

The HOME FRONT

A News Bulletin

No. 7.

December 1957

"CHARGED BY DESTINY"

Among the last words of our dear Guardian to the British Bahá'is are these:

.."the small band of the ardent, the high minded, and resolute followers of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, charged by Destiny and by virtue of the enviable position they occupy..."

We who in the beginning of the unfoldment of the Divine Plan never thought ourselves called to any but a minor role, whose numbers when we entered on the stage thirteen years ago were little over a hundred, and who today dispose of only scant resources whether of lives or treasure, now find ourselves by an act of heavenly grace at the centre of the drama.

He who was the builder of the Administrative Order, who took into his care the design bequeathed by Baha'u'llah and the Beloved Master, guiding the believers throughout the world in the erection of this Divine pattern of the future World Commonwealth, has fallen a martyr and a sacrifice on English earth. How startled we feel at this realisation! How humbled by the thought of the sacred trust given into our hands! How stirred by the influence flowing to us from the most sacred Spot in the heart of these Islands!

Were all the forces of opposition to be leagued against our Faith, and were all men to turn against the Covenant, would not we in Britain stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the Divine Guidance which for thirty-six years streamed through the person of our beloved Guardian?

Dear Friends, there is not one of us who has not been a thousand times reinforced by our Guardian. His spirit encompasses us. His restless energy quickens and disturbs us. His vision and hopes cry out to us for fulfillment. He whose shade "shadoweth all mankind", who loved us always and who came to be with us at his moment of departure, looks now to his co-workers in the British Isles to show forth their qualities, for the service and the rescue of mankind.

"Confident British Community richly deserves new honour."
These, his last words to the British Baha'is!

We know the needs of our Faith. We hear the call from the Islands. We see the great arena of the Home Front, so much of it lying virgin and untouched by the Divine Seed. Yes, we are only four hundred! But are we not the ones "charged by Destiny ... to astonish the entire Baha'i world?"

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

DISPERSION OF THE FRIENDS

In a recent letter to the German Baha'is the beloved Guardian stressed again the importance of dispersion to new and smaller centres. "In this way", he wrote through his secretary, "the affairs of the Faith will attract the blessings of Baha'u'llah and the believers will be rewarded by Him for doing their duty and accepting the challenge of the present hour ... They must have the attitude that, if they do their part, which is to accomplish the goals of the Ten Year Plan, they can be sure that God will do His part and watch over them."

It is a joy to report the dispersal of friends to various centres of Britain where their presence is an important contribution to the progress of our beloved Faith.

Kathleen Hornell has moved to Bangor; this is Northern Ireland's goal town and a vital post. Our heartfelt thanks go to her for her many years of devoted teaching in Belfast, which we know she will still support.

Birmingham has welcomed three friends lately; Robert Calloway and the two Mohtadi sisters. We look to Birmingham for great things!

Philip and Parry Harvey have settled in Bristol, which is striving for incorporation. Annayat Yazdani has moved to Glasgow, one of our most important university towns and a Group striving to regain its Assembly. Mrs. Ghobad has come from Persia to train at the Queen's Park Hospital in Blackburn, thereby strengthening one of our oldest centres which now so badly needs Baha'i support.

Other recent and significant moves include: Kianoush Kouchekzadeh and Kathleen and Sandy Ackroyd to Bradford, as well as Mr. Yazdani, Annayat's brother; Mrs. Ocaya from Uganda to join Nathan, her husband, in Brighton; Sally True from the Canary Islands to study at Oxford; and Mrs. Szanto and her son to Hove.

We send all these dear friends, our best wishes in their new posts.

THE HOME FRONT

The wife of our beloved Guardian, Amatu'l-Baha Ruhyyih Khanum, speaking in London recently to a group of the friends gathered at the Haziratu'l-Quds, expressed her feeling that this Community has been honoured in its choice as the resting-place of Shoghi Effendi because, amongst all the Baha'i communities of the world, it has the highest record of pioneering for its size.

How much our Guardian valued the pioneers and the spirit of pioneering is plainly reflected in his last long letter to the British Isles. "Please assure the dear pioneers", he wrote through his secretary, "that he greatly admires their steadfastness of purpose, their self-sacrifice and their exemplary spirit, and that he particularly prays for them in the Holy Shrines."

And in the same letter are these words: "He is immensely proud of the work which has been accomplished during the last year, of the remarkable spirit of dedication which animates the entire Community, and which invariably produces, at an hour of crisis, a strong and healthy reaction on the part of the Community to rush reinforcements to its weak Assemblies, when they are in danger of dissolution."

Our hearts are filled with humble gratitude at such words, and with deep longing to be worthy in all time to come of the love and approval of our dear Guardian, for we cannot doubt that his interest in the Ten Year Crusade will be even greater, now that his spirit is free and ever present.

With such thoughts in mind, let us consider the state of the Home Front at this midmost point of the Crusade. The chart on the inside pages gives the picture.

- 1) Total of Localities - at 122 these are now well beyond the goal set for the Crusade, of 102. Nothing will gladden our Guardian's heart so much as to increase these steadily, until all Britain is illumined by the Faith.
- 2) Local Assemblies - with 20 we are not yet back to the level of the Six Year Plan, and far from our Crusade goal of 48. Lapsed Assemblies remain at 7. But it is noteworthy that the total of Assemblies, goal towns, and groups is many more than the total number of Assemblies needed.
- 3) Ridvan Goals - the NTC believes that we are capable of forming 9 new Assemblies next Ridvan, 1958. Birmingham and Eccles are ready now. Will the friends everywhere not concentrate to achieve this objective?
- 4) Groups - We are calling on all localities with 2 or more believers to organise as Baha'i Groups. This was our Guardian's wish, and it is the first step toward progress and a future Spiritual Assembly.

T H E H O M E F R O N T
November 1957

	IRELAND	SCOTLAND	NORTH WEST	NORTH EAST	MIDLANDS	SOUTH WEST	SOUTH EAST	EAST ANGLIA
LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES 20	Belfast 1 2 & 3 Dublin 9	Edinburgh 11 & 1	Manchester Liverpool Blackpool 11	Bradford 14 Sheffield 9 Leeds 7	Leicester 10 Oxford 9 & 2 Northampton 8 & 2 Nottingham 8 & 2	Bristol 13&2 Cardiff 10 Bournemouth 9 & 3	London Portsmouth 9 & 1 Reading 9	Norwich 14
LAPSED ASSEMBLIES 7		Glasgow 6	Cheadle 5 Blackburn 3	Newcastle 7	Birmingham 12	Torquay 7	Brighton 6	
GOAL TOWNS 10	Bangor 5	Motherwell 2 Aberdeen 0	Eccles 9 Chester 0			Salisbury 1 Pontypridd 0	Canterbury 4	Cambridge 4 Newmarket 1
GROUPS 26	Dundrum 3		Hyde 3 Lytham- St. Anne's 2 Middlewich 2 Prestwich 2 Sale 2 Salford 2 Stretford 2 Swinton 2 Southport 2	Thornbury 3 Ilkley 2 Normanton 2 Prudhoe 2 Wallsend 2	Ilkeston 3 Loughborough 2 Stoke-on-Trent 2 Thurmaston 2	Poole 2 Portland 2 Taunton 2	Hove 3 Calcot 2 Southwick 2 Wokingham 2	
CENTRES 59	Ballynahinch Greenisland Helen's Bay Ballygrainey Port Stewart	Helensburgh Humbie Kilmarnock Langholm	Altrincham Bebington Burnley Davyhulme Kirkby Lonsdale Maughold Pleasington Talybont	Gateshead Hull Ponteland Preston Rossington Rushworth Whitley Bay Worrall	Birstall Coventry Duckmanton Grantham Hartwell Redditch Woodthorpe	Aberdare Caerphilly Exmouth Newport Paignton Plymouth St. Ives Wimborne	Arundel Amersham Botley Burgess Hill Chichester Easthampstead R.D. Henley R.D. Hunsden Old Coulsdon Petersfield St. Leonards Shoreham Uxbridge West End Westcott Winchester Wraybury	Grays Thetford
122	9	8	24	17	16	17	26	5

BORDERING THE HOMELAND

From the granite Isles of the Faroes in the Norwegian Sea to the warmth of the Channel Islands, and from the capitol of Eire on the Irish seaboard to Cyprus in the Mediterranean, - thus far do the extensions of the EATC stretch with a "clutch" of other Islands nearer home, to be looked after. The committee whose consultations blessed by the love and guidance of Bahá'u'lláh, strive to serve our sisters and brothers on the outer defences of this Island Home, have amongst their number servants of Caucasian, Danish, Scottish, Persian, and English stock, a constant reminder of the wonder and glory of this Blessed Cause.

The Dublin Assembly, striving in a pivotal centre to enlighten a people fettered by the Church, have entered on a new phase in their teaching.

Dr. Grossmann, when speaking of the Hebrides said, "The strongest hope for our Cause is amongst the young people of this Island, 200 years behind the mainland in customs and ideas." Here young Geraldine Craney has achieved the impossible, acceptance as one of the Island by the Hebrideans, no mean feat in this hard land. May they soon recognise the light of our beloved Cause shining from this young Knight.

Charles Dunning in Orkney, despite not infrequent cold-shouldering by the Orcadians, plods stoically on; his simple genuine affection for all has won him a place in many hearts. A recent public meeting, when he sent out 50 invitations, brought 18 to hear Peter McLaren's talk with slides. Since Dr. Grossmann's visit, Dorothy Wigington has been up helping Charles.

Lerwick, deprived of Brigitte for two months, had Lilian McKay the first Shetlander to declare, keeping the flag flying. Teaching there has been helped this year by the first Summer School in June, Dr. Grossmann's visit, Peter McLaren's slides shown to geography classes in the local school, and Dorothy Wigington's stay.

Only a man of Eskil Ljungberg's deep humility and loving warmth could endure the cold of the Faroe Islands and their inhabitants. Teaching here is another example of "living the Faith"; his personal privation does not dim his glowing love for his people and his letters reflect the depth of his love for Bahá'u'lláh.

Down in the warmer climes of Jersey, Evelyn Baxter bravely holds aloft the standard. Despite its nearness to our shores, Evelyn has had few visitors and teaching is difficult for different reasons - tourists in the summer and preoccupation with material acquisitions in the winter.

TEACHING CONFERENCE IN LEEDS

The Annual Teaching Conference will be held in Leeds on Jan. 11th-12th 1958, and will begin at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, closing on Sunday at 4.30. Announcement of place and hotel bookings will soon be available.

Its importance to our Community has never been greater. It is sure to be a memorable event, one which no believer will want to miss. Coming but a few weeks ahead of the first Intercontinental Conference in Kampala, it will anticipate the opening of the fourth phase of the Crusade. It is our last national gathering during a Baha'i year singled out nearly 3,000 years ago by the Prophet Daniel: "Blessed is he who cometh unto the thousand three hundred and thirty five days." It will welcome amongst us our own two Hands of the Cause, recently returned from Haifa. Above all, it is our first opportunity to come together after our beloved Guardian's departure, to remember him and to give praise for the bounties he has brought us, and to consider together the new path which lies ahead.

THE BASIC VERITIES OF THE FAITH

A nation-wide Plan of Study for Baha'is and serious contacts is soon to be launched by the National and Regional Teaching Committees. Impelled by the Guardian's recent letter to Britain, giving as "rock bottom requirements" a "firmer grasp" and "more profound study" of various aspects of the Faith, the NTC is re-issuing in up-to-date form a fourteen-lesson study course. Panels of teachers are now being organised. It is hoped the campaign can be launched not later than January, to show its fruits during this all-important year. We invite all Assemblies and Groups which would like to sponsor this study course to write to the N.T.C. Secretary at once: Ian Semple, c/o Crombie, 4 Melgund Terrace, Edinburgh, 7.

(continuation of E.A.T.C. report)

Over to Malta where Olga Mills, now also alone again, has had two recent encouraging European seekers, but here too the influence of the Church is almost fanatical and integration is the major topic of discussion. Outward teaching is impossible, but for the moment, to be there and pray, upon this rocky shore, is enough.

On, on to Cyprus, surely our most international Assembly, and now representative of all three factions in the Island, a great achievement in this conflict-torn land, onetime seat of the Arch Covenant-breaker. A gay party recently celebrated their first declaration from a Cypriot whom they jokingly "crowned" Queen of Cyprus. Such are the tests be-setting this community, that their triumph over them may well set an example to all LSA's in more peaceful places.

EUROPEAN & ASIAN
TEACHING COMMITTEE

GOD HAS WRITTEN FOR US

Notes of a talk by the revered Hand of the Cause,
Mr. Faizi, at the Bex Continental Conference,
September 24th 1957, as recorded by Betty Reed.

Baha'u'llah says that teaching is "written" for everyone; that means that teaching is the duty of everyone, it is not the work of a selected group of people, it is for everyone.

Throughout the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh you will find that God has commanded the people to do certain things, - obligatory prayer, fasting, etc., - and teaching is like this. It is written for you to do it, He says. There is only one thing which is written for God Himself, which God has written for Himself as a duty to Himself, and that is to help all those who stand to serve and teach. Nothing is written for God to do except this one thing, to help anyone who stands to teach the Cause of God. 'Abdu'l-Baha says even if you do not know the alphabet, get up and go to teach.

To be ready for such a great service we must have three outstanding qualities; certitude in the Cause of Baha'u'llah, i.e. we must be sure and certain in our hearts of whatever we say and teach. When we have reached the stage of certitude and faith, we must arise to serve. If we have certitude and do not get up to do something and give it to others, what is the use of having it? But if we want our teaching to be influential in others, we must have sincerity, purity of intention, to have nothing for ourselves. Certitude, service, and sincerity - nothing of these three must be lacking in us. The lack of one will cause our teaching work to fail; the three together must exist in everything we do and say.

By sincerity, to give an example, there is a simple, primitive musical instrument played by shepherds in Persia and Arabia, a reed or flute. They first empty the reed, clean it completely, and in cleaning the reed they burn it in three or four places; that is the suffering we must have to be clean channels. When we have this, and are purged by this suffering, the Almighty will blow in it. Whenever you are pure in intentions the Holy Spirit will speak through your tongue; He will play, we do not do anything.

When the Guardian says something is to be done, he will create men for it; we only must be ready to be created by him. If we lose ourselves in his service, forget ourselves, we shall be radiant instruments in his hands. There are numerous examples of friends who are pure in heart who have taught very important people.