



BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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EUROPEAN PERSIAN CONFERENCE IN LONDON



Two group photographs representative of the 1,100 believers assembled at the Persian Conference at Picketts Lock, London, 18-20 June. Hands of the Cause 'Alí Akbar Furután, Dr Rahmat'u'lláh Muhájir and, briefly, General 'Alá'í, Counsellors Dorothy Ferraby, Adib Taherzadeh and Manoucher Salmanpour and Auxiliary Board Members Mary Kouchekezadeh, Beman Khosravi, Kamran Namdar and Ezzat Zahrai were among those present. The Conference was opened by National Assembly Chairman John Long.



REJOICE OUTSTANDING EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS MARKING MID YEAR FIVE YEAR PLAN: PUBLICATION IN ENGLISH SELECTION WRITINGS BLESSED BĀB OPENING TO EYES WESTERN FOLLOWERS FAITH A PRICELESS TREASURY HIS IMMORTAL UTTERANCES. A BOUNTY WHICH CANNOT FAIL DRAW HEARTS EVER NEARER YOUTHFUL MARTYR-PROPHET; SUCCESSFUL HOLDING EIGHT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, BLAZONING NAME CAUSE GOD BEFORE A RECEPTIVE PUBLIC, KNITTING MORE CLOSELY TIES LINKING FRIENDS ALL LANDS, RESULTING UPSURGE INTENSE ACTIVITY TEACHING PIONEERING, CONFERRING AWARENESS URGENT CHALLENGE PRESENTED BY GOALS PLAN THIS CRITICAL PERIOD; PROFOUNDLY SIGNIFICANT VISIT TO RESTING PLACE BELOVED GUARDIAN BY FIRST REIGNING MONARCH TO ACCEPT FAITH BAHÁ'U'LLÁH: DEPARTURE FORMER TENANT'S HOUSE 'ABDU'LLÁH PÁSHÁ ENABLING FAITH OBTAIN POSSESSION RECENTLY PURCHASED HOLY PLACE INITIATE PROCESS RESTORATION PREPARATION EVENTUAL OPENING TO VISITS BY PILGRIMS; ARRIVAL HAIFA FIRST FOUR CONSIGNMENTS MARBLE AND INITIATION ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION SEAT UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE MOUNT CARMEL; APPOINTMENT THREE ADDITIONAL COUNSELLORS NORTH CENTRAL AMERICA AUSTRALASIA; ATTAINMENT GOAL SETTLEMENT MIDWAY POINT PLAN MAJORITY PIONEERS CALLED FOR DURING FIRST PHASE ACCOMPANIED GREAT OUTFLOW INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLING TEACHERS; DRAMATIC RESURGENCE TEACHING WORK CRADLE FAITH BY INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS UNDER LOCAL PLANS; FINALLY, ELECTION THIS RIDVÁN SIX NEW PILLARS UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE, NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES OF UPPER VOLTA IN AFRICA, OF THE FRENCH ANTILLES IN THE CARIBBEAN, OF SURINAM AND FRENCH GUIANA IN SOUTH AMERICA, OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS AND OF THE NEW HEBRIDES IN PACIFIC OCEAN, AND OF GREECE IN EUROPE, RAISING TOTAL NUMBER NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES TO 123 TO TAKE PART IN FOURTH ELECTION UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE IN HOLY LAND DURING RIDVÁN 1978.

NATIONAL CONVENTIONS IN 1978 WILL BE ON WEEKEND PRECEDING OR FOLLOWING 23 MAY FEAST DECLARATION BĀB. CALL FOR FORMATION AT THAT TIME SIX MORE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES: BURUNDI AND MAURITANIA IN AFRICA, THE BAHAMAS IN AMERICA, OMAN AND QATAR IN ASIA, AND THE MARIANA ISLANDS IN THE PACIFIC.

The following letter was sent to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom with a request that it should be read at Convention as a supplement to the Ridván Message:

Although our letter of 27 March, 1977 requests you to press vigorously the campaign in Cyprus with a view to establishing the National Spiritual Assembly there in 1978, we decided not to include the formation of this new pillar of the House of Justice in the list of National Spiritual Assemblies to be formed in 1978 given in the Ridván message. Nevertheless, this important goal must be won by the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom as the natural outcome of their valiant efforts in establishing and promoting the Faith in Cyprus. In addition to the pioneer

PRESENT RATE GROWTH COMMUNITY PROSPECT ACCELERATION PROCESS ENTRY BY TROOPS ITS SPREAD NEW AREAS IMPEL US STRENGTHEN STILL FURTHER THE AUXILIARY BOARDS WHOSE SERVICES SO VITAL SOUND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY ANNOUNCE AUTHORISATION INCREASE MEMBERSHIP BOARDS BY 297 RAISING TOTAL TO 675 OF WHICH 279 ARE AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS FOR PROTECTION AND 396 FOR PROPAGATION OF FAITH.

IN EARLY DAYS OF JUNE 1877 BAHÁ'U'LLÁH LEFT CITY 'AKKÁ AND TOOK UP RESIDENCE IN MAZRA'IH, TO MARK CENTENARY THIS TERMINATION CONFINEMENT ANCIENT BEAUTY WITHIN WALLS PRISON CITY WE CALL UPON HIS FOLLOWERS ALL LANDS DEVOTE NINETEEN DAY FEAST OF NÚR COMMEMORATION HISTORIC EVENT, REDEDICATING THEMSELVES URGENT TASKS BEFORE THEM, SO THAT PENT-UP ENERGIES HIS PRECIOUS FAITH MAY BE RELEASED TO REACH EVER GREATER NUMBER SEEKING SOULS IN EVER WIDER CIRCLE THEIR FELLOW MEN.

GREATEST CHALLENGE FACING FOLLOWERS BAHÁ'U'LLÁH LAST TWO YEARS PLAN IS IN FIELDS EXPANSION CONSOLIDATION. TREMENDOUS UPSURGE NEEDED IN SERVICES INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS ON WHOSE DEEDS ULTIMATELY ALL PROGRESS DEPENDS. MOMENTUM GENERATED BY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES MUST BE ACCELERATED WITHOUT DELAY AND SPIRIT RELEASED MUST PERMEATE ALL COMMUNITIES. GREAT INCREASE MUST TAKE PLACE IN ENTHUSIASTIC TEACHING CARRIED OUT WITH CONFIDENCE, IMAGINATION AND PERSEVERANCE BY YOUNG AND OLD, RICH AND POOR, LEARNED AND ILLITERATE, WHETHER AT HOME OR TRAVELLING. PARTICULARLY CALL UPON BAHÁ'Í WOMEN, WHOSE CAPACITIES IN MANY LANDS STILL LARGELY UNUSED, AND WHOSE POTENTIAL FOR SERVICE CAUSE SO GREAT, TO ARISE AND DEMONSTRATE IMPORTANCE PART THEY ARE TO PLAY IN ALL FIELDS SERVICE FAITH.

BOUNTIES IN ABUNDANCE WAITING DESCEND FROM SUPREME CONCOURSE. THAT THE FRIENDS OF GOD WILL NOW SURGE AHEAD WITH RESOLUTE RADIANT SPIRITS IN EVERY CONTINENT ISLANDS OF THE SEAS TO BRING MESSAGE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO WAITING SOULS WIN THEIR ALLEGIANCE HIS CAUSE, ENSURING OVERWHELMING VICTORY PLAN TO WHICH THEY ARE NOW COMMITTED, IS OUR HIGH HOPE AND ARDENT PRAYER AT SACRED THRESHOLD.

24 March, 1977

The Universal House of Justice

assistance which has been requested from the National Spiritual Assemblies of Írán and Turkey, it is hoped to enrol a number of Cypriot believers during the ensuing year. The British friends are now called upon to support the winter and summer schools and all the teaching work generally in Cyprus, and we are confident that such vigorous reinforcement of the splendid contribution they have already made in pioneers will bring about the desired victory. We assure you of our ardent prayers at the Sacred Threshold for success in this difficult but highly meritorious undertaking. May your Convention be a joyful, fruitful and inspiring occasion.

28 March 1977

The Universal House of Justice

THE GREATEST GIFT OF GOD

The corner-stone of the foundation of all Bahá'í activity is teaching the Cause. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá has categorically proclaimed in His Will and Testament, "the guidance of the nations and peoples of the world" is "the most important of all things", and "Of all the gifts of God the greatest is the gift of Teaching."

The friends likewise are in varying degrees aware of the repeated exhortations found in the writings of our Faith that divine confirmations are dependent upon the active pursuit of the teaching work. In the words of the beloved Master, "the unseen divine assistance encompasseth those who deliver the Message." He further states, "...if the work of delivering the Message be

neglected, the assistance shall be entirely cut off, for it is impossible that the friends of God could receive assistance unless they be engaged in delivering the Message."

While the friends are generally conscious of the vital importance of teaching, yet, because of their frailties, many for the most part lack confidence, and feel they do not know what course of action to follow, or how to bring their efforts to a conclusion. Since guidance on such fundamental issues comes from the writings of the Faith, we asked the Research Department to prepare a compilation of texts on the subject. This is now ready and a copy is enclosed.*

A study of the compilation will provide the friends with stimulating information on general guidelines to be followed by them when engaged in the teaching work. While many will be inspired, after reading the compilation, to cast aside their fears and misgivings and their sense of inadequacy, and will arise to speak forth announcing the glad-tidings of the Kingdom to their fellow-men, many more will still be in need of loving education and more detailed guidance on the part of the institutions of the Faith, and patient and wise prodding before they are aroused to action. And since the primary purpose for which Local Spiritual Assemblies are established is to promote the teaching work, it is clear that every National Spiritual Assembly must give careful consideration to ways and means to encourage each Local Assembly under its jurisdiction to fulfil its principal obligation. For instance, Local Assemblies could be urged to organise special meetings when texts, such as those included in the compilation, would be studied. Furthermore, it is important that Local Assemblies share with the local friends stories of successes achieved by some of them, descriptions of effective presentations found useful by them, examples of various ways that a Bahá'í subject could be introduced to inquirers, or illustrations of methods, which would enable the believer to relate the needs of society to our teachings. Such information and suggestions could be offered to the friends at Nineteen Day Feasts, through a local newsletter, or by any other means open to each Local Assembly. In all these contacts with the believers, each Local Spiritual Assembly should impress upon the friends the unique and irreplaceable role the individual plays in the prosecution of any Bahá'í undertaking. Quotations from the writings on this point, such as the following passage from one of the letters of Shoghi Effendi, should be repeatedly presented and explained to the friends:

"He (the individual believer) it is who constitutes the warp and woof on which the quality and pattern of the whole fabric must depend. He it is who acts as one of the countless links in the mighty chain that now girdles the globe. He it is who serves as one of the multitude of bricks which support the structure and insure the stability of the

administrative edifice now being raised in every part of the world. Without his support, at once whole-hearted, continuous and generous, every measure adopted, and every plan formulated, by the body which acts as the national representative of the community to which he belongs, is foredoomed to failure. The World Centre of the Faith itself is paralysed if such a support on the part of the rank and file of the community is denied it. The Author of the Divine Plan Himself is impeded in His purpose if the proper instruments for the execution of His design are lacking. The sustaining strength of Bahá'u'lláh Himself, the Founder of the Faith, will be withheld from every and each individual who fails in the long run to arise and play his part."

When the friends realise that the hosts of the Kingdom are waiting to rush forth and assist them, that others from their own ranks have arisen and have been successful, that everyone can find some effective method of teaching according to his own particular capacities and talents, they will then no doubt arise with greater confidence to take the first step, and this, we know, will be aided and guided from on high, for the very act of striving to respond to God's call will bring in its wake countless divine blessings.

It is the hope and prayer of the Universal House of Justice that each National Spiritual Assembly will do its utmost to constantly encourage the friends to participate in what Shoghi Effendi calls "the most essential, the most urgent of all our obligations", and what must be "the dominating passion of our life", and follow the example of the Apostles of Christ who, as testified by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion . . . till at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth and even to their last hour proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of that Beloved One of God . . . Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps!"

3 March 1977

The Universal House of Justice

* Note: This compilation is now being prepared and when it is ready a copy will be sent to every believer. NSA.

NEW OVERSEAS PIONEER CHALLENGE

We are gratified that so many pioneers have settled in the territories scheduled under the two pioneer calls of the Five Year Plan.

We have just completed a review of the current status of the Plan in consultation with the International Teaching Centre, and it became obvious that a new pioneer call is needed. A new list of pioneer assignments is enclosed, from which you will see that 462 pioneers must arise to settle in specified territories. These pioneers should proceed to their posts as soon as possible to lend their support to the vital local teaching work, in time to participate in winning the remaining goals and in consolidating the work prior to the conclusion of the Plan.

In view of the difficulties that nationals of certain countries are experiencing in settling in the goal countries assigned to their national community, some adjustments, and in certain cases deletions, have been made in the few unfilled goals. Therefore this pioneer call includes all outstanding goals. Any National Assembly finding that its prior unfilled assignments have not been carried forward should realise that alternative solutions have been

found. However, if at the time National Assemblies receive this list some of their prospective pioneers are well advanced in their preparations to proceed to their posts, nothing should be done to prevent their going forward with their plans. We hope that the pioneers already in the field will remain at their posts and that the National Spiritual Assemblies will encourage them, and if necessary provide the means required to enable them to continue their worthy labours in their respective fields of service.

It is our fervent hope and prayer that this new outflow of pioneers will provide a stimulus to the teaching work throughout the world. We realise the heavy commitments that many National Spiritual Assemblies called upon to provide pioneer manpower have in respect of their homefront goals, but in view of the world-wide needs of the Plan, we trust that every effort will be made to respond to this call, and not only pave the way for a triumphal conclusion of the Plan in 1979, but reinforce the efforts now being exerted to lay firm foundations for the spread and development of the precious Faith of God in every land.

26 May 1977

The Universal House of Justice

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 to Botswana | 2 to Jamaica |
| 2 to Cameroon Republic | 2 to United States (for |
| 1 to Gambia | Falkland Is.) |
| 2 to Ghana | 1 to Denmark |
| 1 to Lesotho | 1 to Iceland |
| 4 to Nigeria | 2 to Iceland (for Faroe Is.) |
| 1 to Sierra Leone | |

TOTAL 20

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS AT THE WORLD CENTRE

From time to time there are personnel requirements at the World Centre which must be filled and the Universal House of Justice wishes to build up its file of individuals or couples who possess specific skills and who would be willing and able to serve in the Holy Land, either on a temporary or permanent basis. Following is a list of job classifications of special interest:

Archivist

Construction and Maintenance

Carpenter
Electrician
Mason
Painter
Plumber

Finance

Accountant
Book-keeper

Horticulturist

Indexer

Janitor

Librarian

Mail Clerk

Photographer

Publishing

Editor/Writer
Proof-reader

Printer — Offset

Purchasing Agent

Secretary — Typist — Clerk

Correspondence Storage and Retrieval
Dictaphone Secretary
Executive Secretary
Receptionist/Switchboard Operator
Statistical Records Clerk
Typist

Translator

From English into
Spanish
French
Persian

(Some translations can be handled by mail. Therefore, those qualified and have time for such work from their present location may also respond.)

Bahá'ís interested in being considered when such openings occur should submit information about themselves, their qualifications and experience to their National Spiritual Assembly for forwarding to the World Centre.

NOTICES

BIRTHS

MARRIAGE

26 March 1977: Dr Qudsia Yazdani (Bradford) and Dr Ibrahim Dabestani (Beverley near Hull), in Bradford.

DEATHS

24 February 1977: Edith Walker, in Kendal.
April 1977: Eric King, in Scotland.
6 April 1977: Thomas Curwen, in Bournemouth.
14 April 1977: Ada Harrison, aged 90, in Pendle.
23 April 1977: Anthony Brynmor Knowles, in Northampton.
8 May 1977: George Rowley, in Birmingham.
27 May 1977: Elizabeth Raine, in Edinburgh.
4 June 1977: Frank Senior, in Guernsey.

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

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

Lois Hainsworth (Mrs)
27 Rutland Gate,
London SW7

THE ONWARD MARCH OF THE FAITH

We warmly welcome to the community the following new believers, recorded in the National Office from 24 February to 12 May 1977.

ENGLAND — Adults

Mahrokh Bayzar (Miss) — Loughborough
Maria Campbell (Miss) — Redbridge
Lois Keast (Mrs) — Adur District
Elaine Moira Morgan (Mrs) — Thanet
C. Powell (Mrs) — Wrekin
Elizabeth Stobart (Mrs) — Brighton

Youth

Farid Afnan — Brent
S. Franklin (Miss) — Hollingbury
Samar Manavi — Sheffield
Frances Robertson (Miss) — Romford

WALES — Adults

David John Allum — Anglesey
Maldwyn Morgan Jones — Arfon

Youth

Jacqueline Fisher (Miss) — Gwent

SCOTLAND — Adults

J. Dobbie (Mrs) — Dundee
Maoliosa O'Rourke (Mrs) — Glasgow

Youth

Anjam Khursheed — Kelso
Fardin Monshizadeh — Stirling

NORTHERN IRELAND — Youth

Eva Ellen Bew (Mrs) — Tunbridge Wells
Stephen Dance — Greenwich
Arthur Hugh Lister — Haringey
Susie Eleanor Nicholls (Mrs) — Billingham
John Robert Shipp — Birmingham
Ann Veronica Thomas (Mrs) — Alvechurch

Shahram Badiian — Slough
Sean Knox — Brent
Saman Massudi — Brent
Mary-Ann Stanley (Miss) — Portsmouth

Janet Cox (Miss) — Swansea

Nuha Abdul Aziz Sabour — Swansea

Marjorie MacLennan (Mrs) — Isle of Lewis
Doris Stanford (Mrs) — Perth

Rosemary Leonard (Miss) — Kirkwall
Dorothy May Stirling (Miss) — Glasgow

Geoffrey Lennon — Craigavon

May Frances Brooks (Mrs) — Birmingham
Denise Farrell (Miss) — Sheffield
Marilyn Linda Lloyd (Mrs) — Bromley
Polly Plowman (Mrs) — North Norfolk
Sheila Smithson (Mrs) — Redbridge
Stephen Tomlin — Harrow

Roger David Bancroft — Brighton
Shaheen Knox — Brent
Helen Preston (Miss) — Bromley
Anne Stibbads (Miss) — Cambridge

Thomas Eames — Merionnydd

Ian Mellin — Glasgow

Pari Mehrabi (Miss) — Kirkwall
Senga Thomson (Miss) — Oban

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Annual Report

INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, when the British Community was about one fifth of its present size, the National Assembly Secretary would begin to compile the Annual Report during the Christmas holidays. This report is being written on the weekend before Ridván and this is but one indication of the present size and complexity of the British scene — it was not possible to make an earlier start.

During the past few years the increase in the number of new believers has not kept pace with the commendable expansion seen in the number of assemblies and groups. As a consequence, with some few exceptions, most communities are very weak numerically and this is shown up very clearly when the statistics are compiled from the November Annual Returns. While the National Assembly included in the terms of reference of the National Teaching Committee the responsibility for maintaining all assemblies, as well as achieving the new assembly goals, and called for the closest liaison between the National Pioneer and National Teaching Committees, the Assembly has had to keep a close watch on the overall position throughout the United Kingdom by having an up-to-date statistical report at each of its last three meetings.

In spite of tremendous efforts by some committee members, an increase in the teaching activity and some fine sacrifices by a number of devoted pioneers, when the Assembly met on 1 April 1977, some 17% of the local assemblies were in danger of lapsing and only ten of the thirty-five goal assemblies were assured. During the preceding few weeks the National Teaching and Pioneer Committees had been in close contact with all those weak places which had been drawn to their attention as well as with those communities which had a reservoir of man-power available, but the National Assembly felt obliged to send out from this meeting a personal letter to every adult believer to reach them by 13 April. On the following day a number of believers responded. At the time of writing the gaps have been narrowed considerably and the upsurge of spirit felt from all corners of the community has been an encouragement to all involved.

As long as there are communities each with fewer than twelve resident believers there is always the danger that at the last minute the assembly could be lost. Very great indeed was the emphasis placed by the Guardian on the maintenance of the goals won and he would cable for them to be preserved "at all costs". With this in mind and with the importance given to the formation of spiritual assemblies by the Universal House of Justice in the Five Year Plan, the National Assembly would have failed to meet its responsibilities if it had left its last meeting before Ridván without making some plans for last minute action and an eleventh hour appeal. This should not be confused, however, with the old phrase now no longer applicable of "last ditching". Pioneers today must become actually resident in the assembly area and be prepared to stay until released or at least for a minimum of six months. Nothing else can be acceptable.

During this year there have been 140 adult and forty youth declarations submitted for registration, 255 believers have been transferred-in and many youth have claimed their voting rights. There is no way of estimating the number of Bahá'ís who have left the country, as many go without officially asking to be transferred-out. (Within five days of the mail-out to all families during Easter over fifty envelopes had been returned with "gone away" or "not known" marked on the envelope).

Regrettably the voting rights of twelve believers have had to be removed, mostly for non-observance of Bahá'í marriage laws and fifty-eight withdrawals from the Faith have been accepted. The national records contain the names of some six hundred believers who cannot presently be traced.

The "Programme for Victory", launched three months before the end of last year placed the country on an entirely different footing. As it unfolded, every assembly, group and isolated believer was brought into its orbit and no believer should be in any doubt as to where his or her teaching priorities lie. The next phase of the "Programme" is being presented to Convention as a consultation document and this brings into the "cluster" principle all assemblies, including those whose formation is anticipated.

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Last year's report paid tribute to the love and guidance given by the House of Justice and mentioned the large number of communications received. This has not merely continued but increased during this year and over 170 letters, cables or messages have been received. It is a great bounty to us that in difficulty and doubt we can, if it is absolutely essential, turn immediately to our World Centre and by direct dialling, share our concern with the House and be assured of guidance and prayers. This unique privilege has also brought help and consolation to many visitors from those countries who are denied any direct contact with their World Centre.

HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

While we have not had this year the privilege of any tour or long-term visit by a Hand of the Cause, the friends who were able to reach London had the very great pleasure of meeting Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum (Commonwealth Institute); William Sears (Házaratu'l-Quds); 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá (Post Paris Conference) and Dr Ugo Giachery, Dhikru'lláh Khádem and Dr Varqá (H.M. Malietoa's visit to the Guardian's Grave).

CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

It was with great pleasure that we were able to have an unscheduled meeting with Counsellor Aziz Yazdi of the International Teaching Centre when he made a brief visit to London in August.

The National Assembly has exchanged correspondence with representatives of the Board of Counsellors of Australasia, Central and East Africa, Western Africa and South East Asia and have enjoyed the closest and most loving support of our own European Counsellors. We have met in session with Counsellors Dorothy Ferraby, Betty Reed and Adib Taherzadeh, are frequently in touch with Dorothy Ferraby by telephone, and are actively working for them in hosting the June 1977 Conference for all Persians in Europe and for the International Youth Conference, 1978. Mrs Reed has been of tremendous help in teaching and deepening activities, in visiting certain problem areas and in preparing and launching the One Year Campaign for Scotland and Northern Ireland. Mr Taherzadeh was most inspiring in his contributions to Convention, 1976, the Post Paris Conference, the Inverness Summer School and the annual Teaching Conference in Sheffield. He is also guiding the ad hoc committee charged with the organisation of the Persian Conference at Pickets Lock. Mrs Betty Shepherd was appointed Auxiliary Board Member for Scotland; all Board members have appointed more Assistants for helping them to keep in close contact with the assemblies in their respective areas and Patrick Green was released from his appointment in early August. Five members of the National Assembly attended the annual conference called by the Counsellors at Langenhain in November.

From time to time we have the privilege of having Counsellor Manuchir Salmanpour in this country and this year Counsellor Isobel Sabri attended some of our activities.

HISTORIC EVENT

The visit of His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II to this country in September 1976 was an event of the greatest historical significance as is indicated in the Ridván message of the Universal House of Justice. The first intimation of the visit was a telephone call from the Universal House of Justice. This led to contact with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Central Office of Information; to the special visit of Hand of the Cause Dr Ugo Giachery to lead a delegation to meet His Highness; to a minutely planned audience given to a delegation at His Highness's suite at the Mayfair Hotel to three Hands of the Cause and six members of the National Assembly; to a most dignified and moving visit of the delegation with His Highness and his party and with another member of the National Assembly and some friends of His Highness to the Grave of Shoghi Effendi; and to the meeting and mingling with a large gathering of the friends who were waiting nearby to greet His Highness and his delight in being photographed with them all. Subsequently Dr and Mrs Giachery and the National Assembly secretary, Philip Hainsworth, had a most moving occasion. Recent contact with His Highness in Samoa has confirmed the very great pleasure he and his party had experienced with the Bahá'ís during his London visit.

WORK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

- a) Nine full meetings and over two hundred hours of consultation, with a number of sub-committee consultations, took place during the year. The Assembly met once in Belfast (September), taking the opportunity to meet with the Northern Ireland Community and to consult with the representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Ireland, who accepted our invitation to meet with us to explore areas of our "joint destiny".
- b) All our major committees are to meet with us at different times in full session. At the last meeting of last year the Assembly met with the National Teaching Committee and has had consultations this year with the Pioneer (May); Youth (November); Public Information (January) and Pioneer and Teaching Committee representatives (April).
- c) The sub-committees of the National Assembly have a wide range of responsibilities. The Finance Committee met frequently to keep a close watch on income, expenditure, budgeting, staff matters and office running and equipment. Others looked at such matters as individuals with problems leading perhaps to withdrawal; local assemblies requiring consultation; committees needing guidance; individuals requesting interviews; specific subjects such as "minorities", selection of the local assemblies for the Haziratu'l-Quds purchases, etc. — all to prepare considered reports and recommendations to be presented to the Assembly in full session.
- d) Individual members were given special briefs preparing guidance notes, "Journal" articles, policy statements, and were asked to visit certain communities. Plans were made for the monthly visit of at least one member to Scotland and to Northern Ireland.
- e) All important correspondence from individual believers, groups, assemblies, committees, overseas National Assemblies and committees, as well as every letter and cable from the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í International Community and the Board of Counsellors is copied for every member of the Assembly and each member has, in advance of every meeting, a Secretary's report on events and action taken by the officers in accordance with the powers given to them. This report alone averages about fifteen pages or about 10,000 words per meeting. These letters and the reports, and the individual and sub-committee activities between meetings, contribute to the "homework" necessary for the two hundred or more items which appear on each meeting Agenda and which cannot fully be dealt with at any one meeting. To attempt to keep up with the work, certain priorities are given, local assemblies and committees are constantly encouraged to accept more responsibility and deal with more of their own matters. Guidelines have been laid down for actions to be taken by the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary/ies.
- f) Personal Problems and Matters of Personal Status. A specialist committee consisting where possible of doctors, solicitors and social workers, all experienced Bahá'ís, meets frequently to consult with Bahá'ís who turn to the National Assembly for expert and perhaps professional advice on personal, marital and medical problems. The National Assembly studies and usually accepts the considered opinions and advice of this committee and ensures the strictest confidentiality of all its interviews and deliberations. The secretary and members of this committee are not announced to the community nor is the committee required to produce an annual report. This is partly to protect the members from being continually contacted and "lobbied" particularly where two or more individuals are involved in a difficult problem. This committee of experts performs a most appreciated and extremely valuable service to the National Assembly as well as to the community and we take this opportunity to record our gratitude.

FINANCE**The National Fund**

The Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi, wrote: "Contributions to this Fund constitute, in addition, a practical and effective way whereby every believer can test the measure and character of his faith, and prove in deeds the intensity of his devotion and attachment to the Cause". This year has been outstanding as far as the finances of the Cause are concerned, and if the precious contributions of the believers in the United Kingdom are indications, then this community has indeed displayed the "intensity of . . . devotion" and "attachment to the Cause".

The target set for donations this year on which our budget was planned was £50,000. Both contributions and expenditure lagged a little way behind all through the year until early in 1977 when, upon totalling the contributions, it was discovered the target at that time had been exceeded — a situation which is both rare and exciting.

Most of the committees carefully planned activities within the allotted budget allocations, and this coupled with the step-up in contributions to the Fund indicates the growing maturity of the United Kingdom believers.

Capital Projects

This year great efforts have been made on all sides to donate to this special Fund which is such an important part of the goals of this Five Year Plan. Donations rolled in, and everyone seemed to be making a mighty effort in special fund-raising activities. Reports came in of auctions, special bring-and-buy sales, sponsored events, of some of the friends doing extra work to raise money, of others selling their precious possessions. Everything possible seemed to be done to raise those important extra pennies.

Three Year Youth Campaign

Reflecting the general attitude of the believers, the Youth also excelled themselves, and long before the target date the goal of £6,000 had been exceeded.

Final figures for all Funds will be reported at Convention.

World Inflation

As Bahá'ís we know that, although there sometimes seems to be an improvement in the non-Bahá'í world finances, these things are but temporary until the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is established throughout the world. We know that the financial situation is likely to get very much worse. This year it has become worse with ever-rising prices and non-rising incomes, and yet in spite of it this community has excelled itself. This must surely be a beginning to something more sacrificial, and it seems likely that we can "astonish the world" financially as well as in all our other activities for the Faith.

"PROGRAMME FOR VICTORY"

- a) When the Supplementary Report was presented to last year's Convention it was noted that some of the first phase goals had not been achieved and these were brought forward as top priority for the second phase as "Group B", making a total for this year of thirty-five additional assemblies to be formed. Work was also to begin on some "Group C" areas to enable all assemblies and groups to be involved in "cluster" activity and also to make a start on those "county" goals which were originally an objective of the Nine Year Plan but later reappeared when local government reorganisation raised some new counties. Assemblies must be achieved in these important areas, as well as in the Isle of Man and Guernsey, if our Plan is to succeed.
- b) After Convention 1976 some additions were made to the clusters and to the areas for attention this year, and this was printed as an additional insert in the "Programme" booklet.
- c) A review and clarification document was issued to coincide with Teaching Conference. An article with still more explanatory points appears in the April 1977 issue of the "Journal". This "Programme" is an on-going, ever-expanding approach to the principle of focusing attention on specific goals, a principle emphasised by the Guardian during the Six Year Plan when we tried to work on every goal at the same time and got nowhere. He introduced the "Initial Phase" and the "Final Phase". In the "Programme" we have four phases — three months of "Group A" goals, a year of "Group B" and two years for the remainder of "Group B and C" and the opening of the remaining one hundred Districts.
- d) To give further emphasis and direction to the specific goals and "clusters" in Scotland and Northern Ireland a "One Year Campaign" has been launched in each country, the Scottish one to run from December 1976 to December 1977 and the Northern Ireland one from January 1977 to January 1978. Within a few weeks of the launching of these campaigns a new enthusiasm was apparent in each country.
- e) As this report is being written it would appear that two "Group A" goals are still not won, about seven assemblies will lapse and about seventeen assemblies will have been formed during the year, giving a total of 132 assemblies at Rídván 1977. The foundations are therefore well laid for the combined process of consolidation and expansion during the two years which lie ahead.

SCHOOLS AND CONFERENCES**Helsinki Intercontinental Conference**

This community was well represented and valuable travel teaching help was given to the Scandinavian countries afterwards.

Inverness Summer School

This was not a Summer School in the "closed campus" style or one with all participants living and eating together as has been the pattern of previous Summer Schools in Britain. Nevertheless it was an outstanding success in the spirit it generated, the numbers it attracted, the high level of its sessions, and the publicity for the Faith it initiated. Universal House of Justice member Mr David Hofman, Counsellors Adib Taherzadeh and Isobel Sabri, members of the United Kingdom and some overseas National Assemblies, were among the 316 registered participants.

Paris Intercontinental Conference

It attracted well over 750 from the United Kingdom with many of them making pioneer and travel teaching offers.

The Post-Paris Conference (In London)

This was highly successful and many friends who had attended the Helsinki and Paris Conferences had to be dissuaded from attending to allow room for those who had not had such a privilege.

The Hong Kong, Nairobi, Brazil and Mexico Conferences

These were all attended by some representatives from this community with a particularly large contingent going to Nairobi.

National Teaching Conference, Sheffield (27/28 November)

This was generally accepted as the most successful and inspiring Teaching Conference for some years. With 460 adults and eighty children registered, with excellent material presented by all the major committees, with a clear presentation of all the needs of the Plan and with moving contributions by Counsellor Taherzadeh, a high standard was set for future conferences.

The **Durham Winter School** had to be cancelled and many more people attended the locally organised school in **Henley-on-Thames** than had been expected. This was extremely well conducted and promoted a further upsurge of teaching enthusiasm leading to a call for another such occasion at Easter.

The **Cyprus Winter School** was an entirely new venture, conceived and carried out by one of the two Cyprus Teaching Committees. Hand of the Cause Adelbert and Ursula Mühlischlegel and International Teaching Centre member Counsellor Hooper Dunbar attended, with a representative group from the United Kingdom. Not only was a tremendous spirit generated on that war-torn island but ambitious plans were proposed for a larger and more comprehensive Summer School to be held in Limassol from 1 - 15 September 1977.

Easter School, Henley

Originally classed as a local effort of the South Oxfordshire Assembly with the support of the Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead Assemblies, the National Assembly declared it a national event and encouraged attendance. Altogether 220 registered and there were about seventy offers to travel teach and one to pioneer, which amply testified to its success.

COMMUNICATIONS

One of the planned objectives of the National Assembly for the year was to improve continually the channels of communication between the friends in general and between the Assembly and the community in particular.

- a) **The Nineteen Day Feast Newsletter** has been concentrating on sharing information and news from the National Assembly table, reporting events of national significance and drawing attention to inspiring quotations from the Guardian and the Universal House of Justice. The community had to suffer much repetition of 'Conference', 'School' and 'large event' details as our community appears to be afflicted with some "strange disease" (to which reference will be made later).
- b) **News-sheets** of events were encouraged from the teaching committees but these have not been as regular or as comprehensive as was originally expected.
- c) Much of the news of forthcoming events has had to be gleaned from "**Intercom-Bahá'í**" but as this reaches a mere one sixth of the community an increase in this newspaper's sales must be encouraged.
- d) Immediately following receipt of the cable from the Universal House of Justice to Convention 1976, the National Assembly called upon the whole community to respond to the call from the Universal House of Justice and a comprehensive study of the Guardian's messages was prepared and circulated to each assembly and group so that all, even clusters of assemblies and groups, could "ponder prayerfully unfoldment glorious destiny" and "achieve such victories as will again astonish Bahá'í world". Reports from those areas which obeyed this request and made such a study of the relevant passages reproduced in this document, indicated immediate beneficial results and an upsurge in spirit and enthusiasm.
- e) A full and detailed explanation of the Budget and the principles and methods followed in its preparation was produced and circulated widely as a three page document "**This Critical Juncture**" (May 1976).
- f) The document "**The First Nine Months**", prepared for Teaching Conference and published in the "Journal", the "**One Year Campaign**" releases for Scotland and Northern Ireland, also later published in the "Journal", the articles in the "Journal" on travel teaching and "**A Smouldering Fire**", are further examples of this written communication.
- g) The meetings of the National Assembly outside London which include having a session with the local believers; the visits to communities and assemblies by Assembly members; the invitation to national committees to meet in full with the Assembly, are all additional efforts to improve further the all-important machinery of communication.

THE PURCHASE OF HAZIRATU'L-QUDS

- a) In cooperation with Denmark and Iceland, and with the financial backing of the Universal House of Justice, we helped with the purchase of the Haziratu'l-Quds in the **Faroës** but £14,000 is still owed to the House of Justice for this property.
- b) The **Brighton** Haziratu'l-Quds has been acquired. It is semi-detached and in a central and very delightful neighbourhood. It is valued at about £25,000. As it is presently made into two flats and one is occupied, it cannot be immediately registered in the name of the Faith. We are, however, in possession of the deeds of the property and some of the friends who had made special donations for this goal have allowed their contributions to remain for maintenance and essential alterations, while others transferred their gifts to the Northdown goal.
- c) **Northdown**. An ideal property was found but was auctioned and sold at a higher price than we were prepared to pay. It was subsequently learned that the auction was not completed, the property is being handled by another agent and we have made a conditional bid for it. Due to the wonderful donation of one believer who heard that £3,000 was needed and paid this amount towards this property, and some other substantial amounts for the Haziratu'l-Quds' Fund, one of which was also for £3,000, all the cash is ready waiting for the property to be purchased and a start has been made on building up a fund for the third property.
- d) **Cardiff** is the Assembly selected for Wales and the limit set for this property is £15,000. As soon as a suitable building is located and funds are available, either from contributions or from mortgage, the fourth local goal will be announced.
- e) **Nicosia**. A National Haziratu'l-Quds in Nicosia is the goal, and properties there are very difficult to acquire. The estimate set in the Capital Projects Fund for this property, announced to the delegates last Convention, is £5,000. This estimate, from Cyprus itself, may be too optimistic but no property of any kind within the city limits has yet been found.
- f) **Others**. One pioneer couple from Persia bought a house in a goal town and put it in the name of the National Assembly. This is now a potential local Haziratu'l-Quds for the future and was a deeply appreciated and entirely unsolicited gift.

"A STRANGE DISEASE"

A large part of the United Kingdom community appears to be affected by some strange disease and its symptoms become manifest in old and young believers. It inhibits the friends from responding quickly or even in time to all appeals for booking early for Bahá'í functions or submitting urgently required information to the National Office. Such are the ravages of inflation and the large scale unemployment that professional agents, caterers, conference organisers, etc. demand confirmation of numbers and commitments to pay, well in advance, of any event they are arranging on our behalf. Yet Bahá'ís are reluctant to book or commit themselves until the last minute. Some activities during this past year have had to be cancelled after a great deal of effort and expense have been wasted. The worry given to the organisers when large losses for the Faith are a possibility is disastrous. Here are typical examples:

Junior Youth School

Twice put on but cancelled through lack of response to the great distress of those who wanted to attend. Caterers must order food in advance and cannot rely on last-minute bookings.

Brazil Conference Tour

Not enough people booked though within a week of the Conference a sufficient number enquired to have made a very cheap tour possible.

River Thames Boat Trip

Bookings were made on faith and after intense activity and a great deal of worry and stress for the organisers, twenty more than the maximum sent in bookings long after the closing date and others even turned up at the jetty expecting to be taken on and fed.

Youth Naw-Rúz Event

The accommodation available was for about two hundred and one hundred places were originally booked. As less than fifty had sent their deposits a week after the deadline date the bookings had to be confirmed and paid for on the basis of sixty. No one booked for any of the coach trips so these were cancelled yet on the day the event started in Wales, people were ringing up the National Office asking for details of the coaches!

Reports and Returns

Many of the Annual Returns were a month overdue and for some areas it was necessary to estimate the number of adult believers for the allocation of delegates as the returns were either too late or did not arrive at all. Some of the committees did not submit their material for this report until less than three weeks before Convention.

The Future

If this malaise is not now overcome it is highly likely that the Orkneys and Loughborough Summer Schools will cause a great loss of money as these are confirmed bookings of fifty and one hundred respectively and bookings to date are well below expectations. The special tour for Haifa and Cyprus may also have to be cancelled.

NATIONAL OFFICE

As the Annual Report went to press last year the office staff had been reduced from four to two and for only a few relatively short periods during this year has an ideal staff balance been achieved. Changes have taken place in the membership as well as in the reorganisation of the work but the plans for a more efficient office structure have not yet been implemented. Once again a close examination is being made of the work allocation and its staff requirements as well as the physical lay-out of the offices to minimise the amount of work interruption. The problems associated with this particular office are many and include:

- a) London is a stopping-off place and 'pilgrimage' centre for many overseas visitors who either telephone for information at all hours about meetings and the Guardian's Grave, or call in expecting the staff's undivided attention;
- b) the number of non-English speaking visitors, mostly Persian;
- c) the lack of space for efficient desk and machine lay-out and for separate reception facilities;
- d) the fact that this is a combination of a National Office, a National Hazíratu'l-Quds and a bookshop;
- e) the high cost of living and salaries in all areas within commuting distance which virtually limits staff potential to those who are already resident here;
- f) the long period of every day and weekend when someone must be available to answer the telephone and doorbell (from 8 am to 11 pm);

During the year the following staff have been employed for varying periods — Fiona McDonald, Rowshan Knox, Kim Hamilton, Ann Moqbel, Margaret Nelson, Iran Williams, Helen Neri, Kim Richardson, Afsani Shadnam and five non-Bahá'í 'temporaries'. Presently Fiona, Rowshan and Kim Hamilton, with part-time non-Bahá'í help, are unable to meet the exacting demands of this office and the new structure is eagerly awaited.

EMERGING FROM OBSCURITY

This process has taken various forms:

a) Publicity

Local radio coverage has increased and the re-formed Public Information Committee is actively following-up this avenue. Local Press space has been more generously won particularly in Scotland and Wales where articles, reports and letters have been widely accepted. Regional radio has begun to respond particularly in South Wales (with some items actually in Welsh) and Plymouth, with other successes in Scotland, Northern Ireland and East Anglia. In addition to some personal interviews with Bahá'ís, two significant developments have taken place without any warning to allow for preparation. One person wrote to the BBC from Sierra Leone asking for information — a BBC Africa Service reporter called in the National Office one day for a recording which went out three days later; Bahá'ís picked it up in Lesotho and the BBC provided them with a transcript and asked our permission to allow it to be used in overseas Bahá'í newsletters and, to the astonishment of the BBC, a good reception was reported from Brazil. An even more striking development was when a letter to a religious programme editor of the BBC from a Bahá'í, but written before he accepted the Faith, was passed to a free-lance producer, Miss Anne Macnamara. She had just been in Israel, had met a young Bahá'í pilgrim from the Orkneys and was so impressed with his sincerity that she seized the opportunity to prepare a short programme and took a brief recording from Bernard Leach when he was in London. Some weeks later, with only a few hours' warning, she came on a Thursday to the National Office to record a programme, checked over her script for accuracy by telephone before recording it on Saturday afternoon, and a slightly edited version went out on the 'Sunday' Programme, BBC 4 at 8.30 am 17 April. She hopes it can be modified to go on the World Service and that other similar programmes on the Faith will follow.

b) Meetings

The Faith is gradually being called upon to provide more speakers for large outside public meetings, to share platforms, and to participate in gatherings sponsored by other organisations such as the United Nations Association, World Federalists, World Parliament of Religion and Culture, World Congress of Faiths, and to give support to Her Majesty the Queen's Silver Jubilee appeal.

c) Conferences

Bahá'ís have been invited to present papers and study documents for various organisations. Examples are the Annual Conference of the World Congress of Faiths (Canada National Secretary Douglas Martin presented his paper "Bahá'u'lláh's Model for World Fellowship", Canterbury, July) and the Standing Conference on Inter-Faith Dialogue in Education who requested a statement on "Death" and published an earlier statement on "Initiation".

d) Organisations

Bahá'ís are being asked to lend their practical help to and work for many committees such as UNA, UNICEF, the World Congress of Faiths, the Association of World Federalists and the Committee for the Constitution of a Provisional World Government, mostly at National level, and there are innumerable cases of similar requests from all kinds of organisations at local levels.

e) Publications

After developing a friendly association with members of the SHAP Working Party at various conferences, a substantial section on "Bahá'í" was accepted without modification (though some printing errors were made) for the new and most comprehensive publication "World Religion: a Handbook for Teachers" which was commissioned and printed by the Community Relations Commission and which has gone out to many

schools and individual teachers. The second issue of the publication "News" contained an excellent quotation from Bahá'í Writings, submitted by the National Assembly.

A handout, produced by the **Association of World Federalists** also contained some appropriate passages from the Guardian's writings.

The **Week of Prayer for Peace** will, either this year or next, include prayers and readings from Bahá'í Scripture.

A kit produced by UNA for **United Nations Day** will contain Bahá'í material.

The book, "*Many Lights*" (Chapman) which contains an excellent selection of Bahá'í Scripture is being widely advocated for use in School Assemblies throughout the country.

A number of individuals have managed to get articles on the Faith written in their companies' official or professional journals, on such occasions as transfer, retirement, promotion, success, etc.

f) Personal

Bernard Leach, CH, CBE

On the occasion of his 90th Birthday his retrospective exhibition of pottery and paintings in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the publication of his new book and the revised issue of his "*Belief, Drawings and Verse*", have all attracted favourable newspaper, radio and television comment on the Faith.

Norman Bailey, OBE

On the occasion of his honours award; on the programme "Desert Island Discs" and in "Opera News" has aroused a great deal of interest in the Faith.

CONCLUSION

The year now ending has really been one of great activity. Some miracles have happened, many sacrifices made, many victories won, and reverses and set-backs experienced. Our overseas pioneering record is good and international travel teaching has been excellent. Home-front pioneering has also been quite outstanding and many more projects are under way. With the opening of a new Deputisation Fund for Home and Overseas Travel Teachers and Pioneers, with nearly all the "clusters" now beginning to function in the way envisaged by the National Assembly, with the two "One Year Campaigns" entering their next specific phases and with the renewed call from the Universal House of Justice for participation by every single believer, there is no reason to doubt that the coming year will witness even greater victories for the Faith in the United Kingdom. The challenges presented by the county goals, the Capital Projects, the National Assembly for Cyprus, the Overseas needs for teachers and pioneers, can all still be accepted and every goal may yet be won 'ahead of time'. Few areas in the world have been blessed with so many promises of victory from the Master as well as from the Guardian. In the very first letter to this community written by Shoghi Effendi after he became Guardian, over fifty-four years ago, and in his own handwriting, he said:

"That in every one of you our departed Master reposed His future and truest hopes for an able and convincing presentation of the Cause to the outside world, is abundantly revealed in His spoken and written words to you, as well as in His general references to the spirit of sincerity, of tenacity and devotion that animates His friends of that land."

And now, in the Ritrán 1977 message we are reminded that,

"Bounties in abundance waiting descend from Supreme Concourse."

Surely with this tradition behind us, with the present structure now beginning to function so well, with victories already recorded in His path and with this new promise for the future, total victory is well within our grasp.

Chairman	— John Long
Vice Chairman	— Keith Munro
Secretary	— Philip Hainsworth
Treasurer	— Betty Goode
Members	— Ted Cardell, Joe Foster, Mary Hardy, Barbara Lewis, Enayat Rawhani

(Note: Full copies of the Annual Report as given to the delegates are available from the National Office upon receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.)

TO PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE BAHÁ'Í AUTHORS

Our Bahá'í Publishing Trust is at all times ready to consider publishing works relative to the Bahá'í Faith.

The Trust is interested in all kinds of publications, from books to leaflets; of works ranging from, at the one extreme, scholarly research and theses for Doctorates, of special interest to the academic world internationally, to, at the other extreme, single sheet leaflets for use amongst the semi-literate in all parts of the world.

Royalties, on a commercial basis, are paid to those authors wishing to receive them (this may be of special importance to scholars and professional writers).

The Trust's sales are on a world-wide basis, approximately 70% of the total sales of its own publications are exported, and an increasing number are subsequently being translated and published by its fellow Publishing Trusts and other Bahá'í publishing bodies overseas in languages ranging from those widely used, such as French and Spanish, to those with localised usage, such as Creole and Tongan.

Fully professional services and advice are available to the Trust to deal with all aspects of production.

Interested authors should send their scripts to the Manager, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2 South Street, Oakham, Leics. LE15 6HY, England, for consideration. Prospective authors will find it advantageous to send particulars of what they have in mind before they proceed with their writing.

It is recommended that scripts be sent either by Recorded Delivery (letter post) or Compensation Post (for parcels).

National Spiritual Assembly

HOW ABOUT A CAREER IN PUBLISHING?

This is a special appeal for young Bahá'ís who are either taking their 'A' Levels or are about to start studying for them.

The Bahá'í Publishing Trust is an expanding organisation and has a great long-term future. Whilst much of the technical and professional work has today to be carried out by voluntary whole time or part time experienced Bahá'ís, the Trust has long wished to know of some dedicated young Bahá'í who would be prepared to undergo the necessary professional training with a view ultimately to joining the organisation in a managerial capacity.

Recently the Diploma in Publishing given by the Oxford Polytechnic has been given some excellent publicity and a young Bahá'í who plans to work for this Course would be likely to receive every support from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

The General Entry requirements are:

- 5 subjects in GCE with 2 at 'A' Level, or
- 4 subjects in GCE with 3 at 'A' Level, or
- an appropriate ONC or OND at a good standard.

The student must also satisfy the specific requirements of individual fields.

This Degree Course is a three-year full-time one and actual practical experience is an essential part of work in the third year.

Bahá'í youth who wish seriously to look into this unique opportunity of planning their future to enable them to serve the Cause in a most creative way, and at the same time to be able to equip themselves to work for an institution of the Faith, should apply to the Manager of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust for further details (Mr John Long, 2 South Street, Oakham, Rutland, Leicestershire).

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Diary of Meetings

1977	
30 April	— Convention Meeting
13–15 May	— London
24–26 June	— London
5–7 August	— Venue not decided
16–18 September	— Venue not decided
24, 25 September	— Consultations with Committees
21–23 October	— Venue not decided
25–27 November	— Venue not decided
17, 18 December	— Teaching Conference
1978	
6–8 January	— Venue not decided
21, 22 January	— Consultations with Committees
4, 5 February	— Area Conventions
10–12 February	— Venue not decided
24–26 March	— Venue not decided
1, 2 April	— Consultations with Committees
12–14 May	— Venue not decided
27–28 May	— National Convention

CYPRUS SEVENTYSEVEN summerschool



Bahá'í
Summerschool
Limassol Cyprus
September 1 - 14
1977

Cypro-archaic design 700 BC

ALL SUMMER SCHOOLS — "GO"

No school has had to be cancelled, but many more bookings are essential if we are not to show a loss.

ORKNEY 77 — 9/23 July

Daily car ferry from Scrabster (Thurso) — Book early!

Daily flights from Aberdeen, Inverness.

School costs from £23 — £30 + VAT for adults per week.

Registration fee £3 per person per week.

Reductions for children.

Booking forms:

National Office or Mehrabi, "Carmel", New Scapa Road, Kirkwall, Orkney.

LOUGHBOROUGH 6/20 August

£46.50 + VAT per person per week

for luxury accommodation and full board,

plus £3 registration fee per person per week.

Reductions for children.

Cheap camping facilities nearby with daily food and registration possible.

Book now:

Miss Mary Prince, 26 Priory Road, off Forest Road, Loughborough LE11 3PP.

CYPRUS SEVENTY-SEVEN — LIMASSOL — 1/14 September

Curium Palace Hotel,

swimming pool, tennis courts, ten minutes from beach.

Exciting programme for all! Children especially welcomed.

Tours by Peltours Ltd (01 935 5500) include those for school only or for some days in Haifa.

Programme includes three coach trips, beach picnics, lectures, work-shops.

International speakers, including Hands of the Cause and visitors from World Centre, already scheduled.

Details from National Office or Peltours — immediate bookings necessary for best accommodation.

NIGERIA

An international teaching conference will take place in Enugu, Nigeria from 15–17 July which will be followed by a post-conference teaching project. Details are available from the National Office.



General view of the site for the building of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice on Mount Carmel, February 1977, as preparations were made for the pouring of the first concrete.

CONVENTION 1977
Concert Room, St George's Hall:
30 April – 1 May



It all began like any other Convention, Bahá'ís from all over the United Kingdom and even from other lands joyously greeting each other as though they had been separated for years, yet many had met only weeks previously in Henley or at Winter School, or at the Inverness Summer School or International Conferences of Helsinki and Paris, all less than nine months before. Charles and Yvonne Macdonald from India; Marion Hofman from Haifa; the two dear Hallidays from the Republic of Ireland and our valiant pioneers Chris and Billy Lee, home from Zambia and preparing for their next post in Botswana; recently appointed Auxiliary Board Member Betty Shepherd representing the Board of Counsellors supported by Board Members Mary Kouchekezadeh and David Lewis, were all among those attending. By the time the Roll was called and voting took place for Convention Officers, sixty delegates were present and the following Officers were elected:

John Long	Chairman
Keith Munro	Vice Chairman
Philip Hainsworth	Secretary

The book and audio-visual stalls were on the stage so that even those helping with sales during the meal times were able to participate in Convention. Children's classes were held two floors below; meals were provided in the canteen by the Sefton community and Intercom-Bahá'í and the International Travel Teaching Committee had displays and information desks in the large entrance foyer.

The annual reports had been studied in advance by the delegates and also available was a consultation document on the 'clusters', a list of all assemblies in the United Kingdom, the resolutions from the area conventions and guidance notes for the delegates.

Two messages from the Universal House of Justice were read, one dated 24 March to all National Assemblies and a special one to the United Kingdom Convention about Cyprus, dated 27 March. A message was read from the Cyprus believers and a cable received from Hand of the Cause, Hasan Balyuzi.

As the annual report was completed only after the First Day of Ridván, a large supplementary report was not required, so in addition to commenting on the few typographical errors in the annual report and drawing attention to the 'clusters' document, there were only two matters presented by the National Assembly Secretary, Philip Hainsworth, as follows:—

- 1 (a) The total number of local assemblies formed at Ridván appeared to be as anticipated in the report with twenty-one assemblies gained in the year and five lapsed, giving a net gain of sixteen assemblies, with a total of one hundred and thirty-seven apparently formed. There was some question relating to four of these so it appeared that there were one hundred and thirty-three definitely established and two or three others ready to be formed in the not too distant future. In the Annual Report however it had been anticipated that Bath and Maidstone would be lost, whereas they were in fact maintained, and with the close proximity of Glasgow and Edinburgh to Motherwell and East Lothian respectively, it had not been expected that Motherwell and East Lothian would in fact have lapsed, yet it proved impossible at the last moment to move pioneers to save these two assemblies which had been established prior to the Five Year Plan. Nevertheless the total gain represented an increase of approximately 35% in the number of assemblies since 1974.
- 2 (b) Added to the news given about the BBC broadcast over BBC 4, it was joyfully reported that a modified version using member of the Universal House of Justice, Mr David Hofman, had gone out on World Service on all wavelengths on four different occasions over a period of three days. People had already reported having heard this broadcast at home and overseas, and being stimulated to enquire about the Faith.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented. Encouraging trends were noted and appreciation was expressed for the highly successful three year Youth Campaign which had yielded a total of over £6,600.

Arising from consultation on the **Annual Report**, Convention noted with great concern the number of withdrawals and the fact that about six hundred believers could not be traced. It was clarified that these withdrawals covered a very long time and only when it was absolutely clear that a person did not believe in Bahá'u'lláh would a withdrawal be accepted.

Arising from a study of the annual reports, resolutions were passed relating to the Publishing Trust accounts and the presentation of these reports at future Conventions.



Fiona Macdonald and Company entertaining on Saturday evening

Responding to the call of the Universal House of Justice for special attention to be given to the Nineteen Day Feast of Núr, a number of far-reaching resolutions were recorded, relating in particular to a prayer campaign, guidance on local publicity for the event, the setting of personal goals for every believer and an increasing role for women in teaching activities. Cyprus was discussed, and the increase in travel teachers and the possibility of the use of a local Ḥaḏratu'l-Quds as a National Teaching Centre were also subjects for resolutions.

Great appreciation was expressed for the canteen arrangements and the long lunch period which allowed the friends more time together than in previous Conventions; consultation was continued at a high level until the break for the election of the National Assembly.

All ninety-five delegates voted, all papers were valid and only one isolated vote was rejected by the Tellers. In record time the Tellers were able to provide the following result:—

Keith Munro	79
Philip Hainsworth	76
Enayat Rawhani	73
Mary Hardy	69
John Long	66
Betty Goode	64
Joe Foster	54
Barbara Lewis	44
Ted Cardell	38

After dinner on Saturday there was a session for the Board of Counsellors when all Auxiliary Board Members spoke and this was followed by a much appreciated music interlude led by Fiona Macdonald.

It was on Sunday morning at the opening session that it was found that this was no usual Convention. The National Assembly had called upon Enayat Rawhani to read a prepared statement — that the Officers of the Assembly were John Long—Chairman, Keith Munro—Vice Chairman, Enayat Rawhani—Secretary and Betty Goode—Treasurer, and the Assembly appealed to the whole community for patience and understanding until the new arrangements in the National Office consequent upon this election result could be worked out and announced. The Chairman of Convention and two other National Assembly members left to consult with the new National Secretary and the Convention Vice Chairman took the chair. The delegates appeared stunned, but consultation continued according to a slightly revised agenda. One delegate felt moved to express a motion of gratitude and appreciation for the outgoing National Secretary and after unusually prolonged applause Philip Hainsworth, continuing as Convention Secretary, though obviously deeply moved, expressed his thanks.

Many delegates participated in Sunday's consultation and as always there was some feeling of frustration that more time could not be given to weighty matters. The National Assembly was called upon once again to look at the organisation of Convention and to improve, if possible, the direction of consultation. Although it was generally accepted that contributions demonstrated increasing maturity, there was little repetition and rarely was the 'red light' necessary to cut down on any delegate's comments or suggestions.

Resolutions were recorded dealing with publicity, community study, personal goals, individual responsibility, teaching, the covering letter from the Universal House of Justice dated 3 March 1977 for their new compilation on teaching, public opinion questionnaires, a mobile bookshop, development of local assemblies, 'pastoral care', help for weak assemblies, special campaigns in selected local areas, the "Programme for Victory", dissemination of Bahá'í literature, encouragement of Bahá'í youth to enter the teaching profession, summer schools and regional and national events, among others.

On Sunday afternoon all the children participated in an unusual dramatised presentation of some of the teachings, which was greatly appreciated by the audience and thoroughly enjoyed by the children — they were assisted by a number of youth. It is wonderful to see the growing number of children who take part in these activities and it seems that we can look forward to an ever increasing pool of talent.

Donations contributed during Convention were as follows:

National Fund	£65
Capital Projects	£53

In closing the Convention the Chairman paid a special tribute to the work of the Liverpool Assembly and all the helpers who had volunteered to assist. The Child Education Advisory Committee were congratulated on their excellent plans and for the presentation made on Sunday afternoon. Susan Grimshaw as Secretary of that Committee was particularly mentioned as were the many helpers who had devoted their entire time to the attention of the children, thereby sacrificing their attendance at Convention sessions and relieving delegates who were parents. Particular appreciation was given also to those who helped at the book stall and the audio-visual stall where it seemed that the sales were approximately £1,800 and £600 respectively. The Chairman also commented upon the good number of constructive resolutions which had been made. Appreciation was made from Convention of the work of the Officers of Convention.

The Messages Committee reported — the letter to Cyprus was approved and the cables approved with amendments as follows:

In reply to the cable from Hand of the Cause Hasan Balyuzi:

MAY ALL BLESSINGS BE YOURS DEEPEST LOVE,

the following cable was sent:

OVER 500 FRIENDS CONVENTION HAPPY RECEIVE
YOUR GREETINGS APPRECIATE CONTINUING
FAITH SEND WARMEST LOVE AND PRAYERS.

In answer to the letter from the Universal House of Justice regarding Cyprus the following cable was sent:

FRIENDS EAGER MEET CHALLENGE CYPRUS
INCREASING PARTICIPATION ANTICIPATED
SCHOOLS TRAVEL TEACHING STOP PRAYING
DISCOVER WAITING SOULS GRATEFUL GUIDANCE
PRAYERS.

The following cable was also sent to the Universal House of Justice:

AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS OVER 500 FRIENDS
DEVOTED DELEGATES CASTING 100% VOTE
GATHERED LIVERPOOL STOP GRATEFUL BOUNTY
INSPIRING MESSAGE FIRED HEARTS BELIEVERS
DEDICATE INDIVIDUAL TEACHING CONFIDENT
HELP SUPREME CONCOURSE STOPEAGERCHANNEL
PENT-UP ENERGIES TEACH CAUSE GOD STOP
EAGERLY AWAITING PERIOD RE-DEDICATION
CENTENARY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S RELEASE CONFINEMENT
PRISON CITY 'AKKÁ STOP BEG PRAYERS
EXECUTE PLANS VICTORY WITH ENTHUSIASM
IMAGINATION PERSEVERANCE.

The following reply was received:

DELIGHTED SPIRIT CONVENTION WARMLY
WELCOMED DEDICATION VITAL TEACHING ACTIVITY
DETERMINATION MEET CHALLENGE CYPRUS
ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS BOUNTIFUL
CONFIRMATION EVERY FIELD SERVICE.



Yvonne and Charles Macdonald photographed during one of the Convention sessions.

THE PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE



What is the Public Information Committee? Well, one part of its duties involves advising local communities on how to achieve publicity in the local press and on local television and radio and, as a step towards producing a set of guidance notes on local publicity, the PIC needs your help. All in all there has been a large amount of experience gained in this field around the United Kingdom, but it needs to be collected, collated and shared; you can help us to do this by passing on your experience. The PIC has already sent a circular to all local assemblies with a list of the kind of information and experience we would like to hear about, but if any individual would like to send in their own suggestions we would be only too pleased to hear from you. This list is reproduced below:

- 1) What approaches to the local press have you found to be particularly successful?
- 2) What difficulties do you meet in getting greater publicity in local press and radio?
- 3) How can we help, and what should be our priorities in this?
- 4) Do you have any suggestions for inclusion in the guidance notes for local publicity?
- 5) Please notify our secretary of:
 - a) believers with experience in dealing with local press,
 - b) believers with experience in dealing with, and appearing on, local radio,
 - c) volunteers with clear and expressive voices who could broadcast for the Faith.

Incidentally, may we take this opportunity warmly to thank all those assemblies which have already responded to the above points.

Newscuttings

Please remember to send us copies of any coverage you receive in local newspapers. Either spare cuttings or photocopies, and it also helps if the name and date of the newspaper is included. This helps us in two ways:

- I) We will be in a position to give an overall report on the extent of local press successes.
- II) We will be able to see what kind of things local newspapers regard as newsworthy and we can model our sample press releases accordingly.

Press Information Folders

Several friends have written to the PIC asking where these can be obtained. They are now handled by the Bahá'í Audio Visual Centre, item number 900, price 65p. (See your AVC catalogue)

Headed Notepaper

Assemblies who would like to produce headed notepaper for their own communities using the "Bahá'í Faith" logo design (as used on letters from the National Assembly and PIC and shown above) can obtain a printers' instruction leaflet from the PIC secretary. This leaflet gives all the necessary instructions for your local printer to produce similar headed notepaper for your own community.

Exhibition Material

The PIC is currently working on a "do-it-yourself" exhibition kit which can be sent by post. The exhibition will have a unified design running through all the panels, but what we chiefly need is ideas! If individuals or communities have already produced posters and exhibition materials (and we know that many have) please could they send us a copy, a photograph or even a sketch. If any cost is involved, please let us know beforehand. Indeed, even sketches or rough outlines of good ideas will be very welcome.

The PIC has recently been re-formed by the National Assembly and we are looking forward to serving the community in every way possible. The present members are:

Simon Mortimore
Shamsi Navidi
Mary Niven

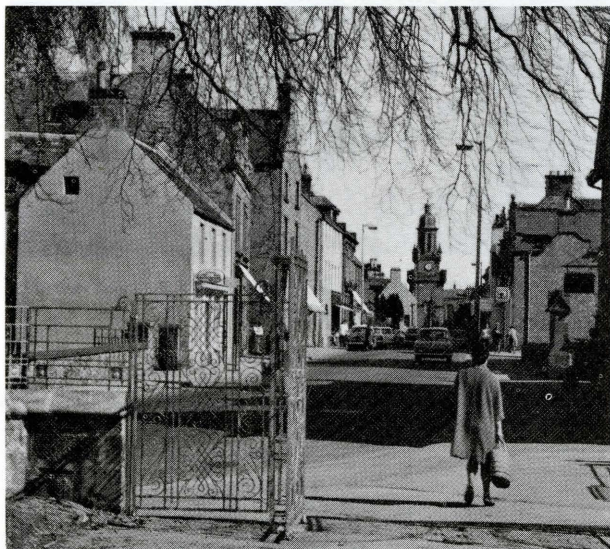
Gilda Walker
Gerald Warren

Please address all correspondence to the secretary:

Gerald Warren,
High Tide Cottage,
Chidham Lane,
Chidham,
CHICHESTER
West Sussex.

PUBLISHING TRUST

The packer who prepares parcels for the Publishing Trust will be on holiday from 8 to 25 July and the invoice clerk from 16 to 31 August. Vera and John Long will be attending the Orkney Summer School and much of the Loughborough Summer School so there will be considerable delay in dealing with orders and correspondence received during July and August although the Trust is not closing down this year during the summer as in recent years.



The market town of Forres lies in the west of Moray district, a 'C' goal of the Five Year Plan. There has been a town on this site for many hundreds of years (it is mentioned in Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'), and the present one blends the old and the new in a way taking full advantage of the beautiful natural situation. Forres is a few miles from the world-famous Findhorn Foundation, and twenty-five miles east of Inverness, whose Spiritual Assembly is responsible for the teaching work in Moray.

SERVICE FOR THE BLIND

Additions to the tape library

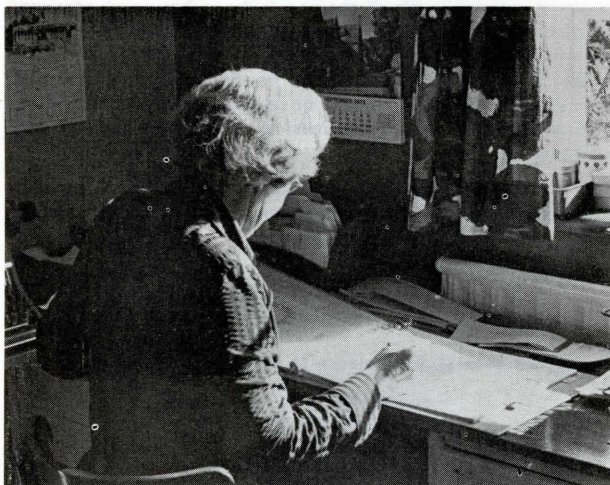
"God and His Messengers" by David Hofman (read by Catherine Sheppard)

"A Manual for Pioneers" by Rúhíyyih Khánúm (read by Marcia Coburn)

Details of the tape library and also of the Braille library appeared in the April issue.

Volunteer transcribers and readers

The response to our appeal in the April issue has been encouraging, but more are needed. If you are interested, please contact the department secretary, Oliver Christopherson, 68 Briardale, Stevenage, Herts. SG1 1TR, Telephone Stevenage 55983.



Betty Goode, the National Treasurer, at work in her office in her home in Stafford.

JYOTI MUNSIFF ON TELEVISION TEACHES BY EXAMPLE

The Bahá'í Faith "... provides me with my direction," said Jyoti Munsiff in a television interview with former cabinet minister and British Rail chairman Sir Richard Marsh. The half-hour long programme, "A Way of Life", was broadcast on Friday 25 February at 10.30 pm over Southern Television and was part of a series of interviews by Sir Richard which included several well-known national figures.

The programme started with a film of Jyoti at her work as a solicitor and legal advisor to Shell International. Amongst other things the film mentioned that she is the only girl working amongst nineteen men, that she was the youngest woman ever to qualify as a solicitor in this country and that her greatest quality is "unflappability"! Though only mentioned towards the end of the interview the Bahá'í Teachings were in evidence throughout as Jyoti gave her opinions on a wide variety of topical issues ranging from women in business, marriage, racial prejudice and immigration.

It was when the conversation turned to nationalism and the problems of the world that Jyoti had a chance to speak about her religious views: "... The basic theme of the Bahá'í Faith is the oneness of mankind" she said, and its teachings are directed towards "... harmonising and unifying the people of the world."

When Sir Richard commented that the Bahá'í Faith is not a religion which most people know about she explained further that the Faith has spread to every country in the world and included followers of every possible background and ethnic group.

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.



CONGO REPUBLIC: Miss Fatanih Maher undertook a four-day teaching trip in the Bouenza area. After going to two villages in search of one of the Bahá'ís, she came across his family and explained the purpose of her visit. About fifteen people came to the home and they had a two-hour meeting. The people all seemed very happy to hear about the Faith.

Miss Maher then went to meet the village Chief and told him and some people of the tribe about the Faith. One man in the gathering asked her to come to his village and tell the people there about her beliefs. A man went through the village announcing "Come, come all to hear the Word of God; come to pray!" Fifteen adults and twenty children gathered at the meeting. There was another gathering that afternoon in which twenty-five adults and twenty children took part. That evening, thirteen people became Bahá'ís. The next day another meeting was held and fifteen people attended—mostly women—who asked many questions. Thirty people came to the last meeting and held a discussion for four hours. Fifteen of them became Bahá'ís.

THE GAMBIA: The National Spiritual Assembly of the Gambia has reported that local spiritual assemblies in seventy-two villages in that country have appointed teachers for children's classes. Over 2,000 children are now attending regular classes.

More than the twenty local Ḥaẓratu'l-Quds called for in the Five Year Plan in the Gambia are reported to be in process of construction. Local centres have already been built and dedicated in Moussoumere, Moussongo, Tarangara, Godogo and Doubouti.

"The teaching team of Mrs Wendy Momen and Mrs Rita Fox of the United Kingdom provided a great stimulus to the work of teaching women in the villages", the National Spiritual Assembly of The Gambia has reported. "Mrs Fox and Mrs Momen visited more than fifteen villages—some where the women were taught for the first time—and they helped to open a completely new village. The Bahá'í village women were delighted, enthusiastic and responsive. Mrs Momen and Mrs Fox also participated in Bahá'í activities in Banjul, in the Kombo area and in Mansakonko."

GHANA: A Bahá'í of Accra recently expressed the desire to pioneer to the north of Ghana and determined to request a transfer from his employer. He rose early in the morning, said many prayers, and went to work. Before he had a chance to speak to his employer the man called for him and said: "Would you be willing to accept a transfer to Bolgatanga, in the north?"

GUYANA, SURINAM AND FRENCH GUIANA: "The visit of Mrs Meherangiz Munsiff to Guyana from October 3 to 25 was a memorable and successful one", the National Spiritual Assembly of Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana commented. "Her visit was timely and not only filled a great need in the Bahá'í communities but generated wide public interest. Mrs Munsiff met the wife of the Prime Minister of Guyana, Mrs Vila Burnham (who is also the president of the Girl Guides); the Minister of Culture, Miss Shirley M. Field-Ridley; the Mayors of New Amsterdam and Georgetown and a representative of the Mayor

of Linden. Public meetings were held in Georgetown, Leguan, Linden, Annandale, Plaisance and Eccles. Mrs Munsiff also spoke at the Rotary and Lions Clubs and at the Girl Guides' Association. In addition to holding press conferences, she was interviewed over radio and was the guest of honour at a reception for leading citizens held at the Pegasus Hotel. Excellent publicity in the media was obtained during Mrs Munsiff's visit. The Proclamation and Publicity Committee, and the Radio Committee, obtained wide coverage in the news media this year, and in more rapid sequence, than ever before."

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS: A broad and varied spectrum of Bahá'í activities has characterised the recent teaching work of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands. These activities included a tree planting ceremony during which two cypress trees were placed beside the grave of Hand of the Cause Martha Root. This ceremony, at which Mrs Marguerite Sears presided, was held in conjunction with the programme marking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Bahá'í Faith in the Hawaiian Islands.

The National Spiritual Assembly reports that the half-hour free radio broadcasts on station KORL continue each Sunday at 11 pm. In addition, a fifteen minute programme in the Filipino language was recently broadcast on Radio KISA. There was also a half-hour special television programme, without cost, commemorating the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh.

INDIA: The Spiritual Assembly of Bombay conducted a World Religion Day programme on 20 January 1977. The State Minister, the Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University and other prominent people from various religious backgrounds participated in the programme as speakers. The function was well organised and was accorded wide publicity by the press and television. Messages of good wishes were received from a number of eminent people and have been printed in a souvenir brochure published by the Local Spiritual Assembly.

His Eminence Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, recently granted an interview to Mr R. N. Shah, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of India, and Mr Jamshed Fozdar. The interview took place at the Dalai Lama's residence at Dharmasala, a hill station at the foot of the Himalayas, on 22 January, 1977, in an atmosphere of cordiality and warmth, and extended to an hour and a quarter. His Eminence recalled previous Bahá'í visitors—the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and Mrs Shirin Boman of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South Central Asia—and expressed many sentiments compatible with Bahá'í principles.

The audience, which had been requested by Mr Fozdar, provided him an opportunity to present the Dalai Lama with a copy of his book *Buddha Maitrya-Amitabha Has Appeared*, a recent publication of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of India, and to elaborate upon various Bahá'í concepts.

Mr Fozdar and Mr Shah also met a number of Tibetan dignitaries to whom they were able to present an outline of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

His Eminence Tenzin Gyatso the XIV Dalai Lama, with Mr R N Shah, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India on the left and Mr Jamshed Fozdar after the presentation by Mr Fozdar of his latest book.



ITALY: Gela: Representatives of the Bahá'í community of the Sicilian island of Gela, at the invitation of a group of Roman Catholics, recently read two Bahá'í prayers and a passage from *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* before a silent and respectful crowd of worshippers, at a peace rally held in a city church. The event was followed by an hour-long interview of the Bahá'ís by a local radio station. Two Bahá'ís explained the principles of the Faith and made particular mention of the Most Great Peace promised by Bahá'u'lláh. The programme concluded with a musical selection, *Amore e Unità*, recorded by the Italian Dawn-Breakers.

Cagliari: The Bahá'ís of Cagliari, Sardinia reported that on Sunday, 16 January 1977 a Roman Catholic priest who is a friend of the Faith read a Bahá'í prayer for unity at all three morning masses and explained to his congregation that Bahá'í communities all over the world celebrate World Religion Day.

LAOS: "The ripples of activity generated by the Hong Kong International Teaching Conference inevitably reached our

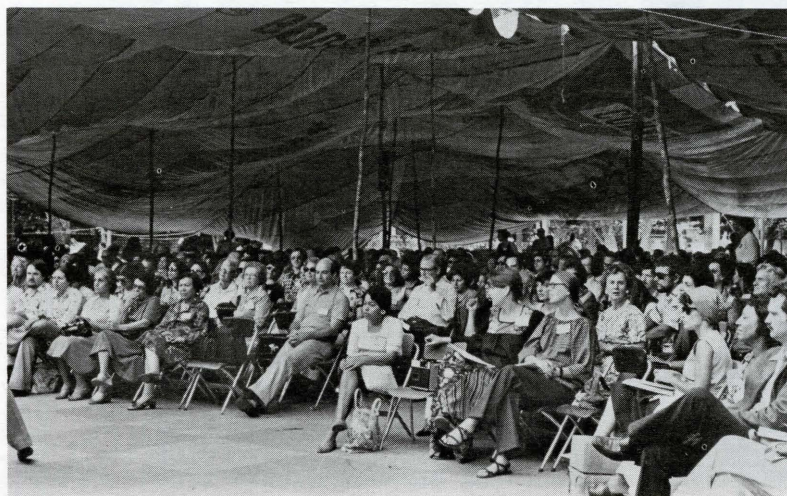
community", reported the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos. "The month of January witnessed an amazing acceleration of youth activities in Vientiane town . . . it is very gratifying to see the number of seekers who are coming to the National Centre and who are becoming Bahá'ís. The seeds planted two years ago at Sisavangvong College of Medicine are yielding a plentiful harvest. 'Each One Bring One' is the theme which inspired the present activities . . . the friends are trying to deepen their knowledge of the Faith in order to become effective teachers. In an hour of fear and despondency the Bahá'í youth stand out as a beacon light, resolute in their faith and efforts, and looking with hope toward the day when all their labours will have been finally rewarded."

SOUTH WEST PACIFIC OCEAN: The National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific Ocean has reported that regular announcements of Nineteen Day Feasts and Bahá'í Holy Days are now being made on the national radio networks of New Caledonia (Radio Noumea) and of New Hebrides (Radio Vila).



International Teaching Conference — Auckland, New Zealand, January 1977 — The friends gathered in the Town Hall for one of the sessions. The Hand of the Cause A Q Faizí, representative of the Universal House of Justice, is seated in the front row on the aisle to the right. The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone and Mrs Featherstone are across the aisle to the left of Mr Faizí.

International Teaching Conference — Bahia, Brazil, January 1977 — General view of the Conference in Teatro Castro Alves. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, representative of the Universal House of Justice, and Mrs Elizabeth Olinga are seated in the front row left. The Hands of the Cause Paul Haney and Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir and Counsellor Donald Witzel are seated to the right of Mr Olinga.



International Teaching Conference — Merida, Mexico, February 1977 — Friends gathered under the canopy at Carta Clara Gardens.

NEW ERA SCHOOL, PANCHGANI, INDIA

On 1 August 1945 Mrs Rezwan Mobedzadeh and Mrs Salisa Kermani left their pioneering homes in Poona for Panchgani to begin a Bahá'í children's hostel. They took with them sixteen small boys and girls. The trip was a decision of the National Spiritual Assembly which at that time included India, Burma and Ceylon.

Despite their youth and inexperience, the two ladies overcame many difficulties in establishing the school. During its first six months the school served only as a hostel, offering spiritual instruction to the children in the morning and evening. Coaching classes were gradually started and in 1948 the school was given the name New Era. In 1953 a large property, 'Woodland', was purchased and for the first time academic and physical education were also offered.

The beloved Guardian said in an early letter to the Spiritual Assembly of Panchgani that he would "specially pray for the growth and progress of the Bahá'í children's hostel so that it may become perfect and distinguished in every respect." He later expressed hopes that it would one day become a Bahá'í university.

Although not yet a university, New Era has witnessed great growth over the past thirty years. The courageous and persevering efforts of numerous pioneers and local friends has seen the emergence of this small seed into a blossoming flower in the fields of Bahá'í education.

Panchgani, which means five plateaux in Hindi, is located about 125 miles south-east of Bombay. The school grounds, poised among the five flat mountain tops, overlook the Krishna River flowing through the Chikli Valley 1500 feet below. Beautiful banyan, mango and silver oak trees cover the land and spread into the clear blue sky. Squirrels, colourful birds and mischievous monkeys are found here in their natural setting.

The school compound consists of thirty-two acres and contains six dormitories, a large classroom building, kitchen and dining facilities, a medical dispensary, a workshop and staff quarters. There is also a large recreation area with facilities for many sports, including an indoor squash court. There are many beautifully flowered gardens. Surrounding the academic centre are agricultural areas where wheat and various fruits and vegetables are grown for school use.

The first major structure to be built was a large spacious classroom building. The foundation of this structure was laid by the late Hand of the Cause of God Tarazollah Samandari, and the construction of this building was financed by Mr Abdul Misagh Misaghieh of Iran. It was completed in 1975 in time for the 30th anniversary of the New Era High School.

It contains twenty-four classrooms, a science laboratory, art and music rooms, offices and a spacious library. A new kitchen-dining hall cum sports centre is under construction and will greatly improve the ever developing grounds.

The school curriculum has taken on many new aspects, and today there is offered a full range of academic subjects and extra-curricular activities. Inter-school events, including a sports day, drama and school fete are held each year.

Spiritual education is given great emphasis and both moral and deepening classes are provided for the students. The greatest asset of New Era education however is the international character of school life, in which both staff and students of diverse nations, religions and backgrounds are all working harmoniously together.

New Era is an accredited member of the Maharashtra State Government educational system and has proven itself a source of pride and inspiration to both its local community and the world community of Bahá'ís. It presently enrolls 335 students, both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í, from more than twenty countries. The school is co-educational, has both boarders and day students and offers instruction from the kindergarten through higher secondary level.

The present day functioning of New Era is the result of the continual guidance of the Universal House of Justice, the National Spiritual Assembly of India and their appointed school committees.



Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum with Mrs Violette Nakhjavani during a visit to the school.

The Indian Government encourages every school to have a social service programme, but few do as much as New Era. The older students help to clean the school compound, assist at school functions, make greeting cards for hospitals, visit orphanages, assist local doctors, perform first aid, assist village people to plant trees and build roads, and take part in many other activities in the spirit of service.

New Era stresses the importance of social service not only for the benefits it extends to the disadvantaged but also as it offers the needed balance in the education of the students.

As an exciting addition to this programme the school, in October 1975, undertook a Rural Development Project. The New Era project includes an international team of Bahá'ís in the fields of agriculture, animal husbandry, public health, hygiene, economics and engineering, who have come to Panchgani to work in conjunction with the students in bringing an overall rise in the standard of living in four neighbouring villages. The project is financed by the donations of the Mottahedeh Foundation in New York. The project has met with many successes in its first year and has drawn attention and support from both government officials and the public. The benefits of this programme are as yet incalculable for the Bahá'í world.

The National Spiritual Assembly of India hopes that a junior college will soon be established, possibly by the end of the Five Year Plan. A teacher training college, technical courses and a diploma in rural development are a part of the proposed programmes for development.

New Era is undoubtedly only the first of many Bahá'í schools to be developed as the New World Order is unfurled. The struggles, shortcomings and successes of its growth provide a powerful example and inspiration for our efforts in the future. New Era has nurtured many young world citizens to become pioneers in many lands and has extended services to both the local and world community. Most important of all, however, it has provided a genuine example of the unity of mankind and the beauty of the diverse races, religions and nations working together. The school administration is gradually trying to come closer to the principles of Bahá'í education given to us by the Central Figures of the Faith.

The School benefits greatly from the frequent visits of Hands of the Cause of God, Counsellors, international travelling teachers and other friends.

There is a real need for (a) a music teacher and (b) a house matron for our small boys' dormitory. The matron would have two assistants, should be capable both of being responsible for the cleanliness and discipline of the boys, their recreation in the dormitory and spiritual education. Mrs Johnson, our school superintendent, would prefer a middle-aged couple or a widow or divorcee, i.e. — the person(s) should have stamina but should not be too young!

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITIES

AYLESBURY VALE: After spending many hours making posters about the nine major religions, the Bahá'ís of Aylesbury held an exhibition in the village hall of Haddenham, just five miles from Aylesbury. The exhibition portrayed the principle of progressive revelation, as well as the fact that in every age religion has been the foundation of great civilisations. The final part explained the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings through pictures and quotations, whilst slides of the Shrines and Temples were projected onto a screen. A week prior to the event, the Bahá'ís went to the village, put posters in shops, gave out 400 invitations, presented three books to the local library, and sent personal invitations to the local clergymen. In all, seventy-four people came during the two evenings. The success of this proclamation has been so encouraging that we are planning to continue the idea in all the villages around Aylesbury. Another heart-warming event was when the Bahá'í youth were invited to go and sing at a local youth club attended by people of many nationalities. The group picked "Unity in Diversity" as their theme, and in a fifteen minute programme spoke about the Faith and the importance of this principle in the world today. Songs pertinent to the subject were also sung to the audience which numbered about fifty. The organiser was so impressed that she has invited the group to sing at a cultural evening in June which will be attended by several hundred people.

CARLISLE: There have been quite a few Bahá'í events in Carlisle this year and we aim to keep things moving! In February we had the great privilege of a visit from Mrs Betty Reed who gave a talk at a public meeting. Betty stressed how people all over the world are finding difficulty in working together and gave an example where Portugal had, at least, thirty political parties trying to gain power. There were some searching questions afterwards from some non-Bahá'ís. We all felt very stimulated by Betty's warmth and dynamism.

An exhibition "Child Education and the Bahá'í Faith" was held in the public library. There seems to have been a great deal of interest, particularly amongst teachers, and every booklet (over two hundred, specially printed for the event) disappeared very quickly from the library. The exhibition was later taken to Haltwhistle, a 'C' goal town in the Tynedale area.

In March Mr David Hines came up and gave an excellent slide show "One". There were a few non-Bahá'ís present who obviously enjoyed both the show and the atmosphere. The presentation of the show was sharp and snappy and pointed up clearly the Bahá'í attitude towards world events.

Later on in March the Gwynedd Road Show gave a performance in Trinity School, Carlisle. There were about fifteen non-Bahá'ís present who afterwards broke up into little groups with the Bahá'ís and talked for a considerable time. Some Carlisle and Allerdale Bahá'ís saw the show for the second time the following evening at Dumfries — a town supported by Carlisle.

These public events have been supported by posters, in shop windows and on notice boards, and by advertising in the local paper. The Bangor Road Show was mentioned on Radio Carlisle when David Menham was able to say something about the Faith.

We have an enquirer living in Cockermouth who is regularly visited by Bahá'ís and an enquirer in Haltwhistle has been presented with "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh" by the local assembly.

We have been fortunate in being able to book the television room of Carlisle Sports Centre every Wednesday evening at a low cost. This room will be used for all manner of Bahá'í activities so that any visiting Bahá'í (or anyone passing through on holiday) will find a welcome on a Wednesday evening at the Sports Centre. It is very central — ideal for bringing in friends to meet the Bahá'ís. Prayers are being said specifically for enquirers known to be interested, naming each one.

At Christmas Jena and John Twiname, our pioneers to Portugal, made a flying visit to Carlisle and we heard of the difficulties in Portugal. We realised how fortunate we are to have such easy access to all Bahá'í literature. Olive Smeatham and Ruth Scott, on holiday in Tenerife, visited Persian Bahá'ís there and had a warm welcome.

In the Easter holidays some of the Carlisle Bahá'ís went to support the Isle of Man Bahá'ís on their teaching weekend.

The Bahá'í Faith is well known in Carlisle and there does seem to be an increasing interest. As world news becomes daily more depressing, people are obviously beginning to look for something beyond human solutions.

GLASGOW: Our community celebrated Naw-Rúz with a party which was attended by about seventy people, a third of whom were non-Bahá'ís. The event was also marked by several broadcasts of an interview on the Faith given by Tom Keenan to Radio Clyde, our local radio station. Each broadcast lasted for about five minutes and was very well produced by the staff of the radio station.

We are also pleased to announce the enrolment of three new believers recently.



Naw-Rúz fancy dress party in Brent.



Warwick World Religion Day meeting

To date the Glasgow community have sent three pioneers to Nithsdale. They are Willie O'Brian, John Neville and Robert Notcher. Another two pioneers are finalising arrangements to move there and should be established in Nithsdale by Ridván. They are Margaret Gilroy and Tom Keenan.

INVERNESS: A series of slide programmes has proved of great value in teaching the Faith. First, the tape-slide presentation of the teachings prepared by Orkney LSA and kindly lent by them was shown in both Inverness and the town of Forres in our goal district of Moray. Then Irene Bennett's slides of her years of work with the Bahá'í communities in Africa, culminating in her twelve years in Uganda, were shown at a public fireside in Inverness. Interested contacts came to all these meetings, and Irene's slides were subsequently also shown at L'Arche, the local home for the mentally handicapped. Not only was this action appreciated by the home's director and staff, but a spontaneous fireside followed.

Other meetings have been held in Moray, where the one local Bahá'í youth — Caroline McDonald, has been energetically teaching on her own as well as assisting with the proclamation, and bringing her friends to events.

The community were particularly sad to lose Irene Bennett to Africa once more, but happy that she is to take up a pioneer post in Nigeria. As Irene says, it was in Africa she became a Bahá'í, and the continent seems to be in her blood.

There has been a good deal of ongoing correspondence in our local papers, with much proclamation value coming to the Faith. Since the start of 1977, local believers have had letters mentioning or discussing the Bahá'í teachings published on ten occasions in a three month period. Much of this was in the paper covering the district of Ross-shire, to the north of Inverness, where with the assistance of a Christian fundamentalist, a vigorous discussion of religious education in schools and the home has gone on. Other press publicity for the Faith continues to be obtained, and good relationships with various newspaper columnists have helped in this.

ISLE OF MAN: A visit to the island by Mrs Beatrice Smith, secretary of the North-West Branch of "The Men of the Trees", and Council member of the National Society of "The Men of the Trees", included a six-minute live interview on Manx Radio on Good Friday morning when the Bahá'í Faith was mentioned several times.

At a public meeting in the evening two books — "Famous Trees of Bible Lands" by Richard St Barbe Baker, and "The Earth is But One Country" by John Huddleston were presented to the Chief Librarian of the Douglas Public Library, with the press photographer present.

Mrs Smith first spoke of the past that trees have in the history of this planet; then gave a slide show of trees around the world beginning with sunrise in the Pacific and ending with sunset. Several people asked questions about the Bahá'í Faith and two have attended a Bahá'í meeting at a later date.

SOUTH WIGHT: We achieved our goal and established our assembly in time for Ridván. It was quite a cliff-hanger, as we were still unsure whether our latest member, who had come to pioneer, would be able to secure accommodation in time.

However, our prayers were answered on Tuesday afternoon, 19 April. After a tremendous flurry of telephone calls a meeting was arranged for the following evening, when we had the added bounty of a visit from Philip Hainsworth who came to form our assembly.

We have had eight members in our group since June of last year, and although we all longed to form the assembly, we also found that we had time really to get to know each other, which we are sure will be a great help.

On 12 April 1977 we held a 'Bring and Buy Sale' of work, followed by a Slide Show entitled "Persia", which was well attended both by Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'í friends. The evening was a great success, and £23 was raised for the Isle of Wight Hospital Broadcasting Appeal Fund.

THREE RIVERS: 21 April marked the first anniversary of the Spiritual Assembly of Three Rivers. During the past year we have held a regular fireside at 41 Astons Road, Moor Park, on Monday evenings. Books have been presented to local libraries and to the Mayor. The Mayor and his wife attended an "Open House" at Naw-Rúz and they enjoyed a little Persian culture! Two public meetings have been arranged with outside speakers and they were well attended.

A series of panel discussions have been held — one each month — with the overall theme "Problems Today". To each of these meetings local organisations have been invited, such as the Marriage Guidance Councillor. They are asked to speak as members of a panel. A Bahá'í speaker also gave the Bahá'í view on the subject after which a general discussion followed. This has been a most valuable method of meeting and acquainting different organisations in the area with the Bahá'í Faith. All meetings have been advertised in the local paper before and we have had a full write-up after the meeting.

Teaching has been carried out in the goal area Hertsmere, several public meetings and firesides have been arranged with the cooperation of the cluster group. We hope to have a spiritual assembly there in the near future.



Discussion at a deepening meeting organised by the Midlands and East Teaching Committee in London in February.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

CALL TO THE NATIONS

The following two letters, the first from the Universal House of Justice and the second from its Department of Publishing announce a new publication which will be available from Bahá'í World Centre Publications in August.

We announce with great pleasure the publication of a compilation of the writings of Shoghi Effendi, entitled *Call to the Nations*. The book is intended for proclamation and presentation, as well as for study by the friends.

These selected passages, although published in compilation twenty years after the passing of the beloved Guardian, are still vitally relevant to the condition of the world. The compilation, drawn largely from the World Order letters of the beloved Guardian, is supplementary to the three volumes of Sacred Text to be published from the World Centre during the Five Year Plan, and we feel sure that it will be a great aid in the promotion of the Cause and in drawing the attention of the leaders of mankind to its redeeming message.

24 May 1977

The Universal House of Justice

The Universal House of Justice has just announced this new compilation from the writings of Shoghi Effendi and has instructed us to send you the following details about it. Apart from a Foreword, written by the Universal House of Justice, and the Introduction which is drawn from a statement prepared by Shoghi Effendi in July 1947 for a Special Committee of the United Nations, the excerpts are all taken from the Guardian's World Order letters. The Table of Contents lists, after the Foreword and Introduction, the following five chapters: Humanity's Ordeal, The Oneness of Mankind, A Pattern for Future Society, World Commonwealth, The Destiny of Mankind. There is a section of references in which all passages are clearly documented to the editions of the Guardian's works published by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of the United States of America.

The format of the book is approximately the same as *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* and it will be available both in cloth binding and paperback: the cloth edition retails for US \$3.50 and the paperback for US \$1.75 and the usual discount of 40 per cent will be given to National Spiritual Assemblies and their Publishing Trusts.

You are requested to send your orders to Bahá'í World Centre Publications, 46 High Street, Kidlington, Oxford OX5 2DN, England. Individuals should, as usual, place their orders through their Local Spiritual Assembly Book Sales Committee or Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

25 May 1977

Department of Publishing

The Prince of Martyrs — a brief account of the Imam Husayn by Hand of the Cause A Q Faizi

"For no warrior could be found on earth more excellent and nearer to God than Husayn, son of 'Ali, so peerless and incomparable was he." With these and other words from *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, Mr Faizi brings to the mind of all Bahá'ís the significance of the life and death of Husayn, as testified by Bahá'u'lláh. Third Imam and grandson of the Prophet, Husayn was martyred by his co-religionists less than fifty years after the passing of Muhammad. In relating this tragic story, Mr Faizi vividly brings to the attention of the Western reader one of the most significant and dire events in the early history of Islám, which set the seal on its most damaging and most lasting schism.

Published by George Ronald, available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust. Paperback, 80 pages £0.75

Milly — a tribute to the Hand of the Cause Amelia E. Collins by Hand of the Cause A Q Faizi

"Milly", as Mrs Collins was known to her friends, was one of the most distinguished "helpers" of the Guardian. She accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in 1919, and passed away in early 1962, her life as a Bahá'í thus spanning the complete period of Shoghi Effendi's Guardianship. She was appointed by him both the Vice-President of the first International Bahá'í Council and a Hand of the Cause.

This essay is not an attempt at a biography, but a tribute from a fellow Hand of the Cause, who came to know Mrs Collins through their work together in Haifa. It is an affectionate and intimate portrait which brings to life her achievements, her devotion and her shining personality.

Reviewed by the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land.

Published by George Ronald, available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust. Paperback, 56 pages, frontispiece £0.50

HUQÚQU'LLÁH

حضرت عبداللہ، در لوح دیگر خطاب با تجای حمدان میفرماید: قولہ العیز
ای یاران ربانی سن این یقین و مسلم است کہ حضرت یحون در سبع
شون نعمای مطلق موصوف و جہت واسعہ مشہور و بفضیل ابدی مألوف و
بعطار عالم وجود معروف ولی نظر حکمت بالغہ و امتحانات فارقہ تماشناز
بگناہ ہستیاز یاد حقوق بر عباد خویش واجب و مفروض فرمود نفوس کہ اعطت
این امر بہرہ نمودند ببرکت آسمانی موفق و در دو جہان روی روشن و شام آرم
عنایت مقرر کردند از جملہ حکمتہای بالغہ اینکہ اعطای حقوق سبب ثبوت و یون
نفوس گردد و نتائج عظیمہ بار و اح و قلوب نبخشہ و در ہمارد خیرہ مصر فہ گردد.