



ONE COUNTRY

"The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens" – Bahá'u'lláh

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*Government raids on 500 private homes and the arrest of some 30
faculty members seek to close the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education,
a decentralized university that aimed to give Bahá'í students access to
the education they have been otherwise denied.*

TEHERAN, Iran – The raids were swift, efficient and well planned. Starting on 29 Sep-
tember 1998, agents of the Revolutionary Guard, in cooperation with government agen-
cies such as the Ministry of Security and Information, spread out across the country in
dozens of small groups.

By the time they were finished five days later, more than 30 people had been arrested,
some 500 private homes had been invaded, and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of
books, furniture and equipment had been confiscated. One witness said some of the raid-
ers were accompanied by film crews — evidence of the methodical nature of the attacks.

The aim of the raids was to shut down the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE),
a unique effort by the Bahá'í community of Iran to provide a university education for its
young people, who have been systematically excluded from colleges and universities in
Iran for more than 18 years. Founded in 1987, the BIHE operated as an independent, full-
fledged university with an enrollment of some 900 students, a faculty of more than 150
first-rate academics and instructors, and complete course offerings in ten subject areas.

Yet the BIHE was forced to operate in a highly circumspect and decentralized manner.
Most of its classes were held in private homes throughout Iran and what little permanent
infrastructure it had was composed of a handful of rented classrooms and laboratories
scattered throughout the capitol.

It was, as *The New York Times* said, “an elaborate act of communal self-preservation” –
a creative and wholly nonviolent response to systematic government-sponsored persecu-
tion that has been waged against Iran's 300,000 member Bahá'í community since the found-
ing of the Islamic Republic in 1979 and that is based solely on religious intolerance.

“The materials confiscated were neither political nor religious, and the people arrested
were not fighters or organizers,” said *The New York Times*, in a 29 October 1998 article
about the raids. “They were lecturers in subjects like accounting and dentistry; the materi-
als seized were textbooks and laboratory equipment.”

To informed observers, the arrests and confiscations are clearly part of a long-standing and
centrally orchestrated campaign by Iranian authorities to deal with Iran's Bahá'í community “in
such a way that their progress and development are blocked” — as stated in a secret 1991
Government memorandum instructing authorities how to deal with “the Bahá'í question.”

“The goal of the government of Iran is to discontinue the [Bahá'í] University and si-
lence this educational and spiritual movement,” said one Bahá'í who was closely involved
in the University's operation and did not wish to be named. “They claim that a Bahá'í has
no right to develop and must not have higher education, so that the community may
become degraded.”

The actions against the BIHE likewise reflect a new and dangerous period for Iran's
Bahá'í community, ushered in by the summary execution of Mr. Ruhullah Rawhani, a 52-
year-old medical supplies salesman who was hanged in Mashhad on 21 July 1998 solely for
religious reasons, and the subsequent confirmation of death sentences against two other
Bahá'ís in Mashhad in September.

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The Hague Centenary: towards a culture of peace

Convened in 1899 by Czar Nicholas II of Russia and Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, the First International Peace Conference at the Hague was an historic event in more ways than one.

From it emerged the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which was the first international intergovernmental organization devoted to the peaceful settlement of disputes and, as such, an all-important precursor the United Nations. The Conference also resulted in important (albeit limited) prohibitions on several terrible new weapons, specifically asphyxiating gases, expanding bullets and the discharge of projectiles or explosives from balloons.

Looking back, it can also be said that this initial modern effort at open-ended, multi-lateral diplomacy also stands as perhaps the first tangible political evidence of humanity's collective consciousness of its own oneness. Together, the First and the Second Hague Conferences (the Second was held in 1907) established the principle of universality in international relations, inasmuch as states from outside Europe participated in both conferences. The two conferences also established the diplomatic equality of small states with large ones, in that each state had one vote. The Hague Conferences also called attention to the emerging reality of a global state system and the need to regulate it within a framework of international law.

The upcoming centennial celebration of the First Hague Peace Conference, scheduled for May 1999, promises to be a significant milestone in the further development of humanity's collective identity. The commemorations will begin with an event organized by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), The Hague Appeal for Peace, followed by an intergovernmental gathering that will serve as the official observance of the centenary of the first Conference.

The two events have identified important themes for discussion and reflection. At the intergovernmental event, the agenda will feature the same discussion points as the First Conference: 1) the question of armaments; 2) humanitarian law and the laws and customs of war; and 3) the peaceful

settlement of international disputes.

The NGO-sponsored event will focus on four themes that, in many respects, are simply somewhat more passionate elaborations of the points identified by governments. These topics, which comprise the planks of an international campaign or "appeal" for peace, include: 1) strengthening international humanitarian and human rights laws and institutions; 2) advancing the prevention, peaceful resolution, and transformation of violent conflict; 3) developing and linking disarmament efforts, including nuclear abolition; and 4) identifying the root causes of war and developing a culture of peace.

The focus on such themes is timely. The 20th century has been among the bloodiest in history. At the same time, steady progress towards the eradication of war has been made.

With each successive step, from the First Hague Conference to the League of Nations to the United Nations, the means for the peaceful settlement of international disputes have been more firmly established. And the succession of other conferences, conventions and agreements aimed at promoting human rights, sustainable development and disarmament, in addition to strides in public education and the increasing reach of a globalized media, has made war increasingly unacceptable – both morally and politically – as a means for resolving conflict.

Yet much remains to be done. Regional and civil wars still rage, and the threat of wider conflict remains. Terrible weapons remain at the ready. In many places international covenants to respect and promote human rights continue to go unheeded.

It is significant that both upcoming Hague events recognize civil society as a key actor in international affairs today. The NGO-sponsored "Appeal" makes this point manifestly clear: not only is it organized by civil society itself, but it relies on global civil society as the main engine for its campaign. Moreover, the Program of Action for the intergovernmental conference also explicitly takes note of the importance of civil society in furthering the processes of peace, stating

"the work of NGOs to mobilize public opinion will be invaluable during the regional sessions and seminars in preparation for the 1999 conferences, as will be their expert knowledge on the subject matter."

Indeed, one of the goals of the NGO-sponsored "Appeal" is to create "new partnerships between citizens, governments, and international organizations" in the hope of establishing a "new diplomacy that will 'delegitimize armed conflict.'"

In this respect, the NGO event may well eclipse the intergovernmental one, inasmuch as the agenda of the governments at the Hague is largely commemorative while the NGO event aims at further mobilizing civil society and effecting a general change in public consciousness.

This is important because the key questions facing humanity today surround not so much the founding of entirely new institutions but rather the creation of public support that will promote the effective functioning of existing ones. And this includes not only the United Nations but also the various action plans and conventions on human rights, sustainable development and other global issues.

What is needed at this moment in history, as the Hague Appeal indicates, is the creation of a "culture of peace" — something that can probably be accomplished only if civil society takes a leading role.

In 1919, just after World War I, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, addressed an extended letter to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace at The Hague, a non-governmental organization founded in the wake of the first two Hague Peace Conferences. The letter remains noteworthy for its vision of peace — and its advice about the prerequisites for the establishment of peace.

"This recent war has proved to the world and the people that war is destruction while universal peace is construction; war is death while peace is life; war is rapacity and blood-thirstiness while peace is beneficence and humaneness," wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá. "There is not one soul whose conscience does not testify that in this day there is no more important matter in the world than that of universal peace."

He stated that the key to establishing peace is "unity of conscience." He wrote, "until the minds of men become united, no important matter can be accomplished. At present universal peace is a matter of great



importance, but unity of conscience is essential, so that the foundation of this matter may become secure, its establishment firm and its edifice strong."

According to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, such unity of conscience must be based on a number of progressive principles and actions. These include the equality of women and men, the provision of education for all, and a ceaseless search for truth and justice.

Further, 'Abdu'l-Bahá indicated that the root causes of wars are the various forms of prejudice and intolerance that stem from disagreements or differences over religion, race, political or economic ideology, or simple nationalistic patriotism. The key to ending war lies in overcoming and abandoning these prejudices, which can be done only by understanding humanity's innate oneness.

"The surface of the earth is one native land," He wrote. "Every one can live in any spot on the terrestrial globe. Therefore all the world is man's birthplace."

He also called for the establishment of a universally representative "supreme tribunal" to which international disputes could be referred for definitive settlement, something that might well be built on the foundations of today's United Nations system (including the International Court of Justice, the direct antecedent to the Permanent Court of Arbitration).

In many respects, the world has begun to act on this vision. The Centenary of the First Hague Peace Conference and the associated Hague Appeal for Peace offer an important and timely occasion for collective reflection on how far we have come — and how much farther we have to go — in creating the "unity of conscience" that underlies the creation of a culture of peace. *

Prof. Abdelfattah Amor, the UN's special rapporteur on religious intolerance, (shown above, far left), at a panel discussion on 5 November 1998 at the United Nations, warned against re-opening discussions on a new international convention on the freedom of religion and belief, saying many states have changed their position on religious freedom since 1981, when the current convention was signed. "I'm afraid that opening a new discussion on conventions would lead us a step backward on religious freedom," said Prof. Amor. Other panel members, shown left to right, included Lilli Schindler of the United Nations Department of Public Information; Kamallesh Sharma, Permanent Representative of India to the UN; Robert Traer of the International Association for Religious Freedom; and Nikoo Mahboubian of the Bahá'í International Community.

In southeastern Europe, an innovative approach to public dialogue

"Cold Coffee" was the title of a short play developed for the final demonstration show of "Promoting Positive Messages Through the Media," a workshop conducted in November by the Bahá'í International Community in Croatia. The play sought to highlight ethnic intolerance – and stimulate a public discussion of the issue with the audience.



Under the framework of an international diplomatic initiative known as the Royaumont Process, a series of workshops in southeastern Europe is seeking to promote "a new public mechanism" for social healing and interethnic communication.

ZAGREB, Croatia – As a work of drama, the short play performed here at Europe House Zagreb one Saturday night in November might not have won much praise from theater critics. About five minutes in length, the sketch had been written in less than a week and rehearsed the day before. None of the four actors was a professional.

But that did not prevent the performance from touching many hearts and, by all accounts, fulfilling its mission. Called simply "Cold Coffee," the play struck a theme of huge importance in this region: the need for better interethnic relations.

Set in a local coffeehouse, the piece features three Croatians, two men and a woman. Sitting around a table, they talk in derogatory terms about their waiter, who is reputedly a Serb. At the drama's climax, the waiter accidentally spills coffee on one of the Croatians, and the two men rise to attack him.

At this point in the performance, a curious thing happened. A voice called out "freeze" and the audience was asked to enter into a discussion about the play's central conflict – a highly sensitive one in this region, where ethnic violence and civil conflict have claimed thousands of lives since

the breakup of the former Communist state of Yugoslavia a decade ago.

The ensuing exchange was lively. Audience members offered up many points of view, from simple pleas for tolerance to the suggestion that ethnic differences are a reality that cannot be ignored or easily covered up. Yet in the end, most of the approximately 75 people who attended seemed to feel that some old barriers had been breached and there were new possibilities in the air.

"I thought it was excellent in that it was actually trying to solve the issue, and people were speaking openly," said Igor Zagrecki, a 23-year-old student of economics at Zagreb University. "Sometimes in your family, you are not allowed to speak, but if you can come here, to events like this, you can be heard."

Laying the groundwork for such events, which seek to explore difficult social problems in a way that is both entertaining and conducive to creating positive solutions, is the goal of a series of workshops organized last fall in southeastern Europe by the Bahá'í International Community in collaboration with its national and local affiliates. The performance here was the product of one such workshop, held 16-21 November 1998. Other workshops

have been held so far in Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, and Albania, and another series is scheduled for Yugoslavia, Macedonia and Bosnia in spring 1999.

Operating within a framework established as a parallel process to the Dayton Peace Accords and under the direct financial sponsorship of the Government of Luxembourg, the workshops are conducted by Russian television journalist Shamil Fattakhov. They are designed to train broadcast and press journalists, educators, and representatives of non-governmental organizations in the creation and production of an innovative type of show that combines techniques drawn from drama, journalism and the "talk-show" format to promote "good-neighborliness" and social stability.

The reaction to the workshops so far has been overwhelmingly positive. Not only have participants throughout the region indicated that they hope to start their own versions of the show and/or apply its methods in their own communications efforts, but government officials who have observed the project in action say that its techniques have the potential for a wide application in helping to promote social healing and interethnic communication.

"It is a very interesting way of approaching this question of 'good neighborliness' – or how to make good relations between people," said Per Vinther, the special envoy of the European Commission to Croatia, who attended the public performance of "Cold Coffee" here. "In every family and every nation, there are these type of problems that you could find better ways to solve. And this is one way to solve them."

Part of the Royaumont Process

The phrase "good neighborliness" is a key term of the so-called Royaumont Process, a diplomatic supplement to the Dayton Peace Accords. The 1995 Dayton Accords established a cease-fire in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which then involved that state, Yugoslavia and Croatia, and did much to promote regional stabilization.

The Royaumont Process takes its name from the French town of Royaumont, where Dayton Accords member states met in 1995 to consider how to promote, as Ambassador Vinther indicated, "stability and good neighborliness in southeastern Europe." A collaborative effort of member states of the European Union, the United States, Russia,

Turkey, and the nations of southeastern Europe, as well as most of the major regional intergovernmental organizations such as the European Commission and the European Parliament, the Royaumont Process is a "soft" diplomatic effort that seeks to mobilize civil society in an effort to overcome the cultural and social prejudices that have caused tensions for so long in the region.

Some 70 projects have been proposed by NGOs and at least eight projects have so far been launched, according to Panagiotis Roumeliotis, coordinator of the Royaumont Process. The Bahá'í International Community project was the first to be funded and launched, he said, in part because "it was so well prepared and comprehensive."

Entitled "Promoting Positive Messages Through the Media," the project was developed by the Paris branch of the Community's Office of Public Information. It is based on a creation of Mr. Fattakhov: *The Happy Hippo Show*, a television program that aired in Kazan, Russia, from 1994 to 1996, where it was hugely popular. Oriented towards youth, the show dealt principally with the dynamic new kinds of moral and ethical situations that had arisen in the former Soviet Union.

Mr. Fattakhov collaborated with the Office of Public Information to create a workshop designed to train participants in the art of producing a similar show for television, radio or the stage that can be used to promote positive moral values in a wide variety of venues, from a national broadcast to a local cultural festival.

In this regard the project, which has a

"In every family and every nation, there are these type of problems that you could find better ways to solve. And this is one way to solve them."

**– Per Vinther,
special envoy of the
European
Commission to
Croatia**

Russian television journalist Shamil Fattakhov, standing, leads participants through the "Promoting Positive Messages Through the Media" workshop in Bulgaria, held 12-17 October 1998.





In Zagreb, after the play "Cold Coffee" had been halted, the audience discussed the issues of interethnic tolerance. In the center of the photo, to the right of the white signboard, is a woman wearing a "Happy Hippo" costume. Her role is to reward people who make positive statements by giving them a piece of fruit.

budget of about US\$80,000, is a fairly straightforward effort in "development communication" – the use of music, drama or other artistic forms to promote a social message. Yet its implementation brings a number of noteworthy innovations.

These include the use of a live audience in a "TV talk show" format in combination with the production of short dramas based on moral dilemmas. These skits focus on the essence of a particular social or moral issue without presenting it in terms of violators and/or victims. The project also introduces elements of "consultation," a distinctive spiritually based non-adversarial decision-making process used by Bahá'í communities worldwide as a tool for building unity and consensus.

Dr. Roumeliotis said governments in the region were initially skeptical about how a workshop on the production of a youth-oriented television show could help their situation. "But after seeing what the organizers have done in these countries so far, they are now very enthusiastic about the implementation of this project," said Dr. Roumeliotis. "The implementation of the project is a success and the reports we have been receiving demonstrate a profound interest by the target countries on the work proposed by the Bahá'í International Community."

According to Ronald Mayer, who oversees the Royaumont Process for the Luxembourg Foreign Ministry, the extensive network of national and local Bahá'í communities in southeastern Europe has been another key reason for the project's success. "This was a decisive factor in our decision

to support the project," said Ambassador Mayer. "Because it was obvious that only an NGO with a local entity in each of the countries could have done the project. You need people who know the people on the spot."

"Freeze"

What makes the program so effective in eliciting public discussion of difficult moral issues is the manner in which drama is used to engage the live audience. Every workshop ends with a "demonstration" show, and the centerpiece of these shows is a short skit or drama which takes its characters to the threshold of an important moral decision, such as how to respond when someone makes an ethnic insult.

At this point, the show's host suddenly yells "freeze" and the action is halted. "This is the magical thing, stopping just before the main dilemma," said Mr. Fattakhov. The host then engages the audience in a discussion of what step the actors should take next, with an emphasis on achieving a positive moral outcome.

"Most of the talk shows people are familiar with pick up a social problem and start investigating it as if it is an itchy place on your body and the best thing to do is to start scratching until blood comes out," said Mr. Fattakhov. "Then that's it. The show is over. What we are trying to do with *The Happy Hippo Show* concept is to search for a positive solution through consultation."

According to Mr. Fattakhov, the process of consultation used in *The Happy Hippo Show* is based on the following principles: 1) understanding that positive solutions are indeed possible; 2) defining the highest moral principle involved; 3) focusing on practical ways to solve problems; and 4) leading the audience through a shared experience of different cultures and points of view. The result, Mr. Fattakhov said, "is a spiritual methodology" that offers "a new public mechanism for the collective investigation of truth."

Addressing critical issues

As adapted for the Royaumont project, the workshops led by Mr. Fattakhov cover everything from the need for and processes of moral education to the practicalities of writing and staging a five-minute drama. Around the region, the workshops inspired participants with the possibility for opening a new public dialogue on critical social and moral issues.

The first training seminar was held in Sofia, Bulgaria, from 12-17 October 1998. The final demonstration show was on the topic of "good neighborliness." Among seminar participants were a representative from the Ministry of Education, a representative of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, two program directors from Bulgarian National Broadcast radio, a program director from Vitosha radio, a country-level coordinator from UNICEF, several teachers, and representatives of a youth movement program and a children's theater group.

Many of the participants said they hoped to adapt the program's format to meet their own objectives. "The program can be applied in the projects of UNESCO for civil education in orphanages, youth groups and schools, where a great percentage of the children come from minorities," said Margarita Dimitrova, a teacher who participated in the Bulgaria workshop. "And maybe later business clubs can be invited to discuss morality and ethics in business."

Other sessions in Romania, Hungary, and Slovenia all featured demonstration shows that focused on interethnic tensions and new approaches to solving them. The final show in Romania, for example, was held 25 October 1998 at the World Trade Center in Bucharest before an audience of more than 120, including representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Education, the media, UNICEF, UNESCO, other NGOs and foundations, and many youth. A wide range of follow-up ideas emerged, including requests to institute *The Happy Hippo Show* in schools and a plan by a local youth magazine to start a regular column based on the show's message.

"The aim is that the participants will be trained in techniques of the show, and that they will then implement it in their own organizations," said Christine Samandari-Hakim, director of the Community's Office of Public Information in Paris. "The long-term objective of the program, of course, is to contribute to peace and we believe the process for public dialogue offered by this project opens a new way to help create the conditions for understanding, cooperation and, finally, for a lasting peace."

The Croatian reaction

In Croatia, participants in the workshop likewise agreed that the format promised to be valuable in promoting communication on difficult social issues. "One thing I had never

thought about before was the possibility of resolving the problem [on the air]," said Robert Zuber, a talk show host and radio journalist on Radio 101, the most popular independent radio station in Zagreb. "The idea of thinking about solutions, this is quite a new thing for Croatian journalists."

Representatives of local NGOs also said they would try to apply what they learned in communication efforts within their own organizations or aimed at their target audiences. "I will integrate what I have learned here into what I am already doing," said Elizabeta Rudic, who attended the workshop as a representative of Open Circle, a Rijeka-based NGO that deals with the addiction problems of young people. She said she hoped to do performances at an annual festival in Rijeka. "This show is unique."

For some participants, the workshop was deeply affecting. "I know that television and media can influence people," said Helena Vidosavljevic, a 31-year-old artist who participated in the training. "Because they did influence people in 1991, during the war."

Of mixed parentage — her father is Serbian and her mother is half Croatian and half ethnic Italian — Ms. Vidosavljevic felt intensely the divisions that underpinned the Croatian war of independence and were magnified by its outcome. "While I lived in a region that was not directly affected by the war, that was not touched by actual destruction, we were economically affected. There was a breakup in people's heads. The system was changing and it was a very tough period, with aggression on both sides."

She hopes to participate in any efforts that might be undertaken to actually launch something like *The Happy Hippo Show* here. "It has the potential to change one mind, two minds, and slowly, slowly, 100 minds," she said. "It is not the only thing that will bring peace, but it is part of the process. Because what we see on the television right now is garbage, mostly, and something like this I would like to watch, like to have my children watch." *



Shamil Fattakhov, giving stage directions during rehearsal in Croatia.

"It has the potential to change one mind, two minds, and slowly, slowly, 100 minds."

— Helena Vidosavljevic, participant

In the district of Olancho, about 200 kilometers northeast of Tegucigalpa, a medical team from the International Medical Corps (IMC) treated victims of Hurricane Mitch. The district is largely inhabited by the Pech people, and it was the National Bahá'í Commission for Humanitarian Aid that helped IMC to identify the area as a region with urgent needs. Joining the IMC team is Dr. Tim Thurber, kneeling, of Brownsville, Texas, a Bahá'í who had worked in the Olancho region previously.



In Honduras, a grassroots network mobilizes after Hurricane Mitch

The Bahá'í community of Honduras – although inexperienced in the business of disaster relief – energetically mobilized itself after Hurricane Mitch, providing a much-needed and trustworthy network for the timely distribution of aid and services.

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras – In his job as a disaster relief coordinator with International Medical Corps (IMC), Stephen Tomlin has been to many of the world's most chaotic crisis areas. The American equivalent of the French-founded "Doctors without Borders," IMC has provided medical relief teams to crisis spots such as Afghanistan, Somalia, and Rwanda, to name just a few of the places Mr. Tomlin has been assigned.

The scene that greeted him in Honduras two weeks after the passage of Hurricane Mitch, which battered Central America for nearly a week in late October-early November 1998, was as grim as any he has faced.

"In Honduras, the devastation was such that the last 25 years of development assistance was just washed away, especially in rural areas, in terms of agricultural development, the health network and the education sector," said Mr. Tomlin. According to news accounts, more than 3,000 – and perhaps 5,600 – people lost their lives because of the tropical storm.

One of the biggest problems facing international relief teams, Mr. Tomlin added, is finding a ready local counterpart that knows the country and the people and that

can effectively help direct incoming relief teams and commodities so that the most needy receive help first.

"When the world's attention is on a country after a disaster, there are a lot of sources of relief that come into the target area," said Mr. Tomlin. "But it often only comes around once. And so the challenge for anybody working in disaster relief is to maximize the incoming resources to make the most significant impact, in order to deal with the priority needs of the communities that are most in need."

In this regard, said Mr. Tomlin and others, the Bahá'í community of Honduras played a special role in helping other established humanitarian organizations identify priorities in the distribution of aid in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch.

"The Bahá'ís have been instrumental in helping us clarify where the help was needed most and how to distribute it well," said Luisa Willingham, who coordinated disaster relief efforts for Foundation Maria, a humanitarian non-governmental organization sponsored by Mary Flake de Flores, the First Lady of Honduras.

Indeed, by its own account, the Bahá'í community – although inexperienced in the

business of disaster relief – energetically mobilized itself after Mitch, seeking to provide whatever help it could. Its role grew quickly, providing not only a much-needed and trustworthy network for the timely distribution of aid and services but also reaching out to sister communities overseas in an effort to channel more aid into the country. This mobilization took place at the local, national and international levels, providing a model for what grassroots-based organizations can do in times of crisis.

With an organized presence in some 53 cities and towns and a national membership of about 40,000, the Bahá'í community here was well positioned at both the national and local levels to help in such a crisis. About a week after the hurricane, the national governing council of the Honduran community established the National Bahá'í Commission for Humanitarian Aid, giving it the responsibility to coordinate Bahá'í-sponsored relief efforts. One of the Commission's first moves – one that was almost a reflex action for a community whose principles underscore the concept of global citizenship – was to reach out to Bahá'ís overseas.

Campaign on the Internet

In a series of electronic mail dispatches, Bahá'í communities around the world were told of the plight of Honduras and other Central American countries. At first, the Hondurans asked only for prayers. But later, as offers of material aid came in, the Hondurans explained what commodities were needed and how they could be sent.

These dispatches led to a largely informal campaign by Bahá'ís overseas, conducted primarily over the Internet, to raise money and send critical commodities to Honduras. Although aid continues to flow, an early assessment of this effort indicates that Bahá'í communities – mostly at the local level – in some 18 different countries sent more than US\$60,000 in cash assistance to Honduras by various means, according to Nancy Garcia, a member of the National Bahá'í Commission for Humanitarian Aid, as the special commission is formally known.

In addition to cash donations, Bahá'í communities overseas also solicited and organized the shipment of at least 8,000 kilograms of medicine, food and clothing, which was sent directly to the Bahá'í community of Honduras for distribution. So far, Bahá'í individuals and/or communities in the fol-

lowing countries have sent donations of cash or commodities: Angola, Australia, Belize, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Italy, Japan, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States of America.

Bahá'í communities overseas were also in the frontlines in terms of helping to organize donations to other humanitarian organizations. The local Bahá'í Center in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, for example, served as the meeting place and collection center for the Honduras Association of Massachusetts, which sent a donation of some 8 standard shipping containers of food, medicine and supplies to COPECO, the Honduran national civil defense agency, and to the Honduran Red Cross. A group of Bahá'ís in Vermont, USA, working with other local organizations, raised some \$100,000 of hurricane relief money for Partners of the Americas, a major private voluntary organization that focuses on local-to-local partnerships.

New relationships

In Honduras itself, the Commission for Humanitarian Aid offered assistance to other non-governmental organizations, mostly in the form of volunteers. From this offer evolved a series of new relationships with organizations such as Foundation Maria, UNICEF, and IMC, as well as with government agencies. And it soon became apparent that the most helpful role for the Com-

"The Bahá'ís have been instrumental in helping us clarify where the help was needed most and how to distribute it well."

– Luisa Willingham, Foundation Maria

In Tegucigalpa, the Bahá'í community worked with other humanitarian organizations to assist in the distribution of relief supplies. Pictured below is a group of people – among whom are several Bahá'ís – who helped to load an International Medical Corps (IMC) truck.





photo by Leo Tomlin

Dr. Tim Thurber, working with an International Medical Corps team, examines a young boy in Honduras.

mission was to help other agencies prioritize their relief distribution efforts.

"The Bahá'í community in Honduras had an administrative organization and network throughout the country in both urban and rural areas," said Mr. Tomlin. "That made a lot of difference in terms of rapid response."

Ms. Willingham of Foundation Maria explained that in the first weeks following Mitch's passage, efforts to provide assistance were hampered by poor communications, an effect that stemmed in part from the destruction caused by the hurricane. "We were getting conflicting stories," said Ms. Willingham, a special assistant to First Lady de Flores. "One government office would be telling us that everything was fine, while the people in a region were telling us that help was getting there, but it wasn't being directed well."

She said, however, that the members of the Bahá'í Commission she worked with were able to draw on the network of Bahá'í communities throughout the country, as well as their own knowledge of specific regions, to help identify areas most in need.

For example, the Commission suggested that IMC send a medical team to the rural district of Olancho about 200 kilometers northeast of Tegucigalpa, an area that was especially hard hit by Mitch. The region is largely inhabited by the indigenous Pech people, who have often been ignored.

"It was as a result of the Bahá'í network that we were able to identify this group as a priority group in need of assistance," said Mr. Tomlin, who joined an IMC medical

team that was sent to Olancho. "And as a result of us coming back and writing a report and interacting with international donors, we were able to target World Food Program attention to that area."

In other cities and departments, local Bahá'í communities also played an important role in identifying needs, serving as volunteers, and/or acting as local distribution agents. To give a few examples:

- In San Pedro Sula, the major city on the north coast, the Bahá'í community worked with UNICEF to prioritize which neighborhoods had been hardest hit and were most in need of aid. Local volunteers then used their own vehicles to deliver milk, rice, beans, cornmeal, water, soap, diapers and other commodities to those neighborhoods and to outlying areas. They helped repackage 20,000 pounds of lima beans, sent in by air from the United States, into five-pound bags for local distribution. And the community set up an IV fluid holding depository, keeping the fluids ready for rapid distribution in the event of an outbreak of cholera or other similar diseases.

- In Choluteca, an agricultural region in the south that was badly hit by flooding, the Bahá'í community set up a short-term distribution center for food, medicine and clothing. The Commission was also instrumental in directing to Choluteca a team from the USA's Centers for Disease Control to do a survey of water contamination caused by the hurricane and a study of the long-term threat it poses.

- In Comayagua, in the country's central region, the local Bahá'í community of Siguatepeque distributed clothing and food to needy families. An orphanage, El Hogar de Tierra Santa, which is operated with Bahá'í involvement, took in some 20 additional children.

In Gracias a Dios, Hospital Bayan played a critical role in Palacios, a small community on the remote northeast coast. Established by two Bahá'í doctors in 1985 to provide medical care to an under-served population composed mainly of Miskito and Garifuna people, the small medical center became a refuge and rallying point for the community during and after the hurricane.

Shelter from the storm

During the storm, more than 200 people took shelter in the hospital's buildings, which are some of the strongest structures in the area. After the storm, the hospital

served as host to an international medical team from Cuba, as well as an emergency relief team from Ireland.

The Cuban Medical Brigade brought in some 15 tons of medicines, equipment and mattresses, and saw more than 5,000 patients during November and December. "Bayan supported all aspects of the work of the Cuban Medical Brigade in terms of electricity, water, general supplies," said Dr. Victoria Abraham Salazar, coordinator of the six-member Cuban team that was sent to Palacios. "And there was a close relationship at all times between the Bayan staff and the Medical Brigade."

For the Bahá'í community of Honduras itself, the experience of working at disaster relief has clearly pushed the community in new directions. "Although the Bahá'ís are used to working in communities, we have

not before worked under these circumstances," said Jeannie Hernandez Imboden, secretary of the Honduran Bahá'í community. "I believe that in spite of all that is bad that it is a very good experience for us, because we have redoubled our efforts and developed our capacities as a community."

The Commission itself has already begun discussing how it can contribute in the long run to helping to rebuild the nation as a whole. "As Bahá'ís we see that this catastrophe has immense potential for inspiring new attitudes of cooperation, collaboration, and reciprocity," said Ms. Garcia of the Commission. "If we help communities develop the skills for consulting and working together to find solutions for restoring their homes and livelihoods for the good of all, they will benefit also from newfound unity, self-worth and vision as individuals and as a community." *

"We see that this catastrophe has immense potential for inspiring new attitudes of cooperation, collaboration, and reciprocity."

– Nancy Garcia

CIVIL SOCIETY

Millennium Forum planning continues

UNITED NATIONS – Efforts to draw broad support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide have been the main focus of the planning process for a proposed Millennium Forum, which backers hope to hold here in the summer of 2000 in connection with a scheduled UN Millennium Summit meeting.

An interim steering committee, which was appointed by an ad hoc gathering of NGOs in July 1998, worked throughout the fall to establish both an organizational structure that will draw into the planning process well-respected NGO leaders and activists from both North and South and a mechanism by which such a structure and its membership can be confirmed.

A two-day meeting to establish the organizational structure and membership of the Forum's leadership has been scheduled for 22-23 February at the UN. An earlier meeting, which had been scheduled for 2 December 1998, was cancelled to allow the interim steering committee more planning time.

The main purpose of the Forum, which was previously called the "Millennium NGO Forum," would be to channel the "ideas and visions" of NGOs at all levels for presentation to the UN Millennium Summit, which is scheduled to be held during the first two weeks of the UN General Assembly's 55th meeting in September 2000.

The proposed organizational structure is

built around three committees. The largest, the Planning Consultative Council, which will set policy for the Forum, will be composed of 100 or more members. Its membership has been put forward by the interim steering committee in a way designed to reflect the global nature of world civil society as well as the broad range of thematic issues to be addressed by the Forum.

At the second level, a Steering Committee of approximately 30 members will be the primary planning and decision-making body of the Forum. Its membership has been proposed by the current interim steering committee and it will be confirmed at the February meeting.

Finally, an Executive Committee, composed mainly of the officers of the Steering Committee, will direct the day-to-day operations of the Forum, overseeing the work of an Executive Director and staff.

Among those who have already agreed to serve on the Steering Committee, subject to confirmation, are: Dianne Dillon-Ridgley, acting executive director of the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO); Bill Pace, secretary general of the Hague Appeal for Peace 1999; Mia Adjali, UN representative for the General Board of Global Ministries; Malick Gaye, head of Environmental Development in the Third World; and Amparo Claro of the Latin American and Caribbean Health Network. *

In Iran, a Bahá'í university is raided, depriving hundreds of education

Iran, continued from page one

It would be incorrect to call the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education an "underground university," since its existence was well-known to the authorities from its earliest years. In fact, in 1996 Iranian authorities conducted raids against BIHE sites, confiscating records and equipment but not moving to shut down its operation.

In keeping with Bahá'í religious teachings on obedience to government, the Bahá'ís in Iran always answered questions forthrightly when asked about the Institute and any other activities. Nevertheless, in a climate where the government has outlawed the operation of their institutions, the Bahá'ís resorted to running an "open university" that was both highly dispersed and prudent in its operation.

Until the Government raids at the end of September 1998, the Institute offered Bachelor's degrees in ten subject areas: applied chemistry, biology, dental science, pharmacological science, civil engineering, computer science, psychology, law, literature and accounting. Within these subject areas, which were administered by five "departments," the Institute was able to offer more than 200 distinct courses each term. In the beginning, courses were based on correspondence lessons developed by Indiana University, which was one of the first institutions in the West to recognize the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education. Later on, course offerings were developed internally.

Teaching was done principally via correspondence, or, for specialized scientific and technical courses and in other special cases, in small-group classes that were usually held in private homes.

"At the beginning, the students did not even know the names of their professors," said one BIHE professor, who, like most others quoted in this article, wanted to remain anonymous out of fear for his safety and that of his relatives in Iran. "Even after three or four years, the students did not know the names of their professors. They had never seen them. Because it was very dangerous. If somebody knows the name of them, maybe they would tell their friends. So it

was all correspondence at the beginning of this plan."

Over time, however, the Institute was able to establish a few laboratories, operated in privately owned commercial buildings in and around Teheran, for computer science, physics, dental science, pharmacology, applied chemistry and language study. The operations of these laboratories were kept prudently quiet, with students cautioned not to come and go in large groups that might give the authorities a reason to object.

An all-volunteer, unpaid faculty

At its peak, the Institute had more than 150 faculty members. Approximately 25 or 30 were professors who were fired from government-run universities after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Other faculty members included doctors, dentists, lawyers and engineers. The majority were educated in Iran, but a good number have degrees from universities in the West, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Columbia University, the University of California at Berkeley and the Sorbonne. None of the Bahá'í faculty members were paid for their time; all worked as volunteers.

"These youth are very precious people," said a faculty member, explaining why they were willing to take such risks, without monetary remuneration, to establish the Institute. "We all care about them. They have been through tests and trials and they had no hope. They have been deprived of many things so if there was any chance for us to get something better for them, we did it."

Each of the five departments drew not only on these volunteer professors for their academic expertise but also on a small and anonymous group of Bahá'í academics in North America, Europe and Australia who sent in the latest textbooks and research papers, occasionally made visits to Iran as guest lecturers, and otherwise provided instructional and technical support.

"The Bahá'í youth are all raised to want to study and become professionals," said one of the outsiders involved in supporting the Institute. "So to sit around and do nothing is a very serious psychological pressure. And

"In Iran, you have to apply for an examination to go to college. If you are successful at your exam, you can go to university. There is a place [on the examination form] which asks, 'What is your religion?' On the left side I just wrote 'Bahá'í.' So they don't let us take that examination."

— a former BIHE student

before the Open University really got going, the youth were in a hopeless position." This man, who was born in Iran and still has family there, asked that his name not be used.

One former BIHE student, who also wished to remain anonymous, explained the difficulties of getting into a state-recognized university. "In Iran, you have to apply for an examination to go to college. If you are successful at your exam, you can go to university. There is a place [on the examination form] which asks, 'What is your religion?' It has items just for Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism. And all of us [the Bahá'í students], we didn't write anything at that place. On the left side I just wrote 'Bahá'í.' So they don't let us take that examination. They didn't give us the entrance card to go to the examination hall. So we can't even take the exam."

High academic standards

Entrance examinations for the BIHE were required, and they established high standards. Of the roughly 1500 students who applied for admission in its first year of operation, 250 were accepted for the first semester of study. By 1996, a total of 600 students had enrolled in the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education and were pursuing their studies, and by 1998 approximately 900 students were enrolled.

"There are a lot of the students in Iran who study because it is a sort of fighting, a sort of positive fighting, sort of like Gandhi," said one former student, who is now living outside of Iran. "If the authorities don't let you get an education, if they don't let you study, you want to show them that you can study."

Among the indications of the Institute's surprisingly high academic standards and instructional level was the success that a few of the graduates had in gaining admission to graduate schools outside Iran, including major universities in the United States and Canada. It should be noted, however, that some of the Institute's graduates and former students outside Iran have had a difficult time getting their credits recognized — a fact of life that stems directly from the Iranian Government's policy of blocking their access to education and its failure to recognize the Institute officially.

Complex administration

In its day-to-day operation the Institute functioned basically like a correspondence school, but with its own delivery service. In

its early years, students and faculty sent homework assignments and lessons back and forth via the state-run postal system. But the packages often did not arrive and were assumed to have been intercepted as part of the Government's attempt to interfere with Bahá'í education.

Since professors could not deliver lectures openly, they prepared their own written notes and compiled text books for distribution to the students. Again, as noted above, some of these texts were based on the latest Western research. One student in civil engineering, for example, was studying the construction of earthquake proof earthen silos — and the Institute's overseas contacts were able to provide him with some of the latest research on this topic from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"Our aim was to offer the best courses available in Iran," said a faculty member.

The entire operation relied heavily on the use of extensive photocopying, and one of the biggest blows in the recent raids was the confiscation of several large photocopying units.

The Institute system also featured a network of special depository libraries around the country. Numbering more than 45, these libraries existed in the private homes of Bahá'ís and enabled students in each district to obtain access to the necessary textbooks for the courses. Some of these libraries were seized in the recent raids.

Told to shut down

Over time, as Institute officials began to feel increasing confidence about their operation, they started to organize many group classes in addition to the independent study taking place in private homes. The Institute began to publish sophisticated course catalogues, listing not only course offerings but the qualifications of the faculty members. And through the international network of Bahá'í communities worldwide, the Institute began to establish the means by which its graduates might become fully recognized by other institutions of higher education outside Iran.

It is not clear to the Bahá'í community of Iran why the raids and confiscations were launched in late September. Those who were arrested were principally faculty members and administrators, and most have now been released. Yet at the time of their arrests, they were asked to sign a document declaring that the BIHE had ceased to exist as of 29 September and that they would no longer

UN General Assembly again calls for the "emancipation" of Iran's Bahá'ís

UNITED NATIONS – On 9 December 1998, the UN General Assembly once again expressed concern over "continuing violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran," specifically mentioning the "unabated pattern of persecution" against the Bahá'ís of Iran.

By a vote of 64 to 41, the Assembly approved a resolution calling on Iran to "abide by its freely undertaken obligations" under various international covenants on human rights and to take steps to "ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including persons belonging to religious minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments."

The resolution was the 13th such expression of concern in 14 years by the Assembly. This year, as in its 1997 resolution, the Assembly called for the full emancipation of the Bahá'í community of Iran, in line with the recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance.

In 1996, the Special Rapporteur, Abdelfattah Amor of Tunisia, concluded that the persecution of Iran's Bahá'ís was religious in nature, not political as claimed by the Government, and that the Bahá'í community should be allowed "to engage fully in its religious activities."



In Paris, hundreds of Bahá'ís from dozens of countries gathered under the Eiffel Tower to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Bahá'í Faith in continental Europe. The three-day celebration, held 27-29 November 1998, included an opening ceremony that drew more than 2,000 people – of whom more than 600 were from outside France – representing more than 50 countries. The Bahá'í communities of the United Kingdom and Canada are also celebrating the centenaries of their founding this year. The celebration in the UK included a concert tour by “One World Rhythm,” a distinctively diverse choir composed of UK citizens from many lands. In Canada, the commemoration was marked by a gathering of some 1,200 in Montreal, a film production and publicity about the publication of a book on the community’s history.

Iran university shut down

Iran, continued from previous page

cooperate with it. The detainees all refused to sign any such declaration.

Iranian Government officials have not been forthcoming with explanations when asked about the actions. According to *The New York Times*, Iranian officials made no comment when asked about the raids and arrests.

However, a secret Government memorandum, drawn up by the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council in February 1991 and which was obtained and made public in 1993 by United Nations’ Special Representative Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, who was then charged with investigating the human rights situation in Iran, provides a context for the raids. Signed by Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, the memorandum established a subtle government policy aimed at essentially grinding the community into nonexistence by forcing Bahá'í children to have a strong Islamic education, pushing Bahá'í adults into the economic periphery and forcing them from all posi-

tions of power or influence, and requiring that Bahá'í youth “be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís.”

Among other significant human rights conventions, Iran is a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966. Parties to this Covenant “recognize the right of everyone to education” and more specifically that “higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means.”

“The exclusion of Bahá'ís from access to higher education in Iran certainly constitutes a gross violation of the Covenant,” said Techeste Ahderom, the Bahá'í International Community’s main representative to the United Nations. “These latest steps taken to shut down the Iranian Bahá'í community’s creative and peaceful response only increases public outrage regarding the Iranian government’s attempt to strangulate the Bahá'í community.”*

The Advancement of Women

Review, continued from back page.

both religions have consistently accorded women an inferior position that is not supported by the authoritative statements of the Founders and have, at times, even gone to the extreme length of denying the spiritual equality of men and women."

In contrast, the equality of women and men has been progressively championed within the Bahá'í community since its founding about 150 years ago in Iran. The Khans offer it as a model, suggesting also that the Bahá'í writings can serve as a guideline for changing attitudes and practices that continue to prevent both women and men from realizing their full potential.

In the course of this discussion, the reader learns much about the Bahá'í Faith and its distinctive approach to social issues. The authors make clear, for example, that Bahá'ís see progress on this and other issues as occurring in an evolutionary fashion, through the social and spiritual transformation of individuals and their relationships.

The Khans suggest, for example, that key to the genuine shift in attitudes necessary for the bona fide advancement of women on a global level are changes in the family. Transformation at this level, they argue, influences larger processes and even determines the course of world peace.

At first glance, this emphasis on the family may seem conventional. And, indeed, the Bahá'í teachings reaffirm that men have a central role as providers and women an all-important role as mothers. However, say the Khans, the Bahá'í vision of the family is far more advanced than the patriarchy of the past, which categorized women as subordinate to men and bred attitudes that limited both sexes.

"The Bahá'í teachings call for a new form of family dynamics, based on equality, that provides a family structure appropriate to the present age and intrinsically far stronger than that of ages past," the Khans write, "a family structure that offers to all of its members — husband, wife, and children — a level of fulfillment and satisfaction otherwise inaccessible."

Equality, as outlined in the Bahá'í writings, write the Khans, does not imply identity of function. Motherhood is greatly valued in the Bahá'í Faith because the mother is the first educator of the child, and education is key to the advancement of civilization. The Bahá'í writings clearly specify that

"the 'training and culture of daughters is more necessary than that of sons.'"

The father's role is to support the family, and while this, too, may seem conventional, it imposes upon the man a spiritual obligation that is neglected in many societies. "The husband's responsibility to support the wife has revolutionary implications in those cultures in which the women currently do a disproportionate share of the work, including growing the food, collecting water and fuel, and generally taking care of the survival needs of the family."

Vital as it is, motherhood is not the only valid role for women, and the Bahá'í teachings call for the adoption of an identical program of education for both sexes. This, the authors explain, would prevent males and females from being channeled into different fields of endeavor without regard for their true capacities.

In some instances, the father may be better suited to tend to domestic matters while the mother may be better qualified for an outside career. Using the tools of cooperation and consultation within an equal partnership, decision-making on such family matters has a flexibility that is not possible within a patriarchal structure.

The Bahá'í Faith also views the equal participation of women in all spheres of activity as a prerequisite to peace, the Khans write. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, one of the central figures of the Faith, wrote that "when women participate fully and equally in the affairs of the world...war will cease."

The Khans argue that such transformations can be realistically achieved "in an evolutionary manner" if "sustained by a commitment to fundamental change and nurtured by educational programs designed to assist individuals and communities to gradually bring attitudes and actions into conformity with the spiritual principle."

The book covers numerous other aspects of this topic and constitutes a comprehensive reference to the Bahá'í teachings on the equality of women and men, which Bahá'ís see as an essential element of a mature civilization. The book also makes an important contribution to the general literature on the subject, offering the unique perspective of a non-patriarchal religious society that focuses on logical reasons to strive for true equality in a way that advances not only women but men — and consequently the whole of civilization.✱

— by Veronica Shoffstall

"The Bahá'í teachings call for a new form of family dynamics, based on equality, that provides a family structure appropriate to the present age and intrinsically far stronger than that of ages past."

— Janet and Peter Khan

Transforming the roles of women and men

Advancement of Women: A Bahá'í Perspective

By Janet and Peter Khan

Bahá'í Publishing Trust

Wilmette, Illinois, USA

In recent years, the role of religion in promoting — or retarding — the advancement of women has become a growing topic of discussion.

From the reactionary response of Islamic fundamentalists to questions among Roman Catholics about whether females should be priests, and to household arguments almost everywhere about whether the wife should pursue a career or stay home with the children, the collision between religious traditions and feminism has stirred heated debate.

In view of this critically important discourse (more than half the world's population are women and four-fifths of the world's population identify themselves as religious believers), a new book by Janet and Peter Khan on Bahá'í views about the equality of women and men is especially welcome.

The Bahá'í Faith is the first major world religion to explicitly identify the equality of women and men as a social principle, and as such its history and teachings on the subject naturally assume significance.

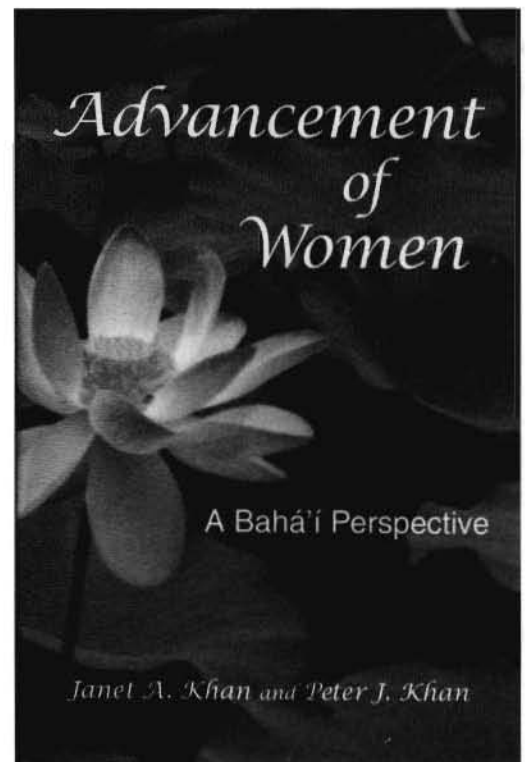
Advancement of Women: A Bahá'í Perspective not only thoroughly and authoritatively explores the Bahá'í position on this topic, it also examines how original texts and teachings of other religions can be interpreted to support the advancement of women's rights and prerogatives.

Of equal significance is the book's main theme: that the only adequate resolution of this discourse lies in the concept of partnership. Partnership, of course, has been emphasized at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women and in meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women by governmental delegates and representatives of non-governmental organizations alike.

The Khans, two well-respected Bahá'ís who are also a married couple, are well suited to undertake a book of this sort. Janet Khan has a Ph.D. in education counseling and has held academic positions at the University of Michigan and the University of Queensland. A former chairperson of the national governing body of the Bahá'ís of Australia, she has served at the Research

Department of the Bahá'í World Center since 1983. Peter Khan, who holds a Ph.D. in electrical engineering, has also occupied academic posts in Michigan and Queensland. He, too, served as a member of the Australian Bahá'í national governing body. Since 1987 he has been a member of the Universal House of Justice, the elected world governing body of the Bahá'í community.

The Khans' book begins with an examination of how the status of women has been defined in the authentic texts and teachings of other world religions, with specific focus on Christianity and Islam. In both cases, the authors conclude, the Founders of these religions have taught that "there is no spiri-



tual distinction between men and women."

The Qur'an, they write, actually did much to raise the status of women, "forbidding female infanticide, providing a limitation on polygamy and extending to women the right to initiate divorce proceedings," among other things. The real problem, they suggest, has been that the "hierarchies of

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