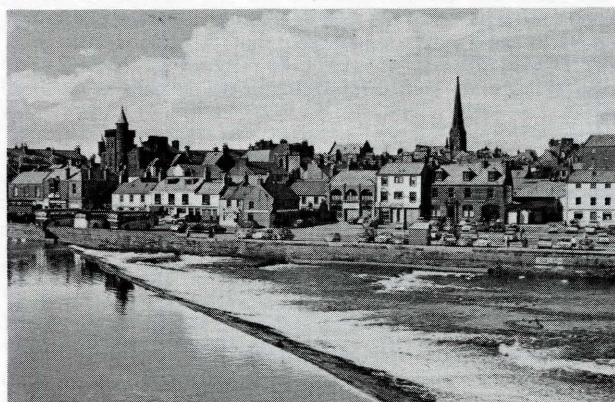
In the district of Nithsdale, a Spiritual Assembly has to be formed by Ridván 1977. At present, a Bahá'í group, four in number, are actively working towards this goal.

You may well ask "Where is Nithsdale?" Nithsdale is a district of Dumfries and Galloway, in the picturesque South-West corner of Scotland and comes under the recently formed teaching area of 'South and Central Scotland'.

Nithsdale in a sense is like a long narrow strip, with the small towns of Thornhill, Sanquhar and Kirkcubbin to the central and northern areas, and Dumfries (pop. 27,000) to the south. This whole area is set in most attractive country.

Nithsdale is very well situated indeed, being fairly close to Carlisle (our nearest Bahá'í community) and within not too far a distance by road from other large centres such as Glasgow, Edinburgh and even Newcastle. A main rail link (Glasgow—London) and local rail services between Glasgow and Carlisle serve Dumfries very well. Anyone wishing to visit Ireland (Summer Schools!), would have no problem, as Stranraer, which is the link to Ireland by boat, isn't so far away to our west.

Anyone coming to pioneer to this 'part of the world', would find it a most attractive and challenging place in which to serve. 'Robert Burns Country' beckons!



Whitesands, Dumfries

12,000 MILES OF TRAVEL TEACHING IN AFRICA,

13 January – 21 July 1976

by Richard Hainsworth

Since I returned from my travel teaching trip to Africa several weeks ago, many people have asked me what it was like. Usually I have had to think for some minutes, for travel teaching is such an intense Bahá'í experience, so crammed with events and occasions that no single answer is sufficient. At no time during the entire six months that I was travelling did I forget that I was a Bahá'í — unfamiliarity with the weather, the customs, the languages of the places I visited reminded me constantly of the reason why I was there.

I stopped in Kenya for two days of acclimatisation and orientation. Malawi was the first country on my itinerary and I was there during the rainy season, the weather was hot and humid and the plants more exotic and lush than usual. My assignment for the most part of my time in Malawi was to assist in delegate elections. The Board of Counsellors had appointed someone to show the villagers how to elect their delegates and I was to help him.

The only way to travel to these villages during the wet season was by foot. This entailed a two-to-four hour walk between each village, and it turned out that the most difficult parts of my trip would be the journeys between the different places. However, in a sense, these were the most rewarding since there was great triumph in having conquered the challenge. The most difficult journey was one I made towards the end of my stay in Malawi. The Auxiliary Board Member who was responsible for Malawi had not yet been to the northern end of the country. Since I had ten days left we decided to go together: we set out on a four hundred mile journey the next morning only knowing how to cover the first hundred miles or so. When we arrived we found that the next leg would last eight hours during the night. It was a terrible ride. Yet, more remarkable was the lady who accompanied me for she was a seventy-three year old grandmother. When we were half way there and, not knowing how to get through the next part of the trip, there was a strange coincidence. The hostel at which we stayed was full, and who should walk into my room to share with me, but the brother-in-law of one of the Counsellors — a man my companion, Helen Wilks, had met the year before. He was able to take and guide us the rest of the way along to our destination.

Another time, during the delegate elections, my companion and I were trying to get forty miles by bus; it took 13 and a half hours! Six hours were spent in a bus station waiting for a connection — needless to say, we did some teaching whilst we were there. When we finally arrived at the bus stop and were walking to the village which was our destination, a small van slowed down and offered us a lift. It turned out that the owner of the van was the chief of the whole area and he invited us to go and tell him why we were there.

The next day, at the time appointed, we visited his enclosure, only to find that he had been called away to adjudicate on a land dispute. Two hours later, just as we were about to return home, he returned with an area councillor (a politician) and various other minor politicians. We had a very good discussion about the Faith during which the Chief began to try and explain the Bahá'í point of view to one of the minor politicians who would not accept one of the teachings!!



Guitar playing during break at the Youth Conference held at Durban

Much of my time was spent living with the Africans in the villages and I will always remember the first night. I was sitting on the verandah of a mud hut which was on the side of a mountain which had a fantastic view, the sun had set and I was playing to a group of children who were bubbling with curiosity over this white man who was playing the *geetaar*. I then thought of the western town I had come from nearly 5,000 miles away. How many people can claim to have had an experience like that, to have shared the love that welled from their hearts to make me feel at home amongst them, my Bahá'í family.

As a travel teacher I learned a considerable amount about myself. Taking action and doing things I never had the courage to do before. Many times I've prayed and a good course of action has suggested itself to me, but sometimes I have not carried out that course of action. However, during the trip I found that putting total trust in God and doing what, after prayer, seemed right, the result, though not always what expected, was successful.

I found myself singing and playing the guitar to 900 school-goers between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five; going to villages and settlements where the mention of the Faith had never been made before; sometimes even walking twenty miles to a place hoping to find a translator when I got there, since the person who usually accompanied me had to plough his field and there was no-one else to take. On one occasion I addressed eleven different groups of people, starting from the basic fundamentals of the Faith.

During my trip I met some of the most marvellous Bahá'ís alive—pioneers. To those wonderful hospitable people I owe the greatest gratitude for making my trip so successful. There are too many to name in this article, but I remember and pray for every one.

Throughout my trip, in every country I visited, be it Malawi, Rhodesia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland or South Africa, I found an overwhelming need for pioneers.

The vast majority of those who come into the Faith have virtually no knowledge of its history, its principles, or administration. In fact, in one remote area, a devoted new Bahá'í asked me whether Bahá'u'lláh was a lady or a man! The believers thirst for knowledge and understanding of the Faith they love, yet the only way for them to gain this knowledge is if someone tells it to them and shows them, in an easy way for them to understand, how important these teachings are and how to put them into practice. Such is the tremendous task of the pioneers and travel teachers.

My trip gave me a wholly different perspective of life. It showed me how insignificant are the pressures that seem to bind my life and how supremely important the Bahá'í Faith is.

In every place and condition, from villages in the lush forests of Malawi to those in the semi-deserts of Botswana and the cold mountains of Lesotho; from the widely scattered villages of Swaziland to the large condensed villages of Botswana; from the complexities of teaching in South Africa to the care taken in teaching where the political climate is sensitive, the power of the Bahá'í Faith is evident in those who serve it.

My hope is that this meagre attempt to describe my trip will illustrate to a small degree the enormous rewards promised by Bahá'u'lláh.

"By the righteousness of God! Should a man, all alone, arise in the name of Bahá and put on the armour of His love, him will the Almighty cause to be victorious, though the forces of heaven and earth be arrayed against him."
(World Order of Bahá'u'lláh p. 106)

The Universal House of Justice has told us that:

"the doors are closing in our faces"

and the Guardian has said:

"The field is indeed so immense, the period so critical, the Cause so great, the workers so few, the time so short, the privilege so priceless, that no follower of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, worthy to bear His name, can afford a moment's hesitation."

(Guidance for Today and Tomorrow, p. 223)

NOTICES

BIRTHS

MARRIAGES

3 July 1976: Ruth Smith to Husayn Mohammadi, of Manchester, in Appledore, Kent.
Mary Lanham to Nigel Colebrook (both LSA members) in Waveney.

23 July 1976: Shadram Yazdani to Leon Braunstein, in Croydon.

DEATHS

3 July 1976: Marjorie Parker, of Oxford, as the result of a car accident.

DEADLINE: As the Bahá'í Journal must now await distribution with the first available Newsletter, would the friends please note that there will now be a regular deadline date — 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

Would the friends please note a typographical error in the August 1976 issue — on the front the number on the left should read No. 134.

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

Lois Hainsworth (Mrs)
27 Rutland Gate,
London SW7

GREEN SHIELD STAMPS: Please continue to send full books, with the name and address of the National Assembly written in the back to:

Ramin Habibi,
42 Cloister Drive,
Darwen, Lancs., BB3 3JX.

About £70 worth of stamps have already been collected and they are to be used to purchase equipment for the National Office. The donors are thanked for their generosity. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if a receipt is required.

HUQUQU'LLÁH

حال تمام در یکی از الواح میفرمایند :

یا ستمند چه مقدار از نفوس که بکمال سعی و جتهاد دشتی از رخارف جمع

مینانند و کمال نسج و شادی را از جمیع آن دارند و لکن در باطن از تقسم اعلی

بگیران محول شده یعنی نصیب خود ایشان نیست بسیار شود که با بعد از آن نفوس

سیرسد اعادنا الله و یا کم من هذا المجران همین عمر تلف شد و شب و روز حجت

کشیده شد و مال هم سبب و مال گشت اکثر اموال ناسطه از بیت اگر نه اس

با نزل الله عامل باشند البته حمایت حق آن نفوس را محروم نگذارد و در هر حال

فضل مراقب و محسن متوجه خواهد بود . انشی

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

AYLESBURY VALE: The presence of travel-teacher Mrs Janet Ward at our Monday fireside brought an added sensation of joy amongst the Bahá'ís of Aylesbury. Speaking about the ten years which she and her husband, Professor Ward, spent in 'Akká as custodians of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, Mrs Ward related many happy incidents that had taken place during that time. She also dwelt on a new deepening programme being used in the USA which covers the local spiritual assembly. As well as holding picnics, social evenings, and joining Youth Clubs in order to proclaim the Faith, the Bahá'í youth of Aylesbury have now formed a singing group which will be visiting hospitals. "Our aim is to make people happy, show the Bahá'í spirit and attract the hearts through cheerful music."

GUILDFORD: Our community has been having a very gratifying and exciting time in recent months. On a variety of occasions people have knocked on doors, written letters or telephoned to ask about the Faith, including the vicar of Stoke Parish, who said that the Bahá'í stickers were the only sign of religion on his route, and stayed for three and a half hours during which time several Bahá'ís and contacts looked in! The United Nations Association and local Society of Friends have suddenly become alive to the Faith, and during a very full programme of UNA activity the Bahá'ís were very much in evidence. On each occasion they found the Faith to be a topic of conversation among the other participants, including a luncheon in honour of the local Member of Parliament prior to a Garden Party at which we were helping (we later presented him with a book, which he warmly received). Several more books have been given to leading dignitaries in the town, and we have regular spots in 'What's on in Guildford' published by the Guildford Library, and the local newspaper, both including activities in the goal district of Waverley.



First Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Macclesfield

Our teaching Committee has made a forward plan for Waverley to culminate in the formation of the Spiritual Assembly at Ridván 1977. Many enjoyable occasions have taken place during the spring and summer with many contacts coming along — Unity Feasts, barbecues, youth evenings, international evenings, etc. Five Bahá'ís have graduated from the University of Surrey this year and we shall be very sorry to lose them, although we know that they will continue to serve the Faith in various parts of the globe.

HAMILTON: On Sunday, 16 May, two representatives of the Hamilton Assembly participated in a 'Kirling Session' at the invitation of the District Council. This assumed a certain significance for us because it was the very first time the Assembly had been recognised by the local non-Bahá'í community to the extent of being invited officially to any function. This occasion is apparently a local custom, when civic dignitaries and local clerics, together with representatives of other groups within the community, gather in the Parish Hall and proceed to the Parish Church for a suitable service. The Bahá'ís were advised to 'wear official dress', if appropriate, for the two-by-two perambulation from the Halls to the Church. Our pair adorned themselves with the most suitable emblem — the small badge bearing the Greatest Name.

INVERNESS: The Nairn agricultural show draws a large attendance from the districts of Nairn, Moray, and Inverness, as well as further afield. In addition to farming matters it has displays and events of a more general nature, and the public attend in very great numbers. For the third year in succession the Inverness Bahá'ís hired a tent for the purposes of proclamation here, and placed on show the exhibition 'Only One Earth', which has been displayed at a number of towns in Scotland. This shows the problems facing mankind today, and their solution in the Bahá'í Faith, by means of a series of large illustrated panels. In addition to the Inverness Bahá'ís, friends from Perth and Humberside assisted with the manning. Several hundred people actually entered the tent to see the display, and many hundreds more at least saw the large 'Bahá'í Faith' sign outside.

IPSWICH: A member of the local Esperanto Association, who is keenly interested in the Faith, suggested that a Bahá'í should give a talk at the annual convention of the Eastern Federation of the Esperanto Associations to publicise the Faith.

A young pioneer to the town agreed to be coached in Esperanto and learn enough to give a talk in six weeks' time, which mentioned the fact that an international auxiliary language is one of the principles of the Faith. Also, in English, was the address given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to an Esperanto banquet in Paris in 1913.

About fifty people attended from East Anglia and the London area. Also were two local Members of Parliament, the ex-Member of Parliament for the area being the President of the Association. Both expressed keen interest in the Faith. The President is currently reading 'Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era', the present Member of Parliament still wishes to attend a Bahá'í public meeting and learn more of our teachings. There were also other interested enquirers.

Having a speaker from a religion caused a stir and something of a breakthrough in the Association, since it does not allow religion and politics at their meetings. But the manner was approved and agreed to be well worthwhile.

MACCLESFIELD was first opened in December 1972. In 1975 a shop-window display for several weeks preceded a Bahá'í stall at the local Carnival in May. A regular visit is made to the local girls' High School twice a year, when one and a half hours is given to the Faith in a comparative religion class. The time is spent on a talk, with slides, and getting the girls to complete a questionnaire.

A secondary schools' essay competition was run some time ago, and the winning entry was published in the local paper. An article on the Faith has also been published.

The formation of the Assembly was made possible by the move of a pioneering family.

PERTH AND KINROSS: The Bahá'í group of Perth and Kinross presented a 'Meet the Bahá'ís Week' in Perth city from 19-24 July. Exhibition material was lent by Inverness Assembly and the group was able to hire the Guild Hall, in the heart of the main shopping centre. As a group B goal, all work from now until Ridván 1977 is important here. Ably supported by friends from Canada, Northern Ireland, England and Scotland, the most ambitious proclamation and teaching event yet seen in Perth was mounted.

In addition to the main exhibition, a series of evening talks and slide shows was given by speakers who had travelled from all parts of Scotland. Topics included 'Family Life in the Bahá'í Faith' (Dr Iain Palin, Inverness), 'Christ and Bahá'u'lláh' (Robert Jelly, Perth), and 'Mankind United — on What Foundation?' (Scott Thomson, Motherwell).

Although the exhibition was not visited in large numbers, those members of the public who did attend were in the main very interested. Among them were the secretary and the chairman (who was a Church of Scotland Minister) of the local branch of the United Nations Association. Many pamphlets and leaflets were taken and a happy aspect of the week was the number of Bahá'í books borrowed or sold. Many new contacts were made among the people of Perth, and the group hope to follow up with a series of teaching events leading up to Ridván. Press coverage included a report of the formal opening of the exhibition.



Friends talking to the Secretary of the Perth UNA

TENDRING DISTRICT: With the help of the friends in Colchester, Ipswich and Malden an all day happening was arranged on 17 August, in the Village Hall at Great Bentley, when it was found that Hugh McKinley from Athens was able to spend the whole day with them. Hugh has been travelling throughout East Anglia and all who heard him will agree that he has a delightful way of speaking about the Faith. The friends arranged a coffee morning and the somewhat bare hall was changed into an interesting room by the use of small tables and chairs, flowers, displays of Bahá'í postcards on boards, as well as pamphlets and book arrangements in a corner. Nine contacts came plus four children and the remarks made by all contacts were most encouraging. Hugh's talk was obviously appreciated as could be seen at question time. The Bahá'ís who were able to stay enjoyed Hugh's company for lunch and, in the afternoon, he talked again and read some of his poems. At 6.30 pm supper was provided which was thoroughly enjoyed — especially by the children! At 8 o'clock another talk was given and, although there were plenty of Bahá'ís, there were only two non-Bahá'ís, BUT they had attended the morning session too. Sincere thanks go to the friends mentioned at the beginning who gave so much of their time when it was needed to make the whole day a real success.

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



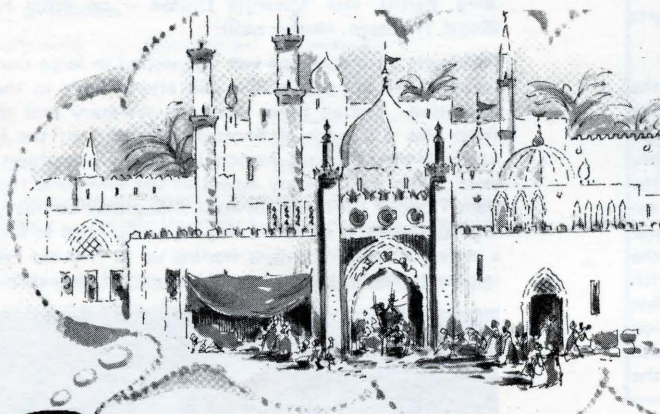
An illustration in the new prayer book

NEW PRAYER BOOK FOR CHILDREN

At last there is a really beautiful prayer book for children. Some time ago the Universal House of Justice released a compilation of prayers for children and our National Assembly asked the Publishing Trust to prepare something special. The result is an impressive, hard backed prayer book, containing some exquisite colour photographs of flowers, animals, birds and landscapes which add to the beauty of the words and must surely attract the attention of children. It has been entitled "Let Thy breeze refresh them" and it is a refreshingly lovely book for *anyone* who loves beautiful things.

B.138

£1.35



POKKA'S STORIES by Betty Reed

Some years ago, as a result of a visit to Finland, Counsellor Betty Reed wrote a number of stories for children. They were designed to be read by very young readers, or to be read to children who cannot yet themselves read and the language is very simple and suitable for this purpose. Pokka, who appears on the first page, is a little Finnish girl and these are stories written as though told by her.

There are seven stories altogether, and they cover the history of the life of Bahá'u'lláh, giving His background and the story of the early days of the Faith, through His exile to Baghdad, His years in the wilderness of Kurdistan, His journeys to Constantinople, Adrianople and 'Akká. The last story deals with his departure from 'Akká until His passing at Bahj.

There are very few books of stories for children and this one will make a welcome addition for parents wishing to tell these stories in a simple way. We all know how important it is to tell our children the stories of our Faith so that they will learn to love them, and here we have the story of Bahá'u'lláh's life told in a way which will attract children.

This book has been held up for some time because it was difficult to find an illustrator who could draw pictures which would attract children — the illustrations which were finally commissioned are delightful and should interest our little ones.

The book is printed in black with illustrations in shades of brown on a light buff-coloured paper, which is quite unusual and most attractive, and the cover is a drawing of the photograph of the City Gate of Tíhrán which appears in the American edition of 'The Dawnbreakers'.

B.139

80p. 99p.



BAHÁ'Í WORLD Volume XV 1968 — 1973

The latest volume of the international historical record of Bahá'í activities was prepared under the supervision of the Universal House of Justice. To quote from the Preface: "The successive volumes of THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD have come to be anticipated by Bahá'ís as the record of their own collective endeavours on behalf of their Faith, of the establishment and development of its administrative order throughout the world and as the source of data, both historical and statistical, relating to the rise of that Faith during its formative age."

This volume records the centenary celebrations of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in the Holy Land, reflects an accelerating development and expansion of the Faith and records the publication by the Universal House of Justice of "A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas" and the adoption of the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice. Please note that the information given in the Newsletter about this volume was incorrect: its correct reference number is B140 and the price a basic £7.90 to which will be added whatever is the current currency surcharge. Today this is 35% making a selling price for this volume of £10.66.

B140

£10.66



One of the illustrations from Pokka's Stories