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A Spiritual Journey Begins in Manhattan

The gathering of 30,000 Bahá'ís from all over the world for the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress will be a microcosm of human diversity and a model of unity

NEW YORK — Although this great North American city is renowned for many things, little in its reputation would seem to make it a place to start a spiritual journey. For such endeavors, one thinks of cities like Jerusalem, Mecca, Rome, or Benares.

Yet come the last week in November, New York City will be the spiritual destination for an estimated 30,000 Bahá'ís from around the world—the largest and most diverse such assemblage of Bahá'ís ever.

Their purpose, in simple terms, will be to embark on a collective experience which aims both to celebrate and comprehend the achievements of the worldwide Bahá'í community in the 100 years since the passing of its Founder, Bahá'u'lláh.

Scheduled to be held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center from November 23 to 26, the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress will also offer a unique window on the character and scope of the rapidly emerging Bahá'í community.

Individuals from more than 170 countries have registered to attend, a reflection of the fact that the Bahá'í Faith is today the second-most widespread independent religion. Bahá'ís come from virtually every ethnic and religious background, and from every nationality and social class.

"What it really is, in my view, is a collective expression on the part of all

(Continued on page 4)



In observance of the 1992-1993 Bahá'í Holy Year, Brazil's Federal Chamber of Deputies held on 28 May a two-hour solemn session commemorating the 100th anniversary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh.

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The Congress and the Covenant

The 1992 Bahá'í World Congress could be compared to a rite of passage for the worldwide Bahá'í community.

As our lead story indicates, it will be the largest and most diverse gathering of Bahá'ís ever, bringing upwards of 30,000 people from 170 countries to New York City for a four-day celebration of the community's dramatic achievements over the last century.

These achievements include the community's impressive expansion. The number of Bahá'ís has grown from about 400,000 in 1963, at the time of the last Bahá'í World Congress, to more than five million today. More remarkable, perhaps, is the degree to which the Bahá'í community has lived up to

its ideal of globalism: the Faith is today the second-most widespread independent religion, surpassed only by Christianity in the number of countries where significant communities have been established.*

The community can also rightfully celebrate its achievements in the field of social action and development. Its national-level governing councils, of which there are currently 165, sponsor many efforts to promote peace, human rights, the advancement of women and sustainable development. For example, national and local Bahá'í communities operate more than 1,300 social, economic and/or education development projects. While many of these are small in scale, their distinctive approach to grassroots involvement puts them on the cutting edge of development work.

Yet of all of its achievements, the most significant is the one that lies at the heart of the Congress's celebration: the community's success at maintaining its essential unity in the 100 years since its Founder, Bahá'u'lláh, passed away.

*According to the 1992 *Britannica Book of the Year*, the Bahá'í Faith is established in 205 countries and dependent territories; Christianity in 254 countries and territories. The third-most widespread religion is Islam, in 172 countries and territories.

This is no small achievement. Throughout religious history, the years immediately following the departure of a Prophet have been the most tumultuous. Disagreements over the succession of leadership have almost invariably led to a splintering of the followers. Early splits in both Christianity and Islam, for example, foreshadowed the multiple divisions seen in these religions today.

Religions are not the only movements that have fallen prey to this seemingly inveterate tendency to fracture. Important social and political movements have likewise suffered the setbacks of sub-division after the passing of their founders. The followers of both Marx and Gandhi—to cite two disparate movements as examples—have been enervated by factionalism.

The Bahá'í community, however, has now remained unified for more than a century—a feature made more remarkable by the tremendous diversity of its membership. Further, its unity encompasses a commitment to a broad range of progressive principles, such as promoting the advancement of women, working to eliminate racial discrimination and seeking to establish economic justice—principles that are by no means uncontroversial.

In a world torn by continuing wars over ethnic and/or religious backgrounds, this distinctive unity in diversity is worth a careful examination.

Bahá'ís believe that the distinctive unity of their Faith stems from a promise from God to humanity that assures His continuing guidance after the passing of Bahá'u'lláh. This promise is referred to as the Covenant.

The idea of a covenant between man and God is, of course, familiar to the followers of many religions. Many Jews understand that God entered into a covenant with their forebearers, promising to guide them as long as they obeyed His laws. Christians, too, understand that Jesus entered into a new covenant with His followers.

For Bahá'ís, the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh is both a renewal of the promise of divine guidance and a specific outline for how to ensure its continuance. In specific terms, Bahá'ís understand the Covenant to be synonymous with the line of succession de-

Perspective

scribed in Bahá'u'lláh's will.

Bahá'u'lláh promised that as long as His followers remain faithful to that line, they can be assured of God's continuing guidance. That line flows first through two hereditary leaders: from Bahá'u'lláh to His son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and then from 'Abdu'l-Bahá to his grandson, Shoghi Effendi. Through their efforts, the ground was laid for the emergence in April 1963 of the democratically elected Universal House of Justice conceived by Bahá'u'lláh.

This belief, that God has provided the means for continuing guidance, stands at the foundation of the unity of the worldwide Bahá'í community.

The distinguishing feature of this age is that, for the first time in history, the entire human race is consciously involved, however dimly, in the awareness of its own oneness and of the earth as a single homeland. This awakening opens the way to a new relationship between God and humankind. Just as the growing realization of our oneness must, in the end, demolish all concepts of racial or national superiority, so it will also ultimately dissolve the assertion that the world's religions are somehow fundamentally different. From the ideal of the oneness of humanity will emerge recognition of the oneness of religion.

Once this realization is reached, humanity will find itself capable of a new level

of cooperation and empowerment. The building of a global civilization then becomes possible.

The mission of the Bahá'í community over the last 100 years has been to demonstrate the efficacy of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh in healing the ills that divide the human race—to demonstrate that unity in diversity is possible.

Because it is framed in religious terminology, the idea of a Covenant for modern times is no doubt difficult for those who believe that religion can only play a subsidiary role in a technological society. There are many who may reject such a concept automatically.

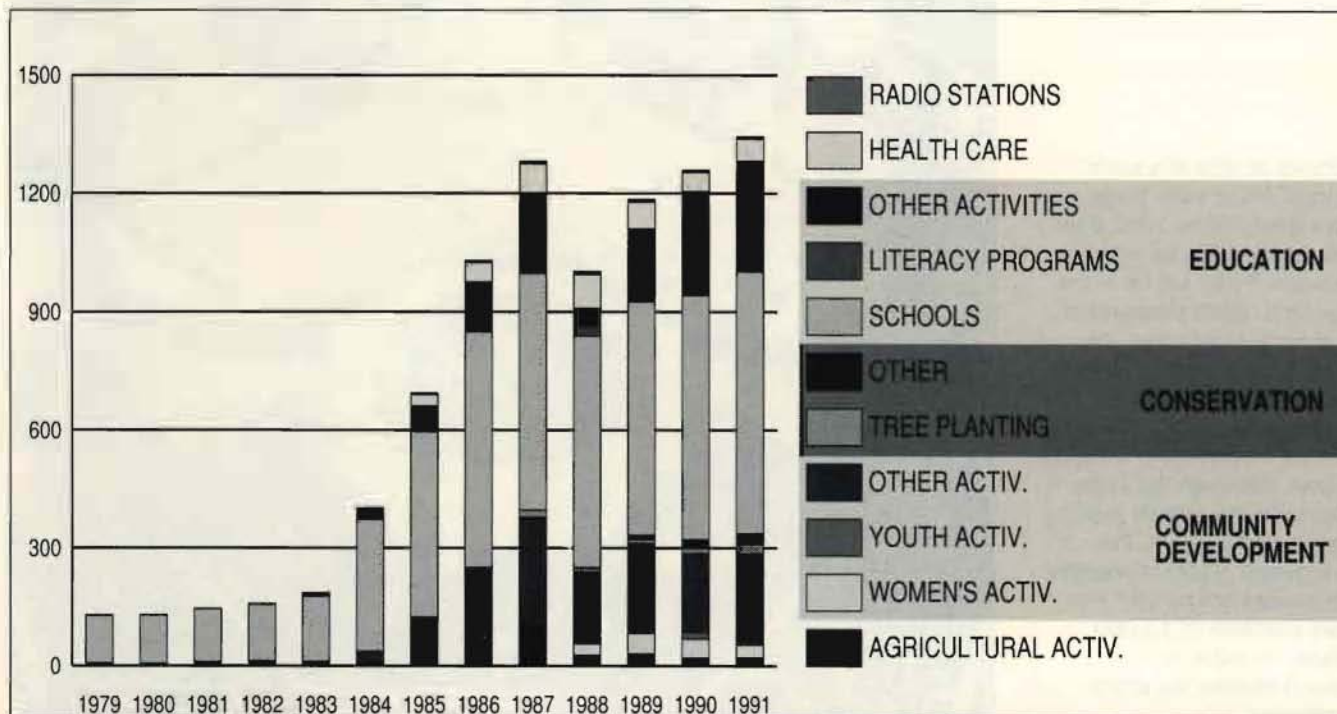
But the facts speak for themselves. The worldwide Bahá'í community may well be the most diverse organized body of people on the planet. Its membership mirrors the diversity of humankind itself. The community is also one of the most unified organizations. In this combination of extremes it is distinctive—if not unique.

The community's successful realization of unity in diversity lies at the heart of the celebration at the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress. The realization of this ideal speaks not only of the community's greatest accomplishment—it also offers a glimpse of the future. For, in the end, what other path is open to the world at large?

Let the celebrations begin. ☉

The worldwide Bahá'í community may well be the most diverse organized body of people on the planet. Its membership mirrors the diversity of humankind itself. The community is also one of the most unified organizations. In this combination of extremes it is distinctive—if not unique.

In recent years, local and national Bahá'í communities have launched an increasing number of small-scale development projects. The chart below shows the number and type of Bahá'í-sponsored projects year-by-year. The number dropped in 1988 when a number of prototype literacy projects in India were ended.



A Spiritual Journey in Manhattan

(Continued from page one)

of the Bahá'ís in the world—because Bahá'ís will be involved on other continents via a satellite broadcast—of our belief in the oneness of humanity,” said Alex Frame, an executive with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation who is also a Bahá'í and a member of the program planning committee for the Congress.

“It will be some 30,000 people getting together in a spirit of unity and harmony to acknowledge the significance of Bahá'u'lláh and His teachings, and what that means to the world. When you look at that in the context of the current conditions in the world—a world which is very confused about how it can address problems which are international and global in scope—this gathering becomes very significant,” said Mr. Frame.

The four-day program of the Congress will feature music, talks, and prayers, along with dramatic and audio-visual presentations in a format and sequence designed primarily for a Bahá'í audience.

At the same time, however, program

planners believe that certain features of the Congress will be of interest to outsiders.

“In some ways, the World Congress represents a public statement of the Bahá'í community as a mainstream religion,” said Hugh Locke, another member of the program committee. “It will give a comprehensive overview of the workings of the community in a way that has never been attempted before. It will show that the community has become a global phenomenon.

“At the same time, it will display the Faith as a unifying force,” said Mr. Locke. “This will be apparent in the diversity of the participants—and in the degree to which they are drawn from all walks of life. What will set the Congress apart from other religious gatherings is the extent to which it is made up of people from a grassroots level. It is a religious coming together on a huge scale, significant also in that it is a gathering entirely of lay people—because there is no clergy in the Bahá'í Faith.”

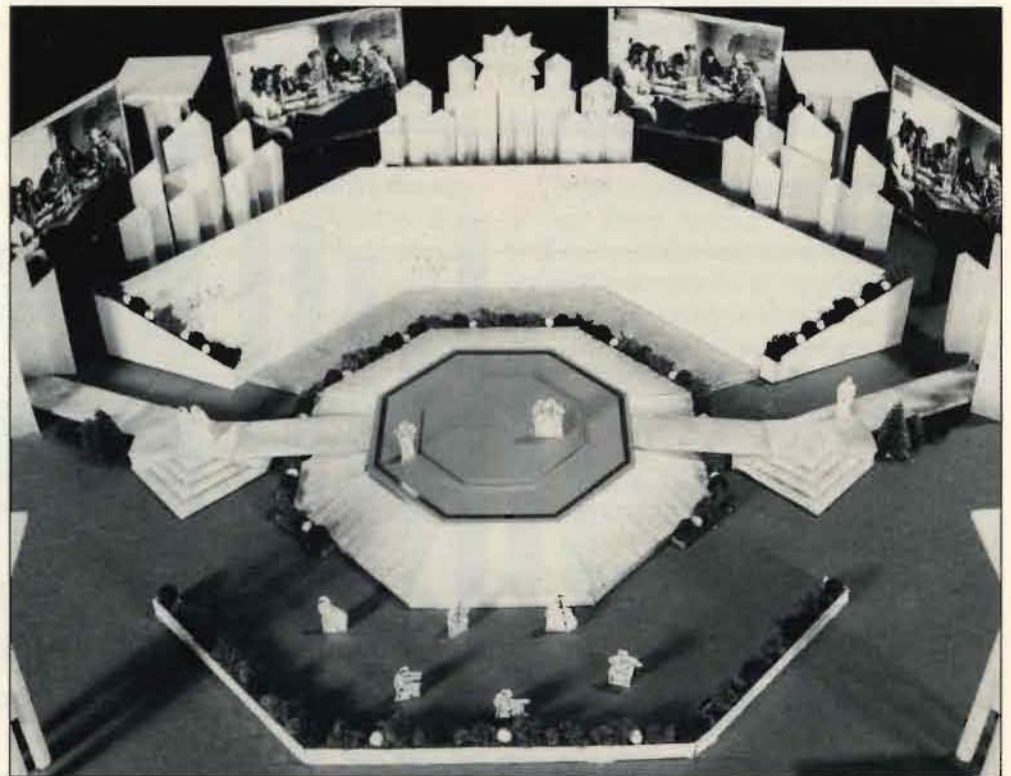
Complicated Logistics

The logistics of planning for a gathering of 30,000 people from all corners of the planet has proved to be a huge task, said Congress planners. “There is no comparison to other conferences,” said Bea Polan, a consultant who has assisted the Bahá'í

“In the context of the current conditions in the world—a world which is very confused about how it can address problems which are international and global in scope—this gathering becomes very significant.”

—Alex Frame

Shown at right is a scale model of the main stage, as designed for the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress by John Kavelin. To be set up in the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in Manhattan, the design features four large television screens and an extensive system of bleachers for the 400-member Congress Choir. Although the Javits Center is the largest such facility in New York, the estimated 30,000 Congress attendees will be split into two sessions of 15,000 each—in order to accommodate the entire gathering.





The Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in downtown New York City will be the site for plenary sessions of the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress.

community in planning the Congress. "It is totally different in content, in the message, and in its diversity."

Finding an indoor meeting place that could accommodate that many people in New York was among the first challenges. Congress planners found that only the Javits Center, which is used principally for large trade shows, had enough enclosed floor space in one room to accommodate the expected numbers of Congress participants. Even then, planners have split the plenary meetings into identical morning and afternoon sessions—simply because 15,000 people is the most that the Center can accommodate in one room at one time.

Congress planners have also booked more than 5,300 rooms in over 30 hotels in the New York metropolitan area. An estimated 3,000 volunteers will be needed to provide services ranging from registration to security.

The diversity of the participants, as well, has posed special challenges. "We have people coming from all over the world—and a very high percentage have never travelled outside of their own countries," said Gry Kvalheim, a logistics coordinator for the Congress. "Many are coming from small villages, and have never been to a large city like New York. So one of our main challenges has been to ensure that these people have a positive experience in New York."

To this end, arrangements have been

made to provide door-to-door transportation for those participants who request it. Buses will meet them at the airport, bring them with their luggage to their hotel, and then be available again to take them to the Javits Center.

"The idea is that from the time people leave their homes through the Congress itself, they will have experienced a journey that is not only physical, but also spiritual," said Ms. Kvalheim. "We are very conscious that this is a special experience for Bahá'ís. So we have tried everything possible to make it special."

Organizers said, for example, that arrangements have also been made in many hotels to set aside special rooms for prayer and meditation.

Why New York?

The 1992 Bahá'í World Congress is the second such gathering for the worldwide Bahá'í community. Its first World Congress was held in London in 1963. The primary purpose of that gathering was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the inauguration of Bahá'u'lláh's mission.

The 1992 Congress will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. The Covenant, as understood by Bahá'ís, is Bahá'u'lláh's establishment of the central authority in the affairs of the Faith that assures its continuing unity and guidance.

When Bahá'u'lláh passed away in 1892, He had named Hisson, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as His succes-

How to receive the worldwide satellite broadcast of the Congress

On 26 November, a special four-hour program on the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress will be broadcast worldwide via satellite. To be aired from 13:00 to 17:00 hours GMT, the broadcast will review the proceedings of the first three days of the Congress and then show elements of the Congress program on its final day, including an address by the Universal House of Justice, the supreme governing council of the Bahá'í world.

For individuals and organizations with access to satellite receiving facilities, the broadcast will be accessible on the following satellites and channels:

- For the United States and most of Canada: KU BAND, SBS 6, Transponder 8.
- For Europe: AOR Primary, Channel 2.
- For the Pacific Rim: POR Primary, Channel 1.
- For India and much of Asia: IOR, Channel 1.
- For South and Central America: Panamsat. (Channel to be announced.)

An hour-long test broadcast will commence at 12:00 hours GMT.

(Continued from previous page)

sor. And it was in New York, in 1912, that 'Abdu'l-Bahá made an explicit proclamation to Western Bahá'ís of His station as successor.

"Historically speaking, the early Western believers knew that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the successor to Bahá'u'lláh," said Elizabeth Martin, who is producing a film on 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the Congress. "But New York is the only place in the Western world where He openly and publicly declared His station. Accordingly, it is for Bahá'ís the City of the Covenant, a city of great significance."

Beyond its significance as the site of that announcement, New York represents a spiritual center for Bahá'ís because of its great diversity, and of the hopes it has represented for people around the world.

"When the son of Bahá'u'lláh visited North America in 1912, he landed in New York," said Mr. Frame. "And New York was a place where, in very tangible terms, a new kind of unity was beginning to take shape—a unity reflecting the hopes of diverse peoples, who had come to America from all over the world, to help make a new civilization. Bahá'ís see this kind of unity as essential for the future of humanity."

The Program

The actual program of the Congress has been more than three years in the planning. It will feature a mix of music, talks, audio-visual presentations, and drama to convey its main points.

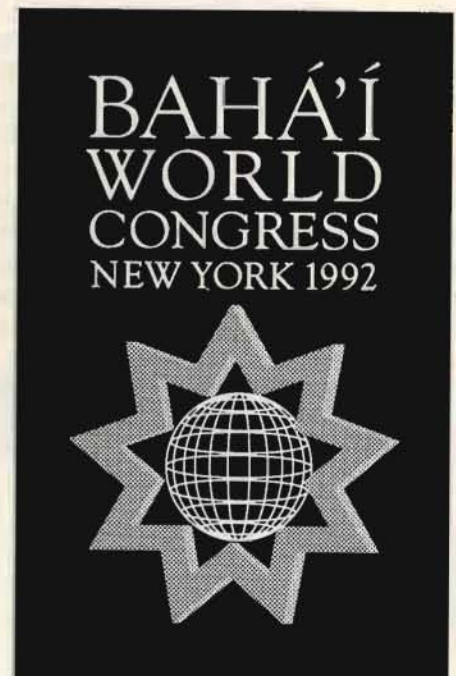
"In simple terms, it is designed to be a spiritual journey," said Mr. Frame. "It begins on the first day with the recognition of Bahá'u'lláh as the Promise of all the Ages. On the second day it explores the role of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of Bahá'u'lláh's covenant. On the third day, it reviews the global accomplishments that the unity of the Bahá'ís of the world has made possible. And on the fourth day, it asks the question: 'Where are we going from here?', examining the next stage in the Faith's mission."

At all four plenary sessions, a 400-member choir will be featured. Like the Congress itself, the choir will attempt to showcase the diversity of humanity. Members will assemble from at least 36 countries, having prepared and rehearsed for their performances by singing along with tape-recorded songs prepared especially for the

Congress. [See page 7.]

On the final day of the Congress, a special four-hour program will be broadcast worldwide via satellite. The broadcast will feature recorded proceedings from the first three days of the Congress as well as a live transmission of the final plenary session.

Several national Bahá'í communities around the world are organizing regional one-day satellite conferences to receive the broadcast. Such conferences have been organized in nine cities: Buenos Aires, Sydney, New Delhi, Nairobi, Panama City, Bucharest, Moscow, Singapore, and Apia, Western Samoa. Individuals with satellite receiving facilities can also receive the broadcasts on their own [See box at left.]



Beyond planned elements of the program, the simple fact of gathering so many people from so many different countries and cultures is expected to have a moving effect on participants, said Congress planners.

"The diversity of the Congress will bring home to participants the principle of the oneness of humanity," said Mr. Locke. "When they come to the Congress, the Bahá'ís will see the reality of the principle to which they dedicate their lives." ☉



Many members of the House of Worship Choir, left, which sings regularly in the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, USA., will perform as members of the World Congress Choir.

How do you create a choir with a global sound? Use a tape recorder. (But not like you may think.)

NASHVILLE, Tenn., USA — Choirs and religious gatherings seem to go together like hand and glove—and the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress is no exception.

Choral music will be an element of each day's program at the Congress.

The final experience, however, is likely to be anything but traditional.

In the first place, a 400-voice Bahá'í World Congress Choir is very large—as such choirs go. "The Mormon Tabernacle Choir is about 320 voices," said Tom Price, choral director for the Congress. "And it is considered a very big choir. So you can see by comparison that the World Congress Choir is quite an undertaking."

Then there is the fact that the Choir will have its first rehearsal together just three days before the Congress—a move necessitated by the choir's international diversity. Members are coming from more than 36 countries to perform at the Congress. "It has got to be one of the most diverse musical ensembles ever heard," said Mr. Price.

To assemble a choir from so many nations was a major logistical task.

"That is perhaps the most interesting aspect of what we are doing," said Congress Music Director Jack Lenz, who is also composing the greater part of the music. "It has all been done through the mails, using audio tapes. We auditioned

members of the choir by having them send in audio tapes."

Mr. Price said over 1,200 people initially inquired about singing in the choir, and 500 audition tapes were reviewed. More recently, the 400 singers who were selected have been sent tape recordings of the music that will be performed at the Congress.

"All of the music is being recorded onto separate tapes for each part—soprano, alto, tenor and bass," said Mr. Price. "People will learn them at home. Three days before the Congress, everyone will come together and we will have final rehearsals."

"This has been the only way we could create a choir with voices that truly come from all parts of the world," said Mr. Price.

That sense of globalism will be mirrored in the Choir's music program. Almost all of the songs are written especially for the Congress, and an effort has been made to incorporate musical features from diverse international styles.

"We will have soloists singing in Persian, Arabic and Chinese, among other languages" said Mr. Lenz. "And there will be songs done in the musical traditions of West Africa, American Gospel, India, and Latin America. Most religious choral music in the past has been done in the Western tradition. The music will reflect the diversity of the worldwide Bahá'í community." ☉

The World Congress Choir will have its first rehearsal together just three days before the Congress—a move necessitated by the choir's international diversity. Members are coming from more than 36 countries, making it among the most diverse ensembles ever.



Teacher Sallinah Makhanye conducts her pre-school class on a nature walk around the grounds of the Hlatikulu Bahá'í Pre-School.

In Swaziland, partnership proves vital to pre-school education

HLATIKULU, Swaziland — Sallinah Makhanye points to a large tree on the grounds of the Hlatikulu Bahá'í Pre-school. Twenty or so young students gather around in a circle and listen.

"Now friends," she says, pointing up and spreading out her arms, "this tree has the big limbs. They all seem like arms. What are they called?"

"Branches," say several children.

She points to the trunk. "Now what is the name of this part of the tree?" she asks.

"The stem," says one precocious young charge.

"Yes," says Ms. Makhanye, who is head teacher at the school. "Let's all say 'stem.'"

"Stem!" comes back as a shout.

"And how does a tree eat?" Ms. Makhanye asks.

"When the water comes down," says a little boy.

"Yes," she answers. "When the water comes down."

The lesson plan is simple, but the concepts will stay for a lifetime.

"The years three, four and five—they are among the most formative, important years in a child's development," said Dr. Ben Dlamini, head of educational testing in the Swaziland Ministry of Education. "So pre-school is a critical part of a child's education."

Unfortunately, governments do not always possess the resources to develop and operate a complete pre-school education program. Accordingly, that role often falls to non-governmental organizations.

In this tiny kingdom in southern Africa, the Bahá'í community has been especially successful in filling that role. By drawing on the skills of trained educators within its ranks, a steady base of committed volunteers, and its own ethic for cooperation and collaboration, the Bahá'í community has over the last decade established itself as an important player in pre-school education in Swaziland. The community has so far:

- established three urban pre-school centers and three village-level pre-school programs, which together serve the country's four major regions;

- assisted in the creation of a country-wide, in-service training program for pre-school teachers, which the community itself continues to administer and operate in collaboration with the Ministry of Education; and,

- worked with the Ministry of Education to create a national pre-school curriculum guide that more closely meets the needs of Swaziland and its people.

Theme of Partnership

Perhaps more significantly, the experience of the Bahá'í community, which has 7500 members nationwide, points to the importance of partnership in any education program or project.

"As an NGO, we provide the facilities, using our Bahá'í centers as school houses," said Dr. Irma Allen, a member of the national child education committee of the Bahá'í community of Swaziland. "We also provide trained manpower. And we provide the coordination.

"The government provides the pre-school inspectors, follow-up inspections of the schools, and certification. And a Northern donor agency, the Bernard Van Leer Foundation of the Netherlands provides an additional cushion of funding and considerable technical help.

"The ultimate result of this partnership," said Dr. Allen, "is that we get high quality teacher training and schools for very little cost."

Swaziland's Director of Education, Mr. S.N. Simelane, agreed with Dr. Allen's assessment, saying that the concept of partnership between NGOs and government was critical to the development of pre-school education in Swaziland.

"Pre-school is very important," he said. "The fact that we are not providing teachers or building classrooms does not mean it isn't important. We just don't have the resources."

The Bahá'í community, Mr. Simelane added, has been especially active in pre-school education. "The Bahá'í people who work with us help us a great deal," he said. "Whenever there are problems, they come together and help us solve them."

He noted that the spirit of volunteerism and public service seemed to be a key reason for the community's success in the field. "Sometimes you wonder why people are investing their time—because we don't pay them," he said.

A Changing Swazi Society

The Bahá'í community became involved in pre-school education about a decade ago in response to the rapid changes in Swazi society and the emergence of a clear-cut need.

"In Swaziland today, a lot more women are starting to work," said Dr. Allen. "So



Students at the Pigg's Peak Bahá'í Pre-School gather for games. The school is conducted in the Pigg's Peak Bahá'í Center, shown in the background.

there is a need for pre-school, because mothers are not able to spend the time at home with their children."

Pre-school education is also important as Swaziland attempts to compete in an increasingly interdependent world. "The pre-school serves a developmental process which children don't always get here before they go to school," said Frances Fletcher, another member of the Bahá'í education committee. "The children of Swaziland don't always have access to books or toys or other stimuli that help to develop their curiosity."

Centers Already in Place

The community realized that three Bahá'í centers it had already built in Swaziland's major cities could serve a double duty.

Today, schools established in the Bahá'í centers in Mbabane, Piggs Peak and Hlatikulu serve about 60 students in each locality. Three village-level pre-schools are also operated by Bahá'í communities at the local level, in Motjane, Mnicini, and Mphetseni, serving an additional 60 students. Each of the schools is self-supporting, financed through modest tuition charges.

"There are three other pre-schools in town," said Glory Kunene, the assistant supervisor at the Piggs Peak Bahá'í Pre-School. "We are the cheapest, although we don't cook and provide food. But the parents are eager to send their children here. We receive about 20 more applications each year than we are able to take."

Students at the Piggs Peak Bahá'í Pre-School say a prayer together as morning class begins.



The centers are also used for the national in-service training program for pre-school teachers, which the Bahá'í community coordinates. Funding and expertise from the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, funneled through the government also contributes to the success of this program.

Only Training Program

"At the present time, we are the only group training pre-school teachers in Swaziland," said Ms. Fletcher, who coordinates the program.

Those enrolled are appreciative. "My supervisor was very pleased with the training," said Nicholine Mbokazi, a 28-year-old woman who works at a Catholic-run pre-school in Hlatikulu. "I am more sure of what I am doing because of the training."

The program, which is operated in close partnership with the government's pre-school inspection program, provides six weeks of training for each teacher each year, leading to a pre-school teacher's certificate in three years. By December 1992, the program will have graduated more than 160 students.

The training program also serves an important development objective by creating more opportunities for women.

"I was an orderly for three years at the Hlatikulu hospital, and I had no chance to go back to school, so this has been very good to me," said Eleanor Dlamini, who is now employed as a teacher at the Hlatikulu Bahá'í Pre-School. The only cost for her training was about US\$8.00 for books and papers.

The training program makes use of a national curriculum that was developed with the assistance of the Bahá'í community. The curriculum emphasizes activities that are more appropriate to Swaziland, such as using local materials as teaching aids and incorporating specific elements of Swazi culture. "To make paint brushes, for example, we suggest using feathers; for braiding, we suggest grass," said Dr. Allen. "We also suggest to schools that they have mothers come in and tell traditional stories."

Without the program, there would be no way to train and certify pre-school teachers in Swaziland. "They have really helped us to get started around the country," said Mrs. Beauty K. Nxumalo, the national pre-school inspector for the Ministry of Education. "The Bahá'í approach to training is very good." ☉



Madame Rúhiyyih Rabbání, left, the only remaining member of the family of Bahá'u'lláh, and HRH Princess Helen of Romania inspect historic early Bahá'í manuscripts which went on display in a special exhibition at the British Museum in September.

Early Bahá'í manuscripts go on exhibition at the British Museum

LONDON — In a special exhibition that opened in mid-September, the British Museum has put on display a number of authentic Bahá'í manuscripts—the first time such artefacts have been publicly exhibited at a major international museum.

The exhibition features at least two manuscripts in the handwriting of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. The exhibition is being held in conjunction with the 1992-1993 Bahá'í Holy Year, which commemorates the 100th anniversary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh.

"This is the first time that the British Museum has put on a show of Bahá'í manuscripts," said Dr. Sheila Canby, the Assistant Keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the Museum, which is sponsoring the exhibition. "It is a small exhibition, but it is of exquisite quality."

September Opening

A number of prominent people attended the formal opening of the exhibition on 15 September, including Madame Rúhiyyih Rabbání, the only remaining member of the family of Bahá'u'lláh, and HRH Princess Helen of Romania, representing the European Royal Household. Also in attendance were seven ambassadors and representatives of the British Foreign Office.

"We are especially pleased that these manuscripts, which for us are priceless

beyond comparison, could be displayed at this time," said the Hon. Barney Leith, who represented the Bahá'í community of the United Kingdom at the opening.

"This year is a Holy Year for the Bahá'í world, in observance of the 100th anniversary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh," Mr. Leith added. "His writings are recognized as the Word of God by more than five million Bahá'ís around the world. So it is gratifying to Bahá'ís here in the United Kingdom that the British Museum should be the first major secular institution to display original Bahá'í manuscripts."☉

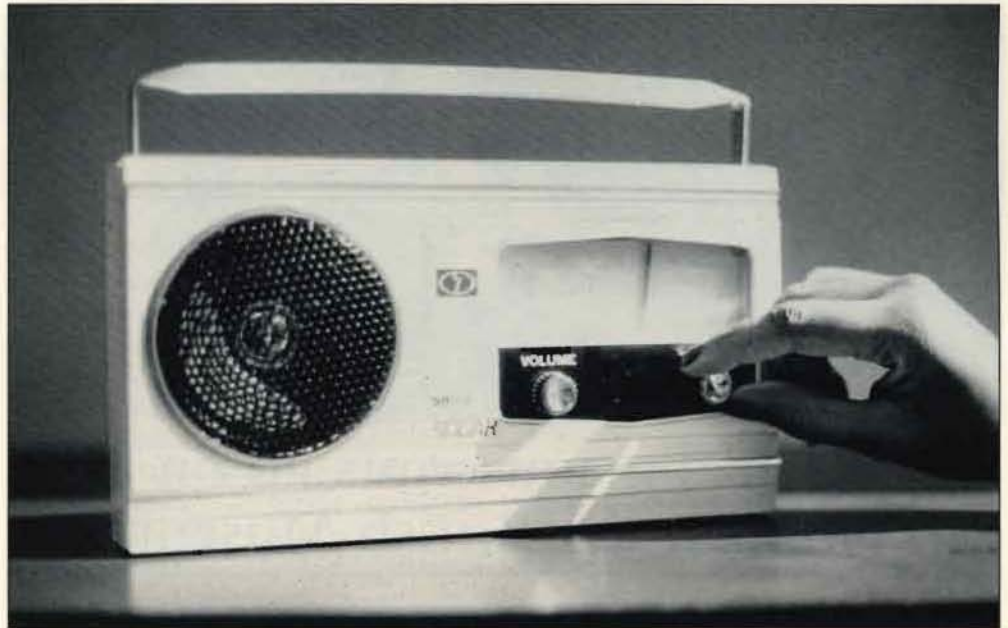
UN Sub-commission condemns Bahá'í persecutions in Iran

GENEVA — The United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has condemned the Government of Iran for "continuing grave violations of human rights," taking particular note of the continuing persecution of the Bahá'í community in Iran.

In a resolution passed on 27 August 1992 by 18 to 3, the Sub-Commission called on Iran to comply with international human rights standards. It also condemned a wide range of recent human rights violations.☉

Promoting Earth-Friendly Radio Receivers

The Vanguardia SR-2 solar-powered radio features a large solar panel and special circuitry that enables it to operate in relatively low levels of light, such as a gasoline lantern.



Newly developed, a super-sensitive, solar-powered radio offers a “green” solution to the proliferation of batteries

CHENGDU, China—Most of the workers at the Chengdu TV and Electrical Corporation here in this central Chinese city ride to work each day on bicycles, which have been long recognized as among the most efficient and environmentally sound means of transportation.

Those same workers are now engaged in a new venture at green technology: the mass production of an inexpensive and efficient solar-powered radio.

The project, undertaken in collaboration with a private foundation led by Bahá'ís, seeks to promote the use of the radios as both an aid to village-level development and a solution to the pollution problems that come with batteries.

“For the so-called First World, the issue here is environmental impact,” said Dr. K. Dean Stephens, who developed special circuitry that he says allows the radio to be more efficient than any solar-powered con-

sumer radio yet produced. “Batteries in their manufacture require about 80 times the energy they store. And, after they are thrown away, they continue to pollute, contaminating the ground for years with heavy metals.”

“What we are trying to do is pioneer a technology that is going to be more earth friendly,” said Dr. Stephens, who is also director of the Vanguard Trust, a not-for-profit foundation that is coordinating and promoting the project.

“With regard to the developing world, the main point is that the cost of batteries ends up being far greater than the cost of a radio, and they are a great drain on the income of many villagers,” Dr. Stephens added.

“We have calculated that in a country like Tanzania, for example, about 10 percent of a worker’s salary would go to buying radio batteries if he replaces them every month. So the difference in using a solar radio is quite remarkable.”

Although small solar powered radios have been produced before, Dr. Stephens

Appropriate
Technology

said, none has risen above novelty status because they were either too expensive or worked only under ideal conditions, such as in bright sunlight.

"This radio has totally redesigned circuitry that enables it to play even in ambient light — sitting beside a window or even next to a gasoline lantern at night," said Dr. Stephens. "In the past, you had to practically bake solar radios in the sun to get them to work."

Trial Production Run

Dr. Stephens also said the radio is much less expensive than previously produced solar radios. Low cost is achieved both by the radio's efficient design and the decision to produce it in China, where labor costs are low. The first radios, made in a trial production run of 100 units, are being sold for US\$25.00. Later, as production runs grow larger, they should sell for less.

"Ultimately, the cost will be about \$17.00 apiece," said Dr. Stephens. "That turns out to be the price of just the solar panel anywhere else."

This combination of high efficiency and low cost has drawn considerable interest among a number of radio broadcasting companies and development agencies. Both the British Broadcasting Corporation and Danish national radio corporation (Danicom) are evaluating preliminary models of the radio, Dr. Stephens said.

Several international development agencies, as well, have ordered radios for testing and trials.

"The concept I think is quite wonderful," said Judy Brace, the vice president for development information services at the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, D.C. "The whole problem of having to replace batteries in a developing country is very difficult. So Vanguard's efforts are certainly commendable."

Ms. Brace said she had ordered one radio to try it out and that, if it passes field trials, it could be of great value to some of the radio projects her organization is involved in. "We could certainly see a market for this," she said.

The first production models of the radio, named the Vanguardia SR-2, use a series of crystalline silicon solar cells, connected in a panel on the back of the radio, as the primary power source. The radio is capable only of medium wave (AM) band reception. Offering FM or shortwave bands would unnecessarily drive the price up, Dr. Stephens said. "We are planning future, multiband models for other markets," he added.

The radio is also fairly large for a modern portable radio, standing 15 cm high by 28 cm wide by 6.5 cm deep. "It's meant to be a table radio," said Dr. Stephens, "something that can sit on somebody's table or by



On the production line at the Chengdu TV and Electrical Corporation in Chengdu, China.

Photo courtesy the Vanguard Trust

the window and provide sound for an entire household. And, the four-inch speaker and relatively large solar panel on the back also dictate its size."

Innovative Circuit Design

The new circuitry designed by Dr. Stephens can drive that speaker on just 1/25th of a watt. "That is about ten times the efficiency of most radios," said Dr. Stephens, whose credentials as an electronics pioneer include responsibility for the design of an ultra-compact color television camera for the Apollo space missions to the moon.

Dr. Stephens believes it is important that China is involved in the production of this radio. "The Chengdu TV and Electrical group has been extremely flexible in working out the final details of the design and manufacturing," said Dr. Stephens. "I am very happy with our relationship — and can say that they are extremely interested in the principles of the Trust."

The first production run, completed in May, was just 100 units. "This run was a test for us," said Dr. Stephens. "The next step will be either a thousand or ten thousand. Our hope is to interest a philanthropic individual or a development agency to invest in purchasing or underwriting such an order, so that we can then make the radio widely available."

On a recent visit to Beijing, Dr. K. Dean Stephens, right, conferred with Professor He Dazhong, director of the Chinese Broadcasting Technology Society, left, about the Vanguardia SR-2 solar-powered radio. Shown at center is Yue Tao, a senior engineer with the Society and a member of the Vanguard Trust's international board of advisors.



Photo courtesy the Vanguard Trust

The production of solar-powered radios is a key plank in the Trust's overall effort to promote village-level radio. The Trust was created to develop and promote useful and appropriate technologies for the developing world, and one of its major themes has been to create affordable technology for village-level radio systems.

A Village Radio System

"There have been successful experiments at creating village radio systems, and there is a good deal of interest in them among development specialists," said Dr. Stephens. "The idea is to set up a miniature radio station that will allow a village to serve itself with local broadcasts."

"Put in other words, village radio is a tool for villages. It is a tool for consultation. It is a tool for the preservation of various traditions and cultural expressions. And, in an era when information is power, village radio is also a form of grassroots empowerment. It puts information directly into the hands of the people," Dr. Stephens said.

The Vanguard Trust recently published a small booklet entitled "Village Radio Owner's Manual," which outlines both the technology and the organization that can be used to establish a village radio station. And the Trust has experimented extensively with a small-scale solar system designed by Dr. Stephens, using it to provide light and refrigeration at a Bahá'í training center in Puerto Rico.

A newsletter, *Vanguardia*, reports on the Trust's activities four times a year, offering easily accessible information about such technologies.

Both the Trust and the newsletter take their name from a passage in the Bahá'í writings that urges Bahá'ís to be in the "vanguard" of scientific achievement, said Prof. Kenneth Kalantar, a Vanguard board member who lives in Puerto Rico.

"Our particular interest is to assist in the development of technologies for the developing world," said Prof. Kalantar, who is an associate professor of chemistry at the Inter American University in San German, Puerto Rico. "But although the Trust was founded by Bahá'ís and is operated on Bahá'í principles, membership is open to anyone who has similar goals." He said the Trust currently has a small but widespread membership of people concerned with issues of appropriate technology. ☼



United States Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, left, and Dr. Helvi Sipila, former United Nations Under Secretary General for Human Rights, were both participants in the Third International Dialogue on the Transition to a Global Society, held at the Landegg Academy. The Academy operates under the auspices of the Swiss Bahá'í Community.

Third International Dialogue focuses on justice in a global society

WIENACHT, Switzerland — Can there be justice without morality? Is there an international standard of justice all humanity can agree on? What is environmental justice?

Such were among the questions discussed at the Third International Dialogue on the Transition to a Global Society, a conference held annually here at the Landegg Academy to explore how humanity can best manage the transition to an interdependent world society.

The theme of this year's dialogue, held 8-12 September, was "The Transition to a Just Society." Participants included a diverse mix of international jurists, representatives of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, and prominent academics and thinkers. They ranged from U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy to Pjeter Arbunori, president of the Albanian Parliament, and Lily Boeykens, president of the International Council of Women.

More than 80 people from 20 countries participated in the four-day event, which was designated as a satellite conference to the "United Nations World Conference on Human Rights," scheduled for next June in Vienna. The Dialogue was held under the auspices of Mr. Antoine Blanca, under secretary general of the U.N.; Dr. Federico Mayor, director general of UNESCO; and Mrs. Catherine Lalumiere, secretary general of the Council of Europe.

"Although we deliberately chose not to make recommendations, we did discover a great deal of common ground," said Judge James Nelson, a retired California state judge who served as rapporteur general of the meeting. "For one thing, we agreed that the basis for a just global society must be, of course, the rule of law. The rule of law embraces every aspect of life, from the environment to due process."

Judge Nelson said other points of agreement in defining a just future society were freedom of thought, expression and action; economic justice; racial justice; equality of men and women; and environmental justice.

"There were some differences of opinion about the equality of men and women that need further exploration, but nobody was at odds with the need for freedom of expression," Judge Nelson said.

"Freedom of speech is exactly what keeps democracy alive," said Justice Kennedy during his presentation. He noted that the U.S. Supreme Court, in the face of almost unanimous outcry, recently upheld the acquittal of a man who had publicly burned the American flag as a protest against the government.

Rgahunandan S. Pathak, former chief justice of India, spoke about sustainable development, saying it is the moral duty of developed countries to allow developing countries access to modern environmentally-compatible technology. ☺

"We agreed that the basis for a just global society must be, of course, the rule of law. The rule of law embraces every aspect of life, from the environment to due process."

— Judge James Nelson

In Sync with the Drumbeat of the Global Village

The 1992 Bahá'í World Congress: Auxiliary musical events

New York City

22-26 November 1992

Some 30,000 Bahá'ís from around the world are coming to New York in November and they are bringing with them their music.

Bahá'í performers—and a few who are not Bahá'ís—will be featured in more than 20 auxiliary concerts and musical events during the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress.

It promises to be an expression of world music like never heard before in a single city over such a short span of time.

There will be concerts by headline names like Dizzy Gillespie, Zhu Ming Ying, and the rock duo Seals and Crofts. And there will also be performances by lesser-known

Bahá'í groups and individuals whose musical

styles also reflect the special traditions of their regions or countries.

Scheduled to perform, for example, are the Dreamtime Aboriginal Theater from Australia; El Viento Canta, a Latin American group that has toured extensively in the former Communist world; Vasili Botozatu, director of the Romanian Folklore Orchestra; and Kevin Locke, whose performances of the Lakota Hoop Dance have won him international renown.

The first major event in conjunction with the Congress will be a classical music concert at Carnegie Hall. Scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on 22 November, the event is to feature pianists Eugene Istomin and Byron Janis and opera stars Benita Valente and Tatiana Troyanos.

Preview

"All of these people are very famous in the classical world," said Peter Gravina, who is producing the concert. "And, although they are not Bahá'ís, they are donating their performances as a contribution to the cause of peace, which is really what the Bahá'í cause is all about." Also featured will be the Cleveland Quartet with David Shifrin as soloist, Mr. Gravina said.

The concert is entitled simply the "World Congress Concert." Bahá'í artists Norman Bailey, a well-known baritone from London, and 20-year-old Vali Phillips, who is the concert master for the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra and one of America's most promising young violinists, will also perform.

Jazzman Dizzy Gillespie, who is a Bahá'í, will be among the featured performers in a jazz concert at Carnegie Hall scheduled for 25 November at 8:00 p.m. Also scheduled to perform that evening will be James Moody, Doc Holliday, the Nicholas Brothers and the Mike Longo Trio.

Zhu Ming Ying, who is among the most popular singers in China, is scheduled to perform at the Bahá'í Variety Concert on 23 November at 8:00 p.m. in the New York Hilton, along with country singer Dan Seals, folk singer Nancy Ward, Russian baritone Renat Ibragimov, and Persian singer Narges Nounhejad. All are Bahá'ís.

"There is certainly a wealth of musical talent in the Bahá'í community, and the World Congress will showcase that," said Jack Lenz, musical director for the Congress. "Between the Congress itself and the evening programs, this will be the most diverse gathering of Bahá'í musicians ever." ☉

Zhu Ming Ying, one of the most popular singers in China, is among the artists scheduled to perform in conjunction with the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress. Ms. Zhu is shown in her apartment with her gold record, one of the first given to an artist in China.

