THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD
1979–1983

THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

VOLUME XVIII

136–140
OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
1979–1983



Upper chamber of the House of the Báb, Shíráz, where He declared His Mission to Mullá Ḥusayn in 1844 (photo courtesy of Mr. K. Mumtází).



The Seat of the Universal House of Justice.



THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

AN INTERNATIONAL RECORD

Prepared under the supervision of
The Universal House of Justice

VOLUME XVIII

136–140
OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
1979–1983

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE
HAIFA
1986

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NOTE: The spelling of the Oriental words and proper names used in this volume of *The Bahá'í World* is according to the system of transliteration established at one of the International Oriental Congresses.

ISBN 0–85398–234 –1

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

The Bahá'í world: an international record.
Vol. 18: 136–140 of the Bahá'í era,
1979–1983
1. Bahai Faith
I. Universal House of Justice
297'.89 BP365

ISBN 0–85398–234–1

Printed in Great Britain
at the University Press, Oxford,
by David Stanford
Printer to the University

PREFACE

THE successive volumes of *The Bahá'í World* have come to be anticipated by Bahá'ís as the record of their own collective endeavours on behalf of their Faith, of the establishment and development of its administrative order throughout the world and as the source of data, both historical and statistical, relating to the rise of that Faith during its formative age.

By librarians and students *The Bahá'í World* is becoming ever more widely known as a source of authentic information about the aims, tenets, history, activities, organization and growth of the Bahá'í Faith. The editors therefore have always in mind the preservation of an even balance between the presentation of material of supreme interest to believers and of a fair and objective picture to enquirers. In this they are guided by the policy of Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, who directed the compilation of the successive volumes from I to XII covering the years 1925 to 1954. The first volume, known as *Bahá'í Year Book*, was in fact a one-year survey; the next seven volumes were biennial, terminating in 1940; volume IX recorded the four years from 1940 to 1944; volume X was again biennial and volumes XI and XII presented the periods 1946 to 1950 and 1950 to 1954 respectively. All these volumes were published in the United States under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly and the supervision of the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. Volume XIII, which recorded the passing of the Guardian and the course and completion of his Ten Year Crusade, covered the entire period from 1954 to 1963 and was produced under the supervision of the Universal House of Justice, which thenceforth assumed responsibility for publication. Volumes XIV, XV, XVI and XVII covered the years 1963 to 1968, 1968 to 1973, 1973 to 1976 and 1976 to 1979 respectively.

This volume, relating to the years 1979 to 1983, records the observance in the Holy Land in July 1982 of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of The Greatest Holy Leaf, eldest daughter of Bahá'u'lláh and 'the outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation'; the successful completion of the first stage of the restoration of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá and its opening to pilgrims; the completion of construction of the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice and its occupation by that Institution in January 1983; the holding in the Holy Land in May 1983 of the fifth International Convention; the progress made towards construction of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Indian Subcontinent in New Delhi and of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands in Samoa; the holding in 1982 of five International Conferences dedicated to the Greatest Holy Leaf and marking the fiftieth anniversary of her passing; the progress made in the Seven Year global teaching plan inaugurated at Riḍván 1979 and constituting yet another stage in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan; and the resumption in Írán on a scale unprecedented in recent history of a campaign designed to extirpate the Bahá'í Faith from the land of its birth through the systematic imprisonment and execution of its leaders, the expropriation, desecration and destruction of its holy places, and the persecution and harassment of its rank and file, a process which, to an extent never before witnessed, drew the sympathetic attention of governments, world leaders and the mass media to the true nature of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh and publicized its teachings.

CONTENTS

*

Introduction

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH, by David Hofman 1

PART ONE

THE BAHÁ'Í REVELATION

I. EXCERPTS FROM THE BAHÁ'Í SACRED WRITINGS
1. Bahá'u'lláh 9
2. The Báb 15
3. 'Abdu'l-Bahá 20

II. EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI 32

PART TWO

THE COMMEMORATION OF HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES

I. THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSING OF BAHÍYYIH KHÁNUM, THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF
1. Passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh About the Greatest Holy Leaf ... 41
2. Passages from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá About the Greatest Holy Leaf and a Selection of His Letters to Her 42
3. Passages from the Writings of Shoghi Effendi About the Greatest Holy Leaf and Excerpts from His Letters About Her 44
4. A Selection of Letters of the Greatest Holy Leaf 47
5. A Tribute to the Greatest Holy Leaf, by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum 50
6. The Commemoration at the World Centre of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf 53
7. Some References to the Greatest Holy Leaf Found in Works Published in English 55
8. Some Works Published to Commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf 57
9. The Greatest Holy Leaf: A Reminiscence, by 'Alí Nakhjavání 59
10. The Life and Service of the Greatest Holy Leaf, by Bahíyyih Nakhjavání ... 68

PART THREE

INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES 1979–1983

I. THE HOUSE OF 'ABDU'LLÁH PÁSHÁ 77

II. THE SEVEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN 1979–1986
1. The Launching of the Seven Year Plan 81
2. The Seven Year International Teaching Plan 1979–1986: Progress to Riḍván 1983 86
A. The World Centre 86
B. World-wide Objectives 103
3. Expansion and Consolidation of the Bahá'í Faith—Information Statistical and Comparative 134
A. Africa 134
B. The Americas 135
C. Asia 135
D. Australasia and the Pacific Islands 136
E. Europe 136

III. FIVE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
1. Five International Conferences: A Pictorial Report 138
2. Messages of the Universal House of Justice to the Five International Conferences:
A. Dublin, Ireland *25–27 June 1982* 156
B. Quito, Ecuador *6–8 August 1982* 157
C. Lagos, Nigeria *19–22 August 1982* 158
D. Canberra, Australia *2–5 September 1982* 159
E. Montreal, Canada *2–5 September 1982* 161

IV. INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁÍ ACTIVITIES 1979–1983
1. Survey by Continents:
A. Africa 163
B. The Americas 171
C. Asia 178
D. Australasia and the Pacific Islands 183
E. Europe 187
2. The Association for Bahá'í Studies: 1979–1983, by Gerald Filson 194
3. The Establishment of the Bahá'í International Health Agency 201
4. Bahá'í Scholarship in Australia: 1979–1983 202
5. Bahá'í Studies Seminars at the University of Lancaster: 1977–1980, by Peter Smith 204
6. The Development of Bahá'í Schools during the Seven Year Plan, by Barbara Barrett 207
7. Bahá'í Youth Academy of India 230
8. The Rabbani School at Gwalior, India, by Stephen H. Waite 233
9. Trail of Light, by Barbara Barrett 239
10. The Centenary of the Founding of the Bahá'í Faith in India: 1880–1980 246

11. The Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán: 1979–1983, by Geoffrey Nash 249
A. Survey of Events 251
B. Identity of the Persecutors, and Charges Levelled against the Bahá'ís ... 267
C. Pattern of Persecution 271
D. Last Letters, Wills and Testaments 284
E. Bahá'ís Killed in Írán, Riḍván 1978–Riḍván 1983 290
F. A Representative Selection of Documents Illustrating the Persecution of the Bahá'í Community of Írán: 1979–1983 306
G. Bahá'í Children in Time of Persecution 331
H. Detailed Summary of Actions taken by the Bahá'í International Community, National and Local Bahá'í Institutions, Governments, Non-Bahá'í Organizations and Prominent People in Connection with the Persecution of the Bahá'ís of Írán 337
12. Letter from the Universal House of Justice to Iranian Bahá'ís Living Outside Írán 357
13. The Emergence of a Universal Moral Order and the Persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í Community, by Will. C. van den Hoonaard 363
14. Persecution of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán: A Partial Bibliography of References from Books and Pamphlets, Journals, Newspaper Articles, and Official Documents in some European Languages, compiled by William P. Collins with the assistance of Janet H. Beavers 369
15. A Chronology of some of the Persecutions of the Báb's and Bahá'ís in Írán: 1844–1978, compiled by Dr. Moojan Momen 380

V. THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH AND THE UNITED NATIONS
1. Summary of the Years 1947–1979 393
2. The Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations 1979–1983, by Victor de Araujo 396
Annex I 410
Annex II 410
Annex III 412
3. Activities of the Bahá'í International Community Relating to the Persecution of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán 1979–1983 414

VI. RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH
1. Incorporation of National Spiritual Assemblies 426
2. Incorporation of Local Spiritual Assemblies 429
3. A Selection of other Documents Recording Official Recognition of the Bahá'í Faith 437

PART FOUR

THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

I. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
1. The Constitution of the Universal House of Justice 453
2. The Fifth International Convention for the Election of the Universal House of Justice 461

3. The Completion of Construction of the Building for the Seat of the Universal House of Justice: A Pictorial Report 465

II. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD
1. The Hands of the Cause of God and the Extension of their Functions into the Future:
A. The Rulers and the Learned 473
B. The Hands of the Cause of God 474
C. The Continental Boards of Counsellors 475
D. The International Teaching Centre 477
2. The Work and Travels of the Hands of the Cause 1979–1983 481
3. Hands of the Cause who Represented the Universal House of Justice at Conventions for the election of New National Spiritual Assemblies 1979–1983 ... 515
4. A Tribute to the Hands of the Cause, by Lilian 'Alá'í 516
5. The Hands of the Cause of God: An Appreciation, by Ray Hudson 521
6. The Development of the Institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors (adapted from the Hawaiian History Calendar) 528

III. THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
1. Introduction, by Horace Holley 536
2. A Model Declaration of Trust and By-Laws for a National Spiritual Assembly 538
3. A Procedure for the Conduct of the Annual Bahá'í Convention 546
4. New National Spiritual Assemblies 548

IV. THE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
1. The Institution and its Significance 554
2. By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly 564

V. THE INSTITUTION OF THE MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR
1. Foreword, by Horace Holley 568
2. The Spiritual Significance of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár 569
3. The Mother Temple of the Indian Sub-Continent, by F. Ṣahbá 571
4. The Lotus of Bahapur, by Sheriar Nooreyezdan 574
5. The First Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands 585

VI. THE NON-POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH
Excerpts from the Writings of Shoghi Effendi 589

VII. RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT
1. Loyalty to Government 595
2. The Bahá'í View of Pacifism 596
3. Summary of the Guardian's Instructions on the Obligations of Bahá'ís in Connection with Military Service 596

VIII. BAHÁ'Í CALENDAR, FESTIVALS AND DATES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE
1. Foreword 598
2. Bahá'í Feasts, Anniversaries and Days of Fasting 598
3. Bahá'í Holy Days on which Work should be Suspended 599

4. Additional Material gleaned from Nabíl's Narrative regarding the Bahá'í Calendar 599
5. Historical Data gleaned from Nabíl's Narrative regarding Bahá'u'lláh 602
6. Dates of Historical Significance in the Rise of the Bahá'í Faith 606

PART FIVE

IN MEMORIAM

	Page
Abbas, Kamil (Kámil 'Abbás Riḍá)	722
Adlparvar, Hishmat	775
Aḥmadpúr, Fu'ád	682
'Alípúr, Guldánih Yúsifí	811
Allen, John	725
Altass, Florence Elizabeth	788
Appa, Seewoosumbur Jeehoba	754
Armstrong, Leonora	733
Balyuzi, Hasan M. (Ḥasan M. Balyúzí)	635
Baqá, Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá	784
Baker, Richard St. Barbe	802
Beard, Frances	756
Blake, Cecilia King	723
Blakely, Dudley Moore	809
Brechtefeld, Henry	805
Chinniah, Inparaju	711
Cobb, Stanwood	814
Cookson, Alexe	730
Dhacoo, Louis Pierre Henri	728
Doktoroğlu, Sami	683
Edwards, Hermione Vera Keens-Douglas	778
Eggleston, Helen	674
Eliás, Ṣubḥí	746
Faizi, Abu'l-Qasim	659
Falláḥ, Muḥammad 'Alí (Afnán)	710
Farhangí, Masíḥ	766
Fitzner, Sarah Florence	727
Furúghí, Rúḥu'lláh	690
Ghobad, Isfandiyar (Isfandíyár Qubád)	709
Giachery, Angeline	717
Gibson, Amoz Everett	665
Greeves, Lisbeth	808
Ḥakím, Manúchihr	745
Ḥalabí, Ḥusayn	707
Haney, Paul Edmond	613
Hayden, Robert	715
Henseler, Julius	794
Hezari, Ardeshir (Ardishír Hizárí)	776
Hokafonu, Mosese	686
Holley, Doris	821
Hutchinson-Smith, Jean	681
Joshi, Asanand Chagla	795
Kahaloa, Solomon	741
Kamálí-Sarvistání, Mírzá Áqá Khán	817
Kazemi (Káẓimí), Sharon Rickey	820
Kelsey, Olivia	774
Kempton, Honor	748
Kidder, Dr. Alice G.	677
King, Melba M. Call	687
Korean, Suliana Halaholo	793
Labíb, Muḥammad	751
Leach, Bernard	669
Lith, Jacob Eduard (Bob) van	817
Lukmani, Dr. M. E. (Dr. M. E. Luqmání)	771
Maḥmúdí, Zhínús Ni'mat	781
Mavaddat, Nasrollah (Naṣru'lláh Maviddat)	791
Mesbah, Amine (Dr. Amín'u'lláh Miṣbáḥ)	811
Mesbah, Jeanne (Jeanne Miṣbáḥ)	811
Missaghiyeh, Abdul-Missagh ('Abdu'l-Míthaq Míthaqíyih)	779
Mkhize, Bertha	773
Mobedzadeh, Shah Bahram (Sháh Bahrám Múbidzádih)	731
Morais, Kenneth Allan	762
Muhájir, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh	651
Mühlschlegel, Dr. Adelbert	611
Muṣṭafá, Muḥammad	768
Nakhjavání, Jalál	797
Njang, Elizabeth Idang	819
Nodada, Cecilia Mkize	719
Ober, Dr. Elizabeth Kidder	677
Olinga, Enoch	618

	Page
Outhey, Jeannette	721
Pavón, Clementina Mejía de	671
Pavón, Segundo	671
Pöllinger, Franz	700
Raman, Appu	787
Raynor, Allan	696
Rhein, Ottilie	703
Rostampour, Ardeshir (Ardashír Rustampúr)	792
Rowling, Margaret	757
Ruggoo, Arthur Joseph Gustave	761
Sala, Rosemary	713
Sandando, Yowane	765
Scherer, Carl A.	738
Scherer, Loretta L.	738
Schmidt, Dr. Eugen	800
Seepé, Lot Max	806
Shepherd, Harold	740
Sneider, Mabel Adelle	705
Sombeek, Ludmila Van	689
Sombeek, Rita van Bleyswijk	763
Stettler, Karl Donald	729
Suleimani, Ridvaniyyih (Riḍvániyyih Sulamání)	752
Vaḥdat, 'Iṣmat	743
Vaḥdat, Yadu'lláh	758
Vargas, Pedro	743
Vujdání, Bahár	698
Weeden, Gladys Anderson	692
Wilks, Helen Hazel	707
Zonneveld, Arnold	824

PART SIX

DIRECTORY, BIBLIOGRAPHY, GLOSSARY

I. BAHÁ'Í DIRECTORY

1. The Universal House of Justice 829
2. The Hands of the Cause 829
3. The International Teaching Centre 829
4. Continental Boards of Counsellors 830
5. Bahá'í International Community 830
6. National Spiritual Assemblies 830
7. Bahá'í Publishing Trusts 830

II. BAHÁ'Í BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bahá'u'lláh's Best-Known Works 833
2. The Báb's Best-Known Works 834
3. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Best-Known Works 835
4. Some Compilations from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá 836
5. Shoghi Effendi's Best-Known Works 836
6. Language and Literature Achievements, Riḍván 1979–Riḍván 1983:
   - A. Languages in International Use 838
   - B. Invented Languages 839
   - C. Africa 839
   - D. The Americas 841
   - E. Asia 843
   - F. Australasia and the Pacific Islands 843
   - G. Europe 844
   - H. Total by Continents 845
7. Translations of the Short Obligatory Prayer:
   - A. Africa 847
   - B. The Americas 851
   - C. Asia 857

D. Australasia and the Pacific Islands 861
E. Europe 863
F. Invented Languages 865
G. Miscellaneous 865
8. A Bibliography of English Language Works on the Bahá'í Faith: Selections, compiled by William P. Collins 866
A. The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh 867
B. The Writings of the Báb 869
C. The Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 869
D. Works Compiled from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, The Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá 873
E. The Writings of Shoghi Effendi 878
F. Works and Messages of the Universal House of Justice 881
G. Writings on the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths 881
9. A Partial Bibliography of some Major Original Works on the Bahá'í Faith in Languages other than English, compiled by William P. Collins 887
10. A Bibliography of Theses Relating to the Bahá'í Faith, compiled by William P. Collins 890
11. Partial Listing of some Current General Bahá'í Periodicals, compiled by William P. Collins 892

III. ORIENTAL TERMS
1. Transliteration of Oriental Words Frequently used in Bahá'í Literature 893
2. Guide to Transliteration and Pronunciation of the Persian Alphabet 895
3. Notes on the Pronunciation of Persian Words 895
4. Definitions of some of the Oriental Terms used in Bahá'í Literature 897

PART SEVEN

LITERARY AND MUSICAL WORKS

I. ESSAYS AND REVIEWS
1. Memories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, by 'Alí M. Yazdí 907
2. Life as Metaphor, by John S. Hatcher 912
3. Remembering Bernard Leach, by Trudi Scott 929
4. The Concept of Spirituality, by William S. Hatcher 932
5. One Kind Deed, by Dipchand Khianra 966
6. Kaushal Kishore Bhargava: An Appreciation, based on a Memoir by Dipchand Khianra 969
7. August Forel Defends the Persecuted Persian Bahá'ís: 1925–1927, by John Paul Vader 970
8. Bahá'u'lláh and the Fourth Estate, by Roger White 975
9. August Rudd: The First Bahá'í Pioneer to Sweden 980

II. VERSE 983

III. MUSIC 993

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece One: Upper Chamber of the House of the Báb, Shíráz, where He declared His Mission to Mullá Ḥusayn in 1844 (photo courtesy of Mr. K. Mumtází)
Frontispiece Two: The Seat of the Universal House of Justice

Part One: The Bahá'í Revelation

Page

Part Two: The Commemoration of Historic Anniversaries

Bahíyyih Khánum; *circa* 1890 43
Bahíyyih Khánum; an early photograph 49
Some relics of the Greatest Holy Leaf preserved in the International Bahá'í Archives ... 52
An early photograph of the marble monument erected by Shoghi Effendi over the resting-place of Bahíyyih Khánum 54
Bahíyyih Khánum; *circa* 1895 56
Bahíyyih Khánum; October 1919 58
Curtis Kelsey astride a donkey, Pilgrim House, Bahjí; 1921 61
Saichiro Fujita in Persian garb; 1921 61
Bahíyyih Khánum; *circa* 1919 66
View of the Greatest Holy Leaf's monument as it appears today 67
Facsimile of Bahíyyih Khánum's handwriting 72
The room occupied by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá 74
The room occupied by the Greatest Holy Leaf in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá 74

Part Three: International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities

Exterior view of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá in its restored condition; 1983 78
Main hall of the quarters of the Holy Family in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá; 1983 79
The room in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá in which Shoghi Effendi was born in March 1897 79
The room in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá would receive His guests 80
Graph illustrating growth of the Bahá'í Faith 1953–1983 82
The Seat of the Universal House of Justice on Mount Carmel 85
Hands of the Cause and Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre; November 1979 87
A representative sampling from the international press of reports and editorials in defense of the Bahá'ís 91
Facsimile of House Resolution No. 110, House of Representatives, Eighty-First General Assembly, State of Illinois, adopted 15 March 1979 93
Facsimiles of documents protesting against the persecution of the Bahá'ís of Írán 95
Publications of the Bahá'í World Centre, 1979–1983 97
Aerial view of the south-west quadrant gardens, Bahjí; April 1983 99
Youthful participants in the satellite conference, Nairobi, Kenya, with the Hand of the Cause William Sears; October 1982 101
Participants in the satellite conference, Yaoundé, Cameroon Republic; October 1982 ... 101

The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery viewing the construction of the House of Worship, Western Samoa; September 1982 105
His Excellency Lee Teng-Hui, Governor of Taiwan, honouring Mr. Suleiman A. Suleimani 105
A selection of newsletters in various languages published specifically for children 113
Some published versions of *Words of God* 114
Bahá'í mobile medical camp, India, with members of the Dang tribe 120
Participants in the Scottish Summer School; 1982 120
A selection of newsletters published in response to the goals of the Seven Year Plan 122
Participants in the New Zealand Children's Camp; 1981 122
First local all-girl teaching team of Papua New Guinea 124
Táhirih—Iranian Bahá'í choir, Southern Ontario, Canada 124
A selection of newsletters for youth 126
Participants in the National Youth Conference, Hong Kong; December 1982 126
Participants in the Bahá'í Winter School, Saenz Peña, Chaco, Argentina 128
The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone with participants in the Finnish Bahá'í Summer School; 1982 128
Some Bahá'ís of the Tapi tribe, Mindoro, Philippines 130
Chinese Bahá'ís of Calcutta, India 130
Bahá'ís at Local Bahá'í Centre for Nineteen-Day Feast, Nagumeya, Ciskei; 1982 133
Participants in the Pioneer Training Institute, Alberta, Canada; 1981 133
French Minister of State for the Interior, Gaston Defferre and Mme. Defferre, on their visit to the Seat of the House of Justice; February 1983 137
Five International Conferences—a Pictorial Report 138
Participants in the satellite conference, Nairobi, Kenya; October 1982 154
A representative sampling from Canadian newspapers of references to the International Bahá'í Conference held in Montreal; September 1982 155
Bushman and other participants who attended a deepening institute held in Khudumelapye, Botswana; July 1981 164
First Bahá'í Summer School, Victoria, Cameroon Republic; March 1980 166
First Local Spiritual Assembly of Mariental, South West Africa/Namibia 169
Bus poster, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. 173
Antonio Cruz, first Bahá'í of the Totonaco tribe in Veracruz, Mexico 174
Second continental indigenous council, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A. 175
Poster advertising a dance created by Ballet Shayda to honour the martyrs of Írán 176
Local Bahá'í community poster commemorating the seven Bahá'ís of Yazd who were martyred in September 1980 176
The Local Spiritual Assembly of Chucuito, Puno, Peru; 1981 178
The 'Children of Bahá' choir performing in observance of U.N. Human Rights Day, 1979 179
'The Chosen Highway' youth choir, Panchgani, Maharashtra, India; 1982 179
Some Bahá'ís of the Dang tribe, Gujarat, India; 1982 181
Some Bahá'í women of Burma 183
Regional Teaching Conference, Auckland, New Zealand; June 1981 184
The Local Spiritual Assembly of Albury, New South Wales, Australia; 1979 184
U.N. Day observance, Bahá'í House of Worship, Sydney, Australia; 1980 187
Teaching Institute, Sisimiut, Greenland; 25 July 1982 188
National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the Republic of Ireland; September 1982 188
A selection of major original publications about the Bahá'í Faith in European languages 191
National Youth Symposium, Seiano, Italy; June 1980 191
Annual convention, Iceland; 1981 193
Exterior view of the Association for Bahá'í Studies centre, Ottawa, Canada 195
View of the reception area, Bahá'í Studies centre, Ottawa, Canada 195

The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum addressing the international conference on marriage and family life, Ottawa, Canada; 1981 197
The Hand of the Cause John Robarts with recipients of awards 197
Issues of *Bahá'í Studies* and *Bahá'í Studies Notebook* published in the period Riḍván 1979–1983 199
The Hand of the Cause John Robarts with participants in the inaugural meeting of the Bahá'í International Health Agency 201
Mrs. Gayle Morrison delivering the Ḥasan M. Balyúzí lecture during the seventh annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies 205
A representative sampling of Bahá'í scholarly journals, 1979–1983 206
Students of the New Era School, Panchgani, India 207
Anís Zunúzí School, Lilavoix, Haiti 208
Odusai School, Tororo District, Uganda; August 1981 209
A woodworking class, New Era High School, Panchgani, India 210
Laying the cornerstone at the site of the Bahá'í Youth Academy, Panchgani, India 210
Glory School, Santiniketan, West Bengal State, India 212
Glory School classroom; 1982 212
Shoghi Children's School, Nunna, India 212
A Bahá'í tutorial school, Charolipada, India 213
Children in prayer, Bahá'í tutorial school, Bairagra, India 214
A Bahá'í tutorial school, Jhabua, India; 1983 214
A Bahá'í tutorial school, Markara, India 214
Hostel for Bahá'í children from Mentawai Islands, Padang, Indonesia 216
A classroom, Tadong Bahá'í Primary School, Gangtok, Sikkim; 1980 217
Students of Pachey Phirphiray tutorial school, Sikkim; 1983 217
Students of *Colegio Núr*, La Cisterna, Santiago, Chile; 1983 218
Colegio Núr, La Cisterna, Santiago, Chile 220
Nursery class, Santitham School, Yasothon, Thailand 222
The Santitham School, Yasothon, Thailand; August 1982 222
Inauguration of Anís Zunúzí School, Lilavoix, Haiti; 20 October 1982 222
The Faizí School, Loncopulle, Chile 222
Tutorial school, Quebrada Nigua, Panama 225
Tutorial school, Piggs Peak, Swaziland 225
Gingalili Pre-School, Nakuru District, Kenya 225
Village tutorial school, Iriga City area, Philippines 225
Bahá'í Centre of Khuan Khreo, South Thailand 227
Louhelen School, Davison, Michigan, U.S.A. 227
Louis G. Gregory Institute, Hemingway, South Carolina, U.S.A.; 1983 227
Tutorial school, Bangwade, Upper Zaire; March 1983 227
Tutorial pre-school, Bulembu, Swaziland; 1982 228
Participants in second course of the Bahá'í Youth Academy of India; 1982 231
Faculty and students of Rabbani School; 1983 234
Ploughing with Rabbani School's team of water-buffalo 237
Mrs. Sherman Waite conducting a class at Rabbani School 238
Four members of the Trail of Light group 240
The Trail of Light group with members of the Aguaruna tribe, Peru 240
The Trail of Light group in Porras, Bolivia 240
The Trail of Light group, Southwest Bahá'í Institute, Arizona, U.S.A.; June 1982 241
An outdoor performance of the Trail of Light group, Pucyura, Peru 243
The Trail of Light group in Honduras 244
Press clippings reporting on the centenary of the founding of the Bahá'í Faith in India; April 1980 248
The national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the Bahá'ís of Írán, Ṭihrán, seized 15 February 1979 ... 250

Home of a Bahá'í family in Shíráz after being looted and destroyed; 1979 250
Translation into English of a circular letter addressed to a Bahá'í who was suspended from employment in government service 251
Site of the House of the Báb in process of being demolished 253
Towns and cities in Írán in which Bahá'í holy places, cemeteries and other properties have been seized or destroyed 254
Some members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán and other prominent Bahá'ís who were kidnapped or executed 258
A desecrated Bahá'í cemetery 263
Mourners gathered for the funeral of Dr. Manúchihr Ḥakím 263
Tent settlement of Bahá'í refugees, Katá 272
A Bahá'í family harassed and made homeless 272
Mourners gathered for the funeral of Mihdí Anvarí and Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání 282
Relatives visiting graves of Bahá'í martyrs in graveyard reserved for 'infidels' 282
The House of Bahá'u'lláh in Tákur, district of Núr, Mázindarán, Írán 289
Individual photographs of some of the martyrs 295

Documentation of the persecutions

Procession honouring the martyrs, The Hague; August 1982 356
Three books describing the persecutions of the Bahá'ís of Írán 362
Representative press clippings reporting on the persecution of Bahá'ís in Írán 370
News-stand posters printed by *Tribune de Genève* and *Journal de Genève* for display in public newspaper dispensers; 1980 379
Towns and cities in Írán in which Bahá'ís were arrested or killed between 1979 and 1983 392
Illustration depicting the death of a Bahá'í from the magazine *Ima'ma, circa* 1911 392
Bahá'í International Community representatives, U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Geneva; 31 January 1983 395
U.N. Day observance, Bahá'í Centre, Mauritius; 23 October 1980 395
Bahá'í representatives, Second World Conference on the U.N. Decade for Women, Copenhagen; July 1980 407
Bahá'í literature display, Second World Conference on Women 407
Bahá'í International Community representatives to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva; 15 February 1982 409
A selection of major publications of the Bahá'í International Community 413
U.N. Day observance, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; 24 October 1980 413
Bahá'í delegation to the meetings of the European Parliament; September 1980 416
Bahá'í delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France; 29 January 1981 416
Senior Iranian military officers are seen attacking the Bahá'í National Centre, Ṭihrán; 1955 425

Part Four: The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh

The members of the Universal House of Justice elected at Riḍván 1983 460
Delegates to the International Convention 462
Friends gathered at Pilgrim House, Haifa, for the observance during the International Convention, 1983, of the Ninth Day of Riḍván 464
The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan with delegates to the Fifth International Convention from Taiwan 480
The Hands of the Cause William Sears, Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, John Robarts and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum; August 1980 483
The Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery with two young friends in Norway 483

The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, Mendoza, Argentina; December 1979 493
The Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney with members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia; 6 January 1981 493
The Hands of the Cause Enoch Olinga, Abu'l-Qásim Faizí and Dr. Adelbert Mühlschlegel, Plön, Germany; 1972 504
The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A.; August 1982 504
The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan with some delegates to the International Convention; April 1983 513
The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone, Savonlinna, Finland; July 1982 513
The Hand of the Cause John Robarts with four Bahá'ís from Zimbabwe 514
Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa with the Hand of the Cause William Sears; 1981 529
Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas with the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum; 1981 529
Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia with the Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney; 1981 531
Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia with the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone; 1981 531
Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe with the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem; 1981 533
The members of the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause, Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre and members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, Mazra'ih; 1983 533
The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum with His Excellency Sir Gerald Christopher Cash, Governor General of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas; 29 April 1981 535

New National Spiritual Assemblies

	Page		Page
Transkei (1980)	548	Windward Islands (1981)	551
Bermuda (1981)	548	Dominica (1983)	551
Bophuthatswana (1981)	549	St. Lucia (1983)	552
Leeward Islands (1981)	549	Uganda (re-established 1981)	553
South West Africa/Nambia ... (1981)	550	Nepal (re-established 1982)	553
Tuvalu (1981)	550		

The Mother Temple of the West, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A. 570
Architectural drawings of the Indian Temple—Podium Level Key Plan and Main Building Section 573
Construction worker at Indian Temple site 581
The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Indian sub-continent under construction; 1 December 1981 583
Construction work in progress; 19 April 1983 583
Architect's model of completed Temple 584
His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II visiting the Samoan Temple site at Apia, Western Samoa; 18 December 1981 587
Aerial view of the Samoan Temple under construction; 15 January 1983 587
Two views of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands under construction 588
Stairs leading to the main rooms of the House of 'Abdu'llah Páshá, 1983 608

Part Five: In Memoriam

	Page
Mühlschlegel, Adelbert	612
Haney, Paul Edmond	615
Olinga, Enoch	618
Enoch Olinga with some members of his family	635
Balyuzi, Hasan M. (Ḥasan M. Balyúzí)	636
Muhájir, Raḥmatu'lláh	652
Faizi, Abu'l-Qásim	659
Gibson, Amoz Everett	666
Leach, Bernard	670
Pavón, Clementina Mejía de	672
Pavón, Segundo	672
Eggleston, Helen	675
Ober, Elizabeth Kidder	678
Kidder, Alice G.	678
Hutchinson-Smith, Jean	681
Aḥmadpúr, Fu'ád	682
Doktoroğlu, Sami	684
Hokafonu, Mosese	686
King, Melba M. Call	688
Sombeek, Ludmila Van	689
Furúghí, Rúḥu'lláh	691
Weeden, Gladys Anderson	693
Raynor, Allan	696
Vujdání, Bahár	699
Mr. Vujdání's last letter to his family	700
Pöllinger, Franz	701
Rhein, Ottilie	704
Sneider, Mabel Adelle	706
Ḥalabí, Ḥusayn (Ḥusayn Rátibu'l-Ḥalabí)	707
Wilks, Helen Hazel	708
Ghobad, Isfandiyar (Isfandíyár Qubád)	709
Falláḥ, Muḥammad 'Alí Afnán	711
Chinniah, Inparaju	712
Sala, Rosemary	713
Hayden, Robert	716
Giachery, Angeline	717
Nodada, Cecilia Mkize	720
Outhey, Jeannette	722
Abbas, Kamil (Kámil 'Abbás Riḍá)	722
Blake, Cecilia King	723
Allen, John William	725
Fitzner, Sarah Florence	727
Dhacoo, Louis Pierre Henri	728
Stettler, Karl Donald	729
Cookson, Alexe	730
Mobedzadeh, Shah Behram (Sháh Bahrám Múbidzádih)	732
Armstrong, Leonora Stirling	733
Scherer, Loretta L.	739
Scherer, Carl A.	739
Shepherd, Harold	740
Kahaloa, Solomon	742
Vaḥdat, 'Iṣmat	743
Vargas, Pedro	744
Ḥakím, Manúchihr	745
Eliás, Ṣubḥí	747
Kempton, Honor	749
Labíb, Muḥammad	751
Suleimani, Ridvaniyyih (Riḍváníyyih Sulamání)	753
Appa, Seewoosumbur Jeehoba	754
Beard, Frances	756
Rowling, Margaret	758
Vaḥdat, Yadu'lláh	759
Ruggoo, Arthur Joseph Gustave	761
Morais, Kenneth Allan	762
Sombeek, Rita van Bleyswijk	763
Sandando, Yowane	766
Farhangí, Masíḥ	767
Muṣṭafá, Muḥammad	769
Lukmani, M. E. (Muḥammad Ibráhímjí Luqmání)	772
Mkhize, Bertha	773
Kelsey, Olivia	775
Adlparvar, Hishmat	776
Hezari, Ardeshir (Ardishír Hizárí)	777
Edwards, Hermione Vera Keens-Douglas	778
Missaghiyeh, Abdul-Missagh ('Abdu'l-Míthaq Míthaqíyih)	779
Maḥmúdí, Zhínús Ni'mat	781
Baqá, Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá	784
Raman, Appu	787
Altass, Florence Elizabeth	788
Mavaddat, Nasrollah (Naṣru'lláh Maviddat)	791
Rostampour, Ardeshir (Ardashír Rustampúr)	792
Korean, Suliana Halaholo	794
Henseler, Julius	795
Joshi, Asanand Chagla	796
Nakhjavání, Jalál	797
Schmidt, Eugen	800
Baker, Richard St. Barbe	802
Brechtefeld, Henry	805
Seepé, Lot Max	807
Greeves, Lisbeth	808

	Page
Blakely, Dudley Moore	810
Mesbah, Amine (Amín'u'lláh Miṣbáḥ)	813
Mesbah, Jeanne (Marie-Jeanne Irady Miṣbáḥ)	813
Cobb, Stanwood	815
Kamálí-Sarvistání, Mírzá Áqá Khán	817
Lith, Jacob Eduard (Bob) van	818
Njang, Elizabeth Idang	819
Kazemi (Kázimí), Sharon Rickey	820
Holley, Doris	822
Zonneveld, Arnold	825

Part Six: Directory, Bibliography, Glossary

The Mayor of La Paz, Bolivia, at the La Paz book fair; July 1981	845
Bahá'í exhibit, International Book Fair, Frankfurt, Germany; October 1982	892
An example of Mishkín-Qalam's calligraphy	896

Part Seven: Literary and Musical Works

Bernard Leach; July 1977	931
Kaushal Kishore Bhargava	969
August Forel; 1924	974
The Times of London, 30 August 1980, reported the seizure of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán	979
Anna and August Rudd	981
Some participants in the first Winter School of Sweden; December 1979	982

INTRODUCTION

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

DAVID HOFMAN

RELIGION has two objectives, the regeneration of men and the advancement of mankind. *All men have been created to carry forward an ever advancing civilization* proclaims Bahá'u'lláh, and *The purpose of the one true God, exalted be His glory, in revealing Himself unto men is to lay bare those gems that lie hidden within the mine of their true and inmost selves.*

These aims of religion, universal and eternal, nevertheless have been conditioned to the capacities of each age or dispensation and the great religions of the past have developed their social orders within generally definable times and areas. Judaism, for instance, attained its peak under Solomon and was confined, before the dispersion, to the Near East; Zoroastrianism remained Persian until the Arab conquest and the settlement of a remnant in Western India; Christianity became the religion of European civilization; the building of the nation state undertaken by Islám remained a Muslim experiment until feudal Europe learned the lesson and its city states gave way to and adopted the more advanced order. It has remained for the Bahá'í religion to declare and promote the cause of world order—the *sine qua non* of its existence—and to disclose the concomitant unities of religion, of mankind and of historical purpose. 'Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life.'[1]

Religion sees the course of history as an organic process, moving towards the full realization of all the potentialities implanted in man. The vicissitudes, the great advances, the hiatuses it regards as the natural unfoldment of that process just as the succession of bud, leaf, flower and fruit is the natural unfoldment in the life of a tree; or infancy, childhood, youth and maturity in that of a man. Indeed, Bahá'í scripture explains, the process is the same. The sun is the effective agent in the organic life of the earth; religion in that of humanity. *The Sun of Truth is the Word of God upon which depends the education of those who are endowed with the power of understanding and of utterance.*[2] The creative Word, revealed in each stage of human progress by a Manifestation of God, and conditioned to the requirements of the time, is the effective agent in the long, single process of humanity's development from infancy to World Order. This truth is enshrined in all revealed religion although it needs the illumination of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation to enable men to perceive it. 'The first picture presented in the Bible is that of human unity in its simplest form; that of a single family. The last picture is that of a unity manifold and universal in which all kindreds and tongues and peoples and nations are gathered into one and unified in the enjoyment of a common worship, a common happiness, a common glory.

'The great problem which, according to the

[1] Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, *The Unfoldment of World Civilization.*
[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *Daryáy-i-Dánish.*

Bible, confronts the human race in its progress is that of advancing from the barest, baldest unity through a long experience of multiplying diversities till ultimately a balance between the two principles is struck, poise is gained and the two forces of variety and unity are blended in a multiple, highly developed world fellowship, the perfection of whose union was hardly suggested in the primitive simplicity of early man.'[1]

This spiritual view of evolution is the constant theme of religion. Each revelation refers to the past, looks forward to the future and concentrates upon the immediate need for spiritual regeneration and enlightenment. The Prophet evokes in human hearts a sacrificial love which transcends self-interest and causes the early believers to dedicate themselves entirely to the practice and diffusion of the new message. As it spreads it works like leaven in society, reforming its morals, uplifting its vision and promoting a greater diffusion of love in social action.

'World history at its core and in its essence is the story of the spiritual evolution of mankind. From this all other activities of man proceed and round it all other activities revolve.'[2]

Unlike the revelations of the past, the Bahá'í revelation releases not only the creative Word necessary to the renewal of spiritual vitality in the human spirit, but embodies that divine energy in an administrative order capable of bringing within its shade all the diversified ethnic groups and myriad types of the human race, who may find within its wide embrace a full, happy and purposeful life. Bahá'í activity therefore is directed not only, as in the past, to the spreading of the Word, but to the establishment of the fabric of that Order which, enshrined within the creative Word itself, becomes the chief instrument for the further diffusion and social application of the Divine Message. This World Order, which the Bahá'í Faith exists to establish, is none other than that long-promised Kingdom in which peace, justice and brotherhood shall prevail universally and 'the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'[3] The establishment of this World Order is dependent upon the regeneration of mankind which must turn again to God and recognize His purpose. The two aims of religion are, therefore, interacting and interdependent.

Such a world-shaking transformation cannot be brought about by any movement of reform, however disinterested, nor by any unaided human effort. Modern man has turned away from God, and bereft of his traditional sanctions, has inevitably wrecked his old order which, in truth, is lamentably inadequate to modern conditions and is not susceptible of repair. *Soon*, is Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic view of our day, *will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead*. Likewise, *The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective*.

The current aim of religion, embodied in the aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith, is the promotion of the next stage in the organic process of human evolution—the coming of age of the human race. The achievement of this maturity will be attested by the unification of mankind and the federation of the world in a single, all-embracing world society of human brotherhood. But great objectives are reached by dedicated pursuit of the preliminary and intermediate stages of the task, without ever losing sight of the ultimate goal, and this has been and is now the occupation of the Bahá'í world community—the completion within specified times of specified goals. These teaching plans to which the Bahá'ís eagerly devote their lives do far more than simply increase the size and consolidation of that world community. They are devised and launched by the head of the Faith—the Guardian and now the Universal House of Justice—and are therefore conceived from a global view, directed to the immediate needs of the great objective, conservative of the community's resources, world-wide in scale permitting the organic development of each part according to its stage of growth but with due regard for the needs of the whole, fostering intensively the unity, the international co-operation, the diversification of the ethnic, religious and social backgrounds of its increasing membership and developing new resources for the next step forward.

It should be noted that none of these plans is isolated in aim or conception but all are directed towards the implementation of three

[1] George Townshend, *The Heart of the Gospel*, 1939.
[2] ibid.
[3] Habakkuk 2:14.

great charters, enshrined in Bahá'í sacred Writings, which authorize and guide the expansion of the Faith and the development of its institutions. In past Dispensations the command to 'spread the Gospel' has been general and unspecified. It was the inspired guidance of the beloved Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith which disclosed to a spiritually delighted and grateful community yet another of the unique features of this Dispensation in the specific guidance given in these three charters for the implementation of this eternal command.

Bahá'u'lláh's *Tablet of Carmel* is the charter for the development of the Bahá'í World Centre in the twin cities of 'Akká and Haifa, the site of its most sacred Shrines—the tombs of the twin Prophets and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant—its monuments and gardens, and of its 'world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions'.[1]

The *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá is the charter for the development of the administrative order of the Faith. In this majestic document, the child of 'that mystic intercourse between Him Who communicated the generating influence of His divine Purpose and the One Who was its vehicle and chosen recipient,'[2] are delineated the structure of the administrative order, its *modus operandi*, its main institutions, the chain of authority, the source of guidance and the position of every believer *vis-à-vis* the Covenant. It has been well called the 'Charter of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh'.

The *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, a series of fourteen letters written by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the believers of the United States and Canada, some addressed to the entire company of believers in the North American continent and others to those in named geographical areas of that continent, constitute the charter for teaching the Faith throughout the world. 'Abdu'l-Bahá names the places, the people to whom teachers must go, the conditions under which they must travel and settle and He reveals several prayers for those who undertake this all-important task.

All the international plans of the Faith launched so far have set specific goals aimed at implementing these three charters and it is incontrovertibly apparent that never in any preceding Dispensation has the command to spread the Word of God been given, in the sacred text, such explicit guidance and detailed objectives.

As the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh increases in size and influence other aims and objectives become apparent and possible of pursuit. The relationship with agencies, institutions and authorities of the non-Bahá'í world becomes an important consideration once the community emerges from obscurity, and has led to public relations programmes and the development of closer association with the United Nations. The Bahá'í International Community is accredited as a non-governmental agency with consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and in various ways to other agencies of the United Nations. The fostering of this relationship has been the goal of all international plans so far, and is visualized as a continuing process. There are other objectives related to the special characteristics of Bahá'í life which become more and more important as the Faith grows and engages greater and greater public attention. They affect Bahá'í individuals, communities and institutions alike. These objectives fall into two groups—those concerned specifically with standards of conduct and those which relate to special Bahá'í practices.

The standards of conduct enjoined by the Prophet are invariably different from and sometimes diametrically opposed to the generally accepted ones of His day. High standards of conduct are, throughout Bahá'í scripture, constantly upheld and urged upon the believers, but the Guardian of the Faith in an essay written in 1938 addressed to the believers in the United States and Canada laid great stress upon the 'spiritual prerequisites . . . which constitute the bedrock on which . . . all teaching plans . . . must ultimately rest . . .'[3] He writes of '. . . a high sense of moral rectitude in their social and administrative activities, absolute chastity in their individual lives, and complete freedom from prejudice in their dealings with peoples of a different race, class, creed or colour.'[4] In his expansion of this theme he declared that 'This rectitude of conduct, with

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *The Spiritual Potencies of That Consecrated Spot*.
[2] Shoghi Effendi, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*.
[3] Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*.
[4] ibid.

its implications of justice, equity, truthfulness, honesty, fairmindedness, reliability, and trustworthiness, must distinguish every phase of the life of the Bahá'í community.'[1] 'A chaste and holy life must be made the controlling principle in the behaviour and conduct of all Bahá'ís, both in their social relationships with the members of their own community, and in their contacts with the world at large.'[2] 'It requires total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, from opium, and from similar habit-forming drugs. It condemns the prostitution of art and of literature, the practices of nudism and of companionate marriage, infidelity in marital relationships, and all manner of promiscuity, of easy familiarity, and of sexual vices.'[3] 'As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well nigh a century, has bitten into the fibre, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community [of that country] at the present stage of its evolution.'[4]

The regeneration of men—the first objective of religion mentioned in this essay—is therefore seen as the prime objective of the Bahá'í Faith. Membership in the Faith is drawn from that society which permits and indulges itself in all those corrupt, immoral and prejudiced activities which Bahá'ís are required to renounce, and since the Faith is steadily but persistently growing in numbers there is reason to hope that slowly but surely a regeneration will take place.

Further, these Bahá'í standards of conduct are not for individuals alone. They must be the hallmark of Bahá'í institutions and communities. 'Such a rectitude of conduct,' wrote the Guardian, 'must manifest itself, with ever-increasing potency, in every verdict which the elected representatives of the Bahá'í community, in whatever capacity they may find themselves, may be called upon to pronounce. It must be constantly reflected in the business dealings of all its members, in their domestic lives, in all manner of employment, and in any service they may, in the future, render their government or people.'[5] 'It must be made the hallmark of that numerically small, yet intensely dynamic and highly responsible body of the elected national representatives of every Bahá'í community, which constitutes the sustaining pillar, and the sole instrument for the election in every community, of that Universal House whose very name and title, as ordained by Bahá'u'lláh, symbolizes that rectitude of conduct which is its highest mission to safeguard and enforce.'[6]

The attitudes deriving from such standards, and from all the varied teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, must pervade all Bahá'í communities and imbue them with distinctive characteristics which can be recognized, amid the welter of opposing or mutually uninterested groups and factions into which modern society is disintegrating, as easily as the features of an individual in a crowd.

Those special Bahá'í practices which will inevitably characterize the Bahá'í community, are the regular observances of its Holy Days and Festivals, the abstention from work on nine such days during the year, the observances by all members of the community of the annual fast, of the laws governing marriage and divorce, of daily prayer, of the invariable practice of consultation in all affairs of life, and particularly by the regular observance of the Nineteen Day Feast. The habitual practice of such laws and ordinances is an objective pursued by all Bahá'ís and Bahá'í families.

It is seen that the aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith may be stated as the raising up of a world-wide community recruited from every race, nation, colour, religious and social background known on the planet, inspired, united and regenerated by the spiritual teachings and love of Bahá'u'lláh, dedicated to the building of that New World Order which 'may well be regarded as the brightest emanation'[7] of His mind and is none other than the long hoped for, Christ-promised Kingdom of God on earth. To prepare men for the gifts of that Kingdom—peace, brotherhood, spirituality—and to raise its very fabric in the world, are the immediate and long-time objectives of the Bahá'í Faith.

The energies of the Bahá'ís therefore, in pursuance of these aims, flow in three major channels: individual spiritual development,

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice.*
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid.
[5] ibid.
[6] ibid.
[7] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 213.

conveying the message of Bahá'u'lláh to others, and developing the pattern of world society embodied in the Bahá'í administrative order. All these activities derive from the sacred text and it is the unique feature of the Bahá'í revelation that whereas the first two are common to all revealed religions it is only Bahá'u'lláh Who creates the institutions and reveals the laws, delineates the social order and establishes the principles of the civilization to which His revelation will give rise. Neither Moses nor Christ, Muḥammad, Buddha, Zoroaster or Krishna did this, although They all foretold that it would be done by Him Who would take the government upon His shoulders and establish the Kingdom in peace and righteousness.

None of the traditional motives operates to create the Bahá'í community, neither former associations, political or economic identity of interest, racial or patriotic grouping. Only the recognition and love of Bahá'u'lláh brings into close relatedness and co-operative action people from every human background, of all types of character and personality, divergent and diversified interest. Through their brotherhood in Bahá'u'lláh the old crystallized forms of human divisiveness to which they formerly belonged, whether of class, race, religion, occupation, temperament or degree of civilization lose their rigidity and eventually disintegrate. The growing Bahá'í community on the other hand is essentially based on love, is a brotherhood, a family, each member delighting in the diversity of its membership, welcoming the former pariah or outcast as a new flower in the garden, each as proud of his humanity as was ever the former chauvinist of his country.

Within such a community the sun of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation can evoke new morals, new attitudes, new conventions, new hopes and visions, all enshrined within the text of the revelation itself and which provide the spiritual atmosphere and distinctive culture of the new day. Such a community, as it grows, becomes more and more a true social order, providing a soil to human life, a climate for its best development, an arena for the practice of its highest aspirations, and a beacon light to attract and guide the disillusioned, spiritually impoverished, frenetic and frustrated peoples of the earth.

The energies of this new culture, guided and conserved to the service of human welfare by the agencies of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order will result in the proliferation of new arts and sciences, new social and economic relationships, new educational methods and a general accession of well-being and felicity. The vision of the Bahá'í Faith, though glorious, is a practical one, and the number of its dedicated promoters grows with increasing speed. It is summarized in the following words by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith in his essay *The Unfoldment of World Civilization*:

'The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system. A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will act as the nerve centre of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate. A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and under-

standing among the nations and races of mankind. In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will co-operate, and will harmoniously develop. The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be co-ordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated.

'National rivalries, hatred, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and co-operation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear. The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race.

'A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation —such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.'

PART ONE

THE BAHÁ'Í REVELATION

I
EXCERPTS FROM THE BAHÁ'Í SACRED WRITINGS

1. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Excerpts from Fire and Light[1]

I

ALL praise be to God Who, from every drop of blood shed by His chosen ones, hath brought forth a vast creation whose number none but Himself can reckon. He hath raised them to be the embodiments of His love and the manifestations of His tender affection. It is they who are the hands of His Cause amongst men. It is they who have rendered aid unto God in every age and have arisen to promote that which He hath purposed in such wise that the majesty of the kings and their dreadful might have failed to affright them, nor have they been hindered from following the path of truth by the clash of arms and the furious clamour of battalions. They have raised their triumphal cry amidst all that dwell in the heavens and on the earth, summoning everyone unto the Lord of all mankind, He Who is the Ruler of this world and of the next, the God of the throne on high and of the earth below.

II

He is God—Blessed and Exalted is He

ALL praise unto the Almighty the Sanctified—glorified be His power—Who hath ordained that the tyranny of the unjust and the violence of the oppressors should become the means whereby the true lovers draw nigh unto the glorious habitation of the Best Beloved and the sincere among His servants attain the Paradise of communion with Him Who is the Desire of all men, and that sufferings and tribulations should serve as the instrument whereby His Word of command is spread abroad and the standards of His praise are unfurled in all regions.

How great is His transcendent power, how immensely exalted His all-embracing Will, inasmuch as He produceth light from fire and joy from sorrow.

They that are sunk in heedlessness fondly imagine that massacre and crucifixion cause the fire of the Word of God to be extinguished, and regard martyrdom as a devastating injury. They are utterly oblivious of the truth that through such afflictions the Cause of God is exalted, its fame is blazoned far and wide, and the martyrs themselves are enabled to attain the boundless retreats of nearness unto God. Immeasurably exalted is the Lord of Wisdom who doeth that which He willeth and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.

III

In the Name of the Loving Friend

O MOTHER! Grieve not over the loss of thy son; rather pride thyself therein. Indeed this is an occasion for gladness and rejoicing, not for despondency and sorrow.

I swear by the Day-Star of the morn of Truth that thy son hath attained a station such as no pen can depict, nor words adequately describe. His habitation is the realm on high, his associates and companions are sanctified and detached souls, and his sustenance the

[1] All but No. XI are excerpts translated by Mr. Habib Taherzadeh, with the assistance of a Committee at the Bahá'í World Centre, from *Fire and Light* [*Nár va Núr*] (Hofheim-Langenhain: Bahá'í Verlag, 1982), a compilation from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.

imperishable and hidden blessings of the Lord. In truth were that lofty and glorious station to be revealed to an extent smaller than a needle's eye before the eyes of them that dwell on earth, they would, one and all, be so filled with joy and ecstasy as to be consumed thereby. Therefore think not that he hath perished. Indeed he will endure in the heavenly kingdom as long as God Himself endureth. And this calleth for gratitude, not grieving. When he findeth that thou art happy he becometh more cheerful, but when he perceiveth that thou art disconsolate, this provoketh anguish in his heart.

Busy thyself in the remembrance of God and unloose thy tongue in celebrating His praise with utmost joy and radiance. God, the Exalted, the True is with thee. He is kinder than a father and more compassionate than a son.

Call thou to mind the episode of the land of Ṭaf (Karbilá), when a mother sent forth her son who laid down his life in the path of the Beloved. This Day is the king of days. It behoveth thee to show forth such deeds as will distinguish thee from the women of a bygone age. Such beseemeth the servants and maid-servants of God. Be thou resigned to His good-pleasure and seek communion with Him.

At this moment the entire company of the Concourse on high are engaged in extolling the virtues of thy son and in acclaiming his attributes. If thou couldst hear, thou wouldst, in thy longing, wing thy flight unto God, the Incomparable, the All-Informed. The day is not far distant when all the dwellers of the earth will magnify his praise and seek blessings from his dust. Verily incalculable is the bounty of thy Lord. Seize thy chance and be of them that endure with patience.

IV

NOTHING hath ever happened nor will happen without a cause or effect. Reflect a while and consider how vast the number of the people that have perished, how numerous the cities and towns that have been reduced to dust and now appear as a level plain. Such is their plight now and only God knoweth the future and that which will come to pass.

Think not that in this turmoil the friends of God have perished by the sword of the oppressors. I swear by the Day-Star of the Kingdom of truth that any of the loved ones of God that hath quaffed the cup of martyrdom during that episode hath ascended unto the realms above and doth abide securely beneath the canopy of the tender mercy of God. Indeed if those sublime stations were unveiled before the gaze of men, even to the extent of a needle's eye, everyone would raise his voice and exclaim: 'Would that I had been with him!' And if any of the friends hath suffered a material loss, such a loss is and will always be a perfect gain. The people of Bahá enjoy utmost benefits, at all times. If at some time or other, according to the dictates of God's inscrutable wisdom, one should incur a certain loss, let not this cause distress. Surely God will glorify it into a gift of inestimable gain. Verily, He is the Lord of Truth, the Powerful, the Knowing, the Wise.

V

YOU should exhort all the friends to patience, to acquiescence, and to tranquillity, saying: O ye loved ones of God in that land! Ye are glorified in all the worlds of God because of your relationship to Him Who is the Eternal Truth, but in your lives on this earthly plane, which pass away as a fleeting moment, ye are inflicted with abasement. For the sake of the One True God, ye have been reviled and persecuted, ye have been imprisoned, and surrendered your lives in His path. Ye should not, however, by reason of the tyrannical acts of some heedless souls, transgress the limits of God's commandments by contending with anyone.

Whatever hath befallen you, hath been for the sake of God. This is the truth, and in this there is no doubt. You should, therefore, leave all your affairs in His Hands, place your trust in Him, and rely upon Him. He will assuredly not forsake you. In this, likewise, there is no doubt. No father will surrender his sons to devouring beasts; no shepherd will leave his flock to ravening wolves. He will most certainly do his utmost to protect his own.

If, however, for a few days, in compliance with God's all-encompassing wisdom, outward affairs should run their course contrary to one's cherished desire, this is of no consequence and should not matter. Our intent is that all the friends should fix their gaze on the

Supreme Horizon, and cling to that which hath been revealed in the Tablets. They should strictly avoid sedition, and refrain from treading the path of dissension and strife. They should champion their One True God, exalted be He, through the hosts of forbearance, of submission, of an upright character, of goodly deeds, and of the choicest and most refined words.

VI

THEY that yearn for the abode of the Beloved, they that circle round the sanctuary of the Desired One, are not apprehensive of trials and adversities, nor do they flee away from that which is ordained by God. They receive their portion from the ocean of resignation and drink their fill from the soft-flowing stream of His mercy. They would not surrender the good-pleasure of the Friend in exchange for the kingdom of both worlds, nor would they barter that which the Well-Beloved hath decreed in return for dominion over the realms of the infinite. They would eagerly drink the venom of woe as if it were the water of life and would drain deadly poison to its bitter dregs just as a sweet and life-giving draught. In the arid wastes of desolation they are stirred with enthusiasm through the remembrance of the Friend, and in the dreary wilds of adversity they are eager and impatient to offer themselves as a sacrifice. Unhesitatingly have they renounced their lives and directed their steps towards the abode of the Best Beloved. They have closed their eyes to the world and fixed their gaze upon the beauteous countenance of the Friend, cherishing no desire but the presence of the loved One and seeking no attainment save reunion with Him. They fly with the feathers of trust in God, and soar with the wings of adherence unto His Will. In their estimation a blood-shedding blade is more desirable than finest silk and a piercing dart more acceptable than mother's milk.

'High-spirited souls by the myriad are
deemed necessary in this path,
To lay down a hundred lives with every
fleeting breath.'

It behoveth us to kiss the hand of the would-be assassin and to set out, dancing, on our way to the habitation of the Friend. How indescribably pleasant is that hour, how immeasurably sweet that moment when the inmost spirit is intent upon sacrificing itself, when the tabernacle of fidelity is hastening to attain the heights of self-surrender! With necks laid bare, we yearn for the stroke of the ruthless sword wielded by the hand of the Beloved. With breasts aglow with light, we eagerly await the dart of His decree. Contemptuous of name, we have detached ourselves from all else but Him, we shall not run away, we shall not endeavour to repel the stranger, we pray for calamity, that thereby we may soar unto the sublime heights of the spirit, seek shelter beneath the shade of the tree of reunion, attain the highest stations of love, and drink our fill from the wondrous wine of everlasting communion with Him. Surely we will not forfeit this imperishable dominion, nor will we forgo this incomparable blessing. If hidden beneath the dust, we shall rear our heads from the bosom of the tender mercy of the Lord of mankind. No trial can suppress these companions, no mortal feet can traverse this journey, nor can any veil obscure this countenance.

Yea, it is clear and evident that in view of the multitudes of internal and external opponents who have raised the standards of opposition, who have girded the loins of endeavour to eliminate these poor creatures, it standeth to reason that one should turn away from them and flee from this land, nay, from the face of the earth. However, through the loving-kindness of God and by the aid of His invisible confirmations, we are as radiant as the sun and as shining as the moon. We are established upon the throne of tranquillity and seated upon the couch of fortitude. Of what importance is the shipwreck to the fish of the spirit? What doth a soul celestial care if the physical frame is destroyed? Indeed this body is for it a prison; and the ship but a place of confinement to the fish. What else but a nightingale can understand a Nightingale's melody and who else but the intimate friend can recognize the familiar voice of the Friend?

VII

THE majesty and glory of the Cause are as great as its trials and afflictions are intense. However, trials and afflictions are scarce noticed in this day, inasmuch as the heaven of

divine bounty is uplifted and the ocean of His loving kindness is manifest. If on the one hand cups of bitter woe and suffering are seen, on the other He Who is the Abhá Beauty is proferring, with His Own hand that hath turned white, the chalice of everlasting life. Though the croaking of the Raven is loud, the river of His choice wine is streaming forth.

In one of the Tablets the following utterances were sent down by the Revealer of Verses—glorified and exalted be His Words:

Say, O ye chosen of the one true God! Let not the censure of the froward, nor the denunciations uttered by them that have repudiated His Cause, grieve you; inasmuch as such acts of opposition have, from time immemorial, served as clear proofs of the truth of Him Who is the True One—magnified be His glory. Therefore should ye hear an unseemly word from an ignorant, foolish or negligent soul, be sure that it can never do harm, for the day is not far distant when such persons and whatsoever pertaineth unto them will have passed away, whereas ye yourselves have been honoured in this day to drink your fill from the living waters of the holy utterances revealed by the All-Merciful and to hearken unto the words: 'Ye are of My company.' Thereupon one of the favoured angels that are nigh unto God and circle round His throne uttered this supplication: 'O my Lord and my Master! O my Desired One and my Best Beloved! O Thou who art the Beloved of all that are in the heavens and on the earth! I beseech Thee to grant, from the ocean of Thy bounty and the day-star of Thy heavenly grace, that I may be cursed, reviled and denounced a myriad times for the sake of Thy love, that these ears of mine may but once be blessed by hearing Thy sweet words: "Verily thou art of the people of Bahá".'

Most of the people of the earth have turned away from the one true God and failed to take their portion from the ocean of divine knowledge. They have ascribed and will continue to ascribe unto Him that which hath caused the inmates of the all-highest Paradise as well as the Prophets and Messengers of God to weep sore and wail. This is not the first divine Revelation that hath been manifested in the world. They that are the chosen ones of God should at all times and under all conditions dedicate themselves assiduously to the service of His Cause. Rumi[1]—upon him be the mercy of God—saith: 'the moon sheddeth light while the dog howleth.' It behoveth everyone to have the utmost regard for the reformation of the world and for that which beseemeth man's sublime station. However, should the continued existence of anyone be detrimental to the interests of the Cause of God, the Almighty will undoubtedly lay hold on him as He hath in the past. No one hath fathomed nor can fathom His transcendent wisdom.

VIII

A PRAISE, exalted above every conception that pen and ink can portray, beseemeth the sublime, the ever-blessed court of the Well-Beloved Who hath initiated the people of Bahá into the school of adversity and directed their steps towards the realm of immortality. Glorified, immensely glorified is the omnipotent Lord Who hath made blood as a means to cause the trees of the exalted Paradise to grow and burst forth, and Who hath ordained that trials and afflictions, though bitter and agonizing, should prove sweeter than sugar to the taste of His loved ones. So strong are the bonds of love for this Well-Beloved that adversities and tribulations have been and will ever be powerless to deflect His ardent lovers from treading His Path.

I swear by Him Who is Our Beloved and your Beloved, that if one's life be not offered up in His path, it would not be worth even as much as a mustard seed, and if one's inmost being were not laid down at His feet, it would appear more abject and insignificant than a pebble. However, none but the divine Assayers are able to recognize this gem. In truth, when bereft of vision, what advantage would one gain by entering into the all-highest Paradise? If destitute of hearing, what can one perceive by drawing close unto the celestial Tree of Blessedness? The Assayers of these priceless gems are such souls unto whom the following tribute is paid: 'They that speak not till He hath spoken and act according to His commandment.'[2] Likewise He saith: 'They

[1] Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí (AD 1207–1273), Persian Ṣúfí poet.
[2] Qur'án 21:27

whom neither merchandise nor traffic beguile from the remembrance of the Almighty.'[1]

Is it fondly imagined that death shall not overtake everyone? Nay, by God! 'Every soul shall taste of death.'[2] Such being the case, it would certainly be far better and more fitting if this mortal life were offered up in the path of the Beloved, and sacrificed for the sake of Him Who is the ultimate Desire of all men. Nay, I beg forgiveness of God for this assertion, inasmuch as this sacrifice would be a myriad times more preferable and fitting. Even for this assertion, I once again implore pardon of God.

I earnestly hope and pray that the one true God—magnified be His glory—may graciously brighten the eyes of all men with the collyrium of His knowledge, that they may be enabled to discern with both their inner and outer eyes that which the victims of evil passions and corrupt desires are debarred from seeing and recognizing.

Salutation and praise rest upon them that have not been kept back by any transitory thing whatever, nor have been alarmed by the violent commotions provoked by the people of the earth—such people as are immersed in the pursuit of earthly vanities and have been deluded by the gay livery of the world, in such wise that they have cast the Cause of God behind their backs. The day is fast approaching when He will have rolled up their domain and spread out a new one in its stead. Verily, He is the One, the Peerless, the Powerful, the Invincible, the Almighty.

IX

IF occasionally, in accordance with the exigencies of God's consummate wisdom, an untoward incident should befall the friends, it would undoubtedly serve as a means whereby divine gifts and heaven-sent bounties will be vouchsafed unto them. Ponder thou upon the tragic episode that hath transpired in the land of Yá (Yazd). I swear by My life, every single event associated therewith hath led to the exaltation of the Word of God and the advancement of His Cause. Indeed whatsoever doth happen during the days of the Manifestation of God, though to outward seeming it is but grievous abasement, there lieth concealed within it incalculable glory and honour; and though it appeareth as dire torment, in reality a myriad blessings are enshrined therein.

If those that have erred grievously were aware of the hidden mysteries of martyrdom, they would in no wise commit such deeds. However, God hath caused them to be tongue-tied and bereft of sight, with their minds and power of perception reduced to naught, in such wise that they deem a priceless benefit a grievous loss. With their own hands they help the Cause of God, though they themselves are wholly unconscious of it. Verily God would at one time render His Cause victorious through the aid of His enemies and at another by virtue of the assistance of His chosen ones. Concerning those pure and blessed souls, Our Pen of Glory hath revealed that which excelleth the whole world, its treasures and whatsoever existeth therein. Ere long shall the heedless and the doers of wickedness be repaid for that which their hands have wrought.

X

THE people of the world have grievously erred, for they fondly imagine that they can exterminate the Cause of God, that they would be able to extinguish His effulgent light, and to put out His heavenly lamps. Vain indeed are their imaginings. I swear by the righteousness of God that the more they endeavour to quench His Light, the brighter will it shine, and the more they strive to smother its flame, the fiercer will it burn. God's invincible Will far transcendeth their devices, and His Purpose is supreme above all human desires, inasmuch as all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth have been called into being through a single holy breeze —the Word of His command—wafted from His presence, and all shall be brought to naught through but one letter of His. From time immemorial He hath been established upon the seat of His sovereignty and through eternity will He continue to occupy the inaccessible heights of His glory. Every created thing is impotent before the evidences of His invincible might, and all beings fade into utter nothingness when confronted with the revelation of His awesome majesty.

The eyes of His loved ones have always wept sore, while His enemies have rejoiced

[1] ibid. 24:37
[2] ibid. 3:184

and made merry by reason of their heedlessness. However, that weeping was followed by a myriad blessings and this jubilation by grievous retribution. Ere long the fruits of these two shall appear from the tree of His irrevocable Decree. Therefore how justifiably proud must be the eye which is worthy of shedding tears and how great the felicity of the neck that is fit to be ensnared in the noose of the Friend.

XI

O GOD, my God! Thou seest Thy loved ones turning their hearts to Thee, and holding fast unto the cord of Thy ordinances and laws. I beseech Thee by the waves of the sea of Thine utterance, and by Him through whom Thou didst adorn the heavens of Thy might, to graciously protect them by the aid of Thy hosts.

O God! Thou beholdest Thy lovers in Írán in the clutches of hate and enmity. I beg of Thee, by Thy mercy which hath preceded the contingent world, to raise up from the earth those who will be moved to aid and protect them, and to preserve their rights and the restitution due to them by those who broke Thy Covenant and Testament, and perpetrated such acts as made the inmates of the cities of Thy justice and equity to lament. Thou art, verily, the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.



2. THE BÁB

Excerpts from Selections from the Writings of the Báb[1]

I

THE substance wherewith God hath created Me is not the clay out of which others have been formed. He hath conferred upon Me that which the worldly-wise can never comprehend, nor the faithful discover . . . I am one of the sustaining pillars of the Primal Word of God. Whosoever hath recognized Me, hath known all that is true and right, and hath attained all that is good and seemly; and whosoever hath failed to recognize Me, hath turned away from all that is true and right and hath succumbed to everything evil and unseemly.

I swear by the righteousness of Thy Lord, the Lord of all created things, the Lord of all the worlds! Were a man to rear in this world as many edifices as possible and worship God through every virtuous deed which God's knowledge embraceth, and attain the presence of the Lord, and were he, even to a measure less than that which is accountable before God, to bear in his heart a trace of malice towards Me, all his deeds would be reduced to naught and he would be deprived of the glances of God's favour, become the object of His wrath and assuredly perish. For God hath ordained that all the good things which lie in the treasury of His knowledge shall be attained through obedience unto Me, and every fire recorded in His Book, through disobedience unto Me. Methinks in this day and from this station I behold all those who cherish My love and follow My behest abiding within the mansions of Paradise, and the entire company of Mine adversaries consigned to the lowest depths of hell-fire . . .

II

I SWEAR by the Most Great Lord! Wert thou[2] to be told in what place I dwell, the first person to have mercy on Me would be thyself. In the heart of a mountain is a fortress [Mákú] . . . the inmates of which are confined to two guards and four dogs. Picture, then, My plight . . . I swear by the truth of God! Were he who hath been willing to treat Me in such a manner to know Who it is Whom he hath so treated, he, verily, would never in his life be happy. Nay—I, verily, acquaint thee with the truth of the matter—it is as if he hath imprisoned all the Prophets, and all the men of truth and all the chosen ones . . .

When this decree was made known unto Me, I wrote to him who administereth the affairs of the kingdom, saying: 'Put Me to death, I adjure thee by God, and send My head wherever thou pleasest. For surely an innocent person such as I, cannot reconcile himself to being consigned to a place reserved for criminals and let his life continue.' My plea remained unanswered. Evidently His Excellency the Ḥájí, is not fully aware of the truth of our Cause. It would be far more heinous a deed to sadden the hearts of the faithful, whether men or women, than to lay waste the sacred House of God.

Verily, the One True God beareth Me witness that in this Day I am the true mystic Fane of God, and the Essence of all good. He who doeth good unto Me, it is as if he doeth good unto God, His angels and the entire company of His loved ones. He who doeth evil unto Me, it is as if he doeth evil unto God and His chosen ones. Nay, too exalted is the station of God and of His loved ones for any person's good or evil deed to reach their holy threshold. Whatever reacheth Me is ordained to reach Me; and that which hath come unto Me, to him who giveth will it revert. By the One in Whose hand is My soul, he hath cast no one but himself into prison. For assuredly whatsoever God hath decreed for Me shall come to pass and naught else save that which God hath ordained for us shall ever touch us. Woe betide him from whose hands floweth evil, and blessed the man from whose hands floweth good. Unto no one do I take My plaint save to God; for He is the best of judges. Every state of adversity or bliss is from Him alone, and He is the All-Powerful, the Almighty . . .

[1] Bahá'í World Centre, Haifa, 1976.
[2] Muḥammad Sháh, to whom this Tablet was addressed.

III

O PEOPLES of the earth! Verily the resplendent Light of God hath appeared in your midst, invested with this unerring Book, that ye may be guided aright to the ways of peace and, by the leave of God, step out of the darkness into the light and onto this far-extended Path of Truth . . .
Chapter LXII, Qayyúmu'l-Asmá.

IV

CONSIDER the manifold favours vouchsafed by the Promised One, and the effusions of His bounty which have pervaded the concourse of the followers of Islám to enable them to attain unto salvation. Indeed observe how He Who representeth the origin of creation, He Who is the Exponent of the verse, 'I, in very truth, am God', identified Himself as the Gate [Báb] for the advent of the promised Qá'im, a descendant of Muḥammad, and in His first Book enjoined the observance of the laws of the Qur'án, so that the people might not be seized with perturbation by reason of a new Book and a new Revelation and might regard His Faith as similar to their own, perchance they would not turn away from the Truth and ignore the thing for which they had been called into being.

V

THOU seest, O my Lord, my dwelling-place in the heart of this mountain and Thou dost witness my forbearance. Verily I have desired naught else but Thy love and the love of those who love Thee. How can I extol the effulgent beauty of Thy Lordship, conscious as I am of my nothingness before the habitation of Thy glory? Yet the sorrow of solitude and loneliness prompteth me to invoke Thee through this prayer, perchance Thy trusted servants may become aware of my lamentations, may supplicate unto Thee on my behalf, and Thou wouldst graciously answer their prayers as a token of Thy grace and Thy favour. I bear witness that there is no God but Thee, inasmuch as Thou art invested with sovereignty, grandeur, glory and power which no one among Thy servants can visualize or comprehend. Indeed Thou shalt, by virtue of that which is inherent in Thine Essence, ever remain inscrutable unto all except Thyself.

VI

IS there any Remover of difficulties save God? Say: Praised be God! He is God! All are His servants and all abide by His bidding!

VII

He is God, the Sovereign Lord, the All-Glorious

SAY: Praise be to God Who graciously enableth whomsoever He willeth to adore Him. Verily no God is there but Him. His are the most excellent titles; it is He Who causeth His Word to be fulfilled as He pleaseth and it is He Who leadeth those who have received illumination and seek the way of righteousness.

Fear thou God, thy Lord, and make mention of His Name in the day-time and at eventide. Follow not the promptings of the faithless, lest thou be reckoned among the exponents of idle fancies. Faithfully obey the Primal Point Who is the Lord Himself, and be of the righteous. Let nothing cause thee to be sore shaken, neither let the things which have been destined to take place in this Cause disturb thee. Strive earnestly for the sake of God and walk in the path of righteousness. Shouldst thou encounter the unbelievers, place thy whole trust in God, thy Lord, saying, Sufficient is God unto me in the kingdoms of both this world and the next.

The Day is approaching when God shall bring the faithful together. In truth no God is there other than Him.

May the peace of God be with those who have been guided aright through the power of divine guidance.

VIII

O LORD! Render victorious Thy forbearing servants in Thy days by granting them a befitting victory, inasmuch as they have sought martyrdom in Thy path. Send down upon them that which will bring comfort to their minds, will rejoice their inner beings, will impart assurance to their hearts and tranquillity to their bodies and will enable their souls to ascend to the presence of God, the Most Exalted, and to attain the supreme Paradise

and such retreats of glory as Thou hast destined for men of true knowledge and virtue. Verily Thou knowest all things, while we are but Thy servants, Thy thralls, Thy bondsmen and Thy poor ones. No Lord but Thee do we invoke, O God our Lord, nor do we implore blessings or grace from anyone but Thee, O Thou Who art the God of mercy unto this world and the next. We are but the embodiments of poverty, of nothingness, of helplessness and of perdition, while Thy whole Being betokeneth wealth, independence, glory, majesty and boundless grace.

Turn our recompense, O Lord, into that which well beseemeth Thee of the good of this world and of the next, and of the manifold bounties which extend from on high down to the earth below.

Verily Thou art our Lord and the Lord of all things. Into Thy hands do we surrender ourselves, yearning for the things that pertain unto Thee.

IX

GLORY be unto Thee, O Lord! Although Thou mayest cause a person to be destitute of all earthly possessions, and from the beginning of his life until his ascension unto Thee he may be reduced to poverty through the operation of Thy decree, yet wert Thou to have brought him forth from the Tree of Thy love, such a bounty would indeed be far better for him than all the things Thou hast created in heaven and earth and whatsoever lieth between them; inasmuch as he will inherit the heavenly home, through the revelation of Thy favours, and will partake of the goodly gifts Thou hast provided therein; for the things which are with Thee are inexhaustible. This indeed is Thy blessing which according to the good-pleasure of Thy Will Thou dost bestow on those who tread the path of Thy love.

How numerous the souls who in former times were put to death for Thy sake, and in whose names all men now pride themselves; and how vast the number of those whom Thou didst enable to acquire earthly fortunes, and who amassed them while they were deprived of Thy Truth, and who in this day have passed into oblivion. Theirs is a grievous chastisement and a dire punishment.

O Lord! Provide for the speedy growth of the Tree of Thy divine Unity; water it then, O Lord, with the flowing waters of Thy good-pleasure, and cause it, before the revelations of Thy divine assurance, to yield such fruits as Thou desirest for Thy glorification and exaltation, Thy praise and thanksgiving, and to magnify Thy Name, to laud the oneness of Thine Essence and to offer adoration unto Thee, inasmuch as all this lieth within Thy grasp and in that of none other.

Great is the blessedness of those whose blood Thou hast chosen wherewith to water the Tree of Thine affirmation, and thus to exalt Thy holy and immutable Word.

Ordain for me, O my Lord, and for those who believe in Thee that which is deemed best for us in Thine estimation, as set forth in the Mother Book, for within the grasp of Thy hand Thou holdest the determined measures of all things . . . .

X

TRUE death is realized when a person dieth to himself at the time of His Revelation in such wise that he seeketh naught except Him.

XI

. . . WHEN God sent forth His Prophet Muḥammad, on that day the termination of the prophetic cycle was foreordained in the knowledge of God. Yea, that promise hath indeed come true and the decree of God hath been accomplished as He hath ordained. Assuredly we are today living in the Days of God. These are the glorious days on the like of which the sun hath never risen in the past. These are the days which the people in bygone times eagerly expected. What hath then befallen you that ye are fast asleep? These are the days wherein God hath caused the Day-Star of Truth to shine resplendent. What hath then caused you to keep your silence? These are the appointed days which ye have been yearningly awaiting in the past—the days of the advent of divine justice. Render ye thanks unto God, O ye concourse of believers.

Let not the deeds of those who reject the Truth shut you out as by a veil. Such people have warrant over your bodies only, and God hath not reposed in them power over your spirits, your souls and your hearts. Fear ye

God that haply it may be well with you. All things have been created for your sakes, and for the sake of naught else hath your creation been ordained. Fear ye God and take heed lest forms and apparels debar you from recognizing Him. Render ye thanksgiving unto God that perchance He may deal mercifully with you.

This mortal life is sure to perish; its pleasures are bound to fade away and ere long ye shall return unto God, distressed with pangs of remorse, for presently ye shall be roused from your slumber, and ye shall soon find yourselves in the presence of God and will be asked of your doings . . . .

These verses, clear and conclusive, are a token of the mercy of thy Lord and a source of guidance for all mankind. They are a light unto those who believe in them and a fire of afflictive torment for those who turn away and reject them.

XII

LAUDED be Thy Name, O Lord our God! Thou art in truth the Knower of things unseen. Ordain for us such good as Thine all-embracing knowledge can measure. Thou art the sovereign Lord, the Almighty, the Best Beloved.

All praise be unto Thee, O Lord! We shall seek Thy grace on the appointed Day and shall put our whole reliance in Thee, Who art our Lord. Glorified art Thou, O God! Grant us that which is good and seemly that we may be able to dispense with everything but Thee. Verily Thou art the Lord of all worlds.

O God! Recompense those who endure patiently in Thy days and strengthen their hearts to walk undeviatingly in the path of Truth. Grant then, O Lord, such goodly gifts as would enable them to gain admittance into Thy blissful Paradise. Exalted art Thou, O Lord God. Let Thy heavenly blessings descend upon homes whose inmates have believed in Thee. Verily, unsurpassed art Thou in sending down divine blessings. Send forth, O God, such hosts as would render Thy faithful servants victorious. Thou dost fashion the created things through the power of Thy decree as Thou pleasest. Thou art in truth the Sovereign, the Creator, the All-Wise.

Say: God is indeed the Maker of all things. He giveth sustenance in plenty to whomsoever He willeth. He is the Creator, the Source of all beings, the Fashioner, the Almighty, the Maker, the All-Wise. He is the Bearer of the most excellent titles throughout the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them. All do His bidding, and all the dwellers of earth and heaven celebrate His praise, and unto Him shall all return.

XIII

HOW numerous the souls raised to life who were exposed to dire humiliation in Thy Path for exalting Thy Word and for glorifying Thy divine Unity! How profuse the blood that hath been shed for the sake of Thy Faith to vindicate the authenticity of Thy divine Mission and to celebrate Thy praise! How vast the possessions that were wrongfully seized in the Path of Thy love in order to affirm the loftiness of Thy sanctity and to extol Thy glorious Name! How many the feet that have trodden upon the dust in order to magnify Thy holy Word and to extol Thy glory! How innumerable the voices that were raised in lamentation, the hearts that were struck with terror, the grievous woes that none other than Thee can reckon, and the adversities and afflictions that remain inscrutable to anyone except Thyself; all this to establish, O my God, the loftiness of Thy sanctity and to demonstrate the transcendent character of Thy glory.

These decrees were ordained by Thee so that all created things might bear witness that they have been brought into being for the sake of naught else but Thee. Thou hast withheld from them the things that bring tranquillity to their hearts, that they might know of a certainty that whatever is associated with Thy holy Being is far superior to and exalted above aught else that would satisfy them; inasmuch as Thine indomitable power pervadeth all things, and nothing can ever frustrate it.

Indeed Thou hast caused these momentous happenings to come to pass that those who are endued with perception may readily recognize that they were ordained by Thee to demonstrate the loftiness of Thy divine Unity and to affirm the exaltation of Thy sanctity.

XIV

GLORY be unto Thee, O Lord, Thou Who has brought into being all created things, through the power of Thy behest.

O Lord! Assist those who have renounced all else but Thee, and grant them a mighty victory. Send down upon them, O Lord, the concourse of the angels in heaven and earth and all that is between, to aid Thy servants, to succour and strengthen them, to enable them to achieve success, to sustain them, to invest them with glory, to confer upon them honour and exaltation, to enrich them and to make them triumphant with a wondrous triumph.

Thou art their Lord, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of all the worlds. Strengthen this Faith, O Lord, through the power of these servants and cause them to prevail over all the peoples of the world; for they, of a truth, are Thy servants who have detached themselves from aught else but Thee, and Thou verily art the protector of true believers.

Grant Thou, O Lord, that their hearts may, through allegiance to this, Thine inviolable Faith, grow stronger than anything else in the heavens and on earth and in whatsoever is between them; and strengthen, O Lord, their hands with the tokens of Thy wondrous power that they may manifest Thy power before the gaze of all mankind.

XV

O LORD! Unto Thee I repair for refuge and toward all Thy signs I set my heart.

O Lord! Whether travelling or at home, and in my occupation or in my work, I place my whole trust in Thee.

Grant me then Thy sufficing help so as to make me independent of all things, O Thou Who art unsurpassed in Thy mercy!

Bestow upon me my portion, O Lord, as Thou pleasest, and cause me to be satisfied with whatsoever Thou hast ordained for me.

Thine is the absolute authority to command.

XVI

O LORD! Thou art the Remover of every anguish and the Dispeller of every affliction. Thou art He Who banisheth every sorrow and setteth free every slave, the Redeemer of every soul. O Lord! Grant deliverance through Thy mercy and reckon me among such servants of Thine as have gained salvation.



3. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

Excerpts from Fire and Light[1]

I

O LORD! These pure souls have ascended unto the realms on high. They have proved themselves nimble and sprightly in Thy service. They rid themselves of all, drew nigh unto Thee, and reached the Fountainhead of eternal life. They have now taken their flight from this world on the wings of longing and have attained Thy kingdom of glory. Gladden Thou their hearts in the world of the unseen and let them abide beneath the shadow of the tree of hope. Bestow upon them Thine infinite mercy and grant them Thy boundless pardon. Make them the signs of Thy forgiveness and the manifestations of Thy forbearance and bounty. Verily Thou art the Bestower, the Loving, the One Who forgiveth the sins of men.

II

O LORD! These stainless souls grew contemptuous of the world of dust and have ascended unto Thy kingdom. From this dreary world they have winged their flight unto the realm of resplendent glory. Weary and dejected they languished in this puny nest, eagerly waiting to set out for their celestial habitation. They moved swiftly and sped forth on their flight until they attained unto Thee. O Forgiving One! Grant them Thy forgiveness. O All-Loving One! Bestow upon them Thy tender care. O All-Sufficing One! Give them Thy bounty and be their comforter and companion. Thou art the Pardoner, the Resplendent, the Bestower, the Lord of Strength.

III

O FORGIVING Lord! These birds that sang Thy praise left their mortal remains buried in desolate tombs, and ascended with the wings of their spirits unto the Frequented Fane. They freed themselves from the pitfalls of this world of dust, so that they might partake of immortal life in the realms above, might seek shelter beneath the shadow of the tree of hope and abide in a nest upon the twigs of eternity in the Abhá Paradise, the Kingdom on High, singing hymns of glory and praise in wondrous accents and sweet melodies.

O Thou kind Lord! These souls are the birds of Thy meadows, the nightingales of Thy rose-garden. Let them dwell within the orchard of Thy forgiveness and grant them access to the concourse wherein Thine eternal glory shineth resplendent, wherein Thy divine beauty is unveiled and perpetual communion with Thee is assured. Enable them to live eternally and to endure forevermore.

Thou art the Forgiving, the Bountiful, the All-Loving.

IV

O THOU kind Lord! From the horizon of detachment Thou hast manifested souls that, even as the shining moon, shed radiance upon the realm of heart and soul, rid themselves from the attributes of the world of existence and hastened forth unto the kingdom of immortality. With a drop from the ocean of Thy loving kindness Thou didst oft-times moisten the gardens of their hearts until they gained incomparable freshness and beauty. The holy fragrance of Thy divine unity was diffused far and wide, shedding its sweet savours over the entire world, causing the regions of the earth to be redolent with perfume.

Raise up then, O Spirit of Purity, souls who, like those sanctified beings, will become free and pure, will adorn the world of being with a new raiment and a wondrous robe, will seek no one else but Thee, tread no path except the path of Thy good-pleasure and will speak of naught but the mysteries of Thy Cause.

O Thou kind Lord! Grant that this youth may attain unto that which is the highest aspiration of the holy ones. Endow him with the wings of Thy strengthening grace—wings of detachment and divine aid—that he may soar thereby into the atmosphere of Thy tender mercy, be able to partake of Thy

[1] Translated by Mr. Habíb Taherzadeh, with the assistance of a Committee at the Bahá'í World Centre, from *Fire and Light* [*Nár va Núr*] (Hofheim-Langenhain: Bahá'í Verlag, 1982), a compilation from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.

celestial bestowals, may become a sign of divine guidance and a standard of the Concourse on high. Thou art the Potent, the Powerful, the Seeing, the Hearing.

V

He is God

O REMNANTS of the martyrs in the path of God!

Your letters have been received and despite the lack of a moment's spare time they were perused with the utmost attention. Since it is impossible to answer each letter separately, I am writing you collectively, and this you will surely excuse.

Indeed as a result of the outrages perpetrated by the wicked, the attacks of the rapacious beasts and the onslaught of the ravening wolves, those blessed souls have endured woeful tribulations and have borne dire sufferings and distressing calamities, each of which calleth for weeping and wailing, for sighing and lamentation. Were eyes to shed tears of blood, they would afford no consolation. By reason of these tragic events 'Abdu'l-Bahá is assailed by despondency and anguish and is beset by bitter sadness and grief.

However, when we ponder carefully it will be observed that these unceasing trials and afflictions, these successive ordeals, though they break one's back, crush one's strength, and exhaust one's endurance, are among the greatest gifts of God, the Ever-Living, the All-Powerful, for He thereby accepteth the self-sacrifice which certain souls are prompted to make in His path, enabling them to attire their heads with the glorious crown of martyrdom and to establish themselves upon the throne of everlasting sovereignty. Such hath ever been the qualification of them that enjoy near access unto God, such are the attributes of the pure in heart.

This life will surely pass away like unto a fleeting shadow and the gay trappings of this earthly existence will soon be rolled up. The cup of bitter death will be borne round and the fire of anguish and despair will be set ablaze. The foundation of human life will crumble and this clamorous outcry and tumult will be hushed to silence and stillness. Rejoicings will cease and pleasures will come to an end. The souls will set out empty-handed on their journey to the next world, compassed by intense grief and anguish. Of the contemplations of bygone days, of the former life of comfort, joy and power not a single vestige will be left. Utter perdition will prevail and everyone's grievous loss and deprivation will be laid bare.

However, such faithful friends as have laid down their lives as martyrs will be stirred by the waves of the ocean of ecstasy. They will be filled with joy and radiance through the revelation of heavenly glad-tidings, will receive divine confirmations of loving-kindness and will be sustained by the wondrous blessings of the peerless Lord in such wise that they will be moved to say: 'Praise be unto God that during our lifetime in this mortal world we became the target of darts in the path of God and were exposed to the dire peril of arrows and spears. Every day a shaft of cruelty was hurled at us, and every moment we drank our fill from the draught of affliction, till eventually we hastened forth to the field of martyrdom for the sake of His love, and offered up our hearts and souls in the path of the All-Merciful'.

Indeed at that moment such souls will rejoice with exceeding gladness and will be so carried away by the joyful tidings of God that they will wing their flight to the heaven of eternal glory with the utmost ecstasy, exultation and spiritual blissfulness. It is Our ardent hope now that We too may partake of a drop from this celestial cup and may receive a portion from this life-giving draught. Verily my Lord will vouchsafe His special favours unto whomsoever He pleaseth. No God is there but Him, the All-Bountiful, the Most Generous.

Now praise be to God that the remnants of the families of the martyrs stand like a mighty structure, firm, steadfast and immovable. Before the eyes of the peoples of east and west they have proved themselves to be wholly self-sacrificing, eager to rush forth to the field of martyrdom, denizens of the kingdom of His love, seated upon the throne of eternal glory, knights of the arena of sacrifice, and rulers of the realm of renunciation and constancy.

Therefore ye should not be sad or sorrowful, nor be oppressed with grief and despondency.

Rather it behoveth you to render Him thanksgiving for being the survivors of those illustrious souls, the remnants of them that are favoured at the Threshold of the Almighty. In truth these calamities and sufferings are a glorious diadem whose glittering gems will shed lustre upon ages and centuries to come.

VI

He is the All-Glorious

O YE friends of God! O ye favoured ones at the Threshold of the One Who transcendeth all limitations!

That distinguished martyr, like unto a lucky star, shineth from the dawning-place of divine unity, luminous, resplendent and unmistakable, though mortal eyes are debarred from beholding him.

With his face beaming with light, with a luminous brow and enthralling beauty, he is calling aloud from the summit of the heaven of glory, saying:

'O my friends! O honoured ones! I quaffed the cup that brimmeth over with the consummate bounty of God and tasted the sweetness of the Abhá Kingdom even from the edge of the sword. I have divested myself of my worn-out garments and raised up my banner in the realm of glory. From the world of dust till the heights of the heavens I spurred on the charger of martyrdom and from this luminous horizon I call out and say:

'"O my loved ones! The portals of His most great favour are flung open and the hearts of the people of Bahá are dilated with joy. The chalice of His bounty is being borne round and the sweet melodies of the birds of the all-highest Paradise reach every receptive ear. The reviving breeze wafting from the garden of the Abhá Kingdom is laden with perfume and everyone who hath suffered long is granted intimate communion within the retreats of the Lord of Truth. From the Threshold of the Almighty, the All-Wise, His summons hath gone forth unto all men, and from the realm of the Concourse on high the voice of glad-tidings: Happy are ye! is continually raised."'

Know ye the excellence of this gracious favour, and esteem the value of this precious gift. The outpourings of the mercy of God are copious like unto a boundless ocean and the manifold blessings of the Abhá Beauty are shed abroad even as the radiance of the shining moon. Were ye to know how great is the revelation of this bounty, how plenteous the gifts that have been vouchsafed, I swear by the ravishing beauty of the Abhá Beloved and by the soul-stirring smile of that peerless Charmer of hearts, that ye would dance with delight in your eagerness to lay down your lives and would leap with joy as ye hasten to the field of sacrifice. Ye would raise, with one hand the brimful cup of self-sacrifice, and with the other the laurel of the supreme bounty successfully won. Thus in the arena of renunciation while uttering the triumphal cry: Great is our blessedness! Great is our blessedness! Happy are we! Happy are we! ye will attain the desire of your hearts, the most glorious martyrdom.

O ye friends of my heart and soul! Slumber not for a moment; relax not nor linger for an instant. In a spirit of exceeding joy and gladness, with unswerving constancy in the Covenant and the Testament of the ever-forgiving Lord and in anticipation of attaining His luminous horizon, make the greatest effort to diffuse His sweet savours and bend your energies to promote His Cause. Be ye heralds of the Covenant, and bearers of the glad-tidings of His Testament. Receive your portion from the breast of His grace, and with high resolve exert your utmost endeavour. Be set aglow with the fire of the love of God, and raise the anthem of jubilation with the full enthusiasm of your heart and soul, so that ye may become intimately familiar with His Call and be initiated into divine knowledge and wisdom.

This world is the empire of the spiritual sovereignty of the Abhá Beauty, and this realm is the seat where the mighty throne of the Kingdom of the Exalted One [the Báb] is established. Its effulgent sun, its shining moon never set, its brilliant stars never fade, its bright horizon is never overcast. Its oceans surge and its birds soar in the heights. Its streams are living waters, soft-flowing rivers of immortality. Its trees are saplings planted in the orchard of the Lord of Glory. Its dominion is the immensity of the realm of the placeless, and its territory the domain of the heart. Its abiding joy is attainment unto the presence of the ever-forgiving Lord. Its sustenance

is the liberal bounty that His adored Beauty hath bestowed. Its chalice is the cup tempered at the Camphor Fountain, its designation, the Expanse of Eternal Life, a life that transcendeth the limitations of countless ages.

O my friends! This is the Call of the Covenant. This is the Dispensation of the Well-Beloved of all mankind. This is the gift that the Day-Star of the world hath graciously given. This is the revelation of His incorruptible grace, the manifestation of His perpetual assistance, the evidence of the power that is born of God and the potency of the bestowals proffered by the All-Merciful. What else do ye want? What else do ye expect? Which path do ye tread? Be quick, be quick! O companions! hurry, hurry! O ye loved ones!

And upon ye be His glory!

VII

O REMNANTS of those effulgent lights! O children of those tabernacles of holiness! O remembrances of those resplendent spirits! Although your distinguished fathers surrendered their souls in the field of glorious martyrdom, hastened away from the abyss of this sordid world of dust unto the lofty heights of the Abhá Kingdom, and raised the banner of the most great bounty among the Concourse on high, ye have not been left behind, forsaken and lonely. Although your fathers have ascended unto the realms above, Almighty God, more affectionate than a father, is ever present. Indeed could ye but know how dear ye are in the presence of your true and heavenly Father, ye would stretch forth your wings and take your flight. And upon ye, O loved ones of God, be His glory!

VIII

He is the All-Glorious

O OFFSHOOT of him who in a transport of delight drank of the chalice of martyrdom in the path of God! That essence of being is so graciously confirmed in this day with boundless grace and favour at the court of the sovereign Lord of the seen and the unseen that the embodiments of spiritual majesty and the exponents of true glory are eagerly yearning to render service unto him. Although to outward seeming he was put to a shameful death, in reality he is established upon the throne of unfading exaltation. The day is approaching when kings will seek blessing from his dust and all heads will bow down in his honour, the day when all men will express humility at the revelation of the majesty and grandeur with which the martyrs are invested and all faces will be downcast before the indomitable power of their testimony. If such is what will take place in this visible world, then imagine what it will be in the spiritual realms of God, so exalted above the comprehension of all beings.

IX

O THOU who art seeking the good-pleasure of the Lord of Glory! I have no time to spare. I am completely absorbed in thinking of, in meditating upon and in lamenting for those distinguished martyrs—may My life be offered up as a sacrifice for them.

On the one hand this grievous calamity hath, like unto a dagger, inflicted upon me so profound an injury that no salve can soothe, nor can any balm assuage; while on the other the scene of sacrifice is seen bedecked with such splendid pageantry, such marvellous festivity that the holy ecstasy of its wine seizeth forevermore the minds of those that are godly and spiritual. Moreover, the Concourse on high and the dwellers in the Abhá Kingdom are now expounding the mystery of sacrifice, the main purport of all heavenly Scriptures. Therefore this hath to some degree relieved my grief. In short, the day is approaching when the meads of the Cause of God, having been watered with blood, will have put forth roses and lilies in such profusion that East and West will become fragrant and North and South perfumed. Peace be upon you!

X

He is God

O YE who have been wronged in the path of God! The loved ones of the Almighty have always been exposed to the dire oppression and tyranny of the people of iniquity, and His chosen ones have continually suffered woeful cruelties at the hand of the perfidious. The friends of God have always quaffed the cup of adversity proffered by the hand of the immortal Cup-Bearer. They have been made targets for the darts and spears of the curses,

accusations and reviling that the rebellious and the wicked hurled at them, and have been persecuted and ill-treated by their opponents among the people of the world. Indeed these tribulations are the very draught with which the Well-Beloved of the world was inebriated, and these calamities are but the effulgent light whereby the luminous brow of the Day-Star of the world was illumined.

Therefore think not that this fierce opposition and cruelty hath brought humiliation and abasement upon you. Nay, I swear by God, besides Whom there is none other God, they redound to imperishable glory and unfading bounty. Indeed this persecution is a cooling draught and these trials a source of delight. This poison is but sugar and this venom the essence of sweetness. This stab in the breast is a soothing balm to heart and soul, and this bitter medicine a healing remedy. One's sense of taste must be unimpaired to perceive its sweetness and to savour its relish. Otherwise to a bilious patient sugar and honey taste more bitter than venom, and to the diabetic a sweet drink is more harmful than deadly poison.

Meanwhile, O ye loved ones of God, let not these sufferings grieve you, nor let your hearts be sore with sorrow. Ere long will all take a pride in them and will seek distinction and glory in both worlds. One will say: In one period I endured hardships by reason of my faith and certitude in the one true God and was recompensed with certain bounties. Another will state: Because of the love I cherished for the Best Beloved of the world, I once quaffed a deadly poison like unto a cup of eternal life and since then I have received His perpetual grace. Yet another will exclaim: In the path of servitude at the Threshold of the Almighty I was cast into prison and gained boundless favours in return. Another will declare: As a result of the illumination I received from the Day-Star of ethereal glory I was made captive and held fast in chains and stocks, for which exceptional rewards were lavished on me. Another will say: My heart was set ablaze with the fire of His love in such wise that I hastened to the field of sacrifice, and kissed the edge of the sword. Another will state: The blessed body of my illustrious father was hacked to pieces in the arena of sacrifice for the sake of my glorious Lord. Another will say: My honoured grandfather was inebriated with the cup of martyrdom which the Cup-Bearer of God's eternal Covenant proffered unto him and he became the recipient of manifold favours and bestowals. Still another will exclaim: Our blessed household was ruined in the path of the Adored One. And still another will exclaim: Our innocent ancestors were made homeless for having promoted the Word of God. In short, everyone, well-pleased, jubilant and leaping with joy will recount these events at length and will glory in them before the other peoples and kindreds of the earth. Then it will become unmistakably clear and manifest, even to outward seeming, what a great bounty, what a supreme blessing these afflictions and trials in the path of the Blessed Perfection had truly been.

Therefore it behoveth you, O loved ones of God, to raise up your hands in thanksgiving unto the Threshold of the peerless One and say:

O one and only God, O matchless Creator. Praised and glorified art Thou for having placed this splendid crown upon the brow of these helpless ones, and this mantle of eternal glory on the shoulders of these indigent ones. The rays of Thy sanctity fell upon bodies of clay and the lights of the world of eternity shone forth. A flame of Thy bestowal from the enkindled fire appeared and gave the hearts eternal life. Thanks be to Thee for this blessing and this bestowal and this bounty with which Thou hast distinguished these helpless ones. Thou art the Generous, the Merciful and the All-Loving.

XI

O THOU who art resigned to His irrevocable Decree!

Render thanks unto God for having attained so sublime a station. Thou art treading the path of His good-pleasure; thou hast surrendered thyself unreservedly to that which is ordained and destined by Him; thou hast placed thy whole trust in Him and manifested unswerving constancy and fortitude in the face of this grievous calamity. Thus indeed doth it beseem the loved ones of God to conduct themselves, so that when they are beset by hardships or hemmed in by dire affliction they

may be able to comfort others and impart consolation unto them, their faces may glow with the light of radiant acquiescence and they may deliver to the flames the veil of moaning, sighing and lamentation, inasmuch as resort to sadness and grief in the midst of tribulation is but an indication of lack of assurance and certitude.

In truth were man to attain the stage of certitude in his spiritual development, no affliction could ever depress his spirits, though he would undoubtedly be influenced by reason of his human susceptibilities. Nevertheless, man's inner being will be so revived by the breeze of divinely-ordained woes and trials that the dust of wailing and lamentation will entirely subside and the light of submissive resignation unto His Will shall shine forth like unto a radiant morn.

And upon thee be greetings and praise.

XII

He is the All-Glorious

O YE who are inebriated with the draught of His Covenant!

It is time to pass beyond the desolate wilds of remoteness, so that ye may reach the retreats of the Beloved, drink your fill from the wine of the bestowals of the All-Merciful, hold a heavenly festival, deck forth the stage for a spiritual celebration and, to the strains of harp and lute and the melodies of the Concourse on high and of the songsters in the meads of holiness, break into sweet lays and wondrous tunes in praise and glorification of the Abhá Beauty.

O ye friends of God! Let not the cavils of the foolish grieve you nor the tribulation of this world dismay you. Indeed, the motivating impulse whereby the sweet savours of God are diffused throughout the world is none but the suffering that befalleth His loved ones and the dire troubles that constantly touch His chosen ones.

Consider a while, the greater the affliction they suffered, the higher was raised the banner of devotion and faithfulness, and the more grievous the trials they endured, the more abundant were the outpourings of grace from the Abhá Beauty. For it is during the darksome night that the radiance of light is conspicuous and the illumination of the lamp most perceptible. Therefore enlightened faces when exposed to dire hardships shine forth with the utmost radiance and brightness, and the hearts of His chosen ones when held in chains and fetters are filled with exceeding joy, gladness and ecstasy.

In the Qayyumu'l-Asmá the Exalted One [the Báb] addresseth the Abhá Beauty in these words: 'O Thou our great and omnipotent Master! I have sacrificed myself wholly for Thee and have yearned for naught but martyrdom in Thy path.' Ponder ye carefully. The highest aspiration cherished by Him Who is the Leader of the righteous and the Day-Star of divine splendour was to lay down His life for the sake of the One Who doeth whatsoever He willeth. Thus it is clear and manifest what should be the supreme aspiration and longing of the loved ones of God.

And upon ye be greetings and praise!

XIII

He is God

O SERVANTS of the one true God! O handmaids of the Merciful!

'From the outset love was rebellious and bloodthirsty,
So as to put every stranger to flight.'

One of the requisites of true love is willingness to bear every suffering and tribulation that hath occurred in the past or may occur in the future. Hence a passionate lover is always stained with blood, and he that yearneth to meet the Beloved a constant wanderer. How well is it said:

'The worldly wise who garner the ears of grain are unaware of Laylá's secret,
For unto none was accorded the great glory but Majnún—
he who set the whole harvest afire.'

Thus throughout all ages and centuries the righteous have been made a target to the darts of adversity and have fallen victim to the swords of oppression. At one time they quaffed the cup of dire ordeal, at another they tasted the venom of bitter woe. Not for a moment did they enjoy rest and comfort, nor did they repose for a fleeting breath upon the couch of tranquillity. Rather did they endure agonizing torment and patiently carry the

burden of hardship that every oppressor was wont to impose upon them. Having been consigned to dungeons and prisons, they severed themselves from the world and all its peoples.

In this way most of the favoured ones of God offered up their lives as martyrs in the field of sacrifice. He Who is the resplendent Morn of divine guidance, the Exalted One [the Báb] sank below the horizon of sacrifice. Quddús sought companionship with the Beloved through glorious martyrdom. Mullá Ḥusayn opened a new gate to the field of martyrdom. Vaḥíd distinguished himself as a peerless figure in the arena of sacrifice. Zanjání [Ḥujjat] offered up his life as a martyr upon the plain of tribulation. The King of Martyrs hastened forth to the place of sacrifice. The Beloved of Martyrs was enraptured with ineffable gladness when he offered up his life for the sake of God. Ashraf attained the heights of honour as he unflinchingly set his face towards the arena of sacrifice. Badí', as he breathed his last, exclaimed: 'Magnified be my Lord, the Most Glorious!' The martyrs of the land of Yá [Yazd] drank their fill with relish from the draught of glorious martyrdom, and the martyrs of Shíráz laid down their lives in the arena of ardent love to the tune of sweet and wondrous melodies. Those massacred in the land of Nayríz were inebriated with the brimful cup of sacrifice, and the martyrs of Tabríz were seized with ecstatic joy and unleashed new energies in the field of sacrifice. Those who renounced their lives in Mázandarán exclaimed: 'O Lord! Destine for us this cup that brimmeth over with the choice wine'; while the martyrs of Iṣfahán laid down their lives with utmost joy and radiance.

In brief, there is not a spike whose tip is not tinged with the blood of the martyrs, nor is there a place not dyed crimson with the blood of His ardent lovers. The purpose is to enable you to know that one of the tenets of those that thirst after Him and the highest aspiration of such as long to behold His face is to endure hardship, to submit to trials and martyrdom in the path of the Lord of grace. Therefore it behoveth you to render thanks unto God for the bounty of having drunk your fill from this draught and for having tasted deadly poison in the path of the Best-Beloved. Indeed far from being a poison this is pure honey and sugar, and far from being bitter in taste, this is the essence of sweetness.

O, how eager am I to bear affliction in the path of God! O, what a great joy to suffer hardship for His love! O, how blessed the man who tasteth the bitterness of woe, and how well is it with him who is swept into the ocean of tribulation in his eagerness to attain the presence of God! It behoveth you to offer thanksgiving at every moment, inasmuch as ye became the target of atrocities in the path of divine guidance and were exposed to grievous oppressions for the sake of the love ye cherish for the Almighty.

In truth those that are guided solely by their reason would be unable to perceive the sweetness of this cup, but the ardent lovers will be overjoyed and enraptured by the holy ecstasy which this wondrous draught doth produce. Every discerning observer who hath gazed upon the countenance of that graceful Beloved was prompted to lay down his life as a martyr, and every receptive ear which had hearkened unto that celestial melody suffered its listener to become so enravished with joy as to offer up himself without hesitation as a sacrifice. The moth which is animated by love will burn its wings as it flitteth round the lamp of God and the phoenix of tender affection will be set ablaze by the fire of ardent desire. No unfamiliar bird can partake of the heat of this Fire, nor can the fowls that dwell upon the dust plunge forth into this heavenly Ocean. However, praise be unto God, ye are the leviathans of this ocean, the birds of this pasture, the moths of this lamp, the nightingales of this meadow.

And upon ye rest the glory of the Most Glorious!

XIV

He is God

O FAITHFUL friends in the Abhá Beauty! By reason of the oppression and atrocities that have befallen those two souls whom the people of the world have wronged ye have raised the cry of lamentation and grieving and have wept and sighed bitterly. This is meet and right for those two gazelles of the meadow of oneness were held fast in the talons of ferocious beasts, and those two nightingales of the rose-garden of divine unity

were gripped in the claws of depraved ravens.

There is no doubt that as a result of those dire woes and sufferings the hearts of the friends of God have been set aflame like unto a candle and they bemoan their grief with tearful eyes. I swear by God besides Whom there is none other God, were ye to scrutinize carefully, ye would observe that every tree, every rock or clod of earth hath wept sore over this grievous injustice and hostility, and is wasted away by reason of this world-consuming fire.

Indeed those wronged ones had never hurt the feelings of even a moth, nor had they ever put forth the hand of molestation toward a helpless ant. They were innocent of any crime and sought no refuge except the threshold of the Ever-Living, Self-Subsisting Lord. They had committed no error save that of having shaken off their slumber, and had incurred no guilt but that of becoming captive to His musk-laden tresses. Their grave offence was to display a glimpse of the beauty of the heavenly Peacock. To do this they spread out the plumage of sanctity and intoned sweet melodies even as the warbling of a nightingale. This was the only guilt they had committed; their faithfulness was regarded as a crime, and their sincerity as deceit. Yet notwithstanding their manifold expressions of love and fellowship, the ravening wolves attacked those two radiant, Joseph-like beings and ripped open not only their shirts but their breasts. Indeed so vehement was their hatred and rancour that they unhesitatingly shed their sacred blood. Ere long will God punish those wicked-doers, both in this world and hereafter for that which they have wrought and will bring dire humiliation upon them in this life and in the next. Verily God is the Avenger, the Almighty.

As to those blessed souls: they will, even as the doves of holiness, wing their flight unto the Concourse on high and in the meads of the Abhá Kingdom will burst into melodious songs, whose strains of sanctity will exhilarate every attentive ear, and whose wondrous accents will be heard at all times by the people of abiding faithfulness. What gift is there greater than this? What blessing is mightier than shedding these few drops of blood in the path of the peerless Lord? What felicity is more meritorious than the bounty of being aided by the mystery of sacrifice to consecrate themselves to the love of the Abhá Beauty? May my life be offered up for those two martyrs; may my whole being be sacrificed for their sake; may my heart be laid down as a ransom for them. Verily, this is a supreme favour, this is a most glorious felicity.

And upon you be salutation and praise.

XV

IN these days when the wicked have created violent disturbances and the opponents have bestirred themselves, they have, in every region stretched forth the hand of aggression and raised the banner of injustice and animosity. In every locality they have launched attacks against the oppressed.

As is currently known this grievous assault hath assumed nationwide proportions. In Iṣfahán they aroused a great commotion; in Rasht the foundations of the city were shaken, and in Qazvín they committed manifest atrocities. Indeed throughout the country agitation is aroused through vehement hostility and dust is stirred up by a raging tempest of hate.

And all this notwithstanding that everyone is fully aware that the friends of God are those whom the people of the world have oppressed, and they who are the well-wishers of all kindreds and nations. They tread the path of righteousness and seek to foster amity and fellowship with all mankind. They are contemptuous of their own selves, and inebriated with the wine of the love of the Almighty. They are sincere and steadfast, shining and radiant. They speak forth, they are competent. They defend the helpless, and are a refuge to the fugitive, an asylum to the poor, a haven for the distressed, a remedy for the afflicted and a balm to the wounds of the needy. They eagerly seek to live in perfect peace with the warlike and quarrelsome tribes, and to those who oppose them, they show forth composure, serenity and kindness.

Be not saddened and grieved by reason of the atrocities the enemies have perpetrated. The day is fast approaching when the light of love will have dispelled the darkness of animosity and the splendours of the sun of truth will have driven away the gloomy night. This spirit of heavenly fellowship, this uprightness of the friends of God will promote

the well-being and tranquillity of all mankind. Warring factions will become peaceful, opposing kindreds friendly, hostile peoples reconciled and aggressive nations united. This is the imperishable glory of the human world. This is the supreme illumination in the kingdom of the Lord of Mercy.

XVI

He is the All-Glorious

O YE wronged captives! The divines in that land have put forth the hand of aggression and have surpassed in cruelty the Pharaohs who executed their victims upon the stakes, and the people of Nimrod, Thamúd and 'Ad. They have closed the eye of justice and with the darts of tyranny have pierced the hearts of the oppressed. They have set on fire the harvest of the wronged ones, and deemed it expedient to inflict upon them every cruelty, molestation and torture, that perchance by so doing the divinely kindled fire might be extinguished, the seething and roaring of the ocean of God's bounty might subside, the outpourings of the clouds of His loving-kindness be stopped, the meteor of heavenly guidance be hindered from shedding its radiance upon those regions, the reviving breezes of divine blessing which blow from the direction of His tender mercy be withheld, the fragrance of the rose of His gracious providence may no longer be diffused from the garden of divine unity, the light of its brilliant orb be obscured, and the secrets of the manifestation of heavenly bestowals be forgotten.

Alas! Alas! Those divines are unaware that the waves of the ocean of glory will surge high and the pervasive power of the Cause of God will acquire unprecedented glory. Its orb will shine resplendent and the effulgent light of its meteor will permeate the world. Its spark will develop into a flame, its luminous star into a sun, and its drop into a downpour and a flood. Its grain will grow into a harvest, its glittering gem will sparkle in every gathering, its fame will be noised abroad, and the anthem of its glorification will reach the highest heavens.

As to these servants and homeless ones: We were so inebriated with our fill from the draught of the love of God that we yearned to drink deep of that wine of God's Covenant. Thus chalice in hand, dancing and leaping with joy, we hastened into the arena of sacrifice. We offered supplications begging for adversity. We exposed our breasts as a target for the shafts of oppression and with the whole affection of our hearts and souls we welcomed the sword of injustice.

This body is the abode of ills and this darkened self a cage to every warbling bird. One's corporeal frame shall become dust and a target to dreadful darts. Therefore if it were offered up in the field of sacrifice for the sake of God, no favour or blessing could be greater than this. Earthly possessions will certainly be lost, and what hath been accumulated will be dispersed; excessive riches will be cast adrift, and the flush of fortune will wither away and fade into nothingness; immense treasures will be squandered and the wealth gathered up by the wind will eventually be blown away by the wind. Hence, better is it for one's riches to be pillaged and plundered in the path of God, than be a booty of the changes and chances of the world.

As to lofty buildings, imposing mansions, and magnificent palaces: every inhabited and flourishing place will become desolate and every mighty edifice reduced to ruin. Therefore, how much better it is for these habitations which are more fragile than a spider's web to be wrecked and ruined for the love of the sovereign Lord of the Kingdom. For if a house of clay be destroyed, there will be reared in its stead a glorious mansion within the soul-uplifting immensity of the realms above. If one's home and dwelling-place be laid waste in this transitory dust-heap, one will be provided with a matchless and incomparable nest within the rose-garden of eternity.

Thus all that is related to the loved ones of God, their former glory, their present services, the grievous sufferings they have borne—all will, even as carving on slabs of emerald, be recorded on the scrolls of the Abhá Kingdom, and therefrom will they shed their radiance upon all the worlds of God. Then when that light sheddeth its rays upon the tongues of the world of existence, it giveth rise to expressions of praise and glorification; when directed towards human hearts, it evoketh the memory of noble traits, deeds and virtues; when reflected upon the pages of the world, it becometh the object of the verse: 'and give

me renown among posterity;'[1] it illumineth the surface of the earth, it is made manifest in the form of consecrated spots and sacred Shrines.

XVII

He is God

O SERVANT of Bahá! It behoveth thee to render thanks unto the Threshold of the Lord of Oneness for the afflictions that have befallen thee, inasmuch as the adversities that are borne in the path of the one true God are but the revelations of His tender mercy, and any such tribulation is the essence of His bounty.

This life is like unto vapour in a desert and the existence of every thing is as a mere illusion, evanescent and bound to extinction. That which endureth is the spiritual reality, it is the shining essence; it is life eternal, it is undisturbed felicity, unfading and perpetual, flourishing and plenteous. The revolution of cycles is powerless to ravage it, nor can the succession of ages and centuries molest it. Therefore, this divinely-ordained reality, this heavenly sign, must needs be preserved.

And the amazing thing is this that the most effective means whereby this light of truth is safeguarded and protected is the onslaught of the enemies, grievous ordeals and manifold hardships. The globe of this lamp is the tempestuous winds and the safety of this ship lieth in the violence of tumultuous waves.

Therefore one must show forth gratitude in the face of Job-like afflictions and must evince joy and pleasure at the unyielding cruelty of evil-doers, inasmuch as such tribulations lead to immortality, and serve as the supreme factor to attract His consummate blessings and infinite bestowals.

And upon thee be the glory of the Most Glorious.

XVIII

He is God

O SPIRITUAL friends and loved ones of the All-Merciful! In every Age believers are many but the tested are few. Render ye praise unto God that ye are tested believers, that ye have been subjected to every kind of trial and ordeal in the path of the supreme Lord. In the fire of ordeals your faces have flushed aglow like unto pure gold, and amidst the flames of cruelty and oppression which the wicked had kindled, ye suffered yourselves to be consumed while remaining all the time patient. Thus ye have initiated every believer into the ways of steadfastness and fortitude. You showed them the meaning of forbearance, of constancy, and of sacrifice, and what leadeth to dismay and distress. This indeed is a token of the gracious providence of God and a sign of the infinite favours vouchsafed by the Abhá Beauty Who hath singled out the friends of that region to bear grievous sufferings in the path of His love. Outwardly they are fire, but inwardly light and an evidence of His glory. Ye have been examples of the verse: 'Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps.' 'And to this let those aspire who aspire unto bliss.'[2]

In short, the day is approaching when the gay trappings of this earthly life will have been rolled up and the sorry plight and adversity of the people of iniquity will have waxed more grievous than those experienced by the oppressed. The inmates of palaces will have been subjected to the confinement of graves, and such as occupy the seats of honour will have fallen upon the dust of misery and abasement.

However, those who have offered up their lives as martyrs will shine resplendent even as a candle, and the effulgent glory of the friends of God will shed its radiance from the horizon of eternity like unto a brilliant star. Behold how wondrous is the bounty whereunto ye have attained. Ye have followed the example set by Him Whom the world hath wronged. Like unto the Day-Star of the world ye have outwardly suffered an eclipse by reason of the injustice the people of malice have wrought. However, far from an eclipse, this is naught but splendour; far from concealment, this is naught but the defeat of the legions. Ere long ye shall behold the shining light of the one true God shedding its radiance upon the whole world, while the heedless ones find themselves in the darkness of extinction.

In the estimation of the loved ones of God abasement is exaltation itself, and affliction

[1] Qur'án 26:84

[2] Qur'án 83:26

leadeth to faithfulness. Earthly glory and comfort are but a mirage of illusion, while in the realm of the spirit heavenly gifts are everlasting and imperishable. The lights in the nether world may be bright, but they are put out at the break of dawn, whereas the stars that shine in the heaven of the love of God will sparkle continually throughout ages and centuries. Such is everlasting glory; such is infinite bounty; such is life eternal; and such is boundless grace.

And upon you rest salutation and praise.

XIX

THE legions of the world cannot withstand this mighty Army. Its weapons are divine knowledge and assurance, and its sword is its world-encircling light. Physical powers are capable of resisting earthly armies, but are impotent before the onslaught of the hosts of heaven. Thousands of times this hath been tried and proven.

The wicked people of Thamúd who manifested fierce hostility towards Ṣáliḥ were unable to withstand His indomitable power. Likewise, the tribes of 'Ad perpetrated revolting outrages, but the spiritual sword of Húd remained unsheathed and the divinely-kindled light proved unquenchable. Although the clash of the arms of the wretched Nimrod reached the ears of all peoples, he failed to suppress the glory of Abraham. The misguided Copts marshalled their troops against Moses, yet could not engage Him in battle. The Jews who gainsaid God's Cause aroused violent commotion, regarded the Beauty of the Promised One [Jesus] as a fire no longer bright, stirred up fierce opposition and launched a campaign of attacks and aggression against Him, but in the end their opposition proved of no avail. The leaders of Ḥijáz inflicted grievous ordeals and atrocities upon the Prince of Mecca [Muḥammad], tormented and injured Him as much as it lay in their power, until their assaults grew so vehement that the Lord of the righteous migrated unto Medina where He proclaimed the Word of God. Later, various kindreds and peoples leagued themselves together, waged tribal war and encircled that focal Centre of Light from every direction, but failed to subdue Him. This is but a brief account of past experiences.

Nevertheless it is highly deplorable that subsequent generations, wholly unaware of this outstanding truth, still seek to oppose the Beauty of the Promised One with utter heedlessness. They have armed themselves with a myriad darts of iniquity and swords of transgression and are engaged in unrelenting attacks. Ere long will they realize the grievous mistake they have committed.

They seek to compress the unlimited ocean; they try to stop forthwith the wondrous outpourings of the vernal showers. But alas for them! The reviving breeze that bloweth from the direction of the Abhá Kingdom cannot be halted and the musk-laden fragrance of faithfulness that wafteth from the rose-garden of the All-Glorious can never be arrested.

During the ministry of Christ the Cause of God did not pass beyond the regions of Jerusalem. Whatever else was achieved came afterwards. Likewise in the days of the Prince of Mecca—may the souls of the favoured ones of God be offered up for His sake—the reputation of His sublime Faith was confined to the boundaries of Ḥijáz. However, the fame of this glorious Cause reached the east and the west during the lifetime of the Blessed Beauty, and Tablets were revealed for the crowned heads of the world.

This blameworthy people have already heard and learned how the wicked grievously failed in their opposition towards the Prince of the righteous, yet they are still heedless. This blessed, this mighty Cause which hath stirred the whole earth to its foundation, cannot be restrained by the hostility that these bands of weaklings have unleashed. Ere long will they find themselves in manifest loss.

XX

MAY my life be offered up for the dust of these martyrs; may my entire being be a sacrifice for the blood of the chosen ones of God, they who enjoy near access to His exalted Threshold, who are attracted to the summit of transcendent glory, and established upon the seat of truth in the all-glorious Kingdom.

O ye who have suffered martyrdom! O trustees of His Revelation! O distinguished men of virtue! O illustrious and noble ones! May my inmost reality, my spirit, my entire

being and whatsoever God hath bestowed upon me through His bounty and grace be laid down as a sacrifice for you.

I bear witness that ye are the radiant stars, the gleaming meteors, the resplendent full moons, the brilliant orbs in this wondrous Revelation. Well is it with you, O birds that warble in the gardens of divine unity; blessed are ye, O lions that roar in the forests of detachment; happy are ye, O leviathans that swim in the waters of His oneness. Verily ye are the signs of divine guidance, ye are the banners that flutter in the field of sacrifice.

I beseech God to bless me, through the breezes of holiness wafted from that glorious centre of sacrifice, and to quicken me with the reviving breath of heavenly communion blowing from that blessed region.

I beg you to intercede on my behalf in the presence of the ever-living, sovereign Lord that He may graciously suffer me to quaff my fill from the choice sealed wine, may grant me a portion from the unbounded felicity that ye enjoy and may exhilarate my heart by giving me to drink from your chalice which is tempered at the Camphor Fountain. Verily my Lord is merciful and forgiving. By bestowing the bounty of sacrifice in this realm of existence, He aideth whomsoever He willeth with whatsoever He pleaseth.

And upon you rest the glory of the Most Glorious!



II

EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

Excerpts from Fire and Light[1]

I

IF in the days to come should adversities of various kinds encircle that land and national upheavals aggravate its present calamities, intensify the repeated afflictions, and darken still more the horizons of that great country, you should not feel sorrowful and grieved, nor be deflected even to the extent of a hair's breadth from your straight path and chosen highway, which is to vigilantly and persistently exert your utmost efforts to increase the number of your institutions, to consolidate their foundations, to proclaim their existence and to add to their fair name and glory.

The liberation of this meek and innocent band of His followers from the fetters of bondage and the talons of the people of tyranny and enmity must needs be preceded by the clamour and agitation of the masses. The realization of glory, of tranquillity, and of true security for the people of Bahá will necessitate opposition, aggression and commotion on the part of the people of malevolence and iniquity. Therefore, should the buffeting waves of the sea of tribulation intensify and the storms of trials and tribulations assail that meek congregation from all six sides, know of a certainty and without a moment's hesitation that the time for its deliverance has drawn nigh, that the age-old promise of its assured glory will soon be fulfilled, and that at long last the means are provided for the persecuted people of Bahá in that land to attain salvation and supreme triumph. A firm step and an unshakeable resolve are essential so that the remaining stages may come to pass and the cherished ideals of the people of Bahá may be realized on the loftiest summits, and be made manifest in astounding brilliance. 'Such is God's method, and no change shalt thou find in His method.'[2]

II

IN this stern battle of life the members of this oppressed community, aided by the power of the Kingdom, and fortified by heavenly determination, by divinely-imparted hopes and by glad-tidings from on high, are standing ready and alert to face any commotion or calamity. Unrelenting tribulations and increasing obstacles shall not make them flinch, nor cause them dismay or grief. They know with full certitude that as the horizons of the world grow darker, as its agitation becomes more severe and the prevailing chaos and confusion more widespread, the dawn of the Promised Day will correspondingly draw nearer, and the means for the splendours of His light to be shed abroad will be more readily provided.

However, the fulfilment of glad-tidings, so glorious and heart-uplifting, must needs be heralded by awesome and distressing events, inasmuch as the realization of these irrevocable and divinely-ordained promises depends on the awakening and the stirring of the conscience of the entire human race, while this cannot be achieved save through the occurrence of unnumbered afflictions, manifold convulsions and growing adversities. And it is precisely for this reason that the people of Bahá are nourished from the draught of certitude and are alive and active through the spirit of hope. They strive diligently, are alert and watchful, steadfast and vigilant. With

[1] All but No. I are excerpts translated by Mr. Habib Taherzadeh, with the assistance of a Committee at the Bahá'í World Centre, from *Fire and Light* [*Nár va Núr*] (Hofheim-Langenhain: Bahá'í Verlag, 1982), a compilation from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.

[2] cf. Qur'án 48:23

heart and soul they exert their efforts. They will not allow the pressure of calamities gradually to impair the foundation of the Cause of God, or vitiate the essence of its divinely-revealed principles; nor will they permit the wickedness and the prevalence of crime to nullify or eclipse the radiance of the cardinal laws of their Faith; or the aggressive hands of the opponents and the machinations of the ungodly to inflict harm upon this holy Revelation, or the confused theories and ideologies that prevail in these days to create the least deviation from the straight path of God . . .

III

O GRIEF-STRICKEN and self-sacrificing souls! The Hand of Providence has ordained that those innocent victims of tyranny should once again be oppressed in the clutches of the wrong-doers, and the Will of God, the Ever-Living, the Almighty, has purposed that manifold tribulations and adversities should, like a torrential flood, descend successively upon that wronged community. In these years of dire stress our Lord, the All-Wise, has, as a preliminary measure for the fulfilment of His gracious pledge and in conformity with His undeviating principle, kindled a raging fire of trials in that country. Be not sorely grieved or dismayed. This is an effective means, preordained and irrevocable, which has been provided by the Causer of causes, through the operation of His immutable Will, and the exercise of His unquestionable power, and in the face of the machinations of every malicious opponent, so that the glory of His Cause may presently be unveiled before the assemblage of man and, in the days to come, His Faith may be rendered victorious and become securely established in that blessed land.

Let nothing frustrate or discourage you. Immerse yourselves in the study of the Holy Tablets. *I testify before God*, Bahá'u'lláh asserts, *to the greatness, the inconceivable greatness of this Revelation. Again and again have We, in most of Our Tablets, borne witness to this truth, that mankind may be roused from its heedlessness*. In another connection this utterance has been revealed: *How great, how very great is this Cause. The day is fast approaching when its stupendous glory will have been made manifest and evident.*

This heavenly Faith cannot be compared to the transitory things of the world of existence, nor can it be identified with or likened to physical and earthly forces. Its tabernacle has been raised through dire oppression, its advancement and promulgation depend upon spiritual and mysterious agencies, and factors that are awesome, alarming and totally unexpected. The Tongue of the Ancient of Days, the Comforter of the people of the world says: *Naught hath been ordained by the finger of His decree for His loved ones except that which is profitable unto them. We beseech Him to graciously enable them to show forth patience and fortitude that haply trials and ordeals might not deflect them from the path of God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing.*

Through the insults and indignities suffered by the well-assured and faithful maidservants of God, portals of everlasting honour will be flung open before the face of the women in Persia, nay everywhere in the world, and as a result of the beatings, torture and cruelties inflicted upon the newly converted Bahá'í youth, a new spirit of liveliness and freshness will stream forth through the veins and arteries of the temple of the Cause of God. The lamentation of the disconsolate who have been made homeless as a result of this grievous event will reach the ears of the spiritually-minded in the west and its powerful repercussions will release a fresh energy in the world of existence, will forge new spiritual ties, and lay bare the essence of this heavenly Revelation before the eyes of all men, be they friends or strangers.

Although the sufferings that have befallen the friends during the past few years were not as frequent, as grievous and widespread as the successive waves of afflictions that have been let loose in recent months, yet notwithstanding this and as a direct consequence of the pangs of anguish and devastating sorrow that have crushed the souls of the friends in Persia, the cherished Cause of God has blossomed forth astonishingly and is advancing with a fresh momentum throughout the five continents of the globe.

While Persia remains heedless and unaware and its sorely-tried friends are beset by grievous repressions and cruelties, the hosts of

life, the bearers of the divine Message of salvation are moving far and wide over the extensive territories of the free world, and bending their energies to capture the citadels of men's hearts. The motivating impulse, the driving power which is responsible for the successful achievements of these sanctified beings is derived from the heat and flame and the influence released through the relentless persecutions and ordeals which the pure-hearted friends in Persia are enduring. Wherefore has the Master said: *When the light of God is ignited in the East it will shed illumination upon the West and its evidences will become visible both in the North and in the South.*

O spiritual brethren! Although the horizons of that country are dark, and manifold hardships and tribulations are continuous and unremitting; although the foundations of that realm are sorely shaken, and the minds of its people in a state of confusion; although there is no peace or protection for the righteous, and the unbelievers are relentless in their hatred and animosity, this anguish and distress, this abasement and ignorance will not endure, nor will this cruelty, captivity, agitation and disturbance persist. The day is fast approaching when God will have manifested from this horizon such light and power as will cause the sun to be darkened, will obliterate every trace of them that have turned away disdainfully from God, and will illumine the faces of the sincere.

It well beseems you to direct your eager gaze to the glad-tidings that have been revealed by the Pen of the Most High and to let the shining prophecies that are contained in His Most Holy Book and in other Tablets illumine your expectant eyes. Can one imagine a pronouncement sweeter, an utterance and promise more perfect, more appropriate, and more glorious than these conclusive verses that have streamed forth from the repository of the Abhá Pen? Exalted is His Word: *Let nothing grieve thee, O land of Ṭá* [Ṭihrán], *for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind. He shall, if it be His Will . . . gather together the flock of God which the wolves have scattered . . . The eye of His loving-kindness shall everlastingly be directed towards thee. The day is approaching when thy agitation will have been transmuted into peace and quiet calm.* Moreover, the following significant and soul-stirring words have been set down by the Pen of the Centre of the Covenant: *Ere long will it be witnessed that the government of the native land of the Blessed Perfection will become the most honoured government of this world, and Írán will become the most prosperous of all lands. This indeed is a token of God's bountiful favour, and verily in this is there a lesson unto every beholder.*

Such God-given promises and sublime glad-tidings that the Pen of the Most High and the divinely-aided and inspired fingers of the Centre of the Covenant have inscribed will, according to the following blessed verse, be unquestionably fulfilled. How enthralling is His Word: *Whatsoever hath streamed forth from the Pen of the Most High hath either already occurred or shall assuredly come to pass. Not a single letter thereof will remain unrealized, for verily the fair-minded shall behold it established upon the throne of fulfilment.*

However, the essential thing is patience, fortitude, courage and audacity. The day is approaching when that country will have turned into a blissful paradise, when the wronged ones of Persia will have become the pride of the world and the leaders of mankind. And this is a promise that will not be belied.

IV

O FOLLOWERS of the beloved Cause of Bahá'u'lláh! Regard not the smallness of your numbers, nor be depressed and discontented by reason of the harm and injury that you sustain at the hands of friend or foe. Let not the vilifications, the whisperings and idle remarks of the foolish and the short-sighted grieve you, nor the vast array of the multitude of assailants frighten or alarm you.

These tribulations have time and again been foretold by our peerless Master. The prophetic warnings that our supreme Lord has uttered clearly foreshadow the onslaught of the hosts of affliction. Have you not heard what has flowed from the tongue of the Comforter of mankind in this connection? He says: *Say: Tribulation is as water for that which We have planted in human hearts. The day is approaching when out of it will have grown such fruit that every seed thereof will proclaim: Verily,*

no God is there but Him, the Almighty, the All-Knowing. And likewise He has said: *Through adversity have We fostered the growth of the Faith of God in bygone ages. Ere long wilt thou witness this Cause shining resplendent above the horizon of glory, invested with majesty and power.* And also He affirms: *God hath made tribulation as the crown wherewith the head of Bahá is attired. The time is at hand when its radiance will have enveloped the whole world. By My life! Such tribulations as are sustained in the path of God, the Fashioner of all created things, are as cherished by Me as eyes are cherished by men, nay even more! Unto this thy Lord, the Mighty, the Unconstrained, beareth witness.*

O apostles of Bahá'u'lláh! How pitiful if we, who are recognized as the bearers of His glorious Name, and related to such an omnipotent Lord, should, in moments of adversity, fail to scrupulously follow the noble example set by Him Who stands peerless in His long-suffering. Happy the one who until his last breath has tasted the venom of woe at the hand of the faithless, and blessed the heart that for the sake of promoting and proclaiming His Cause does not allow himself a moment's rest. Such is the disposition of the pure in heart, such is the method of them that enjoy near access to God, such is the way of the true strivers after God, such befits the hosts that are under the guidance of God, such is the means whereby undoubted triumph and victory will be achieved for the Cause of God.

O people of Bahá! Lift up your voices, and hail men of wisdom with glad-tidings. Call aloud between earth and heaven, exclaiming: O people of the world and workers of injustice and iniquity! Rest assured that we, the followers of the Abhá Beauty, have paid for our Faith with our life-blood, and have tasted the sweetness of sacrifice in the path of His love. Our trust in Him sustains our lives, enabling us to be detached from aught else but Him. We shall promote His Cause to the last breath and offer praise and gratitude at all times for the tribulations He ordains.

O people of the earth! Know you with absolute certainty, and let every wavering and hesitant soul be apprised and take warning, that whatsoever has explicitly been revealed by the All-Glorious Pen will eventually become clear and evident, even as the sun in its noon-tide glory. In this snow-white Spot, and in other lands, the immutable Will of Him Who has stretched out the earth and raised up the heavens, shall be fulfilled, the cherished desire of longing hearts will emerge from behind a myriad veils into the realm of existence, and the highest aspiration of the people of Bahá will be fully, perfectly and conclusively realized. This is that which our Lord has promised us both openly and privily, and indeed this is a promise that will not prove untrue. Therefore it beseems you to arise and exclaim: *O concourse of the earth! Die in your wrath. Ere long will the standard of His Faith be hoisted in every city, shedding radiance upon all regions.*

V

He is God

O MIGHTY Lord! Thou seest what hath befallen Thy helpless lovers in this darkest of long nights; Thou knowest how, in all these years of separation from Thy Beauty, the confidants of Thy mysteries have ever been acquainted with burning grief.

O Powerful Master! Suffer not Thy wayfarers to be abased and brought low; succour this handful of feeble creatures with the potency of Thy might. Exalt Thy loved ones before the assemblage of man, and grant them strength. Allow those broken-winged beings to raise their heads and glory in the fulfilment of their hopes, that we in these brief days of life may gaze with our physical eyes on the elevation and exaltation of Thy Faith, and soar up to Thee with gladdened souls and blissful hearts.

Thou knowest that, since Thy ascension, we seek no name or fame, that in this swiftly passing world we wish henceforth no joy, no delight and no good fortune.

Then keep Thy word, and exhilarate once more the lives of these, Thy sick at heart. Bring light to our expectant eyes, balm to our stricken breasts. Lead Thou the caravans of the city of Thy love swiftly to their intended goal. Draw those who sorrow after Thee into the high court of reunion with Thee. For in this world below we ask for nothing but the triumph of Thy Cause. And within the precincts of Thy boundless mercy we hope for nothing but Thy presence.

Thou art the Witness, the Haven, the Refuge; Thou art He who rendereth victorious this band of the innocent.

VI

THE assaults, onslaughts and attacks perpetrated by the people of arrogance and malice do not and will not endure. They shall, one and all, be dispelled at the appointed time, and no trace of them will be left behind. What will remain, and the influence thereof endure, are the wrongs suffered by the loved ones of God, the audacity they have evinced, the undaunted spirit manifested by the defenders of the Faith of the All-Merciful, their bonds of unity and harmony, and their tenacious adherence and undeviating allegiance to the institutions of the Cause of God in that land.

At present the state of affairs is in turmoil, tribulations are manifold and the authorities have launched attacks from every direction. However, the invisible Hand of God is at work and the wrathful Avenger is watching over the oppressed community of the righteous and the pious. Things that were hidden will be revealed and realities that were unknown will become clear and evident. The innocence of those long-suffering and sanctified beings will definitely be proved and established, and every act of injustice, of iniquity and malice wrought by the evil-doers will be laid bare. The day-star of glory, as is prophesied, will shine forth from that land with such radiance that all men, high or low, of the rulers or the ruled, friend or foe, whether far or near, will be astonished and bewildered.

Now is the time for steadfastness. Now is the ripe moment for the stalwart warriors and champions to show forth courage and to demonstrate their heroism in the arena of service, until such time as God will exalt His Cause, will remove the distress and anxiety of His friends and trusted servants, and glorify those who were brought low among His creatures, to make them spiritual leaders among men, and to make them God's heirs.

VII

THE shedding of innocent blood in that blessed land will produce marvellous results and from it far-reaching consequences will ensue in the course of time. The fierce storm of woes and calamities and the incessant waves of unnumbered trials and incalculable hardships which in recent days have encompassed that small group from all sides are but the first glimmer, the dawning twilight heralding the advent of the new age that has been foretold in the past.

This gloomy night which has lasted for a number of years has plunged every part and region of that country into darkness. The darker the night will turn, and the more intense and dreadful its convulsions and commotions become, the nearer will be the appointed time when the bright morn of deliverance will dawn, when the day-star of felicity and emancipation will shine, when the light of the glory, power and independence of the Faith of God will radiate with extraordinary brilliance, when the fall and collapse, the destruction and ruin of the people of malice and iniquity in that land will become apparent and conspicuous.

The hosts of Bahá, the concourse of the sore-oppressed ones in that afflicted country, should all know with absolute certainty that the Cause of God is great, and its strengthening grace quickens every mouldering bone; its heavenly confirmations are ever present, and its adversaries on the offensive, launching their attacks from all sides. On the one hand they are seized with perturbation and alarm at the sight of the quaking of the foundations of their own structure, and its breakdown and collapse, while on the other hand they are amazed and bewildered at the people of Bahá, and their high degree of tranquillity and firmness, and their long-suffering and unshakeable patience.

This is the day for steadfastness. Now is the time for defence and bravery, so that the evil ones who are lying in wait may be disconcerted, defeated and put to flight, and the prophecies irrevocably decreed by God may be fulfilled without delay.

VIII

AGITATIONS, trials, woes, afflictions, and torture, arson, expulsion, plunder, beating, vilification, captivity, banishment, imprisonment, destruction of life—none of these could hinder the advancement of this beloved

Cause, none could weaken the high resolve of its followers and champions in any part of the world, none could damage or disrupt the structure of its New Order, none could create a cleavage, a division, a schism or any form of sectarianism in the ranks of its embattled hosts. Nay rather, were one to observe with a discerning eye, it would become clear and evident that commotion in itself, the very succession of calamities, upheavals and hardships, and the recurrence of trials, adversities and sufferings have lent an impetus to the power latent in the Cause and reinforced its compelling force and pervasive influence.

Indeed as a result of the onrushing tempests of tribulation and the raging hurricanes of tests and trials, the Faith's scope of operation has been enlarged, its pillars have been raised to loftier heights, its foundation has become more secure, its glory more resplendent, the spread of its influence more rapid, its ascendancy and dominion more conspicuous and evident.

Every blow that the hands of the wrongdoer have inflicted upon the community of the followers of the Cause of God from without, has proved to be the means of a fresh victory and triumph for the Faith, and every agitation provoked from within through the intrigues and plottings of perfidious traitors has led to a remarkable success for the Cause and to the revelation of its wondrous glory . . .

These momentous events, these startling and awesome happenings that have transpired during the past hundred years confirm the truth of this most perfect, this consummate and enthralling utterance that has proceeded from the repository of the All-glorious Pen—exalted is His saying and blessed His Word: *From time immemorial have We reared the celestial Trees of divine Revelation with the waters of opposition and the shedding of blood, could ye but perceive it.* Likewise He says: *By the righteousness of God! This divine Tree will develop by means of the waters of your opposition; yet ye understand not and remain heedless.* Moreover He affirms: *Through affliction hath His Cause been promoted and His praise glorified.* In another connection this blessed verse has been revealed: *Should they attempt to conceal its light on the continent it will assuredly rear its head in the midmost heart of the ocean and, raising its voice, proclaim: 'I am the life-giver of the world!'*

The amazing history of this glorious century will conclusively demonstrate to every opponent of the Cause throughout the world that violent upheavals have strengthened the root of this heavenly Tree, severe trials and hardships have reinforced the foundation of the divine Edifice. Dire abasement became a vesture of glory, while adversity and tribulation were oil which fed the flame of the lamp of God's Revelation. Fierce attacks and violence produced steadfastness and constancy, and persecution and privation created interest, and led to conversion and proclamation. Torment, repression and subjugation were means whereby the light of the ascendancy and triumph of this beloved Cause were eventually diffused far and wide. Convulsions and commotions served in the long run to purify and strengthen the body of the Cause of God, while the clamour of the prattler, the uproar of the deceitful, the tumult of the froward were instrumental in raising high the melody of the Kingdom. The rending and tearing of veils caused such realities and mysteries as were latent in the inmost essence of God's Revelation to be uncovered and brought to light. Wherefore has the All-glorious Pen revealed: *Through their injustice we praised the Cause of God, and the anthem of praise, glorifying the Name of thy Lord, was broadcast in all countries. Through their rejection the truth was recognized, and as a result of their cruelties the luminary of justice hath shone forth. Ponder a while, O men of understanding, that ye might perceive.* Likewise He states: *At one time He exalted His Cause by the hand of the people of tyranny, and at another by the hand of His chosen servants—they unto whom the heedless ones appear as but a handful of dust, they who declare that which the Pen of the Most High hath proclaimed from the horizon of glory.*

IX

CONSIDER what momentous glad-tidings the all-glorious Pen has announced in the holy Tablets, what explicit promises His exalted and irrevocable Pen has revealed. In the *Súratu'l-Haykal* these gem-like words are recorded: *He will, ere long, out of the Bosom*

of Power, draw forth the Hands of Ascendancy and Might—Hands who will arise to win victory for this Youth and who will purge mankind from the defilement of the outcast and the ungodly. These Hands will gird up their loins to champion the Faith of God, and will, in My Name the Self-subsistent, the Mighty, subdue the peoples and kindreds of the earth. They will enter the cities and will inspire with fear the hearts of all their inhabitants. Such are the evidences of the might of God; how fearful, how vehement is His might! And likewise these luminous verses are inscribed in this holy Súrih: *The day is approaching when God will have raised up, through Thee, such invincible Hands, such indomitable Helpers, who will emerge from behind the veils, will render victorious the All-merciful One amidst all the peoples of the world and will burst forth into such a cry as will leave its mark in all hearts. Thus hath it been decreed in the inscribed Tablet. And they will appear with such power that all the dwellers of the earth will be seized with fear and every one will be sorely shaken.*

Moreover He has written: *Ere long will the Call be raised in every city and thou shalt find the people fearful and dismayed by virtue of the awful ascendancy of God's Revelation. Thus hath it been irrevocably ordained in His Holy Scriptures.* And also He declares: *Soon will the cry 'yea, yea, here am I, here am I' be heard from every land. For there hath never been, nor can there ever be any other refuge to fly to for anyone.* And again He says: *The day is fast approaching when God will have manifested from this horizon such light and power as will cause the sun to be darkened, will obliterate every trace of them that have turned away disdainfully from God, and will illumine the faces of the sincere.* And likewise He has revealed: *Ere long ye shall witness all men believing in His Cause and weeping sore over the good things that have escaped them during His days. Verily He is the Expounder, the All-Knowing.*

And He also states: *Soon will the unbelievers behold the banners of victory and will hear the name of God proclaimed from every direction. On that day will they say: 'Truly we do believe in God' Say! God well knoweth what is hidden in the breasts of all men.* And again He has written: *Ere long will the faithful behold the standards of divine manifestation unfurled in all regions.* And likewise He declares: *I swear by the Most Great Book that God's Revelation shall gain ascendancy and encompass the whole world.*

Moreover, the following resplendent words which have flowed from the Pen of the Centre of the Covenant amply confirm that which the All-Glorious Pen of Bahá'u'lláh has revealed: *Despair not of the manifestations of the divine Spirit. Ere long, by the leave of God, the veil will be removed from the face of His Cause, this effulgent light will shed its radiance upon all countries, the signs of His oneness will be spread abroad, and the banners bearing the emblems of your glorious Lord will float above the lofty mansion.* And again He affirms: *The day will soon come when the light of Divine unity will have so permeated the East and the West that no man dare any longer ignore it.*



PART TWO

THE COMMEMORATION OF HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES

I

THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSING OF BAHÍYYIH KHÁNUM, THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF[1]

1. PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH ABOUT THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

I

LET these exalted words be thy love-song on the tree of Bahá, O thou most holy and resplendent Leaf: 'God, besides Whom is none other God, the Lord of this world and the next!' Verily, We have elevated thee to the rank of one of the most distinguished among thy sex, and granted thee, in My court, a station such as none other woman hath surpassed. Thus have We preferred thee and raised thee above the rest, as a sign of grace from Him Who is the Lord of the throne on high and earth below. We have created thine eyes to behold the light of My countenance, thine ears to hearken unto the melody of My words, thy body to pay homage before My throne. Do thou render thanks unto God, thy Lord, the Lord of all the world.

How high is the testimony of the Sadratu'l-Muntahá for its leaf; how exalted the witness of the Tree of Life unto its fruit! Through My remembrance of her a fragrance laden with the perfume of musk hath been diffused; well is it with him that hath inhaled it and exclaimed: 'All praise be to Thee, O God, my Lord the most glorious!' How sweet thy presence before Me; how sweet to gaze upon thy face, to bestow upon thee My loving-kindness, to favour thee with My tender care, to make mention of thee in this, My Tablet—a Tablet which I have ordained as a token of My hidden and manifest grace unto thee.

II

O MY Leaf! Hearken thou unto My Voice: Verily there is none other God but Me, the Almighty, the All-Wise. I can well inhale from thee the fragrance of My love and the sweet-smelling savour wafting from the raiment of My Name, the Most Holy, the Most Luminous. Be astir upon God's Tree in conformity with thy pleasure and unloose thy tongue in praise of thy Lord amidst all mankind. Let not the things of the world grieve thee. Cling fast unto this divine Lote-Tree from which God hath graciously caused thee to spring forth. I swear by My life! It behoveth the lover to be closely joined to the loved one, and here indeed is the Best-Beloved of the world.

[1] Selections from *Bahíyyih Khánum, The Greatest Holy Leaf*, a compilation from Bahá'í sacred texts, writings of the Guardian and Bahíyyih Khánum's own letters, made by the Research Department at the Bahá'í World Centre, 1982.

2. PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ ABOUT THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF AND A SELECTION OF HIS LETTERS TO HER

I

TO MY honoured and distinguished sister do thou convey the expression of my heartfelt, my intense longing. Day and night she liveth in my remembrance. I dare make no mention of the feelings which separation from her hath aroused in mine heart; for whatever I should attempt to express in writing will assuredly be effaced by the tears which such sentiments must bring to mine eyes . . .

II

O ḌÍYÁ![1] It is incumbent upon thee, throughout the journey, to be a close, a constant and cheerful companion to my honoured and distinguished sister. Unceasingly, with the utmost vigour and devotion, exert thyself, by day and night, to gladden her blessed heart; for all her days she was denied a moment of tranquillity. She was astir and restless every hour of her life. Moth-like she circled in adoration round the undying flame of the Divine Candle, her spirit ablaze and her heart consumed by the fire of His love . . .

III

O MY well-beloved, deeply spiritual sister! Day and night thou livest in my memory. Whenever I remember thee my heart swelleth with sadness and my regret groweth more intense. Grieve not, for I am thy true, thy unfailing comforter. Let neither despondency nor despair becloud the serenity of thy life or restrain thy freedom. These days shall pass away. We will, please God, in the Abhá Kingdom and beneath the sheltering shadow of the Blessed Beauty, forget all these our earthly cares and will find each one of these base calumnies amply compensated by His expressions of praise and favour. From the beginning of time sorrow and anxiety, regret and tribulation, have always been the lot of every loyal servant of God. Ponder this in thine heart and consider how very true it is. Wherefore, set thine heart on the tender mercies of the Ancient Beauty and be thou filled with abiding joy and intense gladness . . .

IV

O MY dear sister!

Praise be to God, within the sheltering grace of the Blessed Beauty, here in the lands of the West a breeze hath blown from over the rose-gardens of His bestowals, and the hearts of many people have been drawn as by a magnet to the Abhá Realm.

Whatever hath come to pass is from the confirmations of the Beloved; for otherwise, what merit had we, or what capacity? We are as a helpless babe, but fed at the breast of heavenly grace. We are no more than weak plants, but we flourish in the spring rain of His bestowals.

Wherefore, as a thank-offering for these bounties, on a certain day don thy garb to visit the Shrine, the ka'bih of our heart's desire, turn thyself toward Him on my behalf, lay down thy head on that sacred Threshold, and say:

O divine Providence! O Thou forgiving Lord! Sinner though I be, I have no refuge save Thyself. All praise be Thine, that in my wanderings over mountains and plains, my toils and troubles on the seas, Thou hast answered still my cries for help, and confirmed me, and favoured me, and honoured me with service at Thy Threshold.

To a feeble ant, Thou hast given Solomon's might. Thou hast made of a gnat a lion in the thicket of Thy Mercy. Thou hast bestowed on a drop the swelling waves of the sea, Thou hast carried up a mote to the pinnacles of grace. Whatever was achieved, was made possible through Thee. Otherwise, what strength did the fragile dust possess, what power did this feeble being have?

O divine Providence! Do not seize us in our sins, but give us refuge. Do not look upon our evil ways, but grant forgiveness. Consider not

[1] Daughter of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.



Bahíyyih Khánum; circa *1890.*

our just deserts, but open wide Thy door of grace.

Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful! Thou art the Seer, the Knower!

V

O MY spiritual sister!

Thou didst go away to Haifa, supposedly for only three or four days. Now it becometh apparent that the spiritual power of the Shrine hath brought thee joy and radiance, and even as a magnet is holding thee fast. Thou surely wouldst remember us as well.

Truly the spiritual quality of the holy place, its fresh skies and delicate air, its crystal waters and sweet plains and charming seascape, and the holy breathings from the Kingdom all do mingle in that Sacred Fold. Thou art right to linger there . . .

Kiss the light of the eyes of the company of spiritual souls, Shoghi Effendi . . .

3. PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI ABOUT THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF AND EXCERPTS FROM HIS LETTERS ABOUT HER

I

O YE who burn in the flames of bereavement! By the Day-star of the World, my bereaved and longing heart is afire with a grief that is beyond my description. The sudden, the grievous and calamitous news that the Most Exalted, the pure, the holy, the immaculate, the brightly shining Leaf, the Remnant of Bahá, and His trust, the eternal fruit and the one last remembrance of the Holy Tree—may my life be offered for the wrongs she suffered—has ascended, reached me like live coals cast into a frail and afflicted heart. The foundations of my serenity were shattered, and tears of desolation came like a flood that carries all away . . .

O brothers and sisters in the spirit! In this solemn hour, from one direction we can hear the sounds of loud weeping, and cries of mourning and woe, rising out of the throats of the people of Bahá throughout this nether world, because of their separation from that rich mine of faithfulness, that Orb of the heaven of eternal glory—because of her setting below the horizon of this holy Spot. But from another direction can be heard the songs of praise and holy exultation from the Company on High and the undying dwellers in Paradise, and from beyond them all God's Prophets, coming forth to welcome that fair being, and to place her in the retreats of glory, and to seat her at the right hand of Him Who is the Centre of God's Mighty Covenant.

The community of Bahá, whether in the East of the world or the West, are lamenting like orphans left destitute; fevered, tormented, unquiet, they are voicing their grief. Out of the depths of their sorrowing hearts, there rises to the Abhá Horizon this continual piercing cry: 'Where art thou gone, O torch of tender love? Where art thou gone, O source of grace and mercy? Where art thou gone, O symbol of bounty and generosity? Where art thou gone, O day-spring of detachment in this world of being? Where art thou gone, O trust left by Bahá among His people, O remnant left by Him among His servants, O sweet scent of His garment, shed across all created things!'

O ye who loved that luminous face! The oil within that shining lamp was used up in this world and its light was extinguished; and yet, in the lamp-niche of the Kingdom, the fingers of the Lord of the heavenly throne have kindled it so bright, and it has cast such a splendour on the maids of Heaven—dwelling in chambers of red rubies and circling about her—that they all called from out their souls and hearts, 'O joy upon joy!' and with shouts of, 'Well done! Well done! Upon thee be God's blessings, O Most Exalted Leaf!' did they welcome that quintessence of love and purity within the towering pavilions of eternity.

At that time, as bidden by the Lord, the Protector, the Self-Subsisting, did the heavenly Crier raise up his voice and cry out: 'O Most Exalted Leaf! Thou art she who did endure with patience in God's way from thine earliest childhood and throughout all thy life, and did bear in His pathway what none other hath borne, save only God in His own Self, the Supreme Ruler over all created things, and before Him, His noble Herald, and after Him, His holy Branch, the One, the Inaccessible, the Most High. The people of the Concourse on High seek the fragrance of thy presence, and the dwellers in the retreats of eternity circle about thee. To this bear witness the souls of the cherubim within the tabernacles of majesty and might, and beyond them the tongue of God the One True Lord, the Pure, the Most Wondrous. Blessedness be thine and a goodly abode; glad tidings to thee and a happy ending!' . . .

II

. . . DEARLY-BELOVED Greatest Holy Leaf! Through the mist of tears that fill my eyes I can clearly see, as I pen these lines, thy

noble figure before me, and can recognize the serenity of thy kindly face. I can still gaze, though the shadows of the grave separate us, into thy blue, love-deep eyes, and can feel in its calm intensity, the immense love thou didst bear for the Cause of thine Almighty Father, the attachment that bound thee to the most lowly and insignificant among its followers, the warm affection thou didst cherish for me in thine heart. The memory of the ineffable beauty of thy smile shall ever continue to cheer and hearten me in the thorny path I am destined to pursue. The remembrance of the touch of thine hand shall spur me on to follow steadfastly in thy way. The sweet magic of thy voice shall remind me, when the hour of adversity is at its darkest, to hold fast to the rope thou didst seize so firmly all the days of thy life.

Bear thou this my message to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, thine exalted and divinely-appointed Brother: If the Cause for which Bahá'u'lláh toiled and laboured, for which Thou didst suffer years of agonizing sorrow, for the sake of which streams of sacred blood have flowed, should, in the days to come, encounter storms more severe than those it has already weathered, do Thou continue to overshadow, with Thine all-encompassing care and wisdom, Thy frail, Thy unworthy appointed child.

Intercede, O noble and well-favoured scion of a heavenly Father, for me no less than for the toiling masses of thy ardent lovers, who have sworn undying allegiance to thy memory, whose souls have been nourished by the energies of thy love, whose conduct has been moulded by the inspiring example of thy life, and whose imaginations are fired by the imperishable evidences of thy lively faith, thy unshakeable constancy, thy invincible heroism, thy great renunciation.

Whatever betide us, however distressing the vicissitudes which the nascent Faith of God may yet experience, we pledge ourselves, before the mercy-seat of thy glorious Father, to hand on, unimpaired and undivided, to generations yet unborn, the glory of that tradition of which thou hast been its most brilliant exemplar.

In the innermost recesses of our hearts, O thou exalted Leaf of the Abhá Paradise, we have reared for thee a shining mansion that the hand of time can never undermine, a shrine which shall frame eternally the matchless beauty of thy countenance, an altar whereon the fire of thy consuming love shall burn for ever.

III

. . . O THOU Scion of Bahá! I weep over thee in the night season, as do the bereaved; and at break of day I cry out unto thee with the tongue of my heart, my limbs and members, and again and again I repeat thy well-loved name, and I groan over the loss of thee, over thy meekness and ordeals, and how thou didst love me, over the sufferings thou didst bear, and the terrible calamities, and the wretchedness and the griefs, and the abasement, and the rejection—and all this only and solely for the sake of thy Lord and because of thy burning love for those, out of all of creation, who shared in thine ardour.

Whensoever, in sleep, I call to mind and see thy smiling face, whensoever, by day or night, I circumambulate thine honoured tomb, then in the innermost depths of my being are rekindled the fires of yearning, and the cord of my patience is severed, and again the tears come and all the world grows dark before my eyes. And whensoever I remember what blows were rained upon thee at the close of thy days, the discomforts, trials and illnesses —and I picture thy surroundings now, in the Sanctuary on High, in the midmost heart of Heaven, beside the pavilions of grandeur and might; and I behold thy present glory, thy deliverance, the delights, the bounties, the bestowals, the majesty and dominion and power, the joy, thine exultation, and thy triumph—then the burden of my grieving is lightened, the cloud of sorrow is dispelled, the heat of my torment abates. Then is my tongue loosed to praise and thank thee, and thy Lord, Him Who did fashion thee and did prefer thee to all other handmaidens, and did give thee to drink from His sweet-scented lips. Who withdrew the veil of concealment from thy true being and made thee to be a true example for all thy kin to follow, and caused thee to be the fragrance of His garment for all of creation.

And at such times I strengthen my resolve to follow in thy footsteps, and to continue onward in the pathway of thy love; to take thee as my model, and to acquire the quali-

ties, and to make manifest that which thou didst desire for the triumph of this exalted and exacting, this most resplendent, sacred, and wondrous Cause.

Then intercede thou for me before the throne of the Almighty, O thou who, within the Company on High, dost intercede for all of humankind. Deliver me from the throes of my mourning, and confer upon me and those who love thee in this nether world what will remove our afflictions, and bring assurance to our hearts, and quiet the winds of our sorrows, and console our eyes, and fulfil our hopes both in this world and the world to come—O thou whom God hast singled out from amongst all the countenances of the Abhá Paradise, and hast honoured in both His earth and His Kingdom on high, and of whom He has made mention in the Crimson Book, in words which wafted the scent of musk and scattered its fragrance over all the dwellers on earth!

O thou Greatest Holy Leaf! If I cry at every moment out of a hundred mouths, and from each of these mouths I speak with a hundred thousand tongues, yet I could never describe nor celebrate thy heavenly qualities, which are known to none save only the Lord God; nor could I befittingly tell of even the transient foam from out the ocean of thine endless favour and grace.

Except for a very few, whose habitation is in the highest retreats of holiness, and who circle, in the furthermost Sanctuary, by day and by night about the throne of God, and are fed at the hand of the Abhá Beauty on purest milk—except for these, no soul of this nether world has known or recognized thine immaculate, thy most sacred essence, nor has any befittingly perceived that ambergris fragrance of thy noble qualities, which richly anoints thy brow, and which issues from the divine well-spring of mystic musk; nor has any caught its sweetness.

To this bear witness the Company on High, and beyond them God Himself, the Supreme Lord of all the heavens and the earths: that during all thy days, from thine earliest years until the close of thy life, thou didst personify the attributes of thy Father, the Matchless, the Mighty. Thou wert the fruit of His Tree, thou wert the lamp of His love, thou wert the symbol of His serenity, and of His meekness, the pathway of His guidance, the channel of His blessings, the sweet scent of His robe, the refuge of His loved ones and His hand-maidens, the mantle of His generosity and grace.

O thou Remnant of the divine light, O thou fruit of the Cause of our All-Compelling Lord! From the hour when thy days did set, on the horizon of this Snow-White, this unique and Sacred Spot, our days have turned to night, our joys to great consternation; our eyes have grown blind with sorrow at thy passing, for it has brought back that supreme affliction yet again, that direst convulsion, the departing of thy compassionate Brother, our Merciful Master. And there is no refuge for us anywhere except for the breathings of thy spirit, the spotless, the excellently bright; no shelter for us anywhere, but through thine intercession, that God may inspire us with His own patience, and ordain for us in the other life the reward of meeting thee again, of attaining thy presence, of gazing on thy countenance, and partaking of thy light.

O thou Maid of Bahá! The best and choicest of praises, and the most excellent and most glorious of salutations, rest upon thee, O thou solace of mine eyes, and beloved of my soul! Thy grace to me was plenteous, it can never be concealed; thy love for me was great, it can never be forgotten. Blessed, a thousand times blessed, is he who loves thee, and partakes of thy splendours, and sings the praises of thy qualities, and extols thy worth, and follows in thy footsteps; who testifies to the wrongs thou didst suffer, and visits thy resting-place, and circles around thine exalted tomb, by day and by night . . .

4. A SELECTION OF LETTERS OF THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

I

FROM this hallowed and snow-white Spot, this blessed, heavenly Garden, wherefrom the fragrance of God is diffused to all regions, I hail you with salutations, most tender, most wondrous, and most glorious, and impart to you the most joyful tiding. This tiding serves as the sweet-smelling savour of His raiment to them that long to behold His face, it represents the highest aspiration of His steadfast leaves, it is the animating impulse for the happiness of the world, it is the source of ineffable gladness to the people of Bahá, a remedy to the afflicted, and a refreshing draught for the thirsty. By the righteousness of God, O beloved friend, through this glad-tiding the ailing are cured and every mouldering bone is quickened. This most joyful tiding is the news of the good health and well-being of the blessed, the exalted, the holy person of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'He Whom God hath purposed'—may the life of all created things be offered up for His oneness.

II

THE Festival of Riḍván is come and the splendour of the light of God is shining from the invisible horizon of His mercy. The overflowing grace of the Lord of oneness is pouring down copiously from the unseen world and the glad-tidings of the Kingdom are coming in from all countries. The resplendent morn that betokens the advancement of the Cause of God and heralds the exaltation of His Word is dawning in every region.

Praise be to God that the fame of the Ancient Beauty—may my life be offered up for His loved ones—has been noised abroad in the world and the glory of His Cause is spread far and wide throughout the East and the West. These joyous developments will indeed gladden the hearts of His loved ones.

III

THE passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, may our lives be a sacrifice for His meekness, was the ultimate calamity, the most great disaster. The light has fled our hearts, and our souls are wedded to sorrow, and no power in all the world can furnish any consolation, save only the power that comes from the steadfastness of the believers and their deep-rooted faith, and their unity, and their love for one another.

Only these can lessen the pain and quiet the anguish . . .

Although to outward seeming the Sun of the Covenant has hidden Himself behind the clouds, and the Orb of the Testament is concealed, and on the holy horizon of glory, He has now set, and is lost to view—still His rays are shining from out His hidden place, and forever will His light shed down its splendours.

For ever and ever will He, with all that invisible grace, and those bestowals of the spirit, lead the seeker onward, and guide the yearning, and ravish the hearts of the lovers.

IV

A PHYSICIAN treats every illness with a certain remedy and to every painful sore he applies a specially prepared compound. The more severe the illness, the more potent must be the remedy, so that the treatment may prove effective and the illness cured. Now consider, when the divine Physician[1] determined to conceal His countenance from the gaze of men and take His flight to the Abhá Kingdom, He knew in advance what a violent shock, what a tremendous impact, the effect of this devastating blow would have upon His beloved friends and devoted lovers. Therefore He prepared a highly potent remedy and compounded a unique and incomparable cure —a cure most exquisite, most glorious, most excellent, most powerful, most perfect, and most consummate. And through the movement of His Pen of eternal bounty He recorded in His weighty and involable Testament the name of Shoghi Effendi—the bough that has grown from the two offshoots of the celestial glory, the branch that has branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees.

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Then He winged His flight to the Concourse on High and to the luminous horizon. Now it devolves upon every well-assured and devoted friend, every firm and enkindled believer enraptured by His love, to drink this healing remedy at one draught, so that the agony of bereavement may be somewhat alleviated and the bitter anguish of separation dissipated. This calls for efforts to serve the Cause, to diffuse the sweet savours of God, to manifest selflessness, consecration and self-sacrifice in our labours in His Path.

V

THE Ancient Beauty, the Most Great Name, has, through the splendours of His grace in this most glorious of all ages, made this world of dust to radiate light. The loving counsels of 'Abdu'l-Bahá have turned the beloved of the Lord into signs and tokens of humility and lowliness. He has taught them selflessness, and freedom from material things, and detachment from the world, and has enabled them to understand the verities of Heaven.

In that supernal realm we are all but motes; in the court of the Lord God's majesty we are but helpless shadows. He is the Shelter for all; He is the Protector of all; He is the Helper of all; He is the Preserver of all. Whensoever we look upon ourselves, we, one and all, despair; but He, with all His grace, His bestowals, His bounties, is the close Companion of each one.

It is certain that tests and trials are inseparable from this life and a vital requirement thereof, especially for the human race and above all for those who claim to have faith and love. Only through trials can the genuine be known from the worthless, and purity from pollution, and the real from the false. The meaning of the sacred verse: 'Do men think when they say "We believe" they shall be let alone and not be put to proof?'[1] prevails at all times and is applicable at every breath, and fire will only bring out the brightness of the gold.

So it is my hope that with lowliness and a contrite heart, with supplications and prayers, with good intentions and faithfulness, with purity of heart and adherence to the truth, with rising up to serve and with the blessings and confirmations of the Lord, we may come into a realm, and arrive at a condition, where we shall live under His overshadowing mercy, and His helping hand shall come to our aid and succour.

VI

THE Pen of the divine Ordainer has so decreed that this house of sorrows should be encompassed by unending calamity and pain. Even before the dark clouds of one disaster are scattered, the lowering storm of yet a new grief takes over, casting its darkness across the inner skies of the heart. Such has been the lot of this broken-hearted one and the other leaves of the Holy Tree, from earliest childhood until this hour; such has been the fruit we have plucked from the tree of our lives.

We can see before us the Holy Shrine where lies the blessed, riddled body of the Primal Point, and memory of the delicate and tender remains of other martyrs passes before our eyes. The remembrance of the Ancient Beauty's dungeon in Ṭihrán, and that most noble Being's exile from city to city, culminating in the murk of the 'Akká prison, is engraved upon our minds. The calamities, the massive afflictions, endured by 'Abdu'l-Bahá throughout His entire life, and His wailing at the break of dawn are recorded for all time upon the tablets of the soul, and those cries that rose out of His luminous heart will linger on in the mind's ear.

It is clear, too, how the most dire of all ordeals, the ascension of the divine Beauty, made the structure of our existence to topple down; how being deprived of Him consumed the very limbs of our bodies. And when our fiery tears brought on by this were not yet dried, and the heart's wound had not healed over, then the bearer of God's decree called us to yet another anguish, that dire calamity, that terrible disaster, the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Then were we, the sorrow-stricken, thrust again into the fires of separation, and the pitch darkness of deep mourning enshrouded this family.

Beloved friends of the Blessed Beauty: what could have been the purpose of those holy Beings in enduring such agonies? Why did those precious and luminous souls accept

[1] Qur'án 29:2.



Bahíyyih Khánum; an early photograph.

all that hardship and pain? Any just observer will acknowledge that They had no other end in view but to better the human race, and cleanse it from the imperfections of this contingent world, and see to its advancement, and endow all peoples with the wondrous virtues of humankind. Thanks be to God's bounties, the signs of such perfections, the lights of such bestowals, have become clearly manifest throughout the world. The tree of His Cause grows ever more massive, day by day, and heavier with fruit, and from moment to moment taller, and it shall cast its wondrous shade over all who seek its shelter : . . .

VII

O KIND Lord! O Comforter of anguished hearts!

Send down Thy mercy upon us, and Thy grace, bestow upon us patience, give us the strength to endure. With Thy generous hand, lay Thou a balm upon our sores, grant us a medicine for this never-healing woe. Console Thou Thy loved ones, comfort Thy friends and handmaids, heal Thou our wounded breasts, and with Thy bounty's remedy, restore our festering hearts.

With the gentle breeze of Thy compassion, make fresh and green again these boughs, withered by autumn blasts; restore Thou to flourishing life these flowers, shrivelled by the blight of bereavement.

With tidings of the Abhá Paradise, wed Thou our souls to joy, and rejoice Thou our spirits with heartening voices from the dwellers in the realm of glory.

Thou art the Bounteous, Thou art the Clement; Thou art the Bestower, the Loving . . .

5. A TRIBUTE TO THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum

'THE outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation.' Thus does the Guardian characterize his illustrious great-aunt, the peerless daughter of Bahá'ulláh, the faithful and beloved sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The Greatest Holy Leaf was the eldest daughter of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. Born in Persia in 1846 she, in her long life which ended in 1932, spanned, with the exception of two years, the entire Heroic Age of this new world religion. At the age of six when her Father was cast into the subterranean dungeon in Ṭihrán known as the 'Black Hole', her home was immediately looted and despoiled. In a day the wealthy and noble family was beggared and hid in fear of their lives as Bahá'u'lláh lay in heavy chains—the most prominent, the most blameless victim of the turmoil which His Forerunner's liberal teachings had provoked in a land of bitter Muslim Shí'ah fanaticism. Navváb, the refined, frail, saintly mother of the little girl, fled to a humble dwelling near the dungeon where she could be near her illustrious and much-loved Spouse; 'Abdu'l-Bahá, her eight-year-old Brother, accompanied His mother when daily she went to the home of friends to ascertain whether Bahá'u'lláh was still alive or had been executed that day—for every day some of His co-religionists were martyred, often being handed over to various guilds, the butchers, the bakers, the shoemakers, the blacksmiths, who exercised their ingenuity on new ways of torturing them to death. Through long days of constant terror the little girl stayed at home with her four-year-old brother Mihdí; often, she recalled, she could hear the shrieks of the mob as they carried off their victims. After four months Bahá'u'lláh was released through the intervention of various prominent people, and He and His family were exiled to 'Iráq. In a very severe winter, through the snow-bound mountains of western Persia, the ill-clad, destitute party for three months suffered the ordeal of what He described as *that terrible journey*. Navváb sold the gold buttons of her clothes to help buy food and washed their garments till her delicate hands bled. Such were the earliest recollections of Bahíyyih Khánum; the happy, secure days of her first six years must have become a dream-like experience, for no real peace ever entered her life again. Her Brother 'Abdu'l-Bahá testified to this: *For all her days she was denied a moment of tranquillity*.

The family had barely settled in Baghdád when the infant Faith of Bahá'u'lláh was seized by a new convulsion; a year after His arrival, when the Greatest Holy Leaf was eight, He withdrew for two years to the mountains of Sulaymáníyyih, living as a dervish, His whereabouts unknown to His family and admirers alike. This sacrifice, however, did not avert calamity; the internal and external enemies of His Faith had relentlessly pursued their ends, and in May 1863, just after Bahá'u'lláh had revealed His own station to some of His followers, for the second time Bahíyyih Khánum became an exile and travelled with her mother and other women in covered carts for almost four months from Baghdád to Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, in the caravan of her Father, which comprised about seventy of His followers. By now the young girl had turned her back on the world—a decision which is ever an inward orientation—and was wholly dedicated, every moment of her life, to serving her Divine Father, her Brother 'Abdu'l-Bahá Whom she adored, her frail, heroic and beloved mother, her younger brother Mihdí who had rejoined them, and all the followers of Bahá'u'lláh—indeed, all and sundry who ever crossed her path!

Yet a third banishment lay ahead of the Greatest Holy Leaf; with no warning or justification, four months after their arrival, in the depths of a very bitter winter, the Sulṭán once again exiled Bahá'u'lláh, His family and companions, this time to the city of his displeasure, Adrianople. At the beginning of December, for twelve days, over the wind-swept plains of western Turkey, in storms of snow and rain, in carts and on pack animals, the party struggled, Bahá'u'lláh Himself testifying that: *Neither My family, nor those who*

accompanied Me, had the necessary raiment to protect them from the cold in that freezing weather. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who rode beside His Father's conveyance, was again badly frost-bitten, as He had already been on the long journey from Ṭihrán to Baghdád, and suffered its effects till the end of His life. On their arrival, ill, destitute, prisoners, they were assigned to crowded, cold, vermin-infested houses—for Bahíyyih Khánum the most repugnant of all her sufferings. So terrible was their plight during this period that Bahá'u'lláh asserts: *The eyes of Our enemies wept over Us, and beyond them those of every discerning person.*

During the four years and eight months they sojourned in Adrianople fresh horrors attended the exiled family. In spite of Bahá'u'lláh's every effort to redeem His half-brother, Mírzá Yaḥyá, his intense jealousy reached its apex and he poisoned Bahá'u'lláh, Whose life hung in the balance for a month, and Who carried the mark of this treachery in a trembling hand until the end of His life.

The Greatest Holy Leaf often stated that all the years of her life, from childhood to maturity, were overshadowed by the constant threat that she might be separated from her beloved Father; it was a very real threat for on a number of occasions there was a plan to divide the exiles, Bahá'u'lláh to be sent to some unknown destination and His family to another. Once again the machinations of His enemies, within and without, ripened into a plan of this nature. The same Sulṭán who had exiled Him from Baghdád to Constantinople, and from Constantinople to Adrianople, now issued another edict of exile which was to carry Him to the prison-city of 'Akká in Syria for the last twenty-four years of His life—but His frantic family did not know this, they only knew another exile, and probably permanent separation, now lay ahead.

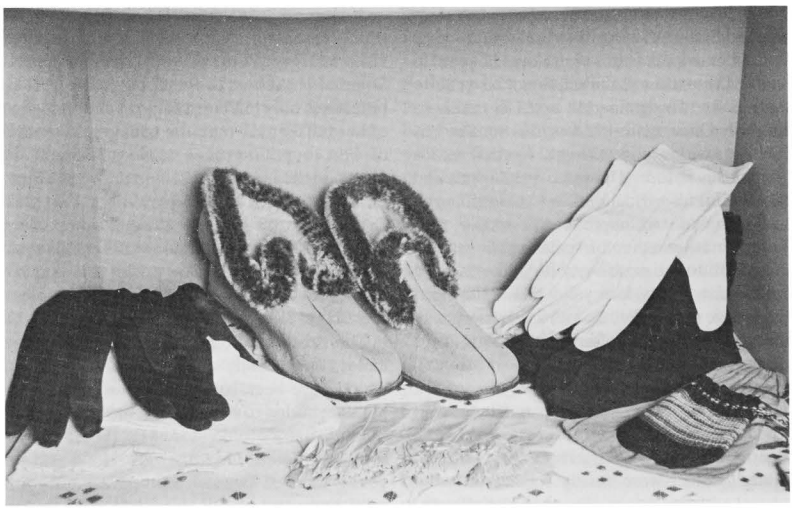
After a miserable, crowded voyage of ten days, with little food, through rough seas, in August heat, the band of exiles—still all together due to the masterful intervention of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—were finally locked into the barracks of the prison-city of 'Akká. Illness, death, privation were their lot for two years, the worst blow of all being the death of the gentle, universally loved Mihdí who, while walking on the prison roof and meditating, fell through an opening and died of his injuries. His body was washed in the presence of his Father Whose poignant grief has been recorded by Him; what went on in the hearts of the tender mother, the loving sister, we can only imagine.

Slowly the wheels of destiny revolved. Through the unceasing efforts of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh was able, although still a prisoner, to live the last years of His life in relative peace in a beautiful mansion in the countryside outside 'Akká. Bahíyyih Khánum, however, continued to live in 'Akká with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His family, whose imprisonment was not permanently lifted until the fall of the Sulṭánate in 1908 freed all political prisoners. The sun of the glory of her Father set in 1892, an event which again led to violent upheavals caused by internal and external enemies of the Faith; but the selfless devotion, the consecration to service in whatever form was needed, which had been manifested in Bahíyyih Khánum's life since she was six years old, continued unchanged; her whole being now revolved about the Brother she adored, the Centre of His Father's Covenant, the Head of His Faith. During the years of ever-increasing freedom and victory 'Abdu'l-Bahá embarked upon His history-making visits to Egypt, Europe and North America. Some of His letters to the Greatest Holy Leaf reflect not only His constant love and thoughts of her but His joy over the triumphant nature of His tour. But once again, inevitably it seems in her sorrow-filled life, great afflictions came upon her. In November 1921 this Brother—so adored, so close a companion since their earliest childhood—closed His eyes and passed away from a world that had so honoured Him, so afflicted Him for almost four score years.

The death of the partner in her trials, her exiles, her family's upheavals and crises, would have been sufficient for any woman of her age; added to it now came the condition of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's successor, His eldest grandson, appointed Guardian of His Faith, a young man of twenty-four, devastated with grief because 'Abdu'l-Bahá had died during his absence at Oxford University, and completely overwhelmed and prostrated by the news of the station and responsibilities conferred upon him in his Grandfather's Will and

Testament. As always Bahíyyih Khánum rose to the occasion, comforted, supported, nursed and encouraged the heartbroken youth, the youth of whom, when he was a child, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had written to her: *Kiss the fresh flower of the garden of sweetness, Shoghi Effendi.* More than this, she accepted the headship of the Faith which Shoghi Effendi, in his great distress, conferred upon her when he withdrew, as he wrote, until such time as '. . . having gained health, strength, self-confidence and spiritual energy' he would be able to take into his hands 'entirely and regularly the work of service . . .' Upon Bahíyyih Khánum's frail shoulders yet again God placed a heavy load. Though she was now seventy-five, she bore, with her usual nobility, dignity, self-effacement and great inner assurance and strength, all the terrible events related to and produced by the ascension of her Brother. At last came the great freeing, her turn to shake the dust of this earth from her feet and wing away to realms on high. But the release and reward for her was far different for him whom she left behind; 'to one who was reared by the hands of her loving kindness', Shoghi Effendi wrote, 'the burden of this direst of calamities is well-nigh unbearable'. Torrents of passionate feeling poured from his pen, in English to the Bahá'ís of the West, in Persian and Arabic to the Bahá'ís of the East. All his love and, above all, her glory, became embodied in immortal words. During the thirty-six years of the Guardian's ministry he never ceased to remember her, to associate her with the unfoldment of the Faith throughout the world, the rise of its institutions at the World Centre, the largest or smallest of his own undertakings; whether publicly or quietly in his personal life, her memory and influence were always there. He summed up what she represented historically, and to him personally in his dedication to her of *The Dawn Breakers*—the masterpiece he created out of Nabíl's Narrative through his unique translation:

To
The Greatest Holy Leaf
The Last Survivor of a Glorious and
Heroic Age
I Dedicate This Work
in Token of a
Great Debt of Gratitude and Love



Some relics of the Greatest Holy Leaf preserved in the International Bahá'í Archives.

6. THE COMMEMORATION AT THE WORLD CENTRE OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSING OF THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

As midnight of 14 July 1982 approached, the Bahá'ís of the World Centre were gathered in the forecourt of the pilgrim house. With the arrival of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the assembled friends silently followed her into the brightly illuminated Shrine of the Báb which cast a swathe of golden light against the dark mountain. It was the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf and, in union with Bahá'ís around the globe, the World Centre paid its tribute to the most remarkable woman of the Bahá'í Dispensation.

At the Shrine the friends heard the recitation of the Tablet of Visitation at the tomb of the Báb, followed by the chanting of the Tablet of Visitation in the Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They then quietly, reverently filed out of the Shrine, and proceeded up to the main gate where police were temporarily holding traffic, silently crossed the road and wound their way through the Monument Gardens to the light-drenched tomb of the Greatest Holy Leaf whose graceful, nine-columned monument had been decorated beautifully with flowers.

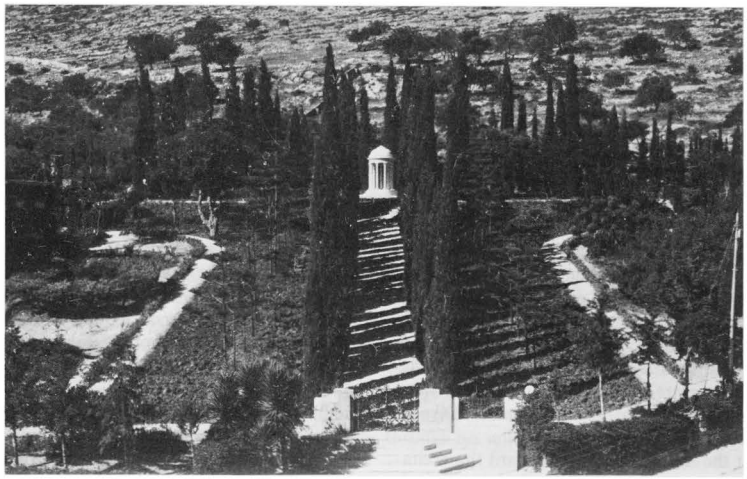
The night air rang with the Arabic words of Bahá'u'lláh's tribute to His daughter: *This is My testimony for her who hath heard My voice and drawn nigh unto Me. Verily, she is a leaf that hath sprung from this pre-existent Root . . .* The passage was read in English. Deep emotion stirred the hearts of the friends who were keenly aware of the privilege that was theirs in being in such a spot, at such a time, and hearing in surroundings of ineffable beauty and peace, these words: *Let these exalted words be thy love-song on the tree of Bahá, O thou most holy and resplendent leaf . . .* The hushed crowd stood for a long moment of reflection, loath to leave the peaceful spot.

The first gathering ever held in the Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice on Mount Carmel was a seminar on the life of the Greatest Holy Leaf, held on 17 July 1982. Though not entirely ready for occupancy, the Seat was the venue for a memorable programme which, together with the midnight commemoration at the tomb, constituted the World Centre's observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of Bahíyyih Khánum.

At nine a.m. the Hands of the Cause, members of the Universal House of Justice and Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre, together with their families and the World Centre staff, gathered in the reception concourse whose beauty surprised even those who had seen it emerging over several years. The aesthetic perfection of the surroundings brought peace and assurance to the participants' spirits, belying the troubled world outside. The chairman paid tribute to the dedicated work of the many friends whose efforts had led to that thrilling moment. He spoke of the international crew of volunteer workers from Canada, Ecuador, England, Germany, Írán, Mauritius, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States who had put in extra-long hours to ensure the readiness of those portions of the building which were used for the anniversary observance.

The broad stairway, seven metres wide, leading down into the concourse from the second floor, served as dais. The friends were seated to the left of the main entrance, while behind them lay an area of comparable size which will permit the seating of more than twice the two hundred and fifty people who were in attendance. Numerous arrangements of roses and other flowers accented the structural beauty of the reception concourse whose design reflects classic perfection of proportion.

The warm July air of Haifa drifted gently in through the large windows which stood open to receive the breeze. A Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to the Greatest Holy Leaf was first chanted then repeated in English. The first to deliver her talk that day was one who had close personal association with Bahíyyih Khánum, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. She began her re-



An early photograph of the marble monument erected by Shoghi Effendi over the resting-place of Bahíyyih Khánum.

marks, however, by calling to mind 'one whose chair is empty today'. The friends' thoughts turned to Mr. Amoz Gibson, the well-loved member of the Universal House of Justice, whose death they had so recently mourned. She then spoke for more than an hour sharing her memories of 'Khánum', as the Greatest Holy Leaf was known. She told of the privilege she was given as a young girl of sharing intimate moments with Khánum in the Master's House during her stay in Haifa with her mother, May Maxwell, in 1923.

Counsellor Anneliese Bopp presented a summary of the life of 'the outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation'. She enumerated some of the titles by which Bahíyyih Khánum is called in the literature of the Faith, among which are: 'well-beloved sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá'; the Holy Family's 'most precious, most great adorning'; 'the brightly shining Leaf, the Remnant of Bahá, and His trust, the eternal fruit and the one last remembrance of the Holy Tree'.

In the afternoon, Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání shared precious memories from the life of the Greatest Holy Leaf. He noted that the dome of the Seat is reminiscent of the dome of the monument of the Greatest Holy Leaf, saying that the architect intended this visible link between the two structures. The emotions that stirred in each privileged participant through the recitals of treasured memories can only be guessed at, but showed clearly on the participants' faces.

Mrs. Baharieh Ma'ání gave an original presentation on the Greatest Holy Leaf's place in religious history, outlining first the role of each of the outstanding women of previous Dispensations, and reinforcing the friends' respect for the capacities and services of the Greatest Holy Leaf and for the effective contributions she made at several times in the history of the Cause.

During a break for refreshments the friends went out by the back door of the Concourse and enjoyed the shade of the colonnade while admiring the dramatic display of colour that had in recent months appeared in the terraced gardens. The five-tiered garden rises steeply for twenty-five metres and is profusely planted with a variety of flowers, blossoming shrubs and small trees.

Portraits of Bahíyyih Khánum and scenes associated with her life were shown in a slide presentation prepared by Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Thompson. This was followed by recitation in Persian and English of a prayer from the pen of the Greatest Holy Leaf which provided a fitting conclusion to a day spent commemorating her saintly life.

7. SOME REFERENCES TO THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF FOUND IN WORKS PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH[1]

Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá *Tablets Revealed in Honor of the Greatest Holy Leaf* (New York: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, 1933).

Shoghi Effendi:

Advent of Divine Justice (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974), p. 37.

Bahá'í Administration (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), pp. 25, 57, 70, 93, 187–196.

The Dawn-Breakers (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974), dedication.

God Passes By (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974), pp. 108, 347, 350, 392.

Guidance for Today and Tomorrow (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973), pp. 58–71.

Messages to America: Selected Letters and Cablegrams Addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America 1932–1946 (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1947), pp. 1, 31, 37.

Messages to the Bahá'í World (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971), p. 74.

World Order of Bahá'u'lláh (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), pp. 67–68, 81–82, 93–94, 98.

Others:

Balyuzi, H. M. *'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant of Baha'u'lláh* (London: George Ronald, 1971), pp. 12, 54–55, 74, 332, 401, 416, 454–455, 463–464, 482.

Balyuzi, H. M. *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá'í Faith* (London: George Ronald, 1970), pp. 119–120.

Blomfield, Lady Sarah *The Chosen Highway* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1967), pp. 37–69, 73.

Gail, Marzieh *Khanúm, the Greatest Holy Leaf, as Remembered by Marzieh Gail* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1982).

Maxwell, May *An Early Pilgrimage* (London: George Ronald, 1969), pp. 18–19.

Muhájir, Írán Furútan, comp. *The Mystery of God* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1979), pp. 278–304.

Rabanni, Rúḥíyyih *The Priceless Pearl* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1969), pp. 6–7, 10–11, 13–15, 21–22, 39, 44, 46–51, 57–58, 63, 90, 102–103, 112, 115, 129–130, 139–140, 144–148, 151–152, 168, 199, 218, 236, 259, 261–262, 266–267, 273, 279–280, 430, 438.

Universal House of Justice *Bahá'í Holy Places at the World Centre* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1968), pp. 62–70.

The Bahá'í World, an International Record.

vol. II, 1926–1928, pp. 83, 132.

vol. III, 1928–1930, p. 64.

vol. V, 1932–1934, pp. 22–23, 114–115, 169–188.

vol. VIII, 1938–1940, pp. 5, 8, 206, 255–256, 262, 266.

vol. IX, 1940–1944, p. 329.

vol. X, 1944–1946, p. 536.

vol. XI, 1946–1950, pp. 474, 492.

vol. XVI, 1973–1976, pp. 54, 66, 73.

Bahá'í News, published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

no. 18, June 1927, p. 5.

no. 36, December 1929, p. 1.

no. 52, May 1931, pp. 1–2.

no. 62, May 1932, p. 2.

no. 65, August 1932, pp. 1–2.

no. 66, September 1932, p. 1.

no. 72, March 1933, p. 3.

no. 121, December 1938, p. 3.

no. 124, April 1939, p. 1.

no. 128, August 1939, p. 4.

no. 133, February 1940, p. 1.

no. 135, April 1940, insert.

Star of the West (Chicago: Bahá'í News Service).

vol. 10, no. 17, pp. 312–314.

[1] Compiled by the Research Department of the Bahá'í World Centre and distributed by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 25 February 1982. Many of these references are accounts of early pilgrimages and make only brief mention of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

vol. 12, no. 10, pp. 163–167; no. 11, pp. 186–188; no. 13, pp. 211–214; no. 15, p. 245; no. 19, pp. 302–303.
vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 68–69, 82–83, 88; no. 8, pp. 207–210, 219–220; no. 11, p. 314.
vol. 17, no. 8, pp. 256–260.
vol. 18, no. 9, pp. 278–282.
vol. 20, no. 1, p. 18; no. 4, p. 104.
vol. 23, no. 5, p. 134; no. 7, pp. 202–204; no. 12, pp. 374–377.
vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 18–20; no. 3, pp. 90–93.
vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 118–122.



Bahíyyih Khánum; circa *1895.*

8. SOME WORKS PUBLISHED TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSING OF THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

IN its message to 'the Bahá'ís of the world', Naw-Rúz 1981, the Universal House of Justice announced its intention to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf by issuing 'a compilation of letters to her and of statements about her by Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the beloved Guardian, and of her own letters'. The successful achievement of this objective was announced to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 12 April 1982.

'The fiftieth anniversary of the ascension of Bahíyyih Khánum, eldest daughter of Bahá'u'lláh and designated by Him the Greatest Holy Leaf, will occur on July 15th of this year,' the House of Justice advised all National Spiritual Assemblies on 24 January 1982. 'We summon the entire Bahá'í world to a befitting commemoration of the life of the greatest woman in the Bahá'í Dispensation.

'National Spiritual Assemblies are requested to arrange national commemorative services, and to ensure that all local communities hold befitting meetings. These services should be held on the date of the anniversary or on the weekend immediately following it, and in those countries where Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs are in existence, they should be held in the Temple.'

Enclosed with the letter was a bibliography of references to the Greatest Holy Leaf in Bahá'í literature in English to assist national communities in arrangements for the services.[1]

Many and varied were the programmes held throughout the Bahá'í world, each characterized by dignity and devotion. In addition, numerous teaching projects were inaugurated in her memory and conferences and deepening classes were held at which her heroic life was studied.

Set out below is a bibliography compiled by William P. Collins of publications produced in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf:

[1] See p. 55.

MAJOR WORKS:

1. *Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf* / a compilation from Bahá'í Sacred Texts and writings of the Guardian of the Faith and Bahíyyih Khánum's own letters made by the Research Department at the Bahá'í World Centre. Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1982. xix, 252 pp.
2. Faizi, Abu'l-Qásim. *A Gift of Love Offered to the Greatest Holy Leaf* / compiled and edited by Gloria Faizi. n.p.: Gloria A. Faizi, 1982, 39 pp.
3. Gail, Marzieh. *Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf* / as remembered by Marzieh Gail. Oxford: George Ronald, 1981. 40 pp.
4. Savi, Julio. *Bahíyyih Khánum, Ancella di Bahá*. Roma: Casa Editrice Bahá'í, 1983. xiii, 112 pp.

PAMPHLETS AND COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMMES:

5. *Bahíyyih Khánum*. [Lubumbashi: Bahá'í Administrative Committee for Central South Zaïre, 1982] 8 pp.
6. *Bahíyyih Khánum, das Groesste Heilige Blatt*. [Bern]: Nationale Vertiefungskomitee der Schweiz, 1982. 5 pp.
7. *Bahíyyih Khánum, das Grösste Heilige Blatt, 1846–1932* / herausgegeben vom Nationalen Geistigen Rat der Bahá'í in Deutschland zum fünfzigsten Jahrestag des Hindscheidens das Grössten Heiligen Blattes. [Hofheim-Langenhain]: Nationale Geistige Rat der Bahá'í in Deutschland, [1982] 32 pp.
8. *Bahíyyih Khánum, la Plus Sainte Feuille, 1846–1932*. [Berne, Switzerland: National Deepening Committee, 1982] 3 pp.
9. *Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf*. [London: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom, 1982] [2] pp.
10. *idem*. [4] pp.
11. *Commemoración del Quincuagésimo Aniversario de la Ascensión de Bahíyyih Khánum, 'la Hoja Más Sagrada.'* [Santi-



Bahíyyih Khánum; October 1919.

ago, Chile]: Cómité Nacional Bahá'í de Educación, [1982] 1 p.

12. *Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf, Bahíyyih Khánum, 15th July 1982/139.* [St. Michael: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Barbados], 1982 [4] pp.
13. *A Commemorative Service for the 50th Anniversary of the Ascension of the Greatest Holy Leaf, Bahá'í House of Worship, 15th July 1982 at 8.00 p.m.* [Mona Vale, N.S.W.]: Bahá'í House of Worship, 1982. [4] pp.
14. *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Passing of Bahíyyih Khánum, 'The Greatest Holy Leaf,' Daughter of Bahá'u'lláh.* [Port of Spain: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Trinidad and Tobago], 1982. [12] pp.
15. *50th Anniversary of the Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf.* [Guam]: National Spiritual Assembly [of the Bahá'ís of the Mariana Islands], 1982. [4] pp.
16. *'The Greatest Holy Leaf,' Bahíyyih Khánum, Daughter of Bahá'u'lláh: A Selection of Writings about Her Life and Qualities to Commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Her Passing on July 15, 1982.* [Accra: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ghana, 1982] 4 pp.
17. *Ḥaḍrat al-Waraqat al-Mubárakat al-'Ulyá fí Dhikrá Ṣu'údihá al-Khamsín.* [Rabat: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Morocco, 1982] [14] pp.
18. Rabbani, Rúḥíyyih. *Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf* / by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. Malawi: Bahá'í International Summer School, Malawi, 1982 (Lilongwe: Extension Aids Branch, Ministry of Agriculture). ix pp. Introduction to item 1.
19. *Seminar on the Greatest Holy Leaf: Seat of the Universal House of Justice, Reception Concourse, 17 July 1982.* [Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre], 1982. [4] pp.

9. THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF: A REMINISCENCE[1]

'Alí Nakhjavání

AS we sit together in this gathering I am reminded of the fact that our beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, speaks about the mystic bond that exists between the Greatest Holy Leaf and Bahá'u'lláh. Obviously this is so, for she was not only His daughter but was referred to by Him as the woman who has the highest rank among all women believers in the Bahá'í dispensation, a station that none surpasses. Shoghi Effendi, basing himself on this statement, has named her the outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í dispensation.

The Greatest Holy Leaf also had a mystic bond, as Shoghi Effendi describes the relationship, with her brother, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant—One Who not only knew her station and appointed her to be in total charge of His household, but Who entrusted her with the sacred remains of the Báb which were housed in her room for some ten years in the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, Who entrusted her with His last will and testament and Who realized that after His passing she would play a central role in the community, as He knew that Shoghi Effendi was not present at the time of His passing. We can be sure that 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away with His mind at rest, because He knew that Shoghi Effendi would soon be there, and that the Greatest Holy Leaf was there.

After the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá the mystic bond between Shoghi Effendi and the Greatest Holy Leaf assumed far-reaching proportions. I am sure that future historians and other writers will write about the eleven years that passed from the night of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the night of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

The thought was borne in today, as I gazed at the friends assembled in this meeting in this majestic setting, that the House of Justice is beginning to forge its links and bonds with the Greatest Holy Leaf. Why? Following so close upon the fiftieth anniversary of her passing the very first meeting in the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice is held in her name. The architect of this building, Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat, today confirmed my recollection that he had deliberately designed the dome of this building to be reminiscent of the dome on the monument erected at the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf. If we compare these two domes we will see the resemblance in broad outline. He did so, he said, because of the well-known statement of Shoghi Effendi in which he likened the administrative order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the monument of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the dome representing the Universal House of Justice.

This building, itself, standing so close to her resting-place, caused me to reflect, as I stood outside, upon yet another symbolism. It is as though someone were standing with his arms outstretched in a semicircle, this arc, the world administrative seat of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, encircling the consecrated spot where these three precious souls are buried, the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Purest Branch and Navváb—chief among them the Greatest Holy Leaf. Thus we are now witnessing the forging of bonds at the World Centre of the Faith between the Universal House of Justice and the Greatest Holy Leaf.

It is somewhat embarrassing to find myself speaking of my own recollections of the Greatest Holy Leaf. I came to the Holy Land in 1922 when I was two-and-a-half years old. The Greatest Holy Leaf passed away in 1932. Of course, I have no memories left of the first two or three years because I was too young, but a few memories have remained of the later years of that decade. I will, then, speak about this young child who has memories of being in the presence of the Greatest Holy Leaf. This child had a brother who was very close to him—my brother Jalál who passed away in May of this year—and the experiences which I relate were joint experiences. I am grateful to

[1] Excerpts from an address presented during the World Centre seminar commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf, held in the reception concourse, permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice, 17 July 1982.

Bahá'u'lláh for having occasion to mention my brother's name here today.

The young child of whom I speak was born of a mother, Fáṭimih Khánum, who had spent her youthful life in service to the Greatest Holy Leaf, serving for some fifteen years, dating back to the time when the Master was in the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá in 'Akká. Some of you may have met her sister, my aunt, Zeenat Baghdadi, who came to the Holy Land not long ago to give information relating to the restoration of the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá. These two sisters, when they were young girls in 'Akká, nine and eleven years old, were accepted into the household of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. My mother was chosen to serve the Greatest Holy Leaf for all those years. So in our family home we had many stories and feelings—the feelings more important than the stories—about the Greatest Holy Leaf, and the way my mother felt about her. These things are in my background and are for you to visualize as I speak to you.

Speaking about this bond between Shoghi Effendi and the Greatest Holy Leaf, Zeenat, my aunt, used to say that in the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá there used to be a parrot. The Greatest Holy Leaf used to take a mirror, hold it before the bird and bid it to say *'Ya Iláhí va Maḥbúbí!'* (O my God and my Beloved!) and to say *'Shoghi ján!'* (Shoghi dear!) Early in the morning, at dawn, my aunt recalled, the household could hear the parrot crying *'Ya Iláhí va Maḥbúbí! . . . Shoghi ján!'* We have my aunt's voice on tape and I have tried to imitate that *'Shoghi ján!'* with its high pitch.

During the period of the commission of investigation in the time of 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd, when grave problems confronted 'Abdu'l-Bahá, it was necessary for the Master to conceal His Will and Testament. Although I have no evidence to support my belief, I am convinced that the only soul apart from 'Abdu'l-Bahá who knew at that time who would be the Master's successor was the Greatest Holy Leaf. She was the depository of His secrets, so to speak.

When you visit the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá you will be shown the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf. My aunt said that she had often wondered why it was that the Greatest Holy Leaf would sit on the mandar in that room, in utter silence, for hours on end. My aunt described my mother sitting at the feet of the Greatest Holy Leaf, also remaining silent and motionless, hour after hour. She said it was only later that she understood that it was because the remains of the Báb were in that room. If we wish to visualize it—forgive my saying this but I am trying to make it understood—it is as though we were asked to live and sleep in the Shrine of the Báb. Obviously, we can well imagine that the Greatest Holy Leaf lived in reverence, turning her heart to the Báb, realizing the sacred trust she had to protect for ten years in that room.

Zeenat used to explain to us that there were several things clearly visible in the life of the Greatest Holy Leaf in the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá and, of course, later on these patterns were transferred to her life at the house of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Haifa. One was the undisputed authority of the Greatest Holy Leaf after 'Abdu'l-Bahá; that was definitely clear. It was not Munírih Khánum; indeed, far from it. It was the Greatest Holy Leaf.

A second was her leadership in co-ordinating the meetings related to the Bahá'í women. Whether in 'Akká or Haifa, she presided over their meetings and controlled everything. The friends would come to her for names for their children, for consultation about a forthcoming marriage and requesting her blessing on the union. She would generally inform the friends about the development of the Cause and whatever 'Abdu'l-Bahá had said. She was the central point for the Bahá'í women in the community in the Holy Land.

A third was her contact with women of the higher social class in 'Akká and later in Haifa. Zeenat said that whenever prominent persons such as the Muftí of 'Akká, the Governor, or other high officials of the government called upon 'Abdu'l-Bahá, He would ask the Greatest Holy Leaf, rather than His daughters or His wife, to visit the women in their homes while He entertained the men in His home. In addition to Persian, the Greatest Holy Leaf spoke fluent Turkish and Arabic.

A fourth aspect became increasingly clear as the Research Department made a study and review of the documents at the World Centre: the extensive correspondence conducted by the Greatest Holy Leaf from the days of Bahá'u'lláh until the end of her life. During

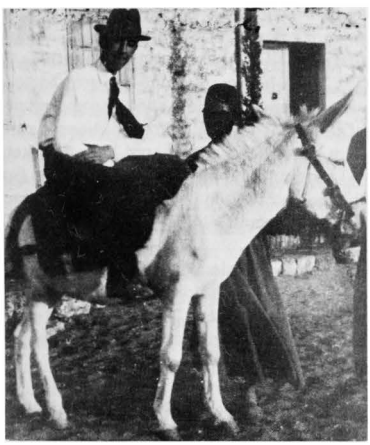
the last six years of Bahá'u'lláh's Ministry she was the Most Exalted Leaf after her mother, and there are letters written by her at that time. During the Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá likewise there are letters from her, and after the passing of the Master, of course, during the difficult period when she was head of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's household and head of the committee which was operating here in charge of the affairs of the Faith in the absence of Shoghi Effendi, until the period when he was able to take the reins of authority in his capable hands.

A fifth aspect was her domestic duties. Ella Goodall Cooper wrote a few lines which I think describe very well the busy life of the Greatest Holy Leaf in the household of the Master.

'One day', she writes, 'we caught a glimpse of her in the kitchen, seated on a low stool, her firm, capable hands busy with a large lamb that had just been brought in from the market. Quickly dividing it, she directed which part was to be made into broth, which part served for the evening meal, which part kept possibly for the morrow, and which was to be sent to those poor or incapacitated friends who were daily supplied from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's table.' The relationship of the Greatest Holy Leaf to the poor is an element of her life which is sometimes forgotten. During the First World War she was the person responsible for feeding the poor from the Master's house: she cooked for them, sent them rations or supplied rations when the poor came asking. All this was under her control.

An American believer, Curtis Kelsey, was present in the Holy Land at the time of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In the memoir of Mr. Kelsey written by Nathan Rutstein we find a description of the event: 'The Greatest Holy Leaf calmly went about comforting the grief-stricken, absorbing their pain. As Curtis watched her move from person to person, stroking a shoulder, clasping a stretched-out hand, he noticed that she exhibited the kind of strength that 'Abdu'l-Bahá radiated. Some sensed that and clung to her. Her control, her poise, her unrestrained flow of compassion assured him that the Faith would not falter. She was, at that moment, the head of the Faith that her dear brother had led so successfully for twenty-nine years, giving His all. She was a tower of strength that all would rally around for support.

'As he watched the Greatest Holy Leaf, her



Curtis Kelsey astride a donkey, Pilgrim House, Bahjí; 1921.



Saichiro Fujita in Persian garb; 1921.

eyes caught his and she walked over to him. Since he was not crying, he wondered why she was coming toward him.

' "Kelsey," she said, "will you take Fujita and Khusraw to 'Akká to tell the friends there of the Master's passing and then come right back?" '

Here she was in the midst of this storm of sorrow, yet she was in full control, giving instructions, comforting everyone around her, although she was the one who was in need of the greatest comfort. When the beloved Guardian passed away and a torrent of grief afflicted the Bahá'ís of the world, our beloved Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum acted in exactly the same way.

In response to a request of the Universal House of Justice the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi has written a brief account of his visits to Haifa during the time when he was a student at the American University in Beirut. He relates a little story that is touching, one we have heard from him many times. One day Shoghi Effendi asked Mr. Faizi to chant a prayer; he had a most melodious and heartwarming voice. The next day Shoghi Effendi said that the Greatest Holy Leaf had heard his voice and she would like him to sing and chant for her. With a few other students, Mr. Faizi went to the Greatest Holy Leaf and chanted. The next day Shoghi Effendi inquired whether Mr. Faizi had visited the Greatest Holy Leaf. 'Yes,' Mr. Faizi replied. 'And did you chant for her?' 'Yes,' said Mr. Faizi. Then Shoghi Effendi said that he had left his door open in order to enjoy the chanting and explained that the Greatest Holy Leaf first heard Mr. Faizi chant because she had left her door ajar on the earlier occasion.

Mr. Faizi in his reminiscences describes another occasion on which the Greatest Holy Leaf was very happy. He writes, 'When our small group of students from Beirut was ushered into the presence of the Greatest Holy Leaf she was seated at the upper end of a large room facing the door.' I think this must be the same room which served as the women's tea-room. 'The wife of the Master, Munírih Khánum, sat next to her and other ladies of the household sat on either side in a semicircle. The mother of the Guardian, Díyá'iyyih Khánum, stood behind the Greatest Holy Leaf with her hands resting on the shoulders of her beloved aunt. We students were given seats facing this beautiful audience. Khánum sat still, her lily-white hands resting gently on her lap. She was a queen who inspired love and reverence and at her throne of grandeur we offered our grateful hearts. Her glance was full of love but she did not speak to us. The Master's wife, Munírih Khánum, spoke on her behalf. She greeted us when we arrived and thanked us warmly in Khánum's name at the end of our programme of prayers, songs and Bahá'í poems.'

On yet another occasion the students were invited. 'This time she said she would like to hear one of the songs that labourers sing in Írán as they go home in the evening on their way back from work. She asked if there was anyone among us who knew these songs. We were surprised that Khánum should still remember such songs which she must have heard on the streets in Ṭihrán during her early childhood. Perhaps the sight of a group of young Persians or the music of the tár (one of the students had a tár, a Persian stringed instrument) had taken her memories back to those days.'

Marjory Morten in her tribute to the Greatest Holy Leaf makes a touching observation which is accurate as far as my own experiences go: 'She delighted in making presents—sweetmeats and goodies and coins for the children, and for others flowers, keepsakes—a vial of attar of roses, a rosary, or some delicate thing that she had used and cared for. Anything that was given her she one day gave to someone else, someone in whom she felt a special need of a special favour. She was channel rather than cup; open treasury, not locked casket.'

I have selected just four brief passages from the memoir written by the Hand of the Cause Keith Ransom-Kehler. These passages ring true:

'On two occasions she removed my Bahá'í ring and after holding it for some time replaced it reversed. Twice she blew on the palm of my hand, a sweet, cool, delicious breath and then exultantly exclaimed: "It is all right now."

'She would reach out her delicate hand and, pressing my cheek close against her own, would make some lover-like exclamation. I was dissolved by her sweetness.

'For the most part she would chant in a low

delicious voice some glorious Tablet or poem, soothing my hand or holding me under the chin as she sang.

'Every Sunday she insisted in going to the meeting on Mt. Carmel: she had to be lifted in and out of the car.'

Keith Ransom-Kehler refers here to the last time she met Bahíyyih Khánum toward the close of her life; she was here in March 1932, not long before the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

As to my own memories, perhaps I could present one or two vignettes. The first I call 'a mouthful from Khánum, but not Khánum's mouthful'. I say this because in *The Priceless Pearl* Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum refers to Khánum's mouthful, and she did so again in her remarks this morning.

About 1926 or 1927, when I was about five or six years old, I came to the Master's house with my mother one hot afternoon—it was probably during the summer months—and the door of the house was open. The Greatest Holy Leaf was seated next to the big round table which is still there in the hall of the Master's house. The samovar was next to her and around this table were seated Munírih Khánum and the daughters of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We reached the hall and stood there and bowed, I following my mother's example. Khánum looked at us and told us to come in. She was having tea. As I came closer I saw that she was having fresh Arabic bread, white cheese and fresh mint. These were placed on the table. She had made one mouthful of bread, cheese and mint, apparently intending to have it herself. It was ready to be eaten and she was still holding it in her hand. As we approached she asked me to come forward and I moved closer to her. She then asked me to close my eyes and I dutifully closed them. Then she said, 'Open your mouth!' and she put the tidbit in my mouth. So vivid is this experience that every time I recall it I feel that I can taste that fresh mint, bread and cheese from the hand of the Greatest Holy Leaf. I feel and taste it every time I bring the incident to memory.

My brother, Jalál, was two years older than I was. The second story is about him. I was not present on one occasion when he was leaving the presence of the Greatest Holy Leaf. It was at the time of the mandate when we had British currency. She placed one shilling in his hand and said, 'Jalál, here is a shilling, half for you and half for your brother.' Jalál said, 'But Khánum, how can I break this coin?' She laughed and beckoned him to her and gave him another shilling. 'This one is for your brother.'

Many were the times my brother and I had sweetmeats, nuts, cookies and other goodies in her room. Often she was tired and would be seated or in bed. She would say, 'Bring that box from under the mandar. Bring it out—that's right, bring it out. Now open it. Take one for yourself and give one to your brother.' How many times I have gone into that room in great reverence and knelt down, as we used to before the portraits of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, and watched while the Greatest Holy Leaf sat there reverently unveiling the portraits and then closing them up again after the viewing was over.

We have heard of the delight the Greatest Holy Leaf took in giving presents. Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Faizi describes an event he witnessed when some Arab women came to pay a visit. Bahíyyih Khánum wanted to give them something, but finding nothing in her room she requested that some sugar cubes be brought from the kitchen and she presented them to her guests. She always wanted to give gifts to others.

The story I will now relate, although not all of it refers to the Greatest Holy Leaf, illustrates what I witnessed of the tender relationship between the Greatest Holy Leaf and Shoghi Effendi. Once our mother asked my brother and I to go to the Master's house after prayers at the Shrine of the Báb. In those days the Guardian was younger and, following prayers, he would walk down to Abbas Street and, the terraces beyond Abbas Street not yet having been built, he would turn to the right on Abbas Street, and then proceed to Haparsim Street and straight down to the Master's house. The pilgrims would usually walk with him. On that particular day my brother and I, too, followed Shoghi Effendi because we thought how much better it was to go to the Master's house with him. When Shoghi Effendi reached the gate he turned and said, '*Fí Amáni'lláh*' (May you be under God's protection) and went in. Being younger than Jalál, I was glad to follow him when he set out after

Shoghi Effendi. The Guardian went up the stairs and we did, too, and then entered the house. It was the custom of the Guardian to have his one major meal each day with the Greatest Holy Leaf. It was also his practice to go to her after meeting with the pilgrims and sit and talk to her. Shoghi Effendi turned right to go through the corridor next to the room in which the Master passed away and proceeded to the next room which was the Greatest Holy Leaf's bedroom. He went along that corridor and we followed, and when he opened the door I was so close to Shoghi Effendi at that point that I saw that the Greatest Holy Leaf was in bed. As soon as she heard the footsteps of Shoghi Effendi and the opening of the door she was at the point of rising from bed to sit in the presence of the Guardian. Although the distance is not far from the door to the bed, Shoghi Effendi literally ran from the door to the bed and gently restrained her, saying '*Já'iz níst*' (it is not permissible). He did not want her to be disturbed.

There is a little sequel to this incident and although it does not directly relate to the Greatest Holy Leaf, since we have begun the story, let me finish it. In the room of Khánum, Shoghi Effendi seated himself. My brother and I, with childish aplomb, sat down too. Then my mother found out what had happened and sent the maid immediately to tell us to come out. The door was opened again and with a motion of her eyes the maid signalled us to leave. Jalál very reverently stood and bowed and withdrew from the room. But I thought this wasn't right; I thought, 'This is not the way to do things!' I felt there should be a handshake. This, of course, was totally inappropriate but to my childish mind it seemed the proper thing to do. I went straight over to Shoghi Effendi who was seated in a deep comfortable armchair and offered him my little hand. Shoghi Effendi looked at me and pulled himself closer, accepted my hand and shook it. This all took time. When I went outside my mother asked me what had delayed me and I explained that my brother didn't shake hands and I thought I should. She was horrified and struck my hand, saying, 'Out of reverence for the Guardian you should have done exactly what your brother did.'

Of course, I felt very bad about this. As we were going home my mother asked again, incredulously, 'You shook hands?'

I said, 'Yes.'

'With your right hand?'

'Of course.'

'Give me your hand.'

I did, and she kissed it several times.

When the Greatest Holy Leaf passed away in her eighty-sixth year, on 15 July 1932, an announcement was printed in Haifa and distributed to everyone concerned, Bahá'ís and others, in Haifa, 'Akká and Jerusalem. At the top is set out stanza 33 of the *Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh, from the Arabic: *O Son of Spirit! With the joyful tidings of light I hail thee: rejoice! To the court of holiness I summon thee; abide therein that thou mayest live in peace for evermore. Bahá'u'lláh.*

Then it states: 'The family of the late Sir 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás announces with profound sorrow the death of Bahíyyih Khánum, sister of the late Sir 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás, who passed away peacefully at 1 a.m. on the morning of July 15. The funeral procession from her home in the Persian Colony is at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, July 15th.'

The passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf was the most significant event in Haifa since the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Many people gathered for the funeral; indeed, there were a hundred cars following the procession. Shoghi Effendi obviously was not in Haifa. Apart from many dignitaries, the Mayor of Haifa was present and the representative of the northern district. There were people present not only from Haifa, but 'Akká, Abú-Sinán, Nablus, Jaffa and Jerusalem, and of course the Bahá'ís were present. The prayer for the dead was read in the Master's house in the main hall. Some of the friends served as pallbearers. The coffin was raised shoulder high on the shoulders of the friends and carried from the Master's house up to the Shrine. The coffin was brought in not through the main gate but through the small gate next to the school, almost immediately above the cluster of cypress trees where Bahá'u'lláh sat, and then down the path to the Shrine. As I recall, it was not taken inside but was placed outside and prayers were read there as well. Then her coffin was raised again and carried along the same route to her resting-place. The site was chosen by Shoghi Effendi and he himself had

instructed his father in Haifa exactly where the site should be and how the burial should take place. Shoghi Effendi also instructed the Bahá'ís to visit her resting-place every day for nine days. Every afternoon for nine days we gathered at her resting-place for prayers.

There were among the local Arabs those who had written eulogies (*Marthíyyih*) about the Greatest Holy Leaf and they wanted to read them. There was no time on the day of the funeral so this was set aside because evening came on and everybody had to go home. Very soon requests were made for a meeting in the Master's house for these poets and various officials to come and, as is the custom, offer condolences to the family, recite poems written in honour of the Greatest Holy Leaf and speak words of praise in her memory. This was immediately reported to Shoghi Effendi who said no. Instead, he said that on the fortieth day after her passing a luncheon should be held for the poor and all else who might come. On the 25th of August all the friends gathered. Some of us were cooking, others were cleaning, others were laying tables and others were serving. Your humble servant was among those who were serving. A long table was laid seating 100 people. We had ten or eleven turnovers; over 1,000 people came. This is how it went on until 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon. A tent had been erected in the garden where those waiting to be seated could shelter from the hot summer sun.

Shoghi Effendi also gave the sum of £100—a considerable amount in those days—to the municipality of Haifa asking that it be distributed to the needy in the name of the Greatest Holy Leaf. An announcement was made in the papers and the municipality set up a special committee to screen applications for assistance and distribute the money to those genuinely in need.

Before I conclude let me mention the hands of the Greatest Holy Leaf. The veins stood out visibly, very much in relief. There was a wonderful softness and a supple tenderness in her hands. She truly spoke with her hands. I have had the privilege of having her hand over my head; she stroked my head many times as a child. And I want to tell you I have kissed those hands many times; I have broken the law of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*!

I can conclude with no more fitting tribute than that of Shoghi Effendi. This is such a beautiful description of Khánum:

> It would take me too long to make even a brief allusion to those incidents of her life, each of which eloquently proclaims her as a daughter, worthy to inherit that priceless heritage bequeathed to her by Bahá'u'lláh. A purity of life that reflected itself in even the minutest details of her daily occupations and activities; a tenderness of heart that obliterated every distinction of creed, class and colour; a resignation and serenity that evoked to the mind the calm and heroic fortitude of the Báb; a natural fondness of flowers and children that was so characteristic of Bahá'u'lláh; an unaffected simplicity of manners; an extreme sociability which made her accessible to all; a generosity, a love, at once disinterested and undiscriminating, that reflected so clearly the attributes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's character; a sweetness of temper; a cheerfulness that no amount of sorrow could becloud; a quiet and unassuming disposition that served to enhance a thousandfold the prestige of her exalted rank; a forgiving nature that instantly disarmed the most unyielding enemy —these rank among the outstanding attributes of a saintly life which history will acknowledge as having been endowed with a celestial potency that few of the heroes of the past possessed.

And then these beautiful words:

> Dearly-beloved Greatest Holy Leaf! Through the mist of tears that fill my eyes I can clearly see, as I pen these lines, thy noble figure before me, and can recognize the serenity of thy kindly face. I can still gaze, though the shadows of the grave separate us, into thy blue, love-deep eyes, and can feel in its calm intensity, the immense love thou did'st bear for the Cause of thine Almighty Father, the attachment that bound thee to the most lowly and insignificant among its followers, the warm affection thou didst cherish for me in thine heart. The memory of the ineffable beauty of thy smile shall ever continue to cheer and hearten me in the thorny path I am destined to pursue. The remembrance of the touch of thine hand shall spur me on

to follow steadfastly in thy way, the sweet magic of thy voice shall remind me, when the hour of adversity is at its darkest, to hold fast to the rope thou did'st seize so firmly all the days of thy life.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum spoke of praying to the Greatest Holy Leaf. I want to make a confession. For the past fifty years since her passing, every time I have had a very difficult, difficult problem that I found myself unable to resolve, I have turned to the Greatest Holy Leaf.



Bahíyyih Khánum; circa *1919.*



View of the Greatest Holy Leaf's monument as it appears today.

10. THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF[1]

Bahíyyih Nakhjavání

ACROSS the world, from East to West, thousands of Bahá'ís have turned their hearts this year towards one single woman called the 'Maid of Bahá'. In conferences they have stood before multitudes to speak of the 'Scion of Bahá', the 'Remnant of Bahá'. In solitude they have all found themselves speechless to describe adequately this 'archetype of the people of Bahá'. 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself refers to her in a way that recalls all that cannot be said: 'I dare make no mention', He wrote, 'of the feelings which separation from her have aroused in my heart . . .' 'I do not know', He continues, 'in what words I could describe my longing for my honoured sister.'

Shoghi Effendi, writing about his great-aunt after her passing in July 1932 also acknowledged that words could not adequately convey all that she was: 'Not even a droplet of all thine endless love can I aspire to fathom, nor can I adequately praise and tell of even the most trifling out of all the events of thy precious life.'

How can we hope to encompass anything of her nature, therefore, when those who give us the words remind us that they will not suffice? How can we contain her when all our lives put together cannot comprehend the least trifling of the events she witnessed, the suffering she endured? It must be with feelings of awe that we approach this subject and with a sense of wonder that we ask who was this 'Maid', this 'Scion', this 'Remnant of Bahá' who must remain for all of time our 'archetype'.

She was named Bahíyyih (Bahá'íyyih) by Bahá'u'lláh. She was given the titles of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Most Exalted Leaf, but in her letters she referred to herself as 'this yearning prisoner', 'this lowly and grief-stricken maidservant', 'this wronged one'. In the writings of Shoghi Effendi we find expressions which have captured something of her nature and his wonderful imagery speaks where we fall silent. She has been called a 'leaf . . . sprung' from the 'Pre-existent Root', 'the fruit of His Tree, . . . the lamp of His love, . . . the symbol of His serenity . . .' He calls her a 'love-lorn moth', a 'soaring pillar', a 'rich mine of faithfulness', an 'orb in the heaven of eternal glory'. She holds a rank in this dispensation that is higher than any other woman can hold. Her station is one among those that revolve around the greater Manifestations of the past, those women who, like moths, revolved around the great suns of the previous Manifestations. Bahá'u'lláh wrote of her in these words: 'Verily, We have elevated thee to the rank of one of the most distinguished among thy sex, and granted thee, in My court, a station such as none other woman hath surpassed.' During the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá her station was similarly exalted. Shoghi Effendi described her as a 'staunch and trusted supporter of the peerless Branch of Bahá', 'a companion to Him beyond compare', 'His competent deputy', 'His representative and vicegerent with none to equal her'. Shoghi Effendi also describes how much she meant to him during the first years of his own ministry, until her passing. He says she was 'my sole earthly sustainer', 'my most affectionate comforter', 'the joy and inspiration of my life'.

The Greatest Holy Leaf had a subtle bond with Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, a kinship that was infinitely tender and powerful. To Bahá'u'lláh she was far more than a daughter for she was like a mirror in which His good pleasure was exquisitely reflected. He says to her, 'How sweet to see thy presence before Me, how sweet to gaze upon thy face.' To 'Abdu'l-Bahá she was far more than a sister, for in letters of consuming tenderness He writes to her as 'O My sister in the spirit and the companion of My heart, the beloved of My soul'. After her passing the secretary of Shoghi Effendi wrote of what she meant to the Guardian saying that the spiritual attachment he felt for her was 'a bond so strong as to defy description, nor can the mind encompass that exalted state'. Per-

[1] Adapted from the address of Dr. Bahíyyih Nakhjavání to the Bahá'í International Conference, Montreal, Québec, 3 September 1982.

haps it is not presumptuous, therefore, if we should say that this subtle and mystic bond is still present with us today working through the Covenant of God, through the divinely ordained administrative order of God, and that her loving care and protection are with us still. Indeed, it can be no coincidence that the Universal House of Justice should have summoned the Bahá'í world to remember her, fifty years after her passing, at a time which coincides with the year in which the House of Justice is itself advancing toward the plenitude of its powers, entering its Seat on the slopes of Mount Carmel, occupying a building set like a jewel on that arc at whose hub and centre lies enshrined the monument of the Greatest Holy Leaf. That subtle bond was a legacy given to us fifty years ago when she passed away. Today we receive that legacy again and none of us needs feel portionless or orphaned.

The following cannot pretend to be an historical account and is not intended as a source of biographical detail. Instead it will attempt to consider the degree of suffering experienced by the Greatest Holy Leaf, her service that gradually widened its sphere of influence as a result of that suffering, and finally the nature of the symbol that she is for us, not only as individuals but as members of institutions. The greatness of her station can only be measured by her obedience and her love for the Covenant of God. Her obedience and love for the Covenant is what ensured her proximity to the Centre of the Covenant throughout her life, and that proximity surely cannot be measured except by some reflection on the degree to which she suffered.

The Greatest Holy Leaf was an initiate of suffering, schooled in sacrifice, and she learned everything there was to know about loss. From the earliest years of her life she was deprived not only of home and security, but also of her dearest Father, when He was thrown into the Síyáh-Chál and later when He removed Himself for two years from the community in Baghdád. Separation from Bahá'u'lláh and exile from her home: such were the experiences that marked the beginning of her life. In His letters to her later we read how 'Abdu'l-Bahá's was one of the educating voices that trained her in the school of sacrifice and instilled in her the capacity to endure. He wrote, 'If thou dost not bear these hardships, who would ever bear them?' And this is what makes of her such a poignant symbol for us today. He counsels her at times of loneliness with words such as, 'However great the distance that separates us, we still feel as though we were seated under the same roof, in one and the same gathering, for are we not all under the shadow of the Tabernacle of God and beneath the canopy of His infinite grace and mercy?' Through her, therefore, we learn from Him.

During these early years of separation and sacrifice during which she lost one brother, and later in 'Akká lost yet another, Mírzá Mihdí, she played the role of auxiliary in the household, assisting her mother. Most of her services were internal, within the household. She served tea. We can imagine how much she must have learned from the mother who was so dear to her, with what joy she must have prepared for the return of Bahá'u'lláh from Sulaymáníyyih. She was herself never married, but that training she received as assistant to her own mother made of her a symbol of such maternal love as we cannot conceive, for she was entirely unpossessive in her mothering. When she died Shoghi Effendi wrote that we were orphaned, left destitute, for the whole Bahá'í world at that time seemed under her protective care.

If we think of this quality in relation to individuals we see how often we may be called upon to be mothers to each other, no matter who we are. When we think of this quality in relation to the institutions of the Faith we realize that we surely have in our Assemblies a parent whom we can turn to with absolute trust if those institutions could also evince the characteristics of such gentle mothering. However the institutions need to be cared for also, and mothered, for this is the infant Faith of God. And modelling ourselves upon the Greatest Holy Leaf we, too, can try to extend that mothering, that generosity, that nurture, that nourishment to the infant institutions that are growing up all over the world.

It was around 1886 when the Greatest Holy Leaf had to endure the loss of her own mother. At that point in time Bahíyyih Khánum received the title of 'The Greatest Holy Leaf'. She took over the role of her mother, was at the helm of the household of

Bahá'u'lláh, conducted the management of the affairs of the house, saw to the food that had to be bought and prepared, met the wives of the pilgrims and extended her love and generosity to the community of women who entered that house. Her loss was therefore paralleled by increased responsibility and this pattern was repeated throughout her life.

In 1892 she had to face the 'supreme affliction', the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, and the degree of that suffering was what nerved her to enter an even wider arena of service to the Cause. Her condition at that time was such that 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote, 'My sister for a considerable period, that is, from the day of Bahá'u'lláh's ascension, had grown so thin and feeble and was in such a weakened condition from the anguish of her mourning that she was close to breakdown.' But it is such a lady who was nevertheless able to stand as the supporter and companion of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at a time of severe crisis. Her role in the Bahá'í community at this point was much more significant, for she had to receive on His behalf the wives of the dignitaries who came to visit the World Centre. Still she conducted the household affairs but the scope was now wider. Shoghi Effendi writes of how far-reaching was her generosity and compassion for the people of 'Akká at that time and how, in spite of this, she was met with rejection and denial and was given no relief at the time of her own great grief. During the last years in 'Akká, before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, when circumstances were so difficult and the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was under threat, it was the Greatest Holy Leaf who was trusted by Him, who was the custodian of His will, who was responsible for the safe keeping of His testament. She it was in whose room the casket of the Blessed Báb was kept for ten years because she was so trusted by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In this way, surely, she is also a model for us not only within our individual lives but through our institutions, for where else could we turn in a world so sadly shaken? Where else but toward the solace of those divinely appointed institutions? To which other haven could we turn and put our trust and confidence?

The Greatest Holy Leaf was an extremely practical person. Indeed, due to the extraordinary multiplicity of her capacities we owe her a faithfulness in this attempt to convey the diversity of her nature. It is too easy for us to create a myth about her, to impose upon her the weight and strain of our twentieth-century interpretations which are inadequate for the duration of this mighty dispensation. She was truly sensitive and finely tuned but she was also immensely practical. There is a description drawn by an early pilgrim which shows her as the housekeeper of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a role which she also performed during the early years of Shoghi Effendi's ministry: 'One day we caught a glimpse of her in the kitchen seated on a low stool, her firm capable hands busy with a large lamb that had just been brought in from the market. Quickly dividing it, she directed which part was to be made into broth, which part served for the evening meal, which part kept for the morrow, and which sent to those poor or incapacitated friends who were daily supplied from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's table.'

It is fitting that we should consider the Greatest Holy Leaf as a model not only for our individual lives but for the qualities of service and the kind of obedience to the Covenant which can stream through our institutions, when we think of her in this capacity of practical housekeeper. Our institutions are dealing with our lives. It is human beings that are passing through the hands of our assemblies. We must have not only tender compassion for them but be immensely practical in our manner of dealing with community affairs so as not to cause harm or hardship or waste. During the trials that affected 'Abdu'l-Bahá, during the threat on His life, the capacities of the Greatest Holy Leaf as housewife and mother enabled her to support 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In a much deeper sense than mere external practicality, she evinced a stability that was rooted in steadfastness to the Covenant. Shoghi Effendi says of that period, 'Suffice it to say that but for her sleepless vigilance, her tact, her courtesy, her extreme patience and heroic fortitude, grave complications might have ensued and the load of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's anxious care would have been considerably increased.' It was an element of her very practical nature that she did not wish to burden 'Abdu'l-Bahá any more than was necessary, and protected Him with her discretion.

What joy it must have given her when the imprisonment was lifted and her beloved brother was permitted to be free and travel to the West! This was one separation the cost of which she surely did not mind paying, for the letters that streamed back to her from Europe and America must have filled her heart with happiness. The victories of the Faith were great recompense for all her previous suffering. And when He left her in Haifa, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave her a much wider role. In His absence she had to deal with many of the affairs in Haifa which had been His responsibility. Everything which did not require interaction with the male world was left to her, because we must remember that this was the Middle East and it would not have been fitting for a lady such as the Greatest Holy Leaf to deal with business affairs; such matters were taken care of by the male members of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's household. But nevertheless her sphere of influence was wider and she received both men and women dignitaries and officials, spoke to the pilgrims on behalf of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, inspired them, gave her assistance to the poor and offered her medical services to the sick.

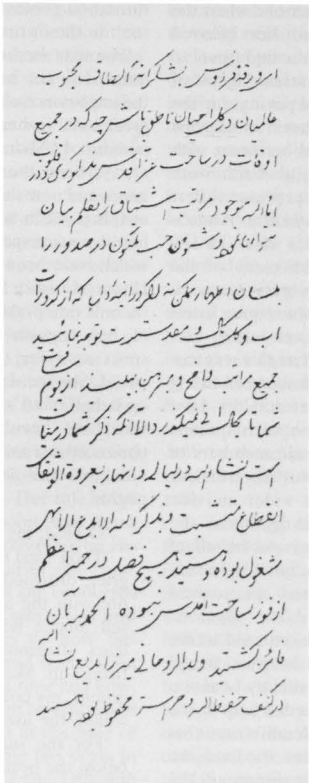
Shortly after 'Abdu'l-Bahá returned to the Holy Land after His travels in the West, World War I broke out. The Greatest Holy Leaf was in a position to offer some needed help to the local community. Shoghi Effendi writes that 'her words of cheer and comfort, the food, the money, the clothing she freely dispensed, the remedies which by a process of her own she herself prepared and diligently applied, all these had their share in comforting the disconsolate.'

Here again we might consider how much she is a model for us not only as individuals but as institutions. She was a natural healer. She not only had compassion for the sick but insight into the nature of their sickness and she offered remedies which she prepared, as Shoghi Effendi said, by 'a process of her own'. We might bear this in mind when we think of how often our Assemblies need to be a source of healing for the community, how they are required to consider each individual case, diagnose the condition, prescribe the remedies in the same way she did, so that by means of prevention, the health of the community might be ensured. We are told that she turned to professionals when necessary; so, too, do the institutions.

Through her own suffering she became attuned to the needs of the community and the importance of her role increased. The next great blow in her life came in 1921 with the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The One Who had always been there to comfort her was now gone, and now she became the comforter. It is at this point in her life that we begin to hear her own voice speaking in the beautiful tablets which have been translated by the Universal House of Justice for us this year. Among them there is one prayer that rises from the depths of her anguish and in it she becomes a spokesman for the suffering masses of the world. She speaks in the language of the heart on behalf of all who have been downtrodden, who have been suppressed, who have experienced a separation and loss of such magnitude that she alone could understand their plight:

> 'O God, my God!
>
> 'Thou seest me immersed in the depths of grief, drowned in my sorrow, my heart on fire with the agony of parting, my inmost self aflame with longing. Thou seest my tears streaming down, hearest my sighs rising up like smoke, my never-ceasing groans, my cries, my shouts that will not be stilled, the useless wailing of my heart.
>
> 'For the sun of joy has set, has sunk below the horizon of this world, and in the hearts of the righteous the lights of courage and consolation have gone out. So grave this catastrophe, so dire this disaster, that the inner being crumbles away to dust . . .'

Where else could we find a spokesman who could so speak on our behalf about our deepest anguish? We know now why she has been offered to us as an intercessor, as one to whom we might turn at times of great despair. It seems most fitting that we reach toward her first, beg her assistance, ask for her compassion, because she has so keenly felt the pain of being human. She was no mediator between man and God, nor a mystery given by God to man, but simply a woman whose voice calling upon God seems universal in its truth and its sincerity. So, too, our institutions might echo that voice of compassion for us, might speak on our behalf when we feel



Facsimile of Bahíyyih Khánum's handwriting.

downtrodden, might raise up the cry for the oppressed among humanity. Only the institutions of God can do that and be truly heard.

The passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which was so dire a catastrophe nevertheless left the Greatest Holy Leaf standing responsible for a Cause that needed its Guardian. This truly was her ultimate role for at that time she was the one who cabled the Bahá'í world, who arranged for the funeral of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who held us and contained our broken hearts until Shoghi Effendi was ready to shoulder the burden of his ministry.

Her letters that went out to the East and West at that time are among the most wonderful teaching letters that we have. She taught the Bahá'ís about the importance of the Covenant. She taught them to revere and love their Guardian. She taught them about the nature of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She encouraged them to be united and warned them against disharmony. These letters show her truly as a teacher of the Cause, another of the roles set as a model for us.

In one of these letters she uses the meta-

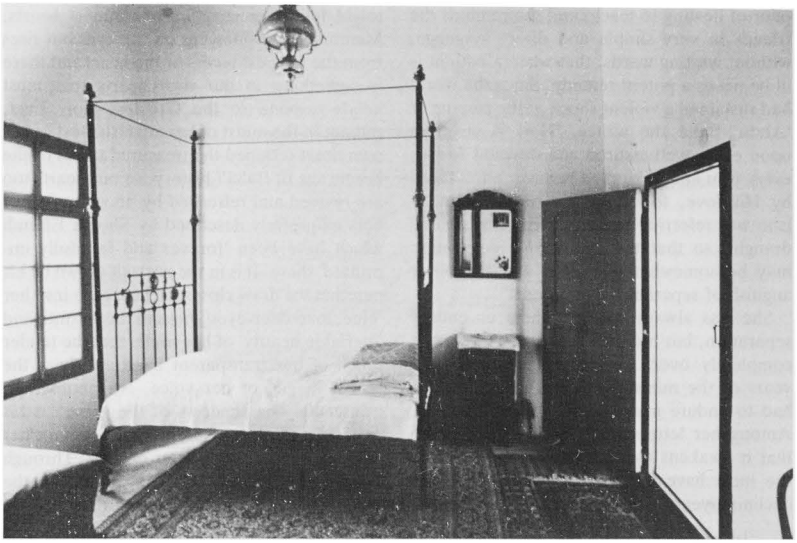
phor of healing to teach, and she reminds the friends in very simple and direct language, without wasting words, that when a patient is ill he needs a potent remedy. Since the world had sustained a violent shock at the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá she writes, 'Now it devolves upon every well-assured and devoted friend, every firm and enkindled believer enraptured by His love, to drink this healing remedy [she was referring to Shoghi Effendi] at one draught, so that the agony of bereavement may be somewhat alleviated and the bitter anguish of separation dissipated.'

She was always trying to help us endure separation, but her own separations were not completely over, for during the first three years of the ministry of Shoghi Effendi she had to endure many partings from him too. Among her letters there is one so touching that it awakens us to remember how keenly she must have felt these separations in her declining years:

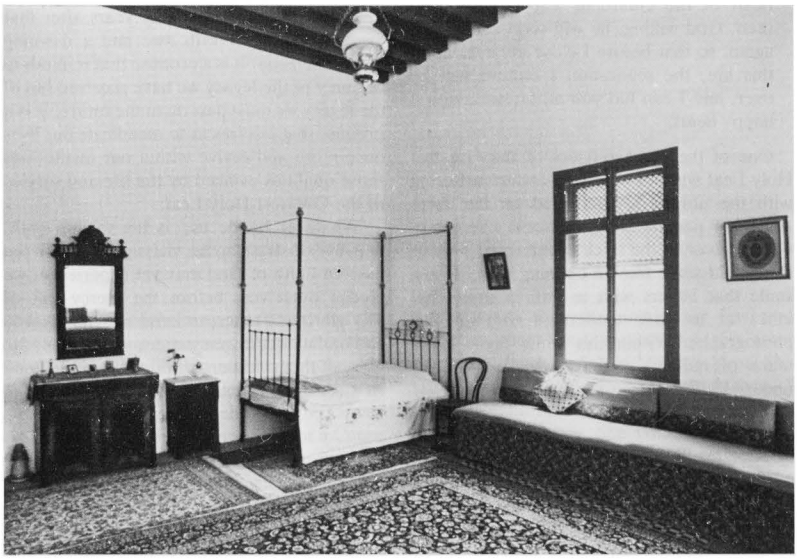
> 'It is the hope of this writer that the friends of God will put forth such efforts, and will so radiate their love for Him, as to light up the world; a love that will make the heart of the Guardian leap for joy, and then, God willing, he will soon come back again, so that before I close my eyes upon this life, the separation I endure will be over, and I can bid you all farewell with a happy heart.'

One of the characteristics of the Greatest Holy Leaf was her ability to endure suffering with the utmost joy reflected on her face. After her passing Shoghi Effendi's secretary wrote, 'Even in the thick of the worst ordeals she would smile like an opening rose.' It is a smile that lingers with us still, a smile that looks at us with tenderness through the photographs. Within this smile there is so much of radiance and sorrow, so much of understanding; it is a smile so deep that we might feel it penetrating our inmost hearts. Memory lies evanescent on the eyes but rises from the deepest recess of the heart and there is something in our own hearts that must needs respond to the Greatest Holy Leaf, radiant in the midst of her anguish. Just as her own heart retained the treasured traces of the heroic age of Bahá'í history, so our hearts too are revived and refreshed by 'those smiles' of hers exquisitely described by Shoghi Effendi which have been 'forever and faithfully imprinted' there. It is in the portrait drawn by his pen that we draw closest to her, gaze into her 'blue, love-deep eyes', bask in the warmth and 'ineffable beauty' of her smile, feel the tender touch of her transparent hand and hear the 'sweet magic' of her voice. No photograph transcends 'the shadows of the grave' as his words do; no commentary could contain her memory as does his paean of love. Through him we first learned of her contributions to the Bahá'í world and at her passing he conveyed to us, through the memory of her life, 'a legacy that time can never dim'. But he does even more on our behalf, for he invites us to stand with him, at the threshold of her passing, and make a solemn promise. It is a promise so binding that fifty years after that event we recall it with awe and a dawning comprehension. It is a promise that reminds us not only of the legacy we have received but of the legacy we must pass on to the future. It is a promise that inspires us to rededicate our lives once more and revive within our institutions those qualities evinced by the life and service of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

'Whatever betide us,' is his solemn oath, 'however distressing the vicissitudes which the nascent Faith of God may yet experience, we pledge ourselves, before the mercy-seat of Thy glorious Father, to hand on, unimpaired and undivided, to generations yet unborn, the glory of that tradition of which thou hast been its most brilliant exemplar.'



The room occupied by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá.



The room occupied by the Greatest Holy Leaf in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá.

PART THREE

INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES 1979–1983

I

THE HOUSE OF 'ABDU'LLÁH PÁSHÁ

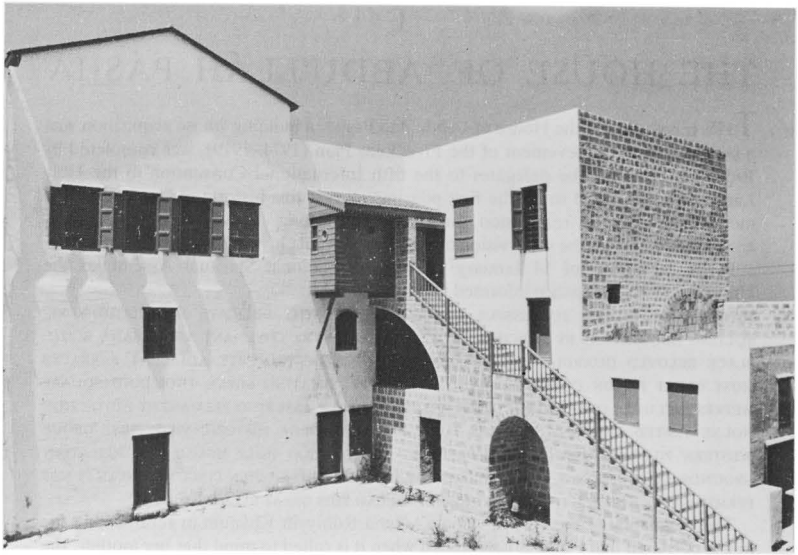
THE renovation of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, a building whose acquisition was a supplementary achievement of the Five Year Plan (1974–1979), was completed by Riḍván 1983. Thus the delegates to the fifth International Convention in the Holy Land were privileged to be the first pilgrims to visit this historic site and enjoy the meticulous work of restoration, and the refurnishing, beautifully and faithfully accomplished under the supervision of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.

In its cablegram of 14 January 1975 to all National Spiritual Assemblies the Universal House of Justice informed the Bahá'í world:

JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION LENGTHY DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS RESULTING ACQUISITION BY PURCHASE HOLY HOUSE CENTRE COVENANT ABDULBAHA BIRTHPLACE BELOVED GUARDIAN SHOGHI EFFENDI. HISTORIC PROPERTY ADJACENT BARRACKS MOST GREAT PRISON COMPRISES LAND AREA APPROXIMATING SEVEN THOUSAND SQUARE METRES INCLUDES OTHER STRUCTURES WITHIN COMPLEX ASSURING PERMANENT PROTECTION HOUSE VISITED BY MANY PILGRIMS TURN CENTURY SCENE HISTORIC VISIT FIRST GROUP WESTERN PILGRIMS. PLANS BEING PREPARED RESTORATION HOLY HOUSE BEAUTIFICATION GROUNDS AS ADDITIONAL PLACE PILGRIMAGE WORLD CENTRE WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES FUNDS PERMIT. OFFER HUMBLE THANKSGIVING BAHAULLAH THIS GREAT BLESSING.

The poignancy of the role of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum in refurbishing the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá is heightened when it is called to mind that her mother, the illustrious May (Bolles) Maxwell, was a member of that first party of Western pilgrims who in 1898 were received by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in that house, and that it was the birthplace of Shoghi Effendi whose 'helpmate', 'shield' and 'tireless collaborator' she was to become.

Indeed, as the Universal House of Justice reminded the Bahá'í world, 'some of the most dramatic and historically significant events of the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Faith are associated with the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá which derives its name from the Governor of 'Akká who built it and used it as his official residence during his term of office from 1820 to 1832 . . . In this house, fifty lunar years after the Báb's martyrdom, in January 1899, the casket containing His sacred and precious remains was received by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who successfully concealed it until it was possible to inter it, with all honours, in its permanent resting-place in the bosom of Carmel. In this house 'Abdu'l-Bahá was confined during the period of His renewed incarceration . . . and from this house He directed the construction of the Báb's sepulchre on Mount Carmel, erected under its shadow His own house in Haifa, and later the Pilgrim House, issued instructions for the restoration of the Báb's holy House in Shíráz and for the erection of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the world in the city of 'Ishqábád . . . It was in this house that His celebrated table talks were given and compiled, to be published later under the title *Some Answered Questions*. In this house and in the darkest hours of a period which the beloved Guardian describes as "the most dramatic period of His ministry", "in the hey-day of His life and in the full tide of His power" He penned the first part of His Will and Testament, which delineates the features and lays the foundations of the Administrative Order to arise after His Passing. In this house He revealed the highly significant Tablet addressed to the Báb's cousin and chief builder of the 'Ishqábád Temple, a Tablet whose import can be appreciated and grasped only as future events unfold before our eyes, and in which, as testified by Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá "in stirring terms proclaimed the immeasurable greatness of the Revelation of the Báb, sounded the warning foreshadowing the turmoil which its enemies, both far and near, would let loose upon the world, and

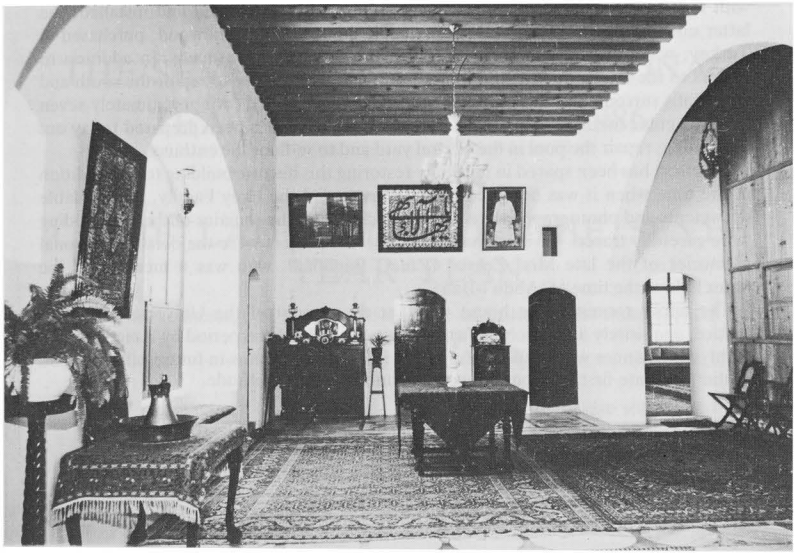


Exterior view of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásha in its restored condition; 1983.

prophesied, in moving language, the ascendancy which the torchbearer of the Covenant would ultimately achieve over them" . . . It was to this house that the historic first group of pilgrims from the West came to see the Master in the winter of 1898–1899, and in which many more from both East and West sought His presence . . . In this house was born the child ordained to hold the destiny of the Faith in his hands for thirty-six years and to become its "beloved Guardian", the child named "Shoghi" by his Grandfather, who grew up under His loving and solicitous care and became the recipient of His Tablets.'

Barely five years after the passing of Bahá'u'lláh it became apparent that the portion of the House of 'Abbúd available for occupation was inadequate for His enlarged family. In the autumn of 1896 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'with characteristic vigour' took action and, in the months preceding the birth of Shoghi Effendi, arranged to rent the main building, and subsequently the subsidiary wings, of the house of 'Abdu'lláh Pásha in the Mujádalih Quarter in the north-western corner of 'Akká. He established it as His official residence, and also as a home for His daughters, their husbands and families. Thus it came about that in March 1897, in an upper room of the wing facing south, Shoghi Effendi was born in that house which was to witness so many events of vital importance to the Faith and to the future of mankind.

In September 1977 the Universal House of Justice approved the plans for restoration prepared by Mr. Riḍvánu'lláh Ashraf, a young Persian Bahá'í architect. The actual work was started three months later by a team of Persian Bahá'ís with experience of reconstructing certain of the Holy Places in Írán. Some of the work was let out on contract. The task of renovation was extensive and was pursued steadily with a view to hastening the time when this priceless residence would be opened for pilgrimage. No less than two hundred and sixty doors and windows, patterned on the originals, had to be made and installed. The roof had to be reconstructed and surfaced



Main hall of the quarters of the Holy Family in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásh<u>á</u>; 1983.



The room in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásh<u>á</u> in which Shoghi Effendi was born in March 1897.

with red tiles purchased in France; new ceilings were assembled and installed, the latter utilizing one hundred and twenty cubic metres of Katrina wood, purchased in Turkey, which was the material of which the originals were made. In addition to repairs to the interior and exterior structure, it was necessary to repair the south and west walls surrounding the property, a project which called for approximately seven hundred cubic metres of stone and cement. Plans have also been prepared to lay out the garden, repair the pool in the central yard and to re-floor the entrance.

No effort has been spared in faithfully restoring this historic building to its condition at the time when it was occupied by the Master and the Holy Family. All available documents and photographs were closely studied, and the remains of the old building were carefully traced. Of inestimable value to the project were the detailed personal memories of the late Mrs. Zeenat (Zínat) Baghdádí, who was a member of the household in the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The upper rooms of the house were, at the request of the Universal House of Justice, exquisitely and carefully furnished in the style of the period by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum whose successful effort will inspire, no less in future pilgrims than in the fortunate first, profound reverence and heartfelt gratitude.



The room in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásha in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá would receive His guests.

II

THE SEVEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN 1979–1986

1. THE LAUNCHING OF THE SEVEN YEAR PLAN

Excerpts from the message of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world, Naw-Rúz 1979

THE decline of religious and moral restraints has unleashed a fury of chaos and confusion that already bears the signs of universal anarchy. Engulfed in this maelstrom, the Bahá'í world community, pursuing with indefeasible unity and spiritual force its redemptive mission, inevitably suffers the disruption of economic, social and civil life which afflicts its fellow men throughout the planet. It must also bear particular tribulations. The violent disturbances in Persia, coinciding with the gathering in of the bountiful harvest of the Five Year Plan, have brought new and cruel hardships to our long-suffering brethren in the Cradle of our Faith and confronted the Bahá'í world community with critical challenges to its life and work. As the Bahá'í world stood poised on the brink of victory, eagerly anticipating the next stage in the unfoldment of the Master's Divine Plan, Bahá'u'lláh's heroic compatriots, the custodians of the Holy Places of our Faith in the land of its birth, were yet again called upon to endure the passions of brutal mobs, the looting and burning of their homes, the destruction of their means of livelihood, and physical violence and threats of death to force them to recant their faith. They, like their immortal forebears, the Dawn-Breakers, are standing steadfast in face of this new persecution and the ever-present threat of organized extermination.

'Remembering that during the Five Year Plan the Persian friends far surpassed any other national community in their outpouring of pioneers and funds, we, in all those parts of the world where we are still free to promote the Cause of God, have the responsibility to make good their temporary inability to serve. Therefore, with uplifted hearts and radiant faith, we must arise with redoubled energy to pursue our mighty task, confident that the Lord of Hosts will continue to reward our efforts with the same bountiful grace He vouchsafed to us in the Five Year Plan.

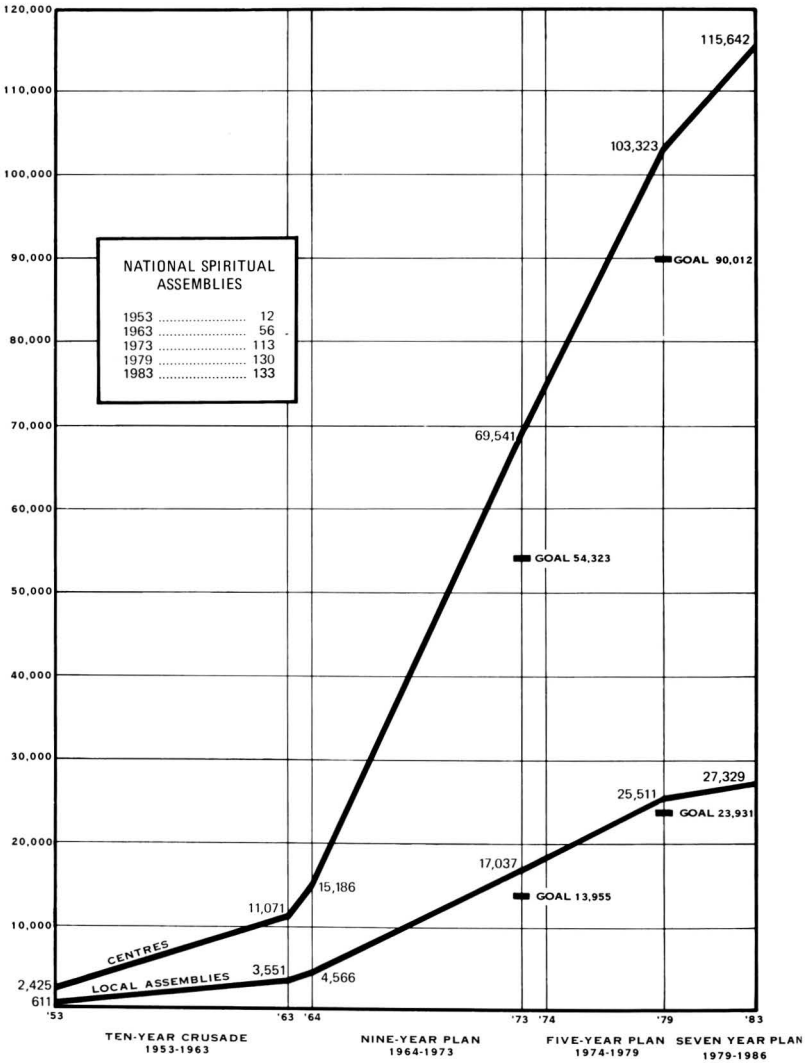
'The teaching victories in that Plan have been truly prodigious; the points of light, those localities where the Promised One is recognized, have increased from sixty-nine thousand five hundred to over ninety-six thousand; the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies has grown from seventeen thousand to over twenty-five thousand; eighteen new National Spiritual Assemblies have been formed. The final report will disclose in all their manifold aspects the magnitude of the victories won.

'In the world at large the Bahá'í community is now firmly established. The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, is bearing a precious fruit in the development of the International Teaching Centre as a mighty institution of the World Centre of the Faith; an institution blessed by the membership of all the Hands of the Cause; an institution whose beneficent influence is diffused to all parts of the Bahá'í community through the Continental Boards of Counsellors, the members of the Auxiliary Boards and their assistants . . .

'The conditions of the world present the

THE GROWTH OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

1953 - 1983



followers of Bahá'u'lláh with both obstacles and opportunities. In an increasing number of countries we are witnessing the fulfilment of the warnings that the writings of our Faith contain. "Peoples, nations, adherents of divers faiths," the beloved Guardian wrote, "will jointly and successively arise to shatter its unity, to sap its force, and to degrade its holy name. They will assail not only the spirit which it inculcates, but the administration which is the channel, the instrument, the embodiment of that spirit. For as the authority with which Bahá'u'lláh has invested the future Bahá'í Commonwealth becomes more and more apparent, the fiercer shall be the challenge which from every quarter will be thrown at the verities it enshrines." In different countries, in varying degrees, the followers of Bahá'u'lláh at this very hour are undergoing such attacks, and are facing imprisonment and even martyrdom rather than deny the Truth for whose sake the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh drained the cup of sacrifice.

'In other lands, such as those in Western Europe, the faithful believers have to struggle to convey the message in the face of widespread indifference, materialistic self-satisfaction, cynicism and moral degradation. These friends, however, still have freedom to teach the Faith in their homelands, and in spite of the discouraging meagreness of outward results they continue to proclaim the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to their fellow citizens, to raise high the reputation of the Cause in the public eye, to acquaint leaders of thought and those in authority with its true tenets, and to spare no effort to seek out those receptive souls in every town and village who will respond to the divine summons and devote their lives to its service.

'In many lands, however, there is an eager receptivity for the teachings of the Faith. The challenge for the Bahá'ís is to provide these thousands of seeking souls, as swiftly as possible, with the spiritual food that they crave, to enlist them under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh, to nurture them in the way of life He has revealed, and to guide them to elect Local Spiritual Assemblies which, as they begin to function strongly, will unite the friends in firmly consolidated Bahá'í communities and become beacons of guidance and havens of refuge to mankind.

'Faced by such a combination of danger and opportunity, the Bahá'ís, confident in the ultimate triumph of God's purpose for mankind, raise their eyes to the goals of a new Seven Year Plan.

'In the Holy Land the strengthening of the World Centre and the augmentation of its world-wide influence must continue:

- The Seat of the Universal House of Justice will be completed and designs will be adopted for the remaining three buildings of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith.
- The Institution of the International Teaching Centre will be developed and its functions expanded. This will require an increase in its membership and the assumption by it and by the Continental Boards of Counsellors of wider functions in the stimulation on an international scale of the propagation and consolidation of the Faith, and in the promotion of the spiritual, intellectual and community aspects of Bahá'í life.
- The House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá in 'Akká will be opened to pilgrimage.
- Work will be continued on the collation and classification of the Sacred Texts and a series of compilations gleaned and translated from the writings of the Faith will be sent out to the Bahá'í world to help in deepening the friends in their understanding of the fundamentals of the Faith, enriching their spiritual lives, and reinforcing their efforts to teach the Cause.
- The ties binding the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations will be further developed.
- Continued efforts will be made to protect the Faith from opposition and to emancipate it from the fetters of persecution.

'Each National Spiritual Assembly has been given goals for these first two years of the Plan, designed to continue the process of expansion, to consolidate the victories won, and to attain, where circumstances permit, any goals that may have had to remain unaccomplished at the end of the Five Year Plan. During these first two years we shall be examining, with the Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies, the conditions and possibilities in each country, and shall be considering in detail the capacities and needs of each of the rapidly differentiating national Bahá'í communities before formulating the further goals towards

which each community is to work following the opening phase of the Plan.

'Throughout the world the Seven Year Plan must witness the attainment of the following objectives:

- The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Samoa is to be completed and progress will be made in the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in India.
- Nineteen new National Spiritual Assemblies are to be brought into being: eight in Africa, those of Angola, Bophuthatswana, the Cape Verde Islands, Gabon, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia and Transkei; eight in the Americas, those of Bermuda, Dominica, French Guiana, Grenada, the Leeward Islands, Martinique, St. Lucia and St. Vincent; and three in the Pacific, those of the Cook Islands, Tuvalu and the West Caroline Islands. Those National Spiritual Assemblies which have had to be dissolved will, circumstances permitting, be re-established.
- The Message of Bahá'u'lláh must be taken to territories and islands which are as yet unopened to His Faith.
- The teaching work, both that organized by institutions of the Faith and that which is the fruit of individual initiative, must be actively carried forward so that there will be growing numbers of believers, leading more countries to the stage of entry by troops and ultimately to mass conversion.
- This teaching work must include prompt, thorough and continuing consolidation so that all victories will be safeguarded, the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies will be increased and the foundations of the Cause reinforced.
- The interchange of pioneers and travelling teachers, which contributes so importantly to the unity of the Bahá'í world and to a true understanding of the oneness of mankind, must continue, especially between neighbouring lands. At the same time, each national Bahá'í community must aspire to a rapid achievement of self-sufficiency in carrying out its vital activities, thus acquiring the capacity to continue to function and grow even if outside help is cut off.
- Especially in finance is the attainment of independence by national Bahá'í communities urgent. Already the persecutions in Írán have deprived the believers in that country of the bounty of contributing to the international funds of the Faith, of which they have been a major source. Economic disruption in other countries threatens further diminution of financial resources. We therefore appeal to the friends everywhere to exercise the utmost economy in the use of funds and to make those sacrifices in their personal lives which will enable them to contribute their share, according to their means, to the local, national, continental and international funds of the Faith.
- For the prompt achievement of all the goals and the healthy growth of Bahá'í community life National Spiritual Assemblies must pay particular attention to the efficient functioning, in the true spirit of the Faith, of their national committees and other auxiliary institutions, and, in consultation with the Continental Boards of Counsellors, must conceive and implement programmes that will guide and reinforce the efforts of the friends in the path of service.
- National Spiritual Assemblies must promote wise and dignified approaches to people prominent in all areas of human endeavour, acquainting them with the nature of the Bahá'í community and the basic tenets of the Faith, and winning their esteem and friendship.
- At the heart of all activities, the spiritual, intellectual and community life of the believers must be developed and fostered, requiring: the prosecution with increased vigour of the development of Local Spiritual Assemblies so that they may exercise their beneficial influence and guidance on the life of Bahá'í communities; the nurturing of a deeper understanding of Bahá'í family life; the Bahá'í education of children, including the holding of regular Bahá'í classes and, where necessary, the establishment of tutorial schools for the provision of elementary education; the encouragement of Bahá'í youth in study and service; and the encouragement of Bahá'í women to exercise to the full their privileges and responsibilities in the work of the community—may they befittingly bear witness to the memory of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the immortal heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation, as we approach the fiftieth anniversary of her passing.

'As lawlessness spreads in the world, as governments rise and fall, as rival groups and feuding peoples struggle, each for its own advantage, the plight of the oppressed and the deprived wrings the heart of every true Bahá'í, tempting him to cry out in protest or to arise in wrath at the perpetrators of injustice. For this is a time of testing which calls to mind Bahá'u'lláh's words *O concourse of the heedless! I swear by God! The promised day is come, the day when tormenting trials will have surged above your heads, and beneath your feet, saying: "Taste ye what your hands have wrought!"*

'Now is the time when every follower of Bahá'u'lláh must cling fast to the Covenant of God, resist every temptation to become embroiled in the conflicts of the world, and remember that he is the holder of a precious trust, the Message of God which, alone, can banish injustice from the world and cure the ills afflicting the body and spirit of man. We are the bearers of the Word of God in this day and, however dark the immediate horizons, we must go forward rejoicing in the knowledge that the work we are privileged to perform is God's work and will bring to birth a world whose splendour will outshine our brightest visions and surpass our highest hopes.'

Each National Spiritual Assembly received a separate message setting forth the details of its respective goals. A summary of the progress made towards fulfilling these, as well as World Centre goals, is set out on the following pages.



The Seat of the Universal House of Justice on Mount Carmel. Excavation of the site commenced in June 1975. The building was occupied by the House of Justice in January 1983.

2. THE SEVEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN 1979–1986

PROGRESS TO RIḌVÁN 1983

THE fifth International Convention falling just after the mid-point of the Seven Year Plan was an appropriate time for reporting on the progress toward achievement of the goals of the Plan both at the World Centre and throughout the Bahá'í world. The current Plan has been the most detailed in the number and type of goals assigned to the Bahá'í communities. The increased amount of data collected at the World Centre in monitoring the progress of the Plan attests, in itself, to the increased activity in the Bahá'í world.

The following survey has been adapted from that prepared for use of delegates to the International Convention and has been supplemented with information which gives, in broad outline, an accurate picture of progress at Riḍván 1983.

A. THE WORLD CENTRE

1. Completion of the Construction of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice

By the summer of 1982 the building was very near completion, the final stages having been delayed by a number of factors beyond the control of the World Centre. It was therefore possible to inaugurate the use of the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice in a fortuitously appropriate manner through the holding of a seminar on the occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

Subsequently the meetings for all Holy Days which are observed in Haifa have taken place in the Seat, and each group of pilgrims has been received there by the Universal House of Justice.

Work on the final stages of the preparation of the building for occupation, and on the landscaping of the surrounding area, continued through the autumn and into the winter, and during the last two weeks of January 1983 the Universal House of Justice and a number of its departments moved their offices to the seat.

2. Designs for Three Additional Buildings on the Arc

The task of preparing plans for the three remaining buildings which are to stand around the Arc on Mount Carmel has been given by the Universal House of Justice to Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat. As a first step, the House of Justice has requested Mr. Amánat to prepare three general presentations:

one with the levels of the land as they are now—that is to say, with the south-eastern end of the Arc at a level considerably lower than the north-western end;

another with the levels raised so that the Arc and the gardens within it are exactly symmetrical, the south-eastern end being raised to the same height as the north-western; and

a third with only an intermediate adjustment of the levels.

Studies are also proceeding on the functions of the three buildings (the Centre for the Study of the Texts, the International Teaching Centre and the International Bahá'í Library), in order to judge the dimensions and placement of the structures, and their interrelationships both with one another and with the existing edifices of the International Archives and the Universal House of Justice.

3. Development of the International Teaching Centre

One of the goals of the Seven Year Plan for the World Centre was stated as follows:

'The Institution of the International Teaching Centre will be developed and its functions expanded. This will require an increase in its membership and the assumption by it and by the Continental Boards of Counsellors of wider functions in the stimulation on an international scale of the propagation and consolidation of the Faith, and in the promotion of the spiritual, intellectual and community aspects of Bahá'í life.'

During the two-year opening phase of the Plan a number of important steps were taken in pursuance of this goal.

—The membership of the International Teaching Centre was increased with the appointment by the Universal House of Justice of Miss Anneliese Bopp as a Counsellor member of the nucleus of the Teaching Centre in the Holy Land.

—The foundations of the Boards of Counsellors were greatly broadened by the consolidation of thirteen Boards into five, thus widening the scope of the activities of each Board to include an entire continent.

—A further significant step in the development of the Boards of Counsellors was the setting of a specific term of office for the Counsellors in the continents, as was envisioned in the original appointments. This term has now been set for five-year periods beginning on the Day of the Covenant, 26 November 1980.

—Steps were taken by the House of Justice and the International Teaching Centre to strengthen the ties between the Counsellors, the Continental Pioneer Committees and the National Assemblies with a view to achieving closer collaboration between these institutions in the selection and utilization of both pioneers and travel-teachers.

—Extensive consultations were held between the House of Justice and the International Teaching Centre regarding appropriate means of opening the way in the next phase of the Plan for the Teaching Centre and the Boards of Counsellors to have a greater degree of participation in the development and financing of special teaching projects and in the provision of Bahá'í literature. The measures taken have resulted in a much wider dissemination of Bahá'í books, pamphlets and other materials for teaching and deepening, in accordance with the particular requirements of the various national communities.



Hands of the Cause and Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre; November 1979. Left to right: Abu'l-Qasim Faizí, Hooper Dunbar, Anneliese Bopp, Paul Haney, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Florence Mayberry, 'Azíz Yazdí.

—In the wider field of promotion of the spiritual, intellectual and social life of the Bahá'í community, the Counsellors have been encouraged by the International Teaching Centre to become increasingly aware of the more spiritual aspects of their functions. In some continents plans are being developed by the Counsellors, together with the National Spiritual Assemblies in the area, to deepen the friends in various aspects of the Bahá'í teachings, especially on the basis of the compilations sent out by the Universal House of Justice.

4. Continued Strengthening of the Relationship between the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations

In its consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as in its association with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), the Bahá'í International Community, through its accredited representatives at the United Nations, has continued to find many opportunities to explain how the Bahá'í teachings, principles and laws, and the spiritual and moral answers provided by the Bahá'í Faith, are essential to achieve the goals of world peace, universal human rights and the full development of all peoples sought by the United Nations Charter. More than ever, the Bahá'í International Community has been able to point to the way of life evolving in Bahá'í communities as an embodiment of the Bahá'í teachings. It did this most dramatically, for instance, during the International Year of the Child (1979), when Bahá'í communities around the world sponsored programmes and activities to promote the well-being of children.

Also, as national and local Bahá'í institutions have begun to sponsor programmes in literacy and rural development—through tutorial schools and radio stations, for instance —to assist in the development of Bahá'í communities and society as a whole, it has become possible for the Bahá'í International Community, in its statements and reports to the UN, to give further evidence of the growth of the Bahá'í world community.

Co-operation with the UN took another step forward with the establishment in July 1981 of a European branch office in Geneva, and the appointment of a full-time representative, and, shortly afterwards, an alternate. Also since 1980 the Bahá'í International Community has had a representative and an alternate with the Vienna International Centre (VIC)—the new UN branch headquarters in Vienna, Austria, where the activities of the Centre for Social and Humanitarian Affairs are now located.

Activities among the non-governmental organizations (NGO's) associated with the United Nations also continued. The Bahá'í International Community has long participated in numerous NGO committees based in New York and Geneva (and now, too, in Vienna) and has helped in planning and chairing a number of activities, such as symposia, luncheons, etc. Its representatives now serve as chairmen of the NGO Committee on UNICEF and of the NGO Committee on Human Rights (New York), and as vice-chairmen of the DPI/NGO Executive Committee and of the Committee on the UN Decade for Women.

Besides encouraging National Spiritual Assemblies to establish and foster a relationship with the UN offices in their countries, sponsoring or co-sponsoring activities in observance of UN days and years and other events, the Bahá'í International Community has, since Riḍván 1979, taken part in twenty United Nations world conferences, congresses and seminars, and attended sixty-four sessions of UN bodies concerned with a broad range of issues: human rights, social development, the advancement of women, the environment, human settlements, children, disabled persons, the ageing, drug abuse, science and technology, disarmament and peace, outer space, crime prevention, population, youth, the law of the sea and the world food problem. In this extensive co-operation with the UN, the Bahá'í International Community has presented information, submitted statements, and published brochures—forty-six items in all—expressing the Bahá'í point of view on a number of these subjects. For the first time the Bahá'í International Community was invited to address the UN General Assembly, during its Second Special Session Devoted to Disarmament. It continued to participate in

New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi in the regular sessions of the UNICEF Executive Board and the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as in the sessions of the Economic and Social Council and many of its functional commissions, committees and associated bodies, such as the Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; the Commission on the Status of Women; the Commission for Social Development; the Commission on Narcotic Drugs; and others.

It has also participated in a number of special UN conferences and meetings since the beginning of the Seven Year Plan, of which the following are the most important:

United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development; Vienna, Austria, 20–31 August 1979.

World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; Copenhagen, Denmark; 14–30 July 1980.

Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders; Caracas, Venezuela; 25 August–5 September 1980.

Eleventh Special Session of the General Assembly on the New International Economic Order; New York, New York, U.S.A.; 25 August–15 September 1980.

United Nations Conference of New and Renewable Sources of Energy; Nairobi, Kenya; 10–21 August 1981.

United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; Paris, France; 1–14 September 1981.

Twelfth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament; New York, New York, U.S.A.; 7 June–9 July 1982.

World Assembly on Ageing; Vienna, Austria; 26 July–6 August 1982.

Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; Vienna, Austria; 9–21 August 1982.

The Bahá'í International Community also sent representatives to the following international meetings and seminars sponsored by the United Nations:

UNICEF Special Meeting on Children in Latin America and the Caribbean; Mexico City, Mexico; 16–18 May 1979.

Regional preparatory conferences for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women:

Europe—Paris, France; 9–12 July 1979

Asia and the Pacific—New Delhi, India; 5–9 November 1979

Latin America—Macuto, Venezuela; 12–16 November 1979

Africa—Lusaka, Zambia; 3–7 December 1979.

Sub-regional Follow-up Meeting for Pacific Women for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; Suva, Fiji; 29 October–3 November 1980.

Seminar on the Relations that Exist Between Human Rights, Peace and Development; New York, New York, U.S.A.; 3–14 August 1981.

Seminar on Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination; Managua, Nicaragua; 14–22 December 1981.

Special Session of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council; Nairobi, Kenya; 10–18 May 1982.

Seminar on National, Local and Regional Arrangements for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asian Region; Colombo, Sri Lanka; 21 June–2 July 1982.

United Nations Seminar on Recourse Procedures and Other forms of Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination and Activities to Be Undertaken at the National and Regional Levels, with Special Reference to Asia and the Pacific; Bangkok, Thailand; 2–13 August 1982.

As the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán intensified, the Bahá'í International Community helped to coordinate international efforts—initiated before the beginning of the Seven Year Plan—to bring their plight to the attention of the States Members of the United Nations, the UN Secretariat and non-governmental organizations working with the UN (a detailed report of these activities appears on pages 414 to 425).

The persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, which constitutes a gross violation of their fundamental human rights, is clearly in con-

travention of the standards of religious freedom set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, more recently, the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. The plight of the Bahá'ís has struck a chord of deep concern and sympathy on the part of UN representatives and officials, who have demonstrated a warm willingness to initiate and press for action to remedy the situation.

The Bahá'í International Community has prepared a number of publications concerning the persecutions in Írán, which have been widely distributed at the United Nations and also made available to National Spiritual Assemblies. The most important of these publications were *The Bahá'ís in Írán: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious Minority* (published in 1981, updated and reissued in 1982) and a formal 'Statement in Rebuttal' of various false and malicious charges propagated against the Bahá'í Faith at the 37th (1982) UN General Assembly by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Írán.

The activities of the Bahá'í International Community—which included the presentation of numerous oral and written statements to appropriate human rights organs of the United Nations—have resulted in or contributed to (a) *démarches* by governments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations; (b) *démarches* by a total of 17 governments to the Iranian government in Ṭihrán: (c) debates and resolutions by the UN Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in which attention was specifically drawn to the religious nature of the persecution, and in which the Secretary-General was given a mandate to intervene with the Iranian government on behalf of the Bahá'ís; (d) statements by sixteen governments during debates on human rights at the 1981 and 1982 sessions of the UN General Assembly; (e) a 1981 intervention with the Iranian government by the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; (f) discussions of the situation by the UN Human Rights Committee in July 1982, when it reviewed with representatives of the Islamic Republic of Írán the question of whether Írán was observing and implementing the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (to which it is a party); (g) similar discussions by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in March 1983, when it reviewed with Iranian representatives the status of minority groups in Írán.

5. Emancipation and Protection of the Faith

Algeria and the Congo

There has been no appreciable change in the condition of the Faith in these two countries and the activities of the Faith continue to be banned in both of them. However, in the Congo, in response to applications made by several religious organizations, including the Bahá'í community, the Supreme Court is considering conferring general freedom of religion in the country. Once the decree is confirmed, the way will open for the Faith in the Congo.

Egypt

The friends here continue to suffer from the disability of lack of recognition of their institutions. Several attempts to obtain protection of the civil rights of the believers in Egypt have been made through the Bahá'í International Community. It is hoped that these efforts will yield results in the near future.

Indonesia

Although the administrative institutions of the Faith are still not officially permitted to function, the friends engage informally in Bahá'í activities, and continue to teach on an individual basis. Small Bahá'í gatherings are being held in various parts of the country to deepen the friends and to lift their spirits. There are two training centres (hostels or Ashrams) in Padang operated by the Bahá'ís, at which twenty-eight students, mostly from Mentawei, are housed; and a third centre was completed in July 1982, which now boards eight boys ranging in age from eight to ten. The children are trained from the beginning to be responsible for their own school expenses by selling handicrafts, etc., and many of the graduates travel-teach, visit the friends in remote areas, and attend conferences with their own funds. Women's classes are being held regularly, where they are taught Bahá'í prayers and the basic teachings of the Faith; and conferences, summer schools and other



A representative sampling from the international press of reports and editorials in defense of the Bahá'ís.

meetings are scheduled frequently. The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone and his wife visited Indonesia and met with the friends there. They participated in a conference at which fifty-five Bahá'ís from nineteen localities gathered together.

Bahá'í literature in various Indonesian languages is being translated, produced and distributed throughout the country in increasing quantities.

Írán

This has been a tragic period for the Bahá'ís of Írán. Persecutions have steadily intensified; the Holy House of the Báb was totally demolished; the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, all local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, and other Bahá'í properties were either confiscated or destroyed; Bahá'í cemeteries were seized and graves desecrated; the Nawnahálán and Umaná Companies were confiscated, and the Bahá'í Hospital and Home for the Aged were taken over by the Revolutionary authorities; one hundred and eighteen Bahá'ís have been martyred; fourteen were kidnapped, their fate still unknown; a large number were imprisoned; hundreds were forced to flee from their homes, which were either confiscated or destroyed; shops and other properties of many of the friends were seized and/or set afire; hundreds were dismissed from their jobs, many of whom had their pensions cancelled; and Bahá'í students were expelled from schools and universities.

The Universal House of Justice called upon the United Nations office of the Bahá'í International Community and National Spiritual Assemblies in most of the world to take measures to help alleviate the suffering of the friends in Írán. As a result of such efforts, many resolutions were adopted by a number of governments and by United Nations and independent organizations protesting against the atrocities meted out to the Iranian Bahá'ís and calling upon the authorities in Írán to stop the injustices being perpetrated against these innocent victims.

The sufferings of our Persian co-workers, however, have resulted in an unprecedented volume of publicity and proclamation for the Faith and have provided an opportunity for the Bahá'ís to familiarize prominent people and those in authority with the verities of the Cause. These victorious achievements have made it easier for the valiant heroes in the Cradle of the Faith to bear the burden of their sufferings and have prompted them to thank Bahá'u'lláh for being chosen once again to be effective instruments for the promotion of His glorious Cause.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

1. THE UNITED NATIONS

a. UN General Assembly
   (1) Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, 25 November 1981
   (2) Resolution on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance, 18 December 1982
b. UN Commission on Human Rights, 11 March 1982 and 8 March 1983
c. UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, 10 September 1980, 9 September 1981, and 8 September 1982
   A resolution was also passed on the topic of Religious Intolerance on 10 September 1982

2. REGIONAL BODIES

a. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
   (1) Declarations tabled by members, 29 September 1980 and 14 May 1981
   (2) Resolution adopted, 29 January 1982
b. European Parliament, 19 September 1980, 10 April 1981, and 10 March 1983

3. NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

a. Australia
   (1) Senate, February 1981
   (2) House of Representatives, August 1981
b. Canada—House of Commons, July 1980 and July 1981
c. Fiji—Senate, March 1982
d. Federal Republic of Germany, May 1981
e. Spain—Human Rights Commission of the Senate, March 1982
f. United States
   (1) Senate, June 1982
   (2) House of Representatives, September 1982
   (3) State Senates
      a) Alaska, April 1979
      b) California, August 1982

STATE OF ILLINOIS
EIGHTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Resolution No. 110

Offered by Representative McPike

WHEREAS, It is the avowed foreign policy of the United States of America to encourage worldwide respect for the human rights of all citizens of the world; and

WHEREAS, The Baha'i community, the largest religious minority in Iran, is being brutally attacked and accused of hating Muslims and committing many crimes against the nation; and

WHEREAS, The Baha'i community in Iran, like Baha'i communities everywhere, abstains from all political activity, is peaceful, works toward brotherhood among nations and races, promotes religious tolerance and seeks mutual understanding with members of all faiths and groups; and

WHEREAS, It is therefore most regrettable that the more fanatical and extremist among the Iranian Muslims have once again chosen the Baha'is as scapegoats, as history shows they have done over 100 years, and have extended their campaign to the United States; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EIGHTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, That we petition President Carter to request Ayatollah Khomeini and the Iranian government to recognize the Baha'i Faith as solely a religious movement and to assure the people of Iran that all religious minorities including the Baha'i, will have full political, cultural and religious rights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this preamble and resolution be forwarded to President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

Adopted by the House of Representatives on March 15, 1979.

William A. Redmond
Speaker of the House

John O'Brien
Clerk of the House

Facsimile of House Resolution No. 110, House of Representatives, Eighty-First General Assembly, State of Illinois, adopted 15 March 1979.

c) Hawaii, April 1982
d) South Dakota, March 1983

(4) State Houses of Representatives
a) Illinois, March 1979
b) South Dakota, March 1983

OTHER ACTIONS TAKEN

1. DÉMARCHES (JOINT REPRESENTATIONS)

a. To the Iranian Government in Ṭihrán
(1) On 31 January 1982 by fifteen governments—Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom
(2) In July 1982 by sixteen governments —all those above, plus Finland
(3) On 27 December 1982 by fifteen governments (as in No. 1)

b. To the UN Secretary General by Ambassadors of European Economic Community countries in New York, on 12 February and 17 July 1982

2. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING IN THE UNITED STATES, MAY 1982

3. ACTIONS TAKEN IN LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS AND PUBLISHED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS

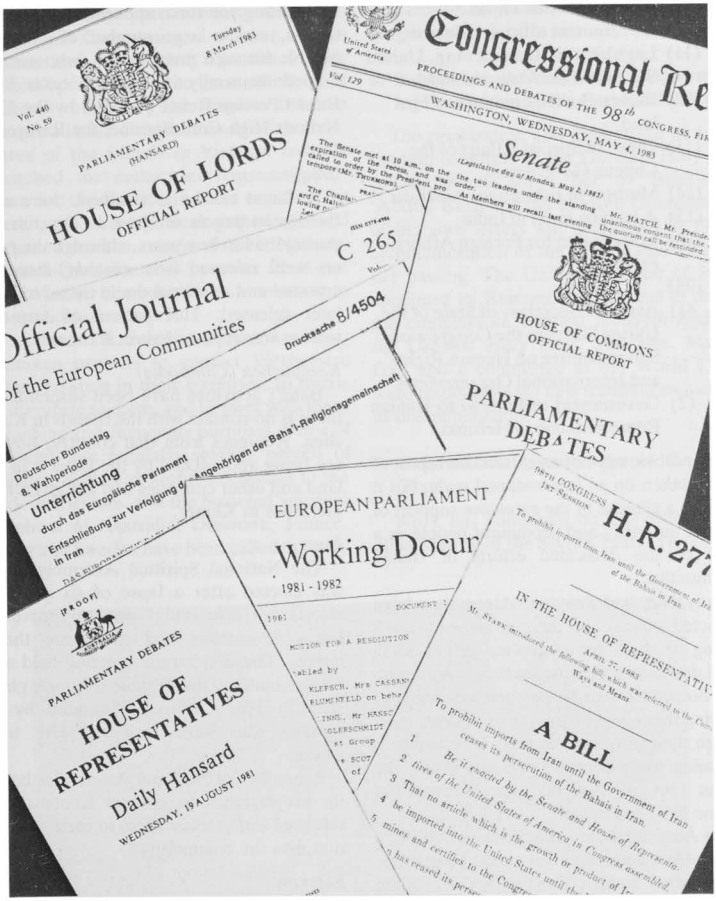
a. Australia—Senate and House of Representatives, March 1982
—Senate, November 1982
b. Brazil—Senate, April 1982
c. Canada—House of Commons, November 1979
d. Germany—three questions to Federal Government, September 1982
e. Italy—two questions to Minister of Foreign Affairs, February/March 1982
—motion to Parliament, March 1982
—question to the Senate, May 1982
f. Netherlands—statement made by Minister for Foreign Affairs, September 1982
g. Norway—statement made by Foreign Minister, May 1982
h. United Kingdom—House of Commons, June 1981
—House of Lords, February 1982
i. United States—House of Representatives, October 1979, July and September 1981, March 1982, and March 1983
—Senate, February 1982

4. STATEMENTS, APPEALS, ENQUIRIES, LETTERS OF SUPPORT, ETC.

A. 1979
(1) Swiss Parliamentarians
(2) Governor of the Hawaiian Islands
(3) Numerous Senators and Congressmen of the United States
(4) Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
(5) All three Parliamentary parties of Luxembourg
(6) Bureau of Human Rights, Trinidad and Tobago

b. 1980
(1) Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India
(2) Government of Western Samoa
(3) Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
(4) Nine political factions of the Dutch Parliament
(5) Minister of Cultural Affairs, Luxembourg
(6) Minister of Foreign Affairs, Australia

c. 1981
(1) Statements made at the thirty-seventh session of the Human Rights Commission in Geneva by delegations from:
a) Australia
b) Canada
c) Netherlands
d) United Kingdom
(2) King of the Belgians
(3) President of France
(4) Foreign Ministers of Australia, Belgium, the Republic of Germany and the Netherlands
(5) Under-Secretary of State, Italy
(6) Minister of Justice, Costa Rica
(7) Minister of Missions and Religious Organizations, Central African Republic
(8) Statements made in Third Committee of the thirty-sixth session of the U.N. General Assembly by representatives of:
a) Australia
b) Fiji
c) Netherlands



Facsimiles of documents protesting against the persecution of the Bahá'ís of Írán.

d) New Zealand
e) Sweden
f) United Kingdom, on behalf of the member states of the European Economic Community
g) United States

(9) Various Ministries of Liberia

d. 1982

(1) Presidents of France and Kiribati
(2) Prime Ministers of Belize, France, Samoa and New Zealand
(3) Office of the President and Vice-President, Gambia
(4) Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Panama
(5) Deputy Prime Minister, Swaziland
(6) Governor General, Jamaica
(7) Minister of State, United Kingdom
(8) Secretary of State, Republic of San Marino

(9) Government of Finland
(10) Government officials, Mexico
(11) Legislators in Luxembourg, United States and the Virgin Islands
(12) Eleven Parliamentarians of Finland
(13) Office of Special Affairs of the Chilean Government
(14) Minister of Education, Australia
(15) A leading jurist in India
(16) Commission for Foreign Affairs, France

e. 1983
(1) Assistant Secretary of State of the United States to the Congressional Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations
(2) Government of Finland to Iranian Representative in Helsinki

This is obviously not an exhaustive report of actions taken on an international scale, but it provides a glimpse of the extensive support of those in authority and prominent people as a result of the dedicated efforts of Bahá'í communities.[1]

Many National Spiritual Assemblies have contacted officials of their governments appealing to them for assistance in providing travel documents to those Iranian Bahá'ís who have been unable to renew their passports, in allowing them to remain in their country even though their passports or visas have expired, in issuing work permits, and in waiving the tuition fees of students whose source of income has been cut off.

The Australian Government has established a special humanitarian immigration programme for stranded Iranian Bahá'ís, and Canadian authorities have set up a project resulting in the successful transfer and settlement of hundreds of the Persian friends. Both of these programmes, which have definite criteria for acceptance of Iranian Bahá'ís, have been established as a result of the persistent efforts of the friends in these countries.

There are many Iranian believers who have applied for resettlement in another country and are waiting for their applications to be processed, and a large number of others not eligible for such programmes, who are being helped financially in hardship cases by the Bahá'í Persian Relief Fund, or by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

'Iráq

So far as can be ascertained, there are no Bahá'ís in prison in 'Iráq at this time; but during the last few years, although the prisoners were released from custody, more were arrested and imprisoned and these, too, were later released. This pattern of arrest and release was repeated several times.

Kampuchea (Cambodia)

Bahá'í activities have been suspended and there is no contact with the friends in Kampuchea. Refugees from that country, however, are being approached by the Bahá'ís in Thailand and other countries and are given Bahá'í literature in Khmer.

Laos

The National Spiritual Assembly of Laos was elected after a lapse of six years, and efforts are now under way to recover lost Local Assemblies and re-activate the believers. The first formal meeting held at the Centre built on the Temple site took place in January 1982, and was attended by local officials who were very receptive to the Cause.

A number of National Assemblies have set up programmes to contact Laotian Bahá'í refugees and to assist them in their re-absorption into the community.

Vietnam

The Bahá'ís in Vietnam have been forbidden to meet and to practise their religion since 1978. All Bahá'í Centres throughout the country have been either closed or confiscated by the authorities. When the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Ho Chi Minh City was seized, two members of the National Assembly who were there at the time were summarily arrested and sent to 're-education' camps. One of them was released early in 1982 because of ill health, but the other is still in detention and all efforts to secure his release have so far been unsuccessful. A Bahá'í from Switzerland visited the friends in Vietnam in 1980 and found them to be steadfast and strong in the

[1] A more complete survey can be found under 'Detailed Summary of Actions taken by the Bahá'í International Community, National and Local Bahá'í Institutions, Governments, non-Bahá'í Organizations and Prominent People in Connection with the Persecution of the Bahá'ís of Irán', p. 337.

Faith. Appeals have been made by the Bahá'í International Community, a number of governments and independent agencies to free the Bahá'í prisoners and to grant members of the Bahá'í community the religious freedom guaranteed in the Constitution of Vietnam.

Three of the friends in Vietnam recently approached the authorities requesting permission for the Bahá'ís to meet together for prayers and other spiritual gatherings, and have asked for the return of their National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds for this purpose. It is not known whether there has been a response to their application.

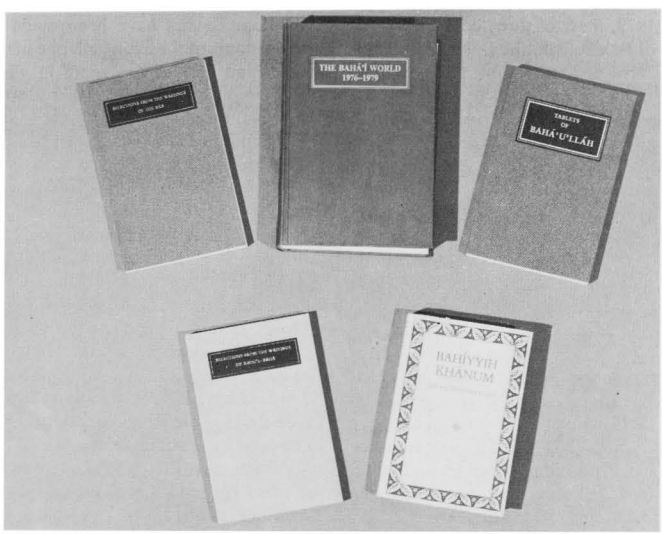
A number of Bahá'í communities have undertaken projects to contact Vietnamese refugees residing in their countries, to distribute literature to them, and to meet with them for teaching and deepening purposes. Some of the friends are regularly sending parcels of medicines, clothes and other necessities to the friends in Vietnam, and the National Spiritual Assemblies of Australia, Denmark, France, Norway and Sweden have been called upon by the House of Justice to participate in this programme.

6. Publication of Compilation Commemorating the Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf

The preparation and publication of a compilation of letters to the Greatest Holy Leaf, of statements about her by Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the beloved Guardian, and of her own letters was completed in 1982 in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of her passing. The Universal House of Justice appointed its Research Department to prepare the compilation, entitled *Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf*, and Mrs. Marzieh Gail and a committee at the World Centre were responsible for new translations included in this publication.

7. Collation and Classification of the Sacred Texts

Work has continued on the collation and classification of the Sacred Texts. The original



Publications of the Bahá'í World Centre 1979–1983: softcover editions of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, *and* Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; The Bahá'í World, *vol. XVII (1976–1979)*; *and* Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf.

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the original letters of Shoghi Effendi now housed at the World Centre number approximately 15,000. Authenticated copies of Tablets and letters available at the World Centre for which no originals have yet been received include some 46,000 items. Of these originals and copies, approximately 15,000 are Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, nearly 27,000 are Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and over 17,500 are letters of Shoghi Effendi, altogether totalling more than 60,000 documents. These documents have been studied and important passages from them extracted and classified.

Further, compilations have been gleaned from this collection, with translations made into English of selected passages where appropriate; and these compilations were then sent out to the Bahá'í world to help in deepening the friends in their understanding of the fundamentals of the Faith, enriching their spiritual lives and reinforcing their efforts to teach the Cause.

During the period under review, eight major compilations were prepared and circulated to National Spiritual Assemblies. In October 1979, a set of three compilations of Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá was provided as a sample to be used for translation into other languages. Other compilations included 'Extracts from the Bahá'í Teachings Discouraging Divorce', January 1980; 'The Importance of Prayer, Meditation and the Devotional Attitude', March 1980; 'Attendance of the Members of a Spiritual Assembly at its Meetings', October 1980; 'The Power of Divine Assistance', August 1981; 'Excellence in All Things', November 1981; 'Family Life', January 1982; and 'The Importance of Deepening Our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith', January 1983.

Also, as requests for information and elucidation of passages from the various Sacred Texts and instructions of Shoghi Effendi were received by the Universal House of Justice from Bahá'í institutions, scholars and other individuals, small compilations on specific subjects were prepared for their study.

8. Restoration of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá

The task of restoring the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, following the plan prepared by Mr. Riḍvánu'lláh Ashraf and approved by the Universal House of Justice, has been steadily pursued with the aim of having this priceless residence opened for pilgrimage by the end of the second phase of the Plan. Some idea of the extent of the work involved is gained from a brief recital of the accomplishments so far achieved.

—Three-quarters of the old and broken stones of the south-east and west façades have been replaced with a local type of sandstone purchased from demolished buildings. These stones were cut and fitted on the site.

—The plaster on the exterior walls of the central courtyard and the entrance corridor has been scraped off and these walls have been replastered with white cement and stone powder.

—Following the pattern of the originals, 260 doors and windows have been made and installed.

—The roof has been reconstructed.

—Using 120 cubic metres of Katrina wood bought in Turkey, then shipped to Israel, the ceilings have been assembled and installed.

—Minor repairs have been made on the original floors of the main hall, one of the bedrooms, and part of the room in which the Guardian was born. All other floors have been re-surfaced.

—All interior walls have been replastered and painted. Red tiles purchased in France have been used in roof repair. Wiring and plumbing have been installed throughout the building. The main entrance door has been fabricated using steel pegs, as in the original.

—The facing of the south and west walls surrounding the property, 2.5 metres thick and 4.5 metres high, has been replaced, an undertaking which called for approximately 700 cubic metres of stone and cement.

—Plans have been prepared to lay out the garden, repair the pool in the central yard and to re-floor the entrance.

—Wooden partitions for the areas upstairs, the main hall and the courtyards have been made and installed.

—The old bath at the foot of the staircase has been excavated, new walls have been built and a concrete roof installed.

—The upper rooms of the House were, at the request of the Universal House of Justice,

exquisitely and carefully furnished in the style of the period by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, and the delegates to the fifth International Convention were the first pilgrims privileged to visit there.

—Every effort has been made to faithfully restore this historic building to its condition at the time when it was occupied by the Master and the Holy Family. All available documents and photographs have been closely studied, and the remains of the old building have been carefully traced. Of inestimable value to the project were the detailed personal memories of the late Mrs. Zeenat (Zínat) Baghdádí, who was a member of the household in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

9. Extension and Beautification of the Gardens

Bahjí

The two gardens in the vicinity of the Collins gate, which were started in 1979, have been further developed. Many varieties of palms have been planted, as well as a number of flowering eucalyptus trees, the seeds of which were procured from Australia.

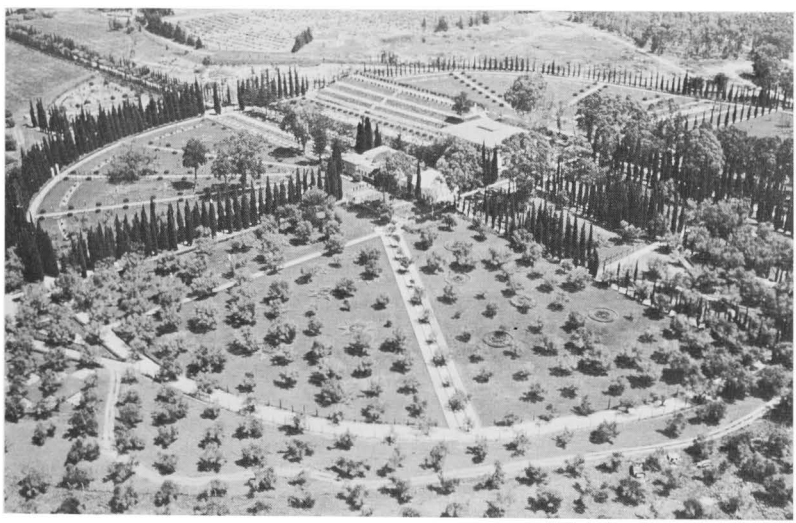
The most important development was the acquisition in September 1980 of a strip of land 13,150 square metres in area, bordering the driveway from the western gate of the Bahá'í property, which made it possible to complete the south-west quadrant gardens surrounding the Most Holy Shrine. A new circular path, like that of the Ḥaram-i-Aqdas, has been made and is bordered with cypress trees. From the western gate a new stretch of gardens has been laid out, and another driveway has been constructed from the gate to the parking lot.

Mazra'ih

Nearly 50,000 square metres of agricultural land adjacent to and north of the Mazra'ih property was purchased as a protection to the Mansion in this rapidly developing area.

Haifa

Overgrown trees around the Shrine of the Báb and the Arc have been replaced with new



Aerial view of the south-west quadrant gardens surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, Bahjí; April 1983.

plantings. New gardens have been developed around the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, and an irrigation system was installed in grassed areas.

Five terraces behind the new Seat of the Universal House of Justice have been cultivated and planted with thousands of plants and decorative shrubs.

Extensive pruning of all trees and shrubs was done in the Monument Gardens, and necessary repair work, including extensive rewiring, was carried out.

Extensive work was done to beautify the garden bordering Hagefen Street at the foot of Mount Carmel, where Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent.

The Bahá'í Cemetery in Haifa was further developed.

10. Five International Conferences—1982

These five international conferences dedicated to the memory of the Greatest Holy Leaf were attended by over 16,000 believers from all parts of the world.

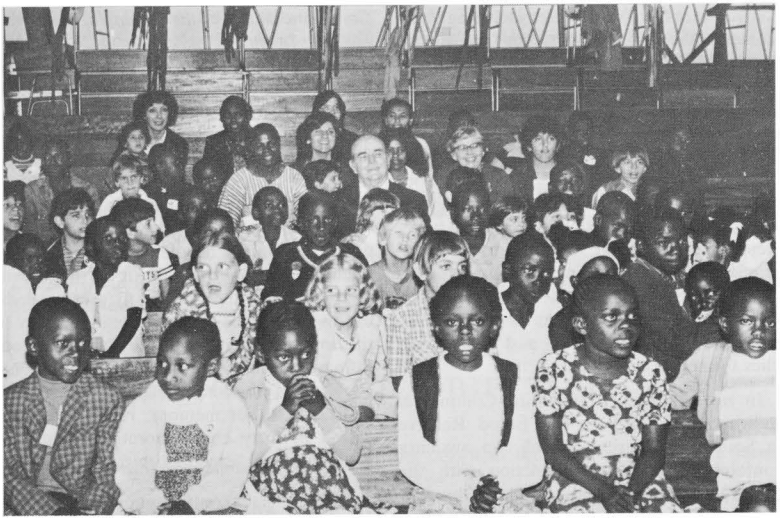
Place and Date	The Hand of the Cause of God Representing the Universal House of Justice	Number Attending
Dublin, Ireland 25–27 June	Collis Featherstone	1,900 from 60 countries
Quito, Ecuador 6–8 August	Paul E. Haney	1,450 from 43 countries
Lagos, Nigeria 19–22 August	John Robarts	1,100 from 90 ethnic groups
Canberra, Australia 2–5 September	Ugo Giachery	2,400 from 45 countries
Montreal, Canada 2–5 September	Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum	9,400 from 101 countries (all 5 continents)

The spirit generated by these historic conferences stimulated and galvanized to greater action thousands more in a number of highly successful satellite conferences. A summary of these developments follows:

In EUROPE, all hearts rallied to respond to the call for spiritualization of the community and intensified personal teaching. A steady stream of messages from Counsellors, National Spiritual Assemblies and even local communities has been received at the World Centre recording the European acceptance of the challenges posed in Dublin.

Throughout LATIN AMERICA, stunning success was achieved by the 'Trail of Light', a project surrounding the Quito conference in which ten indigenous North American Bahá'ís travelled and taught in Mexico, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Ecuador, and ended their journey at the Montreal conference. Performing tribal dances for large audiences, inspiring and forging bonds of love with indigenous believers and achieving unprecedented publicity for the Faith, they truly blazed a trail of light across the Americas that augurs well for the fulfilment of the master's prophecy concerning the destiny of American Indians in the spiritual awakening of their continent. Satellite conferences which shared the enthusiasm of Quito and also emphasized native participation were held in Costa Rica, Bolivia, Belize, Paraguay, Uruguay, Nicaragua, Panama, Suriname and French Guiana, the French Antilles, Bermuda, Barbados and Haiti.

In AFRICA, five official satellite conferences, attended by Hand of the Cause of God William Sears, echoed the 'radiant love' of the Lagos conference with a 'unity, not of sitting together, but of hearts loving'. All the major ethnic groups in Southern Africa were represented at the conferences in South Africa. Bophuthatswana, Transkei and Namibia. Most of the believers at the conference in Nairobi,



Some youthful participants in the satellite conference held in Nairobi, Kenya; October 1982. The Hand of the Cause William Sears is seen seated in the centre, third row from the back.



Some participants in the satellite conference held in Yaoundé, Cameroon Republic; October 1982.

Kenya, were from rural areas, including many women and children, and friends from Egypt, Tanzania and Uganda.

Nigeria's neighbours also took advantage of the activity in Lagos: Benin held five satellite conferences, attended by two hundred believers from twenty-five localities, and as a result of these and the efforts of visitors a twelve per cent growth in the Bahá'í population was recorded. Togo, Ghana, the Central African Republic and Senegal also held satellite conferences. Several teaching projects were organized in Nigeria for conference visitors; in one of these projects two hundred and fifty-five believers were enrolled and five Assemblies formed in one week.

In NORTH AMERICA the third Continental Indigenous Council on the Blood Reserve in Southern Alberta, one of two auxiliary conferences held in conjunction with the Montreal conference, was attended by four hundred and forty-six people representing sixty Indian tribes and ten countries. The council was honoured by the presence of Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and thrilled by the 'Trail of Light' members, who recounted their experiences with Indian Bahá'ís in Central and South America. The seventh Annual Conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies was also held immediately preceding the Montreal conference. More than six hundred and fifty Bahá'ís participated, discussing many topics, including Bahá'í contributions to international development. Seven satellite conferences were held in the Bahamas to share the inspiration of the Montreal conference.

In the PACIFIC teaching throughout the islands was undertaken by participants in the Canberra conference travelling to and from Australia. A large contingent from Japan attended the conference, and some remained for a teaching trip in Australia, demonstrating their awareness of the importance of the spiritual axis described by the Guardian and emphasized by the Universal House of Justice in its message to the conference. Forty overseas travel-teachers taught throughout Australia in the five months preceding and following the conference.

Commemorations of the Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf

The Bahá'í world was filled with awe and love as it became acquainted with, or learned more of, the life of the Greatest Holy Leaf during the commemorations in 1982 of the fiftieth anniversary of her passing. The compilation issued by the Universal House of Justice of Writings about her, the articles devoted to her life which were published in nearly all Bahá'í newsletters and the commemorative meetings held on all five continents inspired the friends to greater dedication and service to the Cause in memory of this immortal heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation. In addition to the five international conferences and their satellites which were dedicated to her memory, reports were received of forty commemorative events, including several teaching projects.

11. Media Attention Focused on the World Administrative Centre

The persecutions in Írán and the worldwide efforts on behalf of the beleaguered friends in the Cradle of the Faith focused attention on the World Centre in Haifa.

During the five years since the fourth International Convention, visits were made by embassy officials from Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland and the United States, as well as official representatives from the following countries and organizations: Brazil, France, Germany, India, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the European Parliament and the World Council of Faiths.

Visits of various national and international media services included the following:

Associated Press
CBC News
BBC-TV London, BBC-TV Wales, BBC-TV Scotland
CFHI-TV—Canadian Broadcasting Company
WMAQ-TV—NBC Chicago
RAI Italian Television
SPS Cable-TV Network—San Francisco
Australian Television, '60 Minutes' Programme

WKBW-TV, Buffalo, New York
ABC-TV, Los Angeles 'Eyewitness News'
Yugoslavian National Television
French National Television
German National Television

Newspapers/Magazines:
Chicago Sun-Times—U.S.A.
Los Angeles Times—U.S.A.
The Baltimore Sun—U.S.A.
The Age—Melbourne, Australia
Le Monde—Paris, France
El País—Madrid, Spain
Suburban Newspapers—Montreal, Canada
The Jerusalem Post; *Ma'ariv*; *Ha'aretz*; *Yidiot Aharonot*; *Al Hamishmar*; *Kol Boker*; El Al Airlines Inflight Magazine, *Israel-Al*—Israel
Nuerenberger Nachrichten; *Aachen Volkzeitung*; *Lubek Zeitung*—Germany
Politiken; *Jyllands Posten*; *Berlingske Tidende*—Denmark

Radio:
Kol Israel—English, Hebrew, Arabic and French programmes
BBC World News

B. WORLD-WIDE OBJECTIVES

1. Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of India

At the beginning of the Seven Year Plan, the Universal House of Justice had approved the design of Mr. Faríburz Ṣahba, who was named architect for the House of Worship in India; the foundation stone had been laid by the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum on 17 October 1977, and excavation of the area had begun.

On the first day of Riḍván 1980 a construction contract was awarded to one of the largest and best-equipped companies in India. The first concrete was poured on 30 July 1980, and over a period of five months 2,300 cubic metres of concrete were used to make up the foundation. In the next four months forty-five columns that support the podium slab at the basement level were poured. On 9 May 1981 concreting of the huge 5,000 square metre slab commenced and continued almost around the clock with a labour force of more than 400. The floor, or inner podium, was completed by the end of June, and the outer podium by mid-September 1981.

In preparation for the construction of the main entrance arches, 16 metric tons of temporary structural steel staging were fabricated to support each arch. The actual construction of the arches, each containing 105 cubic metres of concrete, began in March of 1982, and the last arch was completed on 27 July. On 3 April the foundation stone and a brick from the Síyáh-Chál were embedded in the crown of the entrance arch which faces 'Akká.

The preparatory work for the very complicated construction of the external and internal parts of the dome to cover the central auditorium is now under way. Designing the temporary steel staging took two years of consultation and planning. More than 600 metric tons of structural steel have been used in the massive staging work erected on the floor of the Temple, supporting the inner leaves (petals) and the framework of the interior dome, which is to be umbrella-shaped and composed of nine thin hemispheric concrete shells intersecting each other and designed to be the unopened petals of the lotus blossom. In March 1982 a contract was signed with a firm in Italy for 8,000 square metres of white Pentelikon marble for the cladding of the House of Worship.

Of the nine large pools to surround the Temple, two have been completed and filled with water to a depth of one metre, and work on a third pool is in progress. Each pool covers an area of approximately 500 square metres.

The two wings of the ancillary building flanking the main entrance steps of the House of Worship have been completed, providing about 750 square metres of space which will be used for administrative offices, reception rooms, a conference hall and an audio-visual centre, as well as accommodation for the resident manager.

An average of 500 workers, men and women, and including about ninety families, have done the bulk of the work, manually. They are provided with living facilities; and a nursery and primary school have been set up at the site to care for and educate the infants and children while their parents are at work. Morale is high, and, aware of the importance of their work, the labourers work with greater diligence and interest than at other projects. An example of this concerns women, who at the peak of the concreting work carried about 7½ metric tons of concrete in 25 kilogram headloads, walking a total of 22 kilometres back and forth between concrete mixers and forms.

It is gratifying to note the manner in which construction materials, in critically short supply, have become available, and permission has been granted by various government and municipal departments; how suppliers of non-controlled materials have responded in giving those of a superior quality at rates often below market prices; and how construction has progressed accident-free. The most outstanding achievement was the official exemption from import duty given by three Ministries of India for the marble.

Since it was the expressed desire of the Universal House of Justice for the Bahá'ís of India to contribute a share in construction costs, special Temple coupons of 1 to 100 rupees each were printed and distributed to Temple Fund representatives in each Bahá'í community. As a result of this effort and a generous outpouring of funds from the friends, twenty-two per cent of the total contributions received has come from India.

2. Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Samoa

The purchase of the initial plot of Temple site land, situated at an elevation of 1,800 feet overlooking the city of Apia, was completed in November 1975. Since that time additional adjoining lots have been acquired to permit direct access to the Temple from the main road.

At Riḍván 1978 Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat was appointed architect and in September of that year his design for the Temple was approved by the Universal House of Justice. On 27 January 1979, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II laid the foundation stone, and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the representative of the House of Justice, participated by placing in a niche in the stone a small casket of Dust from the Sacred Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. A coloured sound motion picture entitled 'Blessed Is the Spot' recorded the ceremony and the conference which was held in Apia on the same week-end.

Soil testing and engineering studies followed and in June 1980 tenders for the construction of the House of Worship were let. A contract was signed with a New Zealand contractor, and a building permit was issued in August. Work on the site started in September. The first concrete was poured for the foundations on 18 December 1980 in the presence of the Malietoa.

The total height of the dome will be 33 metres, and by the end of 1982, 11 metres had already been completed. By March 1983 the dome formworks had been set up, and it was anticipated that the concreting of the dome would be completed by June. It will then be covered with white tiles.The completion date for the entire building is scheduled for Riḍván 1984. The building of the Temple has already made an impact in Samoa, and it is expected to attract even more attention as it nears completion.

3. First Dependency of the European Mashriqu'l-Adhkár

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Germany has appointed Mr. Teuto Rocholl, the architect of the Temple in Langenhain, to be the architect for the Home for the Aged which is to be the first dependency of that Temple. Mr. Rocholl has designed some thirty to forty Homes for the Aged in all parts of Germany.

After considering recommendations from the National Spiritual Assembly, the Universal House of Justice has specified that the Bahá'í Home for the Aged should be of the type in which each resident has a private room with a bath, and will receive daily care from the staff. It will have twenty-five beds and, at current prices, it is estimated that the cost of construction will be some DM. 3,500,000, excluding the cost of the site and of connections to utilities.



The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery viewing the construction of the House of Worship near Apia. Western Samoa; September 1982.



Mr. Suleiman A. Suleimani of Taiwan accepting from His Excellency Lee Teng-Hui, the Governor of that country, an award honouring his 'contribution to the religious welfare of the people of Taiwan'; 28 May 1982. Mr. Suleimani and his late wife, Riḍváníyyih, were the first Bahá'í pioneers to Taiwan, settling in the southern port city of Tainan in 1954.

4. New Territories and Islands Opened to the Faith

The light of Bahá'u'lláh continues to spread to new territories and islands, as called for in the Seven Year Plan. More than fifteen islands have been opened to the Faith since the Plan began, and in order to establish what progress has been made in opening territories on the homefront, a major effort to determine the precise distribution of Bahá'ís across the globe has been undertaken by the Statistics Department. In consultation with National Spiritual Assemblies, the major civil divisions inside each country (such as provinces or states) were ascertained, and these were incorporated into the reports sent by each community to the World Centre. The more detailed information that has been thus obtained has revealed how close the followers of Bahá'u'lláh have come to covering the earth with His Message: there are 2,315 civil areas within the homefronts of the 129 National Spiritual Assemblies which are able to report regularly; of these only 223 are not opened to the Faith. The locations of these civil areas, both opened and unopened, are given in the following table.

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Australasia	Europe	Total
National Assemblies reporting regularly	35	35	25	15	19	129
Total civil areas	532	630	409	234	366	2,171
Opened civil areas	464	610	332	216	327	1,949
National Assemblies with unopened civil areas	12	6	15	8	11	52
Unopened civil areas	68	20	77	18	40	223

Seventy-eight National Spiritual Assemblies have opened all the civil areas under their jurisdiction. These National Spiritual Assemblies are as follows:

Africa (22)

Benin, Bophuthatswana, Botswana, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Togo, Transkei, Upper Volta, Zambia, Zaïre and Zimbabwe.

The Americas (29)

Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Antilles, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and the Windward Islands.

Asia (11)

Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia (East and West), Lebanon, Philippines, Qatar, Sikkim, Singapore, Taiwan and United Arab Emirates.

Australasia (7)

Australia, Caroline Islands, Hawaiian Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Europe (9)

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

During the Seven Year Plan the following islands have been opened, listed according to National Spiritual Assembly jurisdiction:

	National Assembly	Area Opened
The Americas:	Brazil	Bananal Island
	Dominican Republic	Saona Island
	French Antilles	Desirade Island
	Nicaragua	Corn Island
Asia:	Singapore	Bukum Island
Australasia:	Australia	Flinders Island
	Caroline Islands	Ulul Island
	Caroline Islands	Kayangel Island
	Mariana Islands	Every major island
	Papua New Guinea	D'Entrecasteaux Islands
Europe:	Greece	Tinos Island of the Cyclades
	Norway	One of the Lofoten Islands

5. New National Spiritual Assemblies to be Established

National Assemblies at the beginning of the Plan in 1979	125
National Assemblies to be formed during the Seven Year Plan	22
Total	147

National Assemblies Established through Riḍván 1983

Africa:	Bophuthatswana	1981
	South West Africa/Namibia	1981
	Transkei	1980
The Americas:	Bermuda	1981
	Dominica	1983
	Leeward Islands	1981
	St. Lucia	1983
	St. Vincent and Grenada	1983
Australasia:	Tuvalu	1981

Supplementary Achievements

Africa:	Uganda (re-established)	1981
Asia:	Nepal (re-established)	1982

6. Legal Status of the Faith

Although few specific goals of this type were assigned during the Seven Year Plan, progress on this vital front continues on many levels and in many forms.

Among the most important legal recognitions of the independent status of the Faith was a constitutional amendment in Pakistan (8 April 1981), naming the Bahá'í Faith specifically among the non-Muslim faiths of the country; this was preceded by a letter from the Ministry for Religious Affairs declaring the Faith a religious 'minority' among 'other non-Muslims'. Other important general recognition of the status of the Faith includes authorization in at least two countries for change of identity cards to show 'Bahá'í' rather than 'Muslim' as the religion of the individual. Other specific forms of recognition are outlined below.

A. National Spiritual Assembly Incorporation

During this period the Universal House of Justice has clarified the conditions under which this goal is considered achieved. The minimum requirements are that the Assembly be accorded the status of an independent legal personality able to sue and be sued, to enter into contracts, and to hold title to property

both real and personal. Insofar as legally possible, the incorporation document should also embody the provisions of the Bahá'í national or local constitution, as expressed in the model Declaration of Trust and By-Laws, and should not contain any provision contrary to Bahá'í administrative principles.

Documents now on file at the World Centre confirm this achievement for a total of seventy National Spiritual Assemblies: twenty-two in Africa, twenty-four in the Americas, seven in Asia, eight in Australasia and nine in Europe. Several other Assemblies, although not completing all the requirements above, have achieved all that is legally possible in their countries. In several other instances, the information now available at the World Centre is insufficient to determine whether or not all conditions established by the House of Justice have been met; inquiries into these cases are continuing.

During the Seven Year Plan to date, the following national incorporation goals have been assigned. The legal processes necessary for their fulfilment are often time-consuming; the present status is as follows:

(A = Achieved, IP = In Process)

Africa		
Bophuthatswana	IP	
Ethiopia	IP	
S.W. Africa/Namibia	A	(8/82)
Transkei	A	(10/80)
SUPPLEMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT:		
Sierra Leone	A	(4/81)
Australasia		
Tuvalu	IP	
The Americas		
The Bahamas	IP	
Bermuda	IP	
Leeward Islands	IP	
Europe		
Austria	IP	

In addition, the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda is reported to have been 're-registered' with the new government there; active efforts towards the fulfilment of this important legal status continue in all other countries where it is legally feasible.

Among important Local Spiritual Assembly incorporations achieved during this period are those of Grenada, where a legislative act has provided incorporation for all present and future Local Assemblies; of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, also by legislative act; of Cayenne in French Guiana; and of Macau. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Addis Ababa has also recently been re-registered with the High Court of Ethiopia.

B. Recognition of Bahá'í Marriage

During this period the Universal House of Justice has redefined what is meant by this goal, as follows:

> Recognition of Bahá'í marriage occurs when Bahá'í authority to conduct and to certify marriages is legal; stated in another way, recognition is attained when a Bahá'í or Bahá'ís, as representative(s) of the Faith, is/are empowered to conduct and certify a legally valid marriage, whether the Bahá'í ceremony is legally sufficient or not.

(In some countries this is already possible under existing law, whether or not specific reference is made to the name of the Faith.) Records at the World Centre reflect such recognition in at least 45 countries, of which the following have been achieved during this Plan:

Africa:		
Mauritius	Recognition Achieved	1/1/82
The Americas:		
Haiti	Recognition Achieved	7/5/80
Panama	Recognition Regained	1/1/83
Asia:		
Malaysia	Recognition Achieved	1/3/82

C. Recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days

The conditions under which this goal is considered fulfilled have recently been clarified by the Universal House of Justice, as follows:

> We should consider the status of recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days as achieved when a government department or office issues a document stating that on one or more of the Bahá'í Holy Days Bahá'í employees have the right to be excused from work, and/or Bahá'í students are permitted to absent themselves from school,

and/or institutions owned and entirely controlled by Bahá'ís may close on the nine specified days . . .

In some countries this has been achieved on a national basis, in others on a state or provincial or regional basis, and in others by local or district school boards or local governments. In most instances the permission applies to schoolchildren, although in a few cases government employees are entitled to be absent while schoolchildren are not. In other cases, students or employees have been permitted to absent themselves from school or work without penalty, although there is no official documentation of this right. Efforts continue toward clarification of this question in many countries for which World Centre records are still incomplete.

Specific achievements of the Seven Year Plan to date include the following:

Africa

Zimbabwe
26/10/82
Two Holy Days (as for other Faiths) permitted teachers in government schools (Ministry of Education)

The Americas

Chile
(28/9/81)
Bahá'í School 'Colegio Nur' is authorized to close on Bahá'í Holy Days if legally-required number of school days is met

United States
(5/5/82)
State of New Jersey Department of Education letter to school superintendents and administrators provides list of Holy Days (including 7 Bahá'í Holy Days) on which it is mandatory that students be excused if requested

Australasia

Hawaiian Islands
(23/6/81)
Legislative act permitting excused absences for all non-Christian pupils to observe their Holy Days (passed by legislature after intense public indignation at refusal of school board to permit excused rather than unexcused absences for Bahá'í children)

Europe

England
(12/7/82)
Brent Local District Council permits Bahá'í teachers two Holy Days off with pay (same number as for teachers of other faiths)

Republic of Ireland
(16/10/81)
Nationally funded school adopts 12 November as holiday for entire school; a second school will do so in 1983.

D. Miscellaneous Recognition

Less direct but equally interesting forms of recognition of the Faith are many and various, and are also increasing in number and frequency. The following selected examples will give an idea of the variety of types of recognition achieved since Riḍván 1979.

Africa

In Zaïre, the Shaba State Protocol Office has accepted that the Bahá'í Faith be represented during all the official meetings, as are representatives of other faiths; and in Liberia, the Ministry of Information has requested the designation of Bahá'í representatives to the National Workshop on Religion.

The Americas

In Brazil, the Mayor of the city of Belo Horizonte has signed a decree designating an annual Bahá'í week, to be included by the Municipal Cultural Secretary in the annual official calendar. In Canada, the Faith has been granted non-governmental organization status with the Canadian International Development Agency, enabling co-operation and funding of many community service projects sponsored by Bahá'í institutions world-wide. Several interesting assignments have been given to U.S. Bahá'í representatives to the United Nations, and in 1982 the American Bahá'í community was honoured by the United States Committee for UNICEF for service to the world's children.

Asia

In India the government officials responsible for all public libraries in each of three states have listed designated Bahá'í books for purchase by all libraries under their jurisdiction, while in Laos permission has been granted for the Bahá'ís to meet for Holy Days

and Nineteen Day Feasts without having to obtain special permission each time, as generally required.

Australasia

In Kiribati the Ministry of Health and Community Affairs approached the Bahá'ís, requesting them to nominate a candidate for a Commonwealth Youth Study Fellowship.

Europe

The very interesting recognition of the Faith in certain publicly-funded schools in Ireland has been outlined above. Also in Ireland, Bahá'í children are excused from classes in Christian religious education and permitted instead to have instruction in their own Faith during those hours, and various exemptions governing such things as the form of letterheads have been granted to incorporated Assemblies there. In the United Kingdom three Bahá'ís now serve on the Religious Education Council, and two others on the Executive Committee of the World Congress of Faiths; and Bahá'í viewpoints were included in the 1979 Standing Conference on Inter-Faith Dialogue in Education.

In addition, numerous exemptions from taxes, rates, and customs duties have also been reported during this period, some representing one-time exemptions on particular items or properties, and others representing general exemption.

7. New Properties

(A = Achieved; IP = In Process)

TEMPLE SITES

Africa	
Bophuthatswana	IP
Burundi	IP
Cape Verde Islands	IP
Equatorial Guinea	IP
Somalia	IP
S.W. Africa/Namibia	IP
Transkei	A
Australasia	
Tuvalu	IP
Tonga	IP

NATIONAL ḤAẒÍRATU'L-QUDS

Africa	
Bophuthatswana	IP
Burundi	IP
Cape Verde Islands	IP
Equatorial Guinea	IP
Gabon	A
Somalia	IP
S.W. Africa/Namibia	A*
Transkei	A
The Americas	
Bermuda	A*
Dominica	IP
Grenada	IP
Leeward Islands	IP
St. Lucia	IP
Australasia	
Tuvalu	A
Europe	
France	A†
Ireland	A†

NATIONAL ENDOWMENTS

Africa	
Bophuthatswana	IP
Burundi	A
Cape Verde Islands	IP
Equatorial Guinea	A
Somalia	IP
Transkei	IP
The Americas	
Bermuda	IP
Asia	
Nepal	IP
Australasia	
Tuvalu	IP
Tonga	IP

DISTRICT ḤAẒÍRATU'L-QUDS

Africa	Goal	
Benin	2	IP
Burundi	1	IP
Cameroon Rep.	3	IP
Ethiopia	3	IP
The Gambia	1	IP
Ghana	3	IP
Ivory Coast	2	IP
Liberia	2	IP
Guinea	1	IP
Mali	1	IP
Nigeria	3	IP
Senegal	1	IP

* By conversion of local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds † Replacement

Seychelles	3	IP
Sierra Leone	1	IP
Tanzania	1	IP
Togo	1	IP
Zaïre	3	IP
Zambia	2	IP
Zimbabwe	3	IP
The Americas		
Argentina	1	IP
Brazil	6	IP
Colombia	2	IP
Costa Rica	1	A
Guyana	1	IP
Guatemala	2	IP
Honduras	1	IP
Leeward Is.	1	IP
Mexico	1	IP
Nicaragua	1	A
Peru	3	IP
Suriname & French Guiana	2	IP
Trinidad & Tobago	1	IP
Venezuela	2	IP
Asia		
Bangladesh	2	IP
Burma	1	IP
Nepal	1	IP
Sikkim	2	IP
Australasia		
Caroline Is.	3	IP
Samoa	1	IP
Tonga	3	IP

LOCAL HAZÍRATU'L-QUDS

Number of additions during the Seven Year Plan:

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Australasia	TOTAL
Buildings	45	16	12	8	81
Lands	8	13	5	–	26
Rented Centres	3	1	1	–	5

MOBILE INSTITUTES

Africa	
Central African Republic	IP
Chad	IP
Malawi	IP
Mauritius	IP
Rwanda	IP
Tanzania	A
Transkei	IP
Uganda	IP
Zimbabwe	IP

8. Radio Stations

The establishment of three new radio stations in South America is a goal of the Seven Year Plan and this goal is close to being won.

1. 'Radio Bahá'í del Lago Titicaca' with its transmitter and studio in Chucuito near Puno, Peru, began broadcasting on 26 November 1981; its associated teaching institute was completed for use soon thereafter, going immediately into intensive service. At present the 1 kw. medium-wave station is reported to be broadcasting ten hours per day in the Spanish, Quechua and Aymará languages.
2. In January 1983 a presidential decree allocated a medium-wave radio frequency to the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia for Caracollo, near Oruro, to become 'Radio Bahá'í of Bolivia'. Construction of the new 1 kw. station and its associated teaching institute are scheduled for completion in January 1984 and for inauguration at Naw-Rúz. A country-wide radio production and broadcasting programme was under way in 1983 as prelude to opening of the station.
3. The National Spiritual Assembly of Chile was denied a frequency for technical reasons, and is now seeking some resolution of their plan for a station at La Branza, near Temuco, in the country of the Mapuche Indians, where already it has acquired land and laid foundations for a station complex.
4. In December 1982 the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States received its construction permit for a 50 kw. FM station, to be completed in early 1984 at the Louis Gregory Institute in Hemingway,

South Carolina. Broadcasts are to reach and deepen the Bahá'í population of eastern and central South Carolina where there is the largest concentration of believers in the United States.

5. The first Bahá'í station, 'Radio Bahá'í of Ecuador', has recently received a far more favourable short-wave frequency, and has also been expanding its public service role in agriculture, health and general culture. It is also upgrading its medium wave transmission power to 3 kw. and broadening its Bahá'í programming.
6. The National Spiritual Assembly of Brazil was denied application for a frequency in the vicinity of Bahia, but is seeking another frequency.
7. The National Spiritual Assembly of Panama is actively developing a radio station project in the Chiriqui area of western Panama as part of the Guaymi Educational Centre complex at Soloy.The station is anticipated to be broadcasting by mid-1984.

9. Publishing Trusts

Goals of the Plan to date have included establishment of three new Publishing Trusts, in the Ivory Coast, Kenya and Nigeria; resumption of functioning of the Publishing Trust of Uganda; further development of the Publishing Trusts of Belgium, Fiji and Lebanon; and development of regional publishing units in Zaïre; and translation, publication and dissemination of literature, newsletters, correspondence courses, child education and audio-visual materials in regional languages through the State Teaching Committees of India. Significant progress has been made toward all these goals.

New Trusts

Although the Ivory Coast, Kenya and Nigeria are still functioning as national Publishing Committees, various steps are under way to establish each as a Publishing Trust. All three have produced their first publications, and it is reported that Kenya has obtained necessary equipment and that an operator has been hired and trained.

Resumption of Trust Activities in Uganda

The first meeting of the reconstituted Publishing Trust Committee took place in July 1981, although small-scale supply operations had resumed as early as November 1979.

Further Development of the Trusts of Belgium, Fiji and Lebanon

The valuable services of all three of these Trusts, which are major sources for the Bahá'í world of literature in French, in the languages of the islands of the Pacific and in Arabic, respectively, continue and are increasing in both quantity and quality.

Regional Publishing Activity in Zaïre and India

Decentralization of publishing activity has met with enthusiasm in both of these countries with polyglot populations, and a flow of literature in local languages from regional or state committees has already begun. Since the assignment of this goal at the beginning of the second phase, regional committees in Zaïre have produced at least thirty titles in ten languages; and in India State Teaching Committees have produced at least forty-one titles in twelve languages.

10. Translation and Publication Achievements

A. General

Among the fundamental goals of the Seven Year Plan is that of providing every believer with portions of the Holy Texts in his or her language and to expand the range and availability of literature in as many languages as possible. Understanding of the importance of this goal is reflected in the steadily increasing flow of reports from an ever greater number of countries, announcing new translations, publications, original materials and reprints in both native and world languages. Of special interest in this regard is the number of reports from certain countries of translations made in the villages by local believers for their own use; some of these reports have reached the World Centre only some years after the achievement.

Also increasing is the number of reports reflecting co-operation between two or more National Assemblies in the translation and production of literature, and the reprinting of literature no longer available from the country

of origin, in languages such as Lao, Vietnamese and Persian.

The total number of languages, dialects and scripts into which some Bahá'í literature (although not necessarily Scripture) has been translated has now reached a minimum of 726, of which at least 568 have been published, or reproduced in some form and made available to believers and/or to the public. This number includes two invented languages (Esperanto and Interlingua), and Braille script for use by the blind in eight different languages, including Japanese, Esperanto and Amharic. The range of literature available in each language varies from a single prayer or pamphlet to extensive libraries of titles; original, locally written materials are also appearing in an increasing number of languages.

B. Literature for Children

Provision of literature specifically for children was a goal assigned to twelve National Assemblies, the first time that this particular emphasis has been so widely assigned. Many additional communities have also felt the need for such materials for their children, as indicated by the figures in the table below, which includes colouring books and materials produced for children's classes, but not lesson plans. In one case the lesson materials have been taped.

Titles originally produced in English are being widely translated, but many original items are also appearing in a variety of languages. Especially noteworthy are the achievements of Mexico, where six titles in Spanish



A selection of newsletters in various languages published specifically for children in the past five years. National communities represented above are: Nigeria (English), Greece. (Greek), Italy (Italian), South & West Africa (Afrikaans/English), Iceland (Icelandic), Japan (Japanese), U.S.A. (English), Hawaii (English), Venezuela (Spanish), Swaziland (English/Swahili), Ethiopia (Tigrigna), Norway (Norwegian), Netherlands (Dutch), India (English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu).



Some of the published versions of Words of God, *a compilation prepared at the World Centre from the Writings of the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith. Shown above are editions in: Aymará, Quechua, Spanish, Luba, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Hindi, Gujarati, Swahili, English, German, French and Ponapean.*

have been produced in two years; and the Netherlands, where at least eleven, and perhaps more, of the twenty-six titles now listed for children have been produced during this Plan. In addition at least five magazines for children have begun publication during this period, one of which, *Varqá*, appears in five languages. The total number of languages in which at least one item has been prepared specifically for children has now reached at least sixty-four, including German Braille.

C. Sacred Texts

To assist Assemblies in making the Sacred Word available to all believers, two compilations of prayers and other selections from the Holy Texts were supplied to National Spiritual Assemblies by the Universal House of Justice. The first of these, a compilation of extracts from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was sent in October 1979; portions of that compilation have been translated into various languages for circulation among the friends, and other such translations are in process. A smaller compilation of short prayers and other brief selections from the Writings was sent in September 1981 under the title *Words of God*. This second compilation has so far been published in thirty-seven editions in twenty-seven languages in twenty-one countries; an additional twenty-three languages in seventeen countries have been translated but not yet published, and at least twenty-two more are in process. Similar small compilations under other titles are also available in at least twenty-four languages, of which at least eighteen are different from those in which *Words of God* has so far appeared. In addition *The Hidden Words* is also now available in more than ninety languages.

D. Audio-Visual Materials

A special aspect of the objective, cited above, of enabling every believer to have some portion of the Sacred Text available in his native tongue, is the provision of such texts in taped or recorded form. Increasingly extensive goals have been assigned for provision of tape-recorded prayers and extracts from the Holy Texts, as well as for production of other audio-visual materials, for use both in deepening new believers and in introducing the Faith to the public.

While certain Assemblies have provided the believers with such materials in the past, goals

concerning them have been extensively assigned for the first time during this Plan.

Production of such materials requires not only professional expertise, but also access to specialized facilities and equipment. These factors, when combined with the newness of the goals for many of the Assemblies to which they are now assigned, have resulted in many reports to the World Centre of projects not yet completed. However, Assemblies reporting particularly extensive achievements so far include the following:

Africa

THE CAMEROONS: taped prayers and introductions to the Faith in Gbaya, Bamoun, Bulu, Ewondo and Duala, with others in process.

NIGERIA: taped prayers, Hidden Words, and songs in Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, English and Tiv; filmstrip commentary translated into Hausa.

SOUTHWEST AFRICA/NAMIBIA: deepening materials in process in five local languages.

UPPER VOLTA: tapes in Lyélé, Nankanse and Gourmantche.

The Americas

ARGENTINA: audio-visual materials for child education, as well as taped extracts and prayers in Mapuche, Mataco and Toba.

BELIZE: tapes in Island Carib (Garifuna), Kekchi and Mopan (Maya).

BOLIVIA: an extensive list of tapes and deepening materials in Quechua, Aymará and Spanish, including cassettes for children and radio tapes.

CANADA: films, videotapes, programming for cable television.

GUATEMALA: tapes in Cakchiquel and Mam.

PANAMA: tapes in Guaymi and Cuna.

UNITED STATES: videotapes in Chinese and Persian; TV programmes in Chinese and Spanish; filmstrip commentaries translated into Chinese, Laotian and Spanish; radio tapes, radio series, programming for cable TV and widely distributed cassette deepening tapes in English.

VENEZUELA: radio tapes in Guajiro and Spanish.

Asia

MALAYSIA: an extensive list of taped materials in Chinese, English, Tamil, Bidayuh and Iban languages.

Australasia

CAROLINE ISLANDS: two and a half hours of deepening tapes in Ponapean, with other languages in process.

VANUATU: correspondence courses on tape being developed in Bislama and Lenakel.

Europe

SPAIN: extensive taping programme including thirty-six proclamation and teaching cassettes for radio use.

In addition a special Committee for Service to the Blind, located in the United Kingdom, is a clearing house and production and distribution centre for materials both on tape and in Braille; and CIRBAL (Centro para Intercambio Radiofónico Bahá'í de América Latina), among its other functions, serves as a clearing house for tapes, videotapes, script and other materials suitable for use via radio and television.

Several other Assemblies have reported initial achievements on a lesser scale, and many projects in many languages are still in process.

E. Correspondence Courses

Correspondence courses were assigned as goals to thirty-one National Assemblies during the first phase, and were so successful that in the second phase this goal was reaffirmed for twenty-six Assemblies and extended to thirty-nine more, for a total of sixty-five. Many Assemblies to which the goal was not specifically assigned also report correspondence courses in use.

One hundred and forty courses in thirty-four languages are reported in use for inquirers, for deepening new believers, for those desirous of more advanced study, for women, for children, for youth, for parents, for Local Spiritual Assembly members and for Auxiliary Board assistants. This is a field in which inter-Assembly co-operation has been especially fruitful; several Assemblies report that they are using course materials developed in other countries, sometimes in other parts of the world, whether in the original form or translated or adapted. Especially noteworthy are

reports from India, where courses are now available in ten languages; from Malaysia, which lists three courses in Chinese, two in Iban, one in Malay, two in Tamil and five in English, of which one is especially for children; and from Togo, which reports three series totalling fourteen courses, with others under development.

In some cases special types of courses were called for by the goals. For example, the following countries have been called upon to develop courses especially for children: (Africa) Nigeria, Senegal, Togo; (The Americas) Brazil, Chile; (Asia) Malaysia. Of these, to date, Malaysia has reported a course for children developed in English, with additional lessons to be prepared in Malay.

11. Efficient Functioning of National Spiritual Assemblies

National Spiritual Assemblies have distinguished themselves in their courageous and audacious defence of the Bahá'ís in Írán; the attainment of financial self-sufficiency has been another heroic achievement. The efforts to foster an awareness among the friends of their responsibility for the growth of the Faith, to raise up self-supporting pioneers and travel-teachers, and other teaching initiatives described in a later section are further evidence of the growing independence of National Spiritual Assemblies.

A. Financial Self-Sufficiency

Commendable efforts have been made by most National Assemblies to become increasingly independent of the International Funds of the Faith, and a fair number have achieved total self-sufficiency.

12. Public Relations

A. Cordial Relations

Astonishing success was achieved in the area of fostering cordial relations with prominent people, especially through the Bahá'ís' efforts to enlist the help of their governments in alleviating the suffering of the Bahá'ís in Írán. Seventy National Spiritual Assemblies developed systematic programmes to promote cordial relations with authorities, and ninety-four reported some activities. Bahá'í delegations in twenty-seven countries met with thirty-five Heads of State or Government, and twenty-one National Spiritual Assemblies reported making contact with all members of parliament or all the ministers of the government. Large numbers of federal and provincial ministers, other authorities, and prominent individuals in eighty-three countries received Bahá'í delegations or information about the Faith.

Appreciation of the Faith among the leaders of the world is growing, as is evidenced by a Prime Minister who advised his government to receive the Bahá'ís and listen to them, another government's request for Bahá'í prayers to be read in a Cabinet meeting, and a UN official who remarked that wherever he was posted the Bahá'ís were always the first to welcome him and offer their assistance.

B. Use of Media

Proclamation of the Faith in the mass media has reached unprecedented levels as a result of the suffering of the Bahá'ís in Írán. In the Seven Year Plan to date, publicity of the Faith has been reported by ninety-five Assemblies, including television coverage in fifty-three countries, radio coverage in eighty-four and press reports in eighty-two countries.

The opening years of the Seven Year Plan have also been characterized by a great initiative by Bahá'í communities to exploit every available media opportunity. Bahá'ís in many countries have taught themselves to use the mass media in seminars and workshops, some of them conducted or assisted by media professionals who became interested in the Faith. At least ten Bahá'í communities in Canada showed regular cable TV programmes during the first phase. In Norway the Bahá'ís were the first independent group to produce a radio programme after a new law allowed this, an accomplishment which in itself produced substantial publicity for their community and the Faith. In the United States a recorded telephone message of the most recent Bahá'í news developments is used by local media representatives to write timely articles for their local papers; more than 1,500 have been published there during the second phase.

Regular radio programmes were reported by a number of National Assemblies: five in

Africa, seventeen in the Americas, two in Asia, five in Australasia and one in Europe. One National Assembly in Africa, five in the Americas and two in Europe reported regular television programmes.

The media have increasingly been used for the consolidation and spiritual enrichment of the Bahá'í community as well. A new practice is the use of national radio and newspapers to remind the far-flung and inexperienced Bahá'í communities to observe Holy Days and other events. As a result of vigorous efforts by the Bahá'ís, All-India Radio now announces every Bahá'í Holy Day and special events. Some communities broadcast morning and evening devotions; many use frequent short radio announcements for teaching. Regular Bahá'í programmes on commercial or public radio, several of them in indigenous languages, are broadcast in thirty countries, and regular Bahá'í television programmes in eight.

For more than ten consecutive years words of Bahá'u'lláh have been raised from the midmost heart of the ocean in weekly radio and television programmes in the Dutch Antilles, now under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward Islands. The weekly Bahá'í programme on Radio Jamaica, now in its seventh year, attracts seventy-nine per cent of radio listeners, according to the station authorities. A report from the Central African Republic, where the Bahá'ís have aired a weekly radio progamme for ten years, shows the effectiveness of these programmes. Bahá'ís marching in an Independence Day Parade under a Bahá'í banner were greeted by the crowd of 25,000 with the Bahá'í radio show theme song, and shouts of 'La Foi Bahá'í'; and as the Bahá'ís marched past the Presidential box, the President and Government Ministers gave them special applause.

Bahá'í utilization of radio in the Americas is being assisted by CIRBAL, the agency which provides information, training and a distribution service for scripts and tapes for use principally in South and Central America and the Caribbean. Radio training workshops have been held in four countries, and Puerto Rico holds two or three annually. Many communities in Latin America have established their own recording facilities with the assistance of CIRBAL.

13. Education[1]

A. Bahá'í Education of Children

The challenging goal of providing Bahá'í education for every Bahá'í child has received the devoted attention of believers around the world. Four hundred and thirty-seven institutes for training children's teachers have been held by sixty-six National Spiritual Assemblies. Fourteen communities in the Americas now hold annual education seminars. Sixty National Spiritual Assemblies have reported developing new lesson plans for children during the Plan and the most recent reports indicate that thirty-three national communities have children's classes in over half of their Local Spiritual Assembly areas.

A report from the Ivory Coast refers to classes in their fifth consecutive year, and describes villages where most children have memorized prayers, as well as a locality where all children, including non-Bahá'ís, attend the Bahá'í classes held in the school. Several communities provide Bahá'í education during school periods set aside for religious instruction, a trend which should increase as Bahá'ís succeed in familiarizing education authorities with the Faith.

One hundred and twenty-six children's schools, camps or conferences have been held during the first half of the Plan. At least fourteen communities publish Bahá'í children's magazines, and others produce children's pages in their national newsletters.

By Riḍván 1983 the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies holding children's classes on a regular basis was in excess of three thousand.

B. Tutorial Schools

In summarizing the present world-wide endeavour to establish tutorial schools (usually non-formal village schools, often with a single teacher), it is clear that records and reports are incomplete. Nevertheless, the schools are playing an increasing role in the development of the Faith in many areas.

At the outset of the Seven Year Plan the goal of encouraging the establishment of tutorial schools was given to thirty-three

[1] See 'The Development of Bahá'í Schools during the Seven Year Plan', p. 207.

national Spiritual Assemblies, nineteen of which were in Africa. At the opening of the second phase of the Plan, the number of National Assemblies with this goal was raised to forty-one, and thirteen of these were given specific numbers of schools to establish.

At the end of the first phase about eighty tutorial schools were reported to be in operation.

By the end of the second phase one hundred and forty-three tutorial schools have been reported. *In Asia* these included: India fifty-two, Bangladesh eight, Philippines eight and Pakistan one. *In Africa* Zaïre's primary school programme failed to produce the desired effects, hence educational centres have replaced them, and nineteen are now reported. Also in Africa the Cameroon Republic has two tutorial schools, Central African Republic two, Lesotho three, Liberia one, Rwanda six, Senegal one, Togo two and Zambia two. *In the Americas* Brazil has three, Chile three, Colombia twelve, Panama eleven, Paraguay five and Venezuela one. *In Australasia* Vanuata has one tutorial school.

	Africa	*Americas*	*Asia*	*Australasia*	*Europe*	*Total*
Tutorial schools now functioning:	38	35	69	1	–	143

C. Academic Schools

Bahá'í academic educational programmes have been increasing during the Plan, but many have their roots in past Plans, for schools are by their nature slow-growing institutions of the Cause. Such schools are needed primarily in less-developed rural areas where large Bahá'í populations reside. The years of the Seven Year Plan have been characterized by the spontaneous and burgeoning interest in academic schooling, usually coupled with Bahá'í instruction for the students. A few countries have been active in the development of academic schools, and others have hopes and plans.

Academic schools as a goal of the Cause stem from the encouragement given by the Master to the believers in Írán and in 'Ishqábád, Russian Turkestan, to organize schools for boys and girls.

India

The long-established *New Era School* in Panchgani, Maharashtra State, an international school of increasing stature, has expanded during this Plan by adding a Youth Academy and an Institute of Rural Technology, and is now developing plans for a College. A preschool, primary and secondary schools and a small Junior College are in operation; vocational training is under way in the Rural Development project and Institute. Bahá'í education is furthered through an associated Youth Academy.

The *Rabbani School*, a Higher Secondary School for village boys in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, has been growing steadily. It graduated its first standard XI class in 1983, the village boys already excelling in the competitive provincial examinations. Physical facilities, staff and curriculum have been supplemented and improved; extension services are being inaugurated, and the self-help and scholastic programmes are expanding. A small primary school for the staff has been initiated.

A number of smaller schools have arisen, such as the *Glory English School* and the *Shoghi Children's Convent* in Andrha Pradesh. Private schools owned and run by Bahá'ís, operating on Bahá'í principles, have been organized in a number of places: the *Glory School* in Santineketan, West Bengal, conducts pre-school classes; the *Jaigeon School* on the border of Bhutan is a primary school.

Uganda

Two primary schools in Tilling and Odusai, Uganda, established long years ago, are now administered by the Ugandan authorities, but the physical properties are owned by the Faith.

Sikkim

The *Tadong School* in Gangtok continues to grow, with pre-primary and primary schools in operation up to standard VI. The school plans to open one standard each year until a secondary school is established.

Thailand

The *Santitham School* in Yasothon, established in 1963, has recently been rebuilt to better accommodate its pre-primary and primary school students. A commercial school has begun to function, and a secondary school is to be opened in the new facilities.

Pakistan

The *New Day Montessori School* in Karachi is adding a standard each year and will expand through standard V; standard III opened in 1983.

Indonesia

In Padang, the Bahá'í Hostels accommodate children, principally from the Mentawei Islands, who are taught crafts, given housing and Bahá'í education, and who also attend local public schools.

Haiti

The *Anís Zunúzí School* in Lilavois, near Port-au-Prince, began its first classes in 1980, and now conducts a primary school for rural children. Vocational and extension services are being developed for village education.

Chile

Colegio Nür in La Cisterna, a suburb of Santiago, is a Bahá'í-owned and Bahá'í-administered state-supported school, begun in 1977. It has a pre-school, primary and secondary school classes. The school's initiative and self-help programmes are impressive.

Near Temuco, two small country primary schools have been built by the friends to serve the Mapuche Indian Bahá'ís: the *Faizí School* in Loncopulle and the *Muhajir School* in Bollilco. These schools have exemplary Bahá'í staffs and are actively growing in both student numbers and physical facilities.

United States

In October 1982 a $1,900,000 reconstruction of the *Louhelen School* near Davison, Michigan, was completed. This reopening of the school, which began with modest classes in 1931, is an important step in the evolution of Bahá'í academic schools in the United States. The new facility is currently used for summer schools, institutes and conferences; eventually it will become a year-round academic school. This development brings closer to fruition the prediction of the Guardian that Louhelen had the potential to 'gradually develop into a true cultural and educational Bahá'í centre'.

D. Subjects Related to Universities and Schools[1]

The efforts to include the Bahá'í Faith in the curricula of universities and schools are gaining momentum through several major achievements and the persistent efforts of many Bahá'í communities around the world. One important accomplishment is the production of a college textbook on the Faith in Canada, which will soon be published in English and French. The publication in Britain of two secondary-level textbooks—*The Bahá'í Faith* and *Eight Major Religions in Britain*, which contains an excellent Bahá'í section—has assured the inclusion of the Faith in Religious Studies courses in the United Kingdom, and has given a great impetus to efforts in other parts of the world. In India the Bahá'ís have been requested to conduct moral education classes in the government schools of Orissa State. In Chile the National Spiritual Assembly is continuing to develop a curriculum for teaching the Faith in government schools, following conditions set down by the Ministry of Education. In Iceland the Bahá'ís established cordial relations with the Course Director for Religious Studies for the Icelandic schools system, and in Australia a proposed Bahá'í curriculum was submitted to the South Australian State Schools Religious Studies Committee.

Courses on or including the Bahá'í Faith have been taught at several universities in Canada, the United States, Alaska and Hawaii, as well as in Kenya, Nigeria and some other countries. The number of such courses will undoubtedly increase as a result of the vigorous teaching activities carried out in schools and universities during the Seven Year Plan. Among the many efforts all over the world the National Spiritual Assembly of Brazil prepared a letter to educators which Bahá'í students distributed to their teachers during Education Month, and several com-

[1] See articles beginning on p. 194: 'The Association for Bahá'í Studies', 'Bahá'í Scholarship in Australia' and 'Bahá'í Studies Seminars at the University of Lancaster'.



Bahá'í mobile medical camp which extends medical aid to tribal peoples in India. This team is working among members of the Dang tribe.



Some participants in the Scottish Summer School held at Glengonnak Camp, Abington; 1982.

munities including Puerto Rico conducted essay contests for students. A network of 257 Bahá'í college clubs is in the forefront of teaching work in the United States, and the number of these clubs is increasing around the world.

The Association for Bahá'í Studies, founded by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada during the Five Year Plan, has extended its activities to the United States, Australia and Europe, and continues to develop its ability to foster Bahá'í scholarship and introduce the Faith into university courses. A West African Centre for Bahá'í Studies, formed in 1983 in Nigeria, has similar goals and great potential for attracting Africans to the Faith.

14. Community Development

The development of Local Spiritual Assemblies and the consolidation of local Bahá'í communities have been at the heart of the Seven Year Plan. Great efforts and remarkable progress have been made; the quality of local Bahá'í life is changing perceptibly in all parts of the world. Many endeavours have contributed to the successful achievement of this goal: spiritual enrichment activities; efforts to strengthen Local Assemblies; the dramatic increase in activities for Bahá'í families, women and youth; and the growing frequency and accessibility of summer/winter schools.

Almost all National Spiritual Assemblies, 114 in total, have reported nationally organized community development activities; over 1,650 events attended by more than 37,000 believers have been held.

A. Spiritual Enrichment and Bahá'í Way of Life

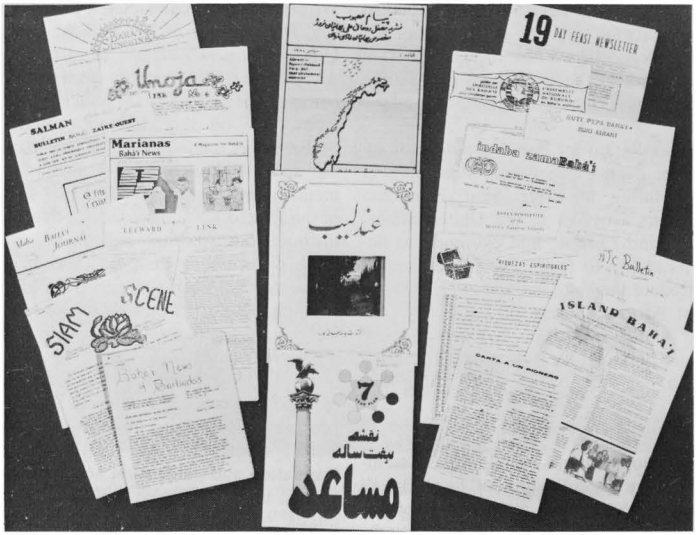
A solid achievement of the Seven Year Plan has been the importance attached to, and efforts directed toward, the spiritual enrichment of the believers. Sixty-six National Spiritual Assemblies adopted vigorous nationwide programmes for this purpose. Most of them featured week-end or several-day institutes on specially designed programmes of study which were held in all parts of the country. The Covenant was the topic of many; others focused on prayer and study of the Writings; Ireland conducted a programme on *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*, and in the United States two months of each year were designated study months, each community being provided with study materials, cassette tapes, etc. on the chosen subject. Many communities trained special teams to conduct the spiritual enrichment programmes. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom conducted twenty-five institutes on spiritual enrichment, and all those participating then led other institutes. Some African countries added an extra day to their District Conventions or Regional Teaching Conferences for a spiritual enrichment programme.

The life-giving words of the Manifestation of God, essential for spiritual growth, are becoming available to more members of the Bahá'í community, not only through the translation and publication achievements described above, but also through a new emphasis on effective distribution of Bahá'í Scripture and encouragement of its use. Several National Spiritual Assemblies have initiated programmes to provide every believer with the *Words of God* compilation; others have printed the short obligatory prayer or other short passages on attractive posters and cards. Several communities are producing booklets containing selections of the Writings for morning and evening devotions. Feast newsletters published by many communities include passages for daily reading. In Luxembourg these are personally delivered to each believer who does not attend the Feast.

The number of inspirational and deepening activities on the local level is also increasing; thirty-two national communities report local deepenings in over fifty per cent of their Local Spiritual Assembly areas. Dawn prayers continue in communities all over the world; in one, the friends from an entire province meet weekly to pray, deepen, and contribute to the Fund. Six National Spiritual Assemblies have reported regular prayer gatherings in more than forty per cent of their communities.

B. Local Spiritual Assembly Development

The phased programme of Local Spiritual Assembly development, detailed in the statistical summary, promises to immeasurably



A selection of newsletters which started publication after Riḍván 1979 in response to the goals set in the Seven Year Plan. National communities represented above are: Bahamas (English), N.E. Zaire (Swahili), W. Zaire (French), Mariana Islands (English), Malta (English), Leeward Islands (English), Thailand (English), Barbados (English), Norway (Persian), Canada (Persian), Pakistan (Urdu), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (English), Burundi (French), Transkei (English/Xhosa), Western Caroline Islands (English), Eastern Caroline Islands (English), Honduras (Spanish), Virgin Islands (English), Peru (Spanish).



Some participants in the Children's Camp, Riversdale, Masterton, New Zealand; 1981.

reinforce the foundations of the Bahá'í community. Local Spiritual Assemblies are also assuming their proper role in directing Bahá'í life; seventy National Spiritual Assemblies made efforts to have their Local Spiritual Assemblies register births, and sixty-three provided guidance for Local Assemblies regarding Bahá'í marriages and funerals. Birth registers, Bahá'í birth and marriage certificates and booklets on the relevant Bahá'í laws have been produced in many countries.

C. Family Life

A deeper understanding of Bahá'í family life has been fostered by activities in many countries. Nineteen National Spiritual Assemblies held institutes or seminars on this subject, and many communities have held deepenings using the Universal House of Justice compilation on Bahá'í Family Life. Family prayers are being encouraged in a number of ways; Puerto Rico is providing a poster for families to have in their homes, and Canada has published a daybook with daily readings.

D. Women's Activities

Inspired by the example of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the fiftieth anniversary of whose passing the friends have commemorated, Bahá'í communities around the world made more intensive efforts to encourage the participation of women in Bahá'í activities and to attract greater numbers of women to the Faith. Seventy-seven National Spiritual Assemblies reported women's activities that included two hundred and sixty-two conferences. There were over one hundred and ten women's conferences in Africa, and in an ambitious programme in Malaysia over seven hundred and fifty women attended women's events. Twenty-four National Spiritual Assemblies report women's teaching activities, including Chad, where one woman made a thirty-nine-day teaching trip, and later walked over 100 kilometres on a twenty-eight-day trip with another woman. During the Plan several communities have begun to produce publications for Bahá'í women.

In some parts of the world Bahá'í women meet locally for prayers, singing, craft work and instruction in nutrition and child care. In some developed countries, morning meetings are being held for teaching women who are at home.

E. Youth

Goals to mobilize youth for participation in expansion and consolidation activities were assigned to many communities; fifty-eight held organized youth teaching projects. In several African countries and in Australia youth teaching projects are organized for every long school holiday, and sometimes the youth have travelled on foot. Zimbabwe has trained over one hundred teams of two youth each for consolidation; Tonga attributes its progress towards large-scale enrolment to youth teaching and consolidation teams. Youth are also holding children's classes, teaching in tutorial schools, conducting deepenings in villages and proclaiming the Faith through Bahá'í sports teams.

Over five hundred and twenty-five youth conferences, schools and camps have been held by one hundred and two National Spiritual Assemblies during the Seven Year Plan thus far.

F. Summer/Winter Schools

A signal achievement of the Plan, and one that has contributed greatly to the consolidation of the community, has been a marked increase in the number of Bahá'í summer and winter schools held each year. Almost twenty countries in Africa and about the same number in the Americas held their first Bahá'í schools during this period. The number of National Spiritual Assemblies holding summer or winter schools more than doubled, rising from around fifty to one hundred and twenty-three. Furthermore, many communities began regional schools and have also increased the number of schools held each year. Thirty-five schools are now held annually in Canada, and thirty-eight in the United States.

A new dynamism suffused many schools as a result of the directive that they should be held at low cost; all segments of the Bahá'í community attended and a wonderful spirit of love and unity was generated as the participants worked together cooking and doing other necessary chores. Many schools in-



Members of the first local all-girl teaching team of Papua New Guinea who perform songs with Bahá'í themes, including their own original compositions.



Iranian Bahá'í choir, southern Ontario, Canada. The choir is named for the early Bahá'í martyr, Ṭáhirih, and has, among its aims, the revival of early songs with Bahá'í themes and the preservation of classical Persian music presently forbidden in Írán.

cluded daily teaching among the local residents attracted by the example of the school.

Over 1,000 school sessions have been held world-wide, attended by over 95,000 believers and enquirers. Their combined length was 4,391 days.

G. Newsletters and Periodicals

The circulation of local, regional, national and international news is an important factor in binding together the Bahá'í community as well as in increasing the believers' understanding of the scope and importance of the Faith they have embraced. While most national communities and many local ones produce such newsletters, albeit sometimes sporadically, specific goals calling for prompt and regular dissemination of newsletters were assigned to Brazil, Ecuador, Guyana, India (where emphasis was placed on newsletters in the regional languages of the country) and Tonga; specific goals concerning magazines were also assigned to Germany and jointly to Australia and New Zealand.

The number and variety of newsletters currently produced by the Bahá'í world is impressive. During the last year, current issues of 277 different periodicals and magazines in forty-two languages reached the World Centre Library; there is no question that many others are produced, especially on local, district and regional levels, which do not reach the World Centre. Included are national, regional and local newletters; newsletters and magazines especially for children, for parents, for youth, for women, for teachers of Bahá'í children's classes; for native believers; for pioneers abroad; for Auxiliary Board members; for local treasurers or national treasurer's representatives; for public affairs and public information representatives; for Persian believers in Western countries; for believers active in Bahá'í radio stations. Other newsletters are produced by National Teaching Committees, Committees for Spiritual Enrichment, Family Life Committees, Bahá'í Education Committees and university clubs. Many National Assemblies send regular newsletters to Local Spiritual Assemblies for their Nineteen Day Feasts. The National Assembly of Southwest Africa/Namibia produces regular newsletters in five languages; eleven or more regional newsletters appear in local languages in India; Malaysia produces a national newsletter in four languages and regional newsletters in three; Switzerland currently produces eight different periodicals in three different languages; dozens of other countries produce periodicals in two or more languages, some intended for world-wide circulation. Internationally-circulated publications also include *Glory* magazine for youth, published in India; *Child's Way*, published in English in the United States; and *Varqá*, a magazine for children published in India in English, Persian and Hindi and now developing editions also in five regional languages of India as well as French, German, Spanish and Portuguese.

Literary and scholarly publications intended for both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í audiences include *The Green Door*, privately produced in Belgium; *Opinioni Bahá'í*, produced in Italy; *La Pensée Bahá'í*, produced in Switzerland; *World Order*, produced in the United States; and various publications of the Association for Bahá'í Studies, headquartered in Canada.

15. Expansion of National Communities

A. Large-Scale Enrolments

Thirty-four National Spiritual Assemblies have reported teaching projects designed to attract large numbers to the Faith, and the necessity of achieving entry by troops and preparing for mass enrolment is at the forefront of the concerns and consultations of many communities. The most successful projects seem to be characterized by a high degree of motivation on the part of local participants; there has been a surge in the growth of the Faith in West Africa as friends returned from the Lagos Conference inspired to teach. Constant evaluation and attempts to improve the effectiveness of methods used are other hallmarks of highly successful projects, as is the presence of friends who are able to devote all their time to the project. One such example is the Yercaud Project in Tamil Nadu, India, dedicated to the memory of Mr. Amoz Gibson. All sixty-eight villages in the Yercaud tribal district have been opened, and in six everyone has become a Bahá'í. More than one hundred and fifty entire families have accepted the Faith, and the project



A selection of newsletters for youth now being published in various languages. Seen above are publications of eighteen national communities, representing all five continents.



Some participants in the National Youth Conference, Hong Kong; December 1982.

participants are training all the Local Spiritual Assemblies to hold local activities from the time they are elected. Asked to send a representative to sit on the platform at an important community meeting, the Bahá'ís were thanked for what they were doing in Yercaud and told, 'Till now religions came and trained the people to expect something, but the Bahá'ís are creating self-confidence in the people's minds.'

While growth in the number of believers was moderate in most of the world, some countries are clearly moving towards the stage of entry by troops. During the first half of the Seven Year Plan the Bahá'í populations of Honduras and Dominica have quadrupled, eleven communities have more than doubled their Bahá'í population and an additional ten have increased their Bahá'í population by more than fifty per cent.

More than a one hundred per cent growth has been achieved in Burundi, Chad, Cyprus, Dominica, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, Ivory Coast and Mali, St. Lucia, Upper Volta and Vanuatu, and more than a fifty per cent growth in Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Guyana, Italy, Malawi, St. Vincent and Grenada, Suriname and French Guiana, Transkei and Zimbabwe.

B. Growth in Numbers of Local Spiritual Assemblies

The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies around the world has risen steadily, led by Asia, where there was an eighteen per cent increase in the number of Local Assemblies, and Africa, where there was a thirteen per cent increase. During the first half of the Seven Year Plan, the total number of Local Spiritual Assemblies rose by fourteen per cent to 27,329. The growth of Local Spiritual Assemblies and localities during the past thirty years is shown in the graph on page 82.

C. Bahá'ís in the General Population

The following percentages have been calculated using the numbers most recently reported and the most recent population statistics available to the Statistics Department. Where no report of the number of believers was sent, the last available figure was used. Ten National Spiritual Assemblies or areas, as listed below, have a Bahá'í population exceeding one per cent of the general population corresponding to that National Spiritual Assembly or area.

Kiribati	6.97%
Tonga	3.85%
Tuvalu	2.93%
Belize	2.25%
Marshall Islands	2.00%
Samoa	1.43%
St. Lucia & Dominica	1.40%
Solomon Islands	1.15%
Swaziland	1.13%
Sikkim	1.12%

There are islands whose population is one hundred per cent Bahá'í in Papua New Guinea, Korea, Bangladesh and in Lake Ukerere in Tanzania.

D. Individual Teaching

The recognition by each believer of his personal obligation to advance the interests of the Faith is an objective of the Seven Year Plan towards which the Bahá'í world community is moving with determination. One sign of this is the adoption of personal teaching goals by increasing numbers of believers; encouragement of this action has been offered by Bahá'í institutions on all continents. At least twenty-seven National Spiritual Assemblies in Africa and nine in the Americas have published sample goals, distributed personal goal forms or held special conferences on this subject.

E. Extension Teaching Goals

The great increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies adopting and pursuing extension teaching goals is another indication of the maturing awareness among believers of their responsibility for the promulgation of the Faith. At this time six National Spiritual Assemblies report adoption of extension teaching goals by one hundred per cent of their Local Spiritual Assemblies.

F. Teaching Conferences

Regional and national teaching conferences have been important not only in encouraging and inspiring the friends, but also in organiz-



Some participants in the Bahá'í Winter School, Saenz Peña, Chaco, Argentina.



Some participants in the Bahá'í Summer School, Finland; 1982. The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Featherstone are seen in the fourth row, left.

ing teaching campaigns and informing the believers of the possible avenues of service available to them. One hundred and sixteen National Spiritual Assemblies held over 1,400 teaching conferences, attended by over 78,000 believers. This represents an eighty-three per cent increase in the frequency of these meetings, which were held at the rate of two hundred and twenty per year during the Five Year Plan.

G. Self-supported Homefront Pioneers and Travelling Teachers

Self-supported homefront pioneering is one form of service that is increasingly suggested to the believers. Homefront pioneers have been essential in winning every Plan since the first ones the Guardian gave to North America and Europe, and on those continents homefront pioneers continue to serve valiantly in the most remote and difficult areas. In some parts of the world, however, self-supported homefront pioneering has been stressed for the first time during the Seven Year Plan. Goals in this area have been given to sixty-one National Spiritual Assemblies. Thus far reports have been received of at least forty-seven homefront pioneers in seventeen countries in Africa, of at least thirty-four in fourteen countries in Central and South America, of many in four countries in Asia and of at least eight in three countries in Australasia. The number of these heroic servants of Bahá'u'lláh is expected to rise steadily, as many National Spiritual Assemblies are actively encouraging self-supported homefront pioneering.

Those among the younger Bahá'í communities which have taken upon themselves the burden of the development of the Faith in their countries and function without outside help exhibit a special exuberance and confidence. In Tonga such teams continually support seventy-eight communities. Peru, where sixty-two per cent of village Local Spiritual Assemblies have extension teaching goals, and Zambia, where effective consolidation is carried on without the help of pioneers, also offer examples of the successes which other communities can anticipate as they move towards the goal of self-sufficiency. Many communities have found that their efforts to attract new believers become much more successful when indigenous Bahá'ís are in the forefront of the teaching work.

H. Enrolment of Minority Groups

While the goal to diversify the community was universal, and the goal to extend and consolidate the teaching work among minority and tribal peoples widely assigned during both phases of the current Plan, only a few such groups were specifically mentioned by name. The number of tribal and ethnic peoples now represented in the Faith has reached more than 2,100; however, efforts toward rectification of World Centre records on this subject do not yet permit identification of the number first enrolled during the Seven Year Plan.

Special projects for teaching ethnic minorities have been among the most exciting developments in the Plan. In the Americas the 'Trail of Light' project (known as 'Camino del Sol' in the Spanish-speaking countries) was the most spectacular of many projects aimed at reaching indigenous believers. The international team of American Indian and Eskimo believers from Alaska, Canada and the United States divided into two units which visited Belize, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Ecuador before meeting and performing at the Quito and Montreal conferences. Intended as a means of strengthening the ties between the indigenous believers of both American continents, the teams succeeded brilliantly, galvanizing native believers in many places, some of whom had never known of the existence of Indian Bahá'ís outside their own small communities. Unexpectedly, the teams also proved extremely popular with non-Bahá'í audiences as well, achieving unprecedented levels of proclamation, publicity and popular acclaim and leaving a new spirit behind them wherever they went.

Also in the Americas, Brazil has had particular success in reaching Indian believers of new tribes; the Jaguar Project, intended to reach all the tribes of Mexico with the healing Message of Bahá'u'lláh, has continued in modified form; and smaller-scale projects continue in other countries with large indigenous populations. In North America the Indigenous Councils of native believers originally



Some Bahá'ís of the Tapi tribe, Mindoro, Philippines.



Some Chinese Bahá'ís of Calcutta, India, seen with Counsellor Shirin Boman (centre back).

held in Alaska have become continental in scope uniting believers from Canada, the United States, and Central and South America as well. Special projects in the United States have been designed to reach people of Spanish-speaking background in that country, and in both Canada and the United States special efforts have been made among refugees from South-east Asia. Among these unfortunate people have been found a number of believers from the communities of Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam, and efforts have been made to incorporate them into local Bahá'í community life. Canada has also reported particular teaching success among the Sikh community there, and special efforts have been made to reach the Doukhobors.

Special projects in Asia have included not only the Amoz Gibson project in the Yercaud tribal district of India but similar projects in the Wynad tribal district in Kerala State, and in South Bihar and Orissa; and consolidation projects in the tribal districts of Dang and Jhabua. Another special project in India, carried out with the assistance of friends from Malaysia, has been aimed at reaching the Chinese population of Calcutta, and has resulted in the enrolment of the first Chinese believer in the history of the Indian Bahá'í community. Special projects for reaching the Chinese communities in their countries have also been carried out in Malaysia and other countries.

In Australasia, Papua New Guinea has, as always, had particular success in enrolling native believers, despite the formidable teaching and consolidation problems resulting from the rugged terrain and undeveloped nature of so much of the interior of the country. In Australia long-standing efforts to reach the Aborigines with the Faith have resulted in four Local Spiritual Assemblies in Aboriginal areas, and several others whose majority of members are Aboriginal believers. Special teaching projects have also been directed to the Torres Strait Islands. In New Zealand efforts continue to be made to reach the Maori, and more than forty believers, mostly of Maori background, attended a special conference on translation of the Writings into the Maori language. In Fiji special efforts are now being directed toward the large percentage of the population which comes from Hindu background.

In all European countries, teaching continues among various minorities, which differ from country to country. Long-standing efforts to reach the Romany and Same peoples continue, and the number of believers from these backgrounds increases slowly, despite the difficulties in teaching and consolidation created by their nomadic way of life. Denmark has also had particular success recently in teaching Greenlanders resident in both Greenland and Denmark. In addition to these native peoples, teaching efforts also continue among guest-workers, foreign students, refugees and people from overseas territories such as the Dutch Antilles, Suriname and South Molucca. Regular conferences are also held in Germany for believers there from Turkish background, and these may soon be expanded to include Turkish believers from neighbouring countries as well.

Also highly gratifying to the House of Justice is the number of reports reaching the World Centre which reflect the increasing tempo of participation by indigenous and minority believers in the initiatives of teaching, administration, community development, and deepening. An increasing number of native believers from remote parts of the world are also now finding it possible to make the pilgrimage to the Holy Places at the World Centre, with all the resulting spiritual benefits both to themselves and to the communities to which they return.

16. Inter-Assembly Collaboration

A. Assistance and Collaboration

Through inter-Assembly collaboration many projects were carried through which otherwise would not have been possible. Goals were assigned for the following types of assistance:

—Purchase of mobile and audio-visual institutes, given to nine countries in Africa;
—Purchase and/or construction of nine national and thirty district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, thirty-three in Africa, three in the Caribbean, three in Australasia;
—Purchase of six Temple sites, five in Africa, one in Australasia;
—Assistance by supplying literature;
—Assistance by supplying pioneers and/or deputizing pioneers;

—Assistance by providing self-supported travelling teachers;
—Assistance by supporting native travelling teachers;
—Assistance by combined teaching on borders between two countries:
Africa 20 (39 areas)
Americas 7
Australasia/New Guinea
Europe 10 (24 border areas)
—Assistance by exchange of travelling teachers:
Europe 28 areas (sets of National Assemblies);
—Inter-National Spiritual Assembly teaching projects, one in the Americas, two in Australasia, five in Europe.

The properties and literature sections of this report describe the collaboration achievements in those areas. In a few instances, due to local circumstances, only token assistance was possible; but in most cases the collaboration extended was substantial and effective.

International collaboration in the form of joint teaching projects and exchanges of travelling teachers has given a special stimulus to the growth of the Faith in many countries. Some projects, such as several involving Malaysia, are designed to share the teaching experiences and techniques developed by one community. Often these projects emphasize the wonderful diversity of the Bahá'í community, as in the fruitful international cooperation in teaching native Americans, and in the projects which have brought speakers of one language, for example Turkish, to teach minorities speaking the same language in another country. Many of the projects in Europe have focused the energies of several communities on difficult goals. International projects are exciting and enriching for those who take part, especially as many of the participants are Bahá'ís who are unable to teach the Faith in their own countries. In one such country the Bahá'ís contribute towards the expenses of the teaching teams sent to neighbouring countries each year. Thus far during the Seven Year Plan twenty National Spiritual Assemblies have collaborated on international teaching efforts other than those in border areas.

The greater part of international collaboration has been in border teaching projects, which have had excellent results in the enrolment of new ethnic groups, expansion in remote areas and in increasing unity and understanding among Bahá'ís in neighbouring countries. Thirty-seven National Spiritual Assemblies have taken part in border teaching projects.

B. Pioneers

There have been three different pioneer calls during the Seven Year Plan to date. The first phase called for 419 pioneers world-wide; the second phase called for 286, some of which were restatements of the original 419 and others of which were new calls. The third call was made in November 1981, and called for 249 pioneers to settle at specific goals. Again, some of the 249 were new calls and others were restatements of the original calls.

As of Riḍván 140, 3,298 pioneers have settled at their posts, of whom 547 are filling specific goals.

A summary of the goals and numbers of pioneers settled by continent is as follows:

In Africa a total of 761 pioneers were settled at their posts at Riḍván 140; 307 during the first phase, 140 during the second and 314 during the revised 11/81 phase, of whom 143 are filling specific goals.

In the Americas a total of 997 pioneers have settled as of Riḍván 140; 500 during the first phase, 160 during the second and 337 during the revised phase, of whom 177 are filling specific goals.

In Asia a total of 590 pioneers have settled as of Riḍván 140: 250 during the first phase, 93 during the second and 247 during the revised phase, of whom 64 are filling specific goals.

In Australasia a total of 257 pioneers have settled as of Riḍván 140; 61 during the first phase, 39 during the second and 157 during the revised phase, of whom 86 are filling specific goals.

In Europe a total of 693 pioneers have settled as of Riḍván 140; 345 during the first phase, 98 during the second and 250 during the revised phase, of whom 77 are filling specific goals.

C. International Travelling Teachers

During the Seven Year Plan reports of over

4,100 travelling teachers, world-wide, have been received, of whom 754 travelled in Africa, 1,392 in the Americas, 508 in Asia, 382 in Australasia and 1,131 in Europe.



Bahá'ís gathered at the Local Bahá'í Centre for the Nineteen-Day Feast, Nagumeya, Ciskei; 1982.



Some participants in the Pioneer Training Institute held at Sylvan Lake, Alberta, Canada; 1981.

3. EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH
Riḍván 1979–1983

INFORMATION STATISTICAL AND COMPARATIVE

	Riḍván 1979	*Riḍván 1983*
Independent countries where the Bahá'í Faith is established[1]	158	164
Dependent territories or overseas departments	51	45
National Spiritual Assemblies	130	135
Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies	106	104
National Haẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity)	129	145
National Endowments	156	146
Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár)	5	5
Sites for future Bahá'í Temples	118	119
Bahá'í Publishing Trusts	23	22
Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated	640	727
Indigenous tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá'í Faith	1,825	2,122
Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days	64	68
Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage	40	48
Localities where Bahá'ís reside	103,323	115,842
Isolated centres or groups	77,812	88,513
Local Spiritual Assemblies	25,511	27,329
Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies	2,099	2,764

A. AFRICA

	Riḍván 1979	*Riḍván 1983*
Independent countries where the Bahá'í Faith is established	50	51
Dependent territories or overseas departments	6	5
National Spiritual Assemblies	37	37
Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies	31	30
National Haẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity)	35	40
National Endowments	40	40
Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár)	1	1
Sites for future Bahá'í Temples	32	36
Bahá'í Publishing Trusts	1	1
Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated	212	239

[1] In previous volumes of *The Bahá'í World* this, and the succeeding entry throughout these tables, were grouped under the heading 'Countries, significant territories and islands where the Bahá'í Faith is established'. To provide greater accuracy the definition of this term has been revised to approximate current geographical and political divisions of the world, resulting in a reduced number now labelled 'Dependent territories or overseas departments'. Other factors, too complex to detail, account for the reductions in certain other figures.

Africa (cont.)	*Riḍván 1979*	*Riḍván 1983*
Indigenous tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá'í Faith	1,120	1,250
Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days	11	12
Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage	7	8
Localities where Bahá'ís reside	26,111	28,570
Isolated centres or groups	20,735	23,444
Local Spiritual Assemblies	5,376	5,126
Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies	78	795

B. THE AMERICAS

	Riḍván 1979	*Riḍván 1983*
Independent countries where the Bahá'í Faith is established	31	34
Dependent territories or overseas departments	20	17
National Spiritual Assemblies	33	38
Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies	30	31
National Haẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity)	34	47
National Endowments	31	40
Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár)	2	2
Sites for future Bahá'í Temples	30	31
Bahá'í Publishing Trusts	3	3
Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated	123	167
Indigenous tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá'í Faith	275	325
Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days	23	22
Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage	10	13
Localities where Bahá'ís reside	22,577	24,929
Isolated centres or groups	16,825	19,236
Local Spiritual Assemblies	5,752	5,693
Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies	906	825

C. ASIA

	Riḍván 1979	*Riḍván 1983*
Independent countries where the Bahá'í Faith is established	36	36
Dependent territories or overseas departments	5	4
National Spiritual Assemblies	27	26
Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies	15	15
National Haẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity)	26	24
National Endowments	53	29
Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár)	–	–
Sites for future Bahá'í Temples	26	22
Bahá'í Publishing Trusts	9	8
Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated	171	165
Indigenous tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá'í Faith	300	275

Asia (cont.)	*Riḍván 1979*	*Riḍván 1983*
Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days	10	13
Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage	9	8
Localities where Bahá'ís reside	49,597	57,155
Isolated centres or groups	36,511	41,818
Local Spiritual Assemblies	13,086	15,337
Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies	712	681

D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

	Riḍván 1979	*Riḍván 1983*
Independent countries where the Bahá'í Faith is established	9	11
Dependent territories or overseas departments	16	15
National Spiritual Assemblies	14	15
Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies	14	12
National Haẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity)	15	15
National Endowments	13	15
Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár)	1	1
Sites for future Bahá'í Temples	12	12
Bahá'í Publishing Trusts	2	2
Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated	77	83
Indigenous tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá'í Faith	108	250
Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days	10	9
Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage	10	11
Localities where Bahá'ís reside	2,573	2,539
Isolated centres or groups	1,913	1,954
Local Spiritual Assemblies	660	585
Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies	151	159

E. EUROPE

	Riḍván 1979	*Riḍván 1983*
Independent countries where the Bahá'í Faith is established	32	32
Dependent territories or overseas departments	4	4
National Spiritual Assemblies	19	19
Incorporated National Spiritual Assemblies	16	16
National Haẓíratu'l-Quds (headquarters of national Bahá'í administrative activity)	19	19
National Endowments	19	22
Bahá'í Temples (Mashriqu'l-Adhkár)	1	1
Sites for future Bahá'í Temples	18	18
Bahá'í Publishing Trusts	8	8
Languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated	57	73
Indigenous tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá'í Faith	22	22
Countries that recognize Bahá'í Holy Days	10	12

Europe (cont.)	*Riḍván 1979*	*Riḍván 1983*
Countries that recognize Bahá'í marriage	4	8
Localities where Bahá'ís reside	2,465	2,649
Isolated centres or groups	1,828	2,061
Local Spiritual Assemblies	637	588
Incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies	252	304



French Minister of State for the Interior, Gaston Defferre, and Mme. Defferre, are formally welcomed by the Secretary General of the Bahá'í International Community on behalf of the Universal House of Justice on their visit to the Seat of the House of Justice in February 1983. The visit was the first by a government official of cabinet rank following occupation of the Seat. Pictured, left to right: Mr. Mohsen Enayat, World Centre Legal Officer; M. Defferre; Mr. Donald Barrett, Secretary General of the Bahá'í International Community; His Worship Arieh Gurel, Mayor of Haifa; and Mme. Defferre, who is better known as Edmonde Charleroux, one of Europe's leading authors.

III

1. FIVE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
A PICTORIAL REPORT

DUBLIN—QUITO—LAGOS—CANBERRA—MONTREAL
1982

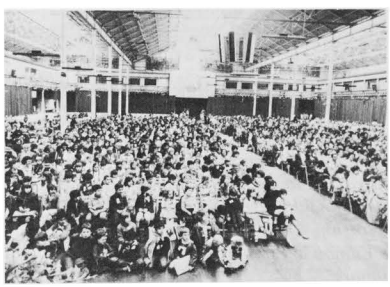
THE Universal House of Justice called for five international conferences to be held to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf and the mid-point of the Seven Year Plan (1979–1986). Originally the Asian/Australasian Conference was scheduled for Manila, but because of local conditions it could not be held there. It was, therefore, moved to Canberra.





The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, official representative of the Universal House of Justice, opened the Conference held in Dublin from 25 to 27 June 1982 and challenged the friends to find means of awakening Europe to its spiritual purpose. 'This must now be your constant preoccupation, the subject of your deliberations, the purpose of your lives . . .'





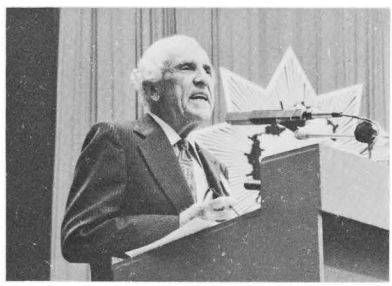
Some 1,900 Bahá'ís gathered in the premises of the prestigious Royal Dublin Society. The late Hand of the Cause George Townshend's father was a member of this Society and rendered it 'distinguished services'. In attendance at the reception were a number of prominent officials and leaders of thought.



The Dawn-breakers of Austria sang the special Conference song composed in honour of Bahíyyih Khánum by two Irish Bahá'ís, Caroline and Paul Hanrahan.



Mrs. Marion Hofman addressed the Conference on the life of the Greatest Holy Leaf. The other principal speakers were Counsellors Agnes Ghaznavi, Betty Reed and Adib Taherzadeh.



The Hand of the Cause John Robarts beautifully delineated the spiritual dimension of the Local Spiritual Assembly, pointing out that it is a divine institution.



The musical events were particularly rich and varied. The duo pictured to the left are from 'Iráq.



The Hands of the Cause Collis Featherstone and John Robarts occupy front-row seats during one of the sessions. Counsellor Dorothy Ferraby and Mrs. Lottie Tobias are seated behind Mr. Robarts.



Persian Bahá'í ladies display their colourful costumes. Bahá'ís from 60 countries were represented at the gathering.



Bahá'í youth are seen consulting during one of their committee meetings.



More than 250 Bahá'í children attended. Here a group of them is seen entertaining at one of the Conference sessions. The friends at the Conference sent flowers to be placed on the graves of Shoghi Effendi and George Townshend.







A reported 1,450 Bahá'ís from 43 countries attended the Quito Conference held from 6 to 8 August 1982. Thirteen Counsellors and representatives from 21 Indian tribes were present when the Conference opened.

Dr. Patricio Romero B., the Prefect of Pichincha, spoke as the Conference was inaugurated. He praised the work and ideals of the Bahá'ís and welcomed them to Ecuador.





The Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney read, in both Spanish and English, the message of the Universal House of Justice. His own comments were translated into Spanish by Counsellor Burafato. Srta. María Perugachi translated from Spanish to Quechua and also spoke on the role of women.



Camino del Sol *(Trail of Light), consisting of two teams of North American believers of Eskimo and Indian origin from Alaska, Canada and the United States entertained the Conference with their music and traditional dances.*



Members of Camino del Sol *visited with local native believers. Prior to the Conference they had travelled to ten countries of Central and South America for two months proclaiming the message and meeting indigenous and non-indigenous believers.*



A handsome woven poncho was presented to Mr. Haney on behalf of the Bahá'ís of Bolivia. Later, the Conference participants visited the grave of the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who is buried near Quito and whose memory was invoked by the House of Justice in its message to the Conference.



Sr. Rufino Gualivisi, an outstanding teacher and the first believer of Ecuador to be appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board, arose spontaneously and addressed the Conference, comparing its spirit of unity to a seed which must be planted throughout the world for the good of all mankind.



A group of musicians from Bolivia is seen entertaining. There were also groups from Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Puerto Rico who presented songs, dances and sketches.



Dancers from Colombia performed the 'Cumbé' *and a group from Ecuador's Esmeraldas Province executed a graceful* 'Costeño' *dance. Bolivians in their colourful dress, Peruvians, Mapuches of Chile, all contributed to the excitement of the panorama of the Bahá'ís of the Americas. The public was invited to attend the festive 'Folklore Night'.*

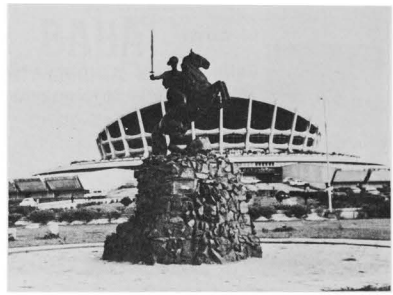


A musical group from Chile. The Conference had a positive effect on Ecuadorian authorities, provided an opportunity for television appearances by the guests and enabled the staffs of Bahá'í radio stations to share their experiences with CIRBAL (Centro para Intercambio Radiofónico Bahá'í de América Latina).



Members of the Continental Board of Counsellors for the Americas who attended the Conference are seen with the Hand of the Cause Paul Haney. The Counsellors later held a meeting of their Board at Guayaquil. A brotherly embrace of North and South was seen to be the distinguishing feature of this Conference.



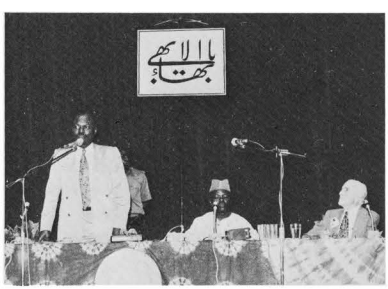




Thursday, 19 August was registration day for the Lagos Conference which was held from 19 to 22 August 1982. Some 1,110 Bahá'ís from 46 countries, representing 90 ethnic groups, were present for the event.

Those attending posed for the Conference photograph in front of the attractive National Arts Theatre where the Conference sessions were held.





The Secretary of the State Government, M. Bashoron, read the address of the Governor of Lagos State. He welcomed the Bahá'ís and expressed admiration for the principles of the Faith such as truthfulness, faithfulness and loyalty. Nigerian Television filmed the opening of the Conference.



The Hand of the Cause John Robarts, who represented the Universal House of Justice, read its message and commented on the growth of the Faith in Africa. He later described the Conference as 'magnificent' and praised its 'radiant spirit.' A committee of five, including Ibo, Yoruba, Iranian and American members, oversaw the Conference arrangements.



Counsellor Isobel Sabri spoke on the spiritual destiny of Africa, pointing out that the Africans were dearly loved by both the Master and the beloved Guardian. Eleven Counsellors from Africa took the opportunity of meeting the 54 Auxiliary Board members who attended from 23 countries.



Mrs. Sabri's stirring address was followed by a call for pioneers by the Hand of the Cause John Robarts who had been, himself, a pioneer to Africa. Mr. and Mrs. Robarts were named by Shoghi Effendi Knights of Bahá'u'lláh for Bechuanaland (now Botswana).



Many believers from African villages were in attendance.

The villagers brought their songs with them, to the delight of all. Mrs. Joanie Lincoln sang and taught to the audience a moving song she composed for the occasion, 'La Plus Sainte Feuille'*—(the Greatest Holy Leaf).*

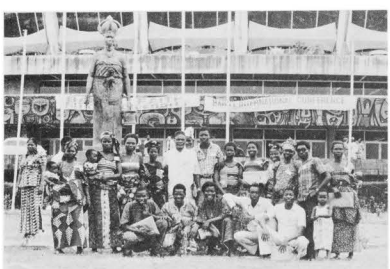




Among the extra-curricular activities were fireside meetings such as the one pictured here, held in the exhibition hall. An important segment of the Conference was devoted to discussion of the role of women, to which impressive contributions were made by African believers.

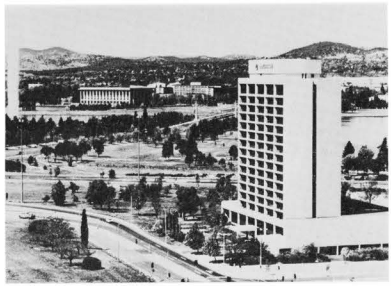
Seen on the right is another group of believers from the villages. When the relatives of martyrs were invited to the dais there was an African among them who represented his Iranian wife's recently-martyred father. The audience rose to its feet and spontaneously sang a prayer dedicated to the martyrs.





The happiness of the Conference participants is reflected in their radiant faces. 'A great unity characterized the Conference,' an observer reported. 'It is impossible to describe in words.'



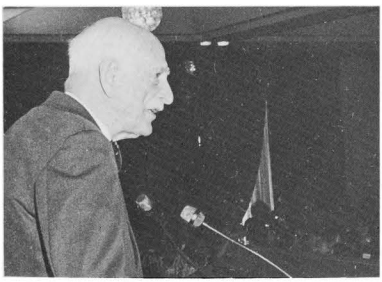




Australian Aboriginal believers pose in front of the Lakeside Hotel where the Canberra Conference was held from 2 to 5 September 1982.

Believers from 45 countries—2,400 in all—registered for the Conference, twice as many as originally expected. On opening morning the believers sent flowers to the resting-places of the Greatest Holy Leaf and the Hands of the Cause John and Clara Dunn and Agnes Alexander.





The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery represented the Universal House of Justice and read its message to the Conference. Afterwards, Dr. Giachery cabled the House of Justice that this was the finest Conference he had ever attended, one that could result in 'durable achievements all regions between poles within brief time'.

It was a happy Conference that was made even more joyful by the attendance of a large delegation of believers from Japan who came to participate in the discussion of the 'Spiritual Axis' mentioned in the Guardian's last message to Australia.





Since the Conference could not be held in Manila, the Philippine Bahá'ís sent a scroll containing the signatures of over 4,000 Philippine believers.

Unprecedented publicity was given the Conference by the media. One portion of the Conference that was televised and screened nation-wide three times was the roll call of the nations . . .





. . . illustrating the great diversity of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh.



Music was supplied by the choir conducted by Russ Garcia.



A press interview was held with Counsellors Peter Khan, Richard Benson and Tinai Hancock. A total of fifteen Counsellors were in attendance including Anneliese Bopp of the International Teaching Centre who spoke on the life and service of the Greatest Holy Leaf.



A large delegation from New Zealand was present.



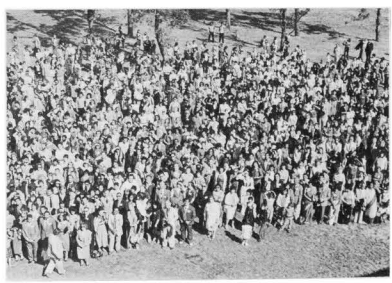
Many attended from the Pacific Islands.



The Hands of the Cause Collis Featherstone and Ugo Giachery, along with Counsellors Owen Battrick and Anneliese Bopp, enjoy one of the sessions.



A telephone link was established between the Canberra Conference and the one which was held concurrently in Montreal. Mr. Featherstone is seen speaking on the Canberra end of the line.

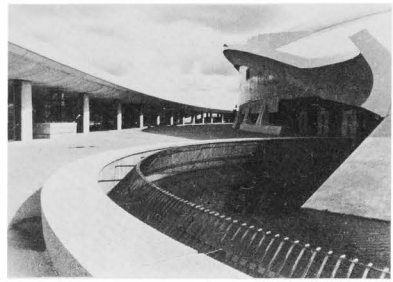


The official Conference photograph.



After the close of the Conference in Canberra the friends went to Sydney to attend a programme of worship in the Mother Temple of the Antipodes which was filmed by two television stations with dignity and respect. Summing up the Canberra Conference, a participant cabled that the friends were inspired by the vision of the Faith 'radiating outwards spiritual axis' and felt challenged as never before to carry out this task.

BAHÁ'Í
CONFERENCE INTERNATIONALE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
Montréal





The Montreal Conference was also held from 2 to 5 September 1982. Believers from 101 countries and all five continents were in attendance. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the official representative of the Universal House of Justice, was piped into the auditorium by a bagpiper clad in the Sutherland tartan. She read the message of the House of Justice to . . .

. . . over 9,000 Bahá'ís who gathered in Montreal's Velodrome. Acoustics in the huge hall presented a problem, but cassette recordings of the talks were made available. Simultaneous translation was provided in English, French, Persian and Spanish.





The distinguished guests included four other Hands of the Cause: Gen. Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Mr. Dhikru'lláh Khádem, Mr. John Robarts and Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá. A sky-banner reading 'Bienvenue aux Bahá'ís du monde', *flown by Daoud Tedjarati, welcomed the believers to the Conference site.*



A poignant part of the programme was the recital of names of those Bahá'ís in Írán who have been martyred. Members of the families of the martyrs were asked to stand.



Dr. Bahíyyih Nakhjavání spoke on the significance of the life and services of Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf, to whose memory the series of Conferences was dedicated.



An unforgettable moment occurred on the afternoon of Sunday, 5 September, when 1,200 children came from their own Conference across the Plaza to the Velodrome where they performed their Conference theme song, 'We are Bahá'ís'.



The children's chorus was under the direction of Jack Lenz, a Canadian composer and musician. Mr. Lenz trained and directed a Bahá'í choir and rehearsed and conducted a 25-piece orchestra for the Saturday evening concert.



Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥiyyih Khánum gave a special talk to the children.



A huge area was set aside for the display and sale of Bahá'í literature, teaching aids and other special materials. This was the largest display ever mounted with 40 suppliers participating and close to 200,000 items on view.

The evening sessions were enriched by contributions from Bahá'ís in the performing arts, including singer Nancy Ward Johnson, pictured here. Other artists included Nancy Ackerman, Gordie Munro, Suzanne Hebert, the Do'a Group, Kiu Haghighi, Lucie Dubé and Jacques Prouls, Doug Cameron and Bruce Gibson, Jeff White, Marg Atkinson Raynor, Steve Porter and Susan Aldridge.





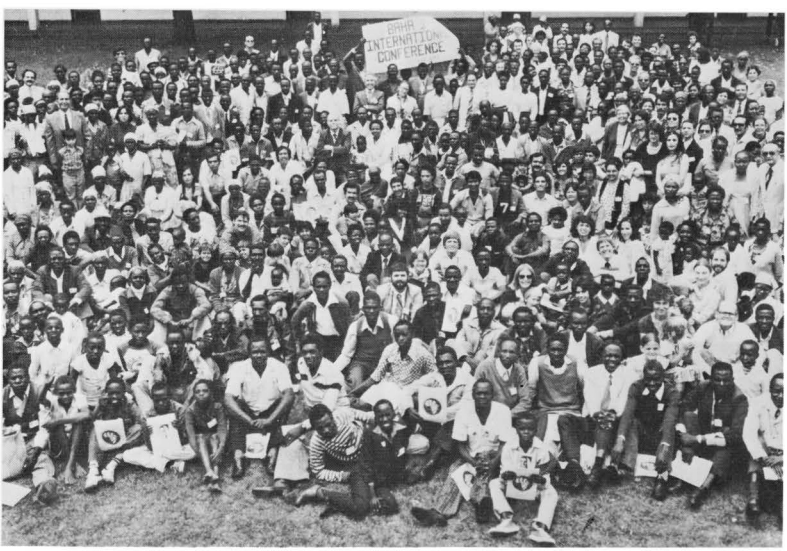
The ballet group 'Shayda' performed a ballet inspired by the recent martyrdoms in Írán and a dramatic presentation was made by a team of actors, under the direction of Betty Martin, of excerpts from the work of the Canadian poet, Roger White.



The members of the 'Trail of Light' team who had completed a highly successful tour of various Latin countries before attending the Quito Conference appeared in Montreal and were greeted by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.



The Hand of the Cause John Robarts raised the call for pioneers. More than 300 responded and subsequently met with representatives of pioneering committees. The total attendance at all five Conferences was 16,000. The spirit generated by these vast gatherings stimulated and galvanized to greater action thousands more in a number of satellite Conferences held throughout the world.



Some participants in the satellite conference held in Nairobi, Kenya; 15–17 October 1982. Numerous conferences of a similar nature, dedicated to the memory of the Greatest Holy Leaf, were held throughout the world.



A representative sampling from Canadian newspapers of references to the International Bahá'í Conference held in Montreal from 1 to 5 September 1982. Four major Montreal newspapers alone printed sixteen articles. In addition, two national television networks carried reports and there were many references on radio.

2. MESSAGES OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE TO THE FIVE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

A. TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN DUBLIN REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

25–27 June 1982

To the Friends gathered at the International Conference in Dublin

Dearly-loved Friends,

The world is in travail and its agitation waxeth day by day. Such shall be its plight that to disclose it now would not be meet and seemly. The shattering blows dealt to the old, divisive system of the planet and the constantly accelerating decline in civilized life since that dire warning was uttered by Bahá'u'lláh a hundred years ago, have brought mankind to its present appalling condition. Consideration of how the Bahá'ís of Europe, confronted by this situation, can meet their responsibilities, spiritually and actively, is the main purpose of this Conference.

The holding of this Conference in Dublin calls to mind the historic and heroic services of Ireland in spreading the divine religion throughout pagan Europe. Europe's response was to develop, through many vicissitudes, the most widespread and effective civilization known. That civilization, together with all other systems in the world, is now being rolled up, and Europe's plight in proportion to her former pre-eminence, is desperate indeed. By the same token her opportunity is correspondingly great. The challenges to her resilience, to her deep-seated spiritual vitality, nourished over the centuries by the Teachings of Christ —now, alas, neglected and even contemned— can and must call forth a more magnificent response than was ever made by the divided and contending peoples of olden times. Yours is the task to arouse that response. The power of Bahá'u'lláh is with you and this Day, as attested by the Báb, *is immensely exalted . . . above the days of the Apostles of old.*

In this great Day Europe is blessed as never before in its history, for the Manifestation of God, the Lord of Hosts, spent five years of His exiles within its borders, sending forth from His *remote prison* the first of those challenging, world-shaking addresses to the kings and rulers, six of whom were European potentates. There is no authenticated record of a Manifestation of God ever before setting foot in Europe.

You are engaged on a Seven Year Plan and have made devoted and sacrificial efforts to attain its objectives. But its ultimate purpose, as that of all other plans, namely the attracting of the masses of mankind to the all-embracing shelter of the Cause of God, still evades us. Particularly in Europe. We have not, as yet, found the secret of setting aglow the hearts of great numbers of Europeans with the divine fire. This must now be your constant preoccupation, the subject of your deliberations at this Conference, the purpose of your lives, to which you will attain *only if you arise to trample beneath your feet every earthly desire . . .* We call upon every Bahá'í in Europe to ponder this vital matter in his inmost soul, to consider what each may do to attract greater power to his efforts, to radiate more brilliantly and irresistibly the joyous, regenerating power of the Cause, so that the Bahá'í community in every country of Europe may stand out as a beacon light repelling the dark shadows of godlessness and moral degradation now threatening to obliterate the last remnants of a dying order. We call upon the Continental Board of Consellors to consult following this Conference with every National Spiritual Assembly in Europe, and together, launch such a campaign of spiritualization of the Bahá'í community, allied with intensified personal teaching, as has never been witnessed in your continent. The

goals of the Seven Year Plan can all be accomplished as the result of such a programme and the European Bahá'í community may achieve through it the spiritual force and character to demonstrate to a stricken and declining civilization the peace and joy and order of the long-awaited, Christ-promised Kingdom of God on earth.

May the loving spirit and saintly life of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the fiftieth anniversary of whose ascension is commemorated in this Conference, imbue your thoughts and aspirations and resolves with that dedicated, self-sacrificing, utter devotion to Bahá'u'lláh and His Cause which she so greatly exemplified.

B. TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN QUITO, ECUADOR

6–8 August 1982

To the followers of Bahá'u'lláh gathered at the International Conference in Quito, Ecuador

Beloved Friends,

We hail with joyous hearts and eager anticipation the soldiers of Bahá'u'lláh's Army of Light gathered together in Quito, the capital city of the Republic of Ecuador, to do honour and homage to the blessed memory of Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf, the most outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation, the fiftieth anniversary of whose ascension was so recently commemorated throughout the world.

Conscious of the beloved Master's plea to promulgate the oneness of mankind to a spiritually impoverished humanity, inspired by the memory of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir whose mortal remains are interred in the soil of Quito, and deriving spiritual stimulus from the Mother Temple for Latin America, the friends are reminded of the galvanizing words of our beloved Guardian addressed to '. . . the eager, the warm-hearted, the spiritually minded and staunch members of these Latin American Bahá'í communities . . .': 'Let them ponder the honor which the Author of the Revelation Himself has chosen to confer upon their countries, the obligations which that honor automatically brings in its wake, the opportunities if offers, the power it releases for the removal of all obstacles, however formidable, which may be encountered in their path, and the promise of guidance it implies . . .'

Praiseworthy indeed are the achievements thus far made by the communities of South and Central America and the islands of the Caribbean in the first half of the Seven Year Plan. Full advantage should be taken of the current high tide of proclamation engendered by the crisis in Írán to attract to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh earnest and seeking souls from every stratum of society, thereby enriching the spiritual and material diversity of our communities. Great effort should be made to utilize more fully the valuable possibilities of radio and television as a means of reaching the vast multitudes whose hearts and minds offer fertile soil for the planting of the seeds of the Faith. All elements of the Bahá'í community, particularly the women and youth, should arise as one soul to shoulder the responsibilities laid upon them. All outstanding goals of the Seven Year Plan should be pursued with enthusiasm and assurance of their accomplishment.

All National Spiritual Assemblies during the remaining fast-fleeting years of this radiant century, in collaboration with the Institutions of the Faith standing ready and eager to assist them, must greatly reinforce the foundations of maturing National and Local Spiritual Assemblies to enable them to cope successfully with the multifarious and challenging problems that will confront them.

At a moment in Bahá'í history when the persecuted, beleaguered friends in the Cradle

of the Faith heroically continue to face the trials ordained for them in the Major Plan of God, meeting martyrdom, as need be, with joyous acceptance, it behooves the friends throughout the Bahá'í world to endeavour by their own greatly increased acts of self-abnegation to make fruitful the spiritual energies released by the sacrifices of their stricken brethren.

May you all immerse yourselves in the spirit of the saintly life of the Greatest Holy Léaf whose self-sacrificing devotion to her beloved Father's Cause is a worthy example for every believer to emulate.

c. TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

19–22 August 1982

To the Friends gathered at the Bahá'í International Conference at Lagos

Dearly-loved Friends,

With hearts overflowing with love for the people of Africa, so richly endowed with the gifts of the spirit, so abundantly and repeatedly blessed since the dawn of this Revelation, and so gloriously promising in the unfoldment of their hidden potentialities, we welcome the friends gathered at this Conference held in one of the most important capitals of their emergent continent.

As we review the annals of our Faith we see that since the days of the Blessed Beauty and up to the early 1950s, the activities of the friends in Africa had produced the formation of one National Spiritual Assembly with its seat in Cairo, Egypt, the opening of twelve countries to the light of the Faith, and some fifty localities established throughout its vast lands. It was at such a time that the beloved Guardian ushered in the first African Teaching Plan, to be followed during the remaining years of his ministry and in subsequent years after his passing, by a series of challenging and bravely executed plans designed to implant the banner of the Faith throughout the length and breadth of that continent and its neighbouring islands. Today, after the lapse of a little over three decades, we stand in awe as we view with admiration one of the most valiant contingents of the Army of Light, guided by its own Board of Counsellors, led and administered by thirty-seven National Spiritual Assemblies and 4,990 Local Spiritual Assemblies, privileged to serve an eager and radiant community of believers drawn from 1,152 African tribes residing in 29,000 localities.

How wonderful that it has been possible to convene this Conference on African soil with such a large number of African friends in attendance, in loving memory of the most distinguished heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation, the eldest daughter of the King of Glory, who lived a long life of sacrificial service to the Cause of her Beloved Father. Her meekness, her unassuming nature, the purity of her soul, the sensitivity of her heart, the calmness of her demeanour, her patience and long-suffering in trials, and above all, her unshakeable faith, her tenderness and love, and the spirit of self-renunciation which she evinced throughout her blessed life, are outstanding characteristics that we can well emulate, particularly in Africa, where these heavenly qualities play such an important part in attracting the souls, and winning the hearts to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

We rejoice in the knowledge that some communities have already initiated in her name teaching and consolidation campaigns of far-reaching magnitude, that many Bahá'í women inspired by her example are accepting an ever-greater share of responsibility in running the affairs of the community, and that numerous newsletters are reflecting eulogies of the station she occupied, the sufferings she endured and the heroism she demonstrated in her love for the glorious Cause of her Lord.

The fortunes of the Seven Year Plan in Africa are in the balance. As we draw near to the midway point in the unfoldment of the processes it has set in motion, we call upon its valiant promoters on the African mainland and its surrounding islands, to take stock of their position, to re-appraise their progress, and to concentrate their resources on whatever portions of the goals are as yet unachieved. Chief among its objectives are a widespread recruitment of many more supporters of the Most Great Name, the deepening of the individual believers, for the fulfilment of all goals ultimately depends upon them, and a notable increase in the number of newly-formed as well as firmly-rooted Local Spiritual Assemblies, to serve as bases for the manifold activities of the community, including the Bahá'í education of children, a greater participation of women and youth in Bahá'í activities, and the formulation of ways and means to enrich the spiritual lives of the 'noble' and 'pure-hearted' believers of a 'fast awakening continent'.

May the participants in this Conference carry to the mass of their devoted fellow believers, whose personal circumstances have made it impossible for them to attend, the spirit of joy and optimism which we hope will be generated at this gathering and the flames of enthusiasm which we pray will be enkindled in their hearts.

May the memory of the Greatest Holy Leaf, who through her life of heroic self-sacrifice has left to us 'a legacy that time can never dim', inspire the friends in every country of the continent to rededicate themselves to the Cause of God, not to allow any opportunity for mentioning the Faith to slip by unutilized, and not to permit one day of their lives to pass without a noble effort to draw nearer to the good-pleasure of the Blessed Beauty.

Our fervent prayers surround you as you proceed with your deliberations.

D. TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

2–5 September 1982

To the Friends gathered in the Asian–Australasian Bahá'í Conference in Canberra

Dearly-loved Friends,

These are momentous times. The institutions of the old world order are crumbling and in disarray. Materialism, greed, corruption and conflict are infecting the social order with a grave malaise from which it is helpless to extricate itself. With every passing day it becomes more and more evident that no time must be lost in applying the remedy prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh, and it is to this task that Bahá'ís everywhere must bend their energies and commit their resources.

New conditions now present themselves making it easier to accomplish our purpose. Galvanized by the fires of fierce opposition and nurtured by the blood of the martyrs, the forces of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh are, at long last, emerging from obscurity. Never before in history has the Faith been the subject of such universal attention and comment. Eminent statesmen, parliamentarians, journalists, writers, educators, commentators, clergymen and other leaders of thought have raised their voices and set their pens to expressions of horror and revulsion at the persecutions of our brethren in Írán on the one hand, and to paeans of praise and admiration of the noble principles which motivate the followers of the Most Great Name on the other.

The five International Conferences of the Seven Year Plan were called to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf, to discuss anew the present condition of the Faith in a turbulent world society, to examine the great opportunities for its future growth and development

and to focus attention on the unfulfilled goals of the Plan. We are certain that the contemplation of the gathered friends on the sterling qualities which distinguished the heroic life of the Greatest Holy Leaf will help them to persevere in their noble endeavours.

This particular Conference is unique in many ways. The geographical area of concern spans over half the globe, including within its purview all the vast continent of Asia as well as the water hemisphere which comprises all of Australasia. Within the continent of Asia is the 'cradle of the principal religions of mankind . . . above whose horizons in modern times, the suns of two independent revelations . . . have successively arisen . . . on whose western extremity the Qiblih of the Bahá'í world has been definitely established . . .' The first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Bahá'í World was erected on this continent under the direction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and now another is arising on the Indian sub-continent in the midst of the world's largest Bahá'í community. In Australasia the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, dedicated to the Glory of God just two decades ago, looks out across the vast Pacific Ocean in whose *midmost heart* still another Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is being built on the mountain slope above Apia in the country of the first reigning monarch to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

The population of Asia and Australasia is well over half the world population. The area includes Asiatic U.S.S.R. and mainland China, accounting for more than one thousand million souls who are, for the most part, untouched by the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. Obviously present conditions in these areas call for the exercise of the utmost wisdom and circumspection. Yet this vast segment of humanity cannot be ignored.

Canberra, where you are now meeting, is at the southern pole of the spiritual axis referred to in the beloved Guardian's last message to the Bahá'ís of Australia as 'extending from the Antipodes to the northern islands of the Pacific ocean . . .'. Referring to the National Spiritual Assemblies at the northern and southern poles of that axis, Shoghi Effendi went on to say:

'A responsibility, at once weighty and inescapable, must rest on the communities which occupy so privileged a position in so vast and turbulent an area of the globe. However great the distance that separates them; however much they differ in race, language, custom, and religion; however active the political forces which tend to keep them apart and foster racial and political antagonisms, the close and continued association of these communities in their common, their peculiar and paramount task of raising up and consolidating the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh in those regions of the globe is a matter of vital and urgent importance which should receive on the part of the elected representatives of their communities a most earnest and prayerful consideration.'

These guidelines, penned a quarter of a century ago, are as valid today as when they were written, and can be taken to heart by all Bahá'í communities on either side of the axis.

We are approaching the midway point of the Seven Year Plan. As we review our accomplishments with respect to the goals of that Plan, it is essential that we fortify ourselves for the tasks ahead, and that we rededicate ourselves to that Cause for which our beloved martyrs rendered their last full measure of devotion. We can do no less!

We shall be with you in spirit during your important deliberations. Our prayers ascend at the Holy Threshold for the success of your Conference and the International Conference being held concurrently in Montreal. We shall ardently supplicate that the blessings and confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh will descend upon you and surround you wherever you go in service to His Faith.

E. TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN MONTREAL, CANADA

2–5 September 1982

To the Friends gathered at the Bahá'í International Conference in Montreal

Dearly-loved Friends,

Seventy years ago 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited Montreal, hallowing it forever. The visit of the beloved Master to America, the laying by Him of the cornerstone of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West and the revelation by Him five years later of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, which invest its chief executors and their allies with spiritual primacy, constitute successive stages in the gradual disclosure of a mission whose seeds can be found in the Báb's address to the peoples of the West, urging them to aid God's Holy Cause. This mission was given specific direction through Bahá'u'lláh's summons to the rulers of America, calling on them to heal the injuries of the oppressed and, with *the rod of the commandments* of their Lord, to bring their corrective influence to bear upon the injustices perpetrated by the tyrannical and the ungodly. 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed in clearer details than those given by either the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh the nature and scope of that glorious mission. In His eternal Tablets unveiling America's spiritual destiny the Master wrote, . . . *the continent of America is, in the eyes of the one true God, the land wherein the splendours of His light shall be revealed, where the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled, where the righteous will abide and the free assemble. Therefore, every section thereof is blessed* . . . and, referring to Canada, He asserted that its future *is very great, and the events connected with it infinitely glorious.* Even more specifically, He expressed the *hope that in the future Montreal may become so stirred, that the melody of the Kingdom may travel to all parts of the world from that Dominion and the breaths of the Holy Spirit may spread from that centre to the East and the West of America.*

After the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and under the guidance of the Guardian the Bahá'ís of the world witnessed with awe and admiration the North American community arising as one man to champion the Administrative Order taking shape on their own soil, to embark upon the first collective teaching plan in the annals of the Faith, to lead the entire Bahá'í world in intercontinental teaching campaigns, to demonstrate with devotion their exemplary firmness in the Covenant, to extend their support and protection and relief to the oppressed followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the East and particularly in His native land, and to send forth valiant pioneers and travelling teachers to every continent of the globe. These marvellous and noble exertions, calling for the expenditure of resources almost beyond their means, paved the way for the achievement of glorious victories which synchronized with a series of world convulsions, signs of universal commotion and travail, and with repeated crises within the Faith. And in this day, while the blood of the martyrs of Persia is once again watering the roots of the Cause of God and when the international outlook is impenetrably and ominously dark, the Bahá'ís of North America are in the van of the embattled legions of the Cause.

Less than a score of years remain until the end of this century which the Master called *the century of light*, and He clearly foresaw that ere its termination an advanced stage would have been reached in the striving towards the political, racial and religious unity of the peoples of the world, unfolding new horizons in scientific accomplishments, universal undertakings and world solidarity.

The calls of the Master and the Guardian plainly summon the Bahá'ís of the Americas to prodigies of proclamation, of teaching and of service. The American melting-pot of peoples needs the unifying power of the new Faith of God to achieve its fusion. The representative character of the Bahá'í community should therefore be reinforced through the attraction, conversion and support of an ever-growing number of new believers from the diverse elements constituting the population of that vast mainland and particularly from among Indians and Eskimos about

whose future the Master wrote in such glowing terms. In the glorious freedom which enables you to proclaim, to teach and confirm, to educate and deepen yourselves and others in the verities of the Faith, you have precious opportunities of service denied to many of your fellow believers elsewhere. If your blessed communities are to lead the world spiritually, as the Master envisaged, then the Faith must strike deeper roots in your hearts, the spirit of its teachings must be exemplified in ever greater measure in your lives, and God's Holy Cause must be taught and proclaimed with ever greater intensity. In His immortal Tablets addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America 'Abdu'l-Bahá assures each one of you that *whosoever arises in this day to diffuse the divine fragrances, the cohorts of the Kingdom of God shall confirm him . . .*

You are met in this Conference to review the progress of the Seven Year Plan, to be confirmed, galvanized and sent into action. It is not enough for the North American believers to stand at the forefront of the Bahá'í world; the scope of their exertions must be steadily widened. In the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The range of your future achievements still remains undisclosed. I fervently hope that in the near future the whole earth may be stirred and shaken by the results of your achievements . . . Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a centre from which waves of spiritual power will emanate . . .* The valiant countries of North America should in the second half of the Seven Year Plan ensure that an ever-swelling number of pioneers and travelling teachers will arise and travel to and settle in countries which need their support, however inhospitable the local conditions may be, ceaselessly endeavouring to contribute to the expansion of the teaching work and the strengthening of the foundations of the communities they are called upon to assist. They should, moreover, continue their defence of the downtrodden, open their doors to their Bahá'í brethren who are seeking refuge in their lands, provide technological expertise to communities which need it, and supply an uninterrupted flow of resources to support the ever-increasing international projects of the Faith.

In their respective homefronts the Bahá'ís of North America should intensify the drive to attract the masses to God's Holy Cause, to provide the means for their integration into the work of the Faith, and should become standard-bearers of an embryonic Bahá'í society which is destined to gradually emerge under the influence of the integrating and civilizing forces emanating from the Source of God's Revelation. Such noble objectives cannot be fully achieved unless and until local communities become those collective centres of unity ordained in our Writings, and every individual earnestly strives to support the structure and ensure the stability of the Administrative Edifice of the Faith.

How fitting that this Conference, and the one held for Bahá'í children on a scale unprecedented in North America, should commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf, whose love for the North American believers and whose admiration for their heroism were so deep and so sustained and whose natural fondness for children was so characteristic of Bahá'u'lláh. May each of you emulate her unswerving devotion and loyalty to the Covenant of God and her perseverance in the path of His love. We shall mark this first day of your Conference, together with the one being held concurrently in Canberra, with prayers at the Holy Shrines that all may *become assisted in service and like unto brilliant stars shine in these regions with the light of guidance.*

IV
INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES 1979–1983

1. SURVEY BY CONTINENTS

BASED ON REPORTS OF THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

A. AFRICA

THE BAHÁ'Í community of Africa embraces fifty mainland countries, plus nine major islands or island groups. At the close of the period under review there were thirty-seven National Spiritual Assemblies, plus five countries where the Faith had been banned for the time being and the National Assemblies dissolved in accord with government decrees. In Zaïre, the Universal House of Justice had temporarily replaced the National Spiritual Assembly with three Administrative Committees. There were, by Riḍván 1983, a total of over 5,000 Local Spiritual Assemblies, and the Faith was established in approximately 28,000 localities.

During this period three new National Spiritual Assemblies were formed in Africa. In 1980 the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Transkei had been elected with its seat in Umtata and in 1981 the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bophuthatswana with its seat in Mmbatho and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South West Africa/Namibia with its seat in Windhoek. It is noteworthy that the National Assemblies of Transkei and Bophuthatswana were the first National Spiritual Assemblies to be formed in the former tribal homelands of South Africa which have been declared independent nations by the government of the Republic. Two other countries had been prepared in this period for National Spiritual Assembly status: Cape Verde Islands and Gabon. The National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda was reformed in 1981 after the Faith had been banned there for a period of nineteen months during the Amin regime.

Proclamation, Public Relations and the Media

Unquestionably, the most notable accomplishment of this historic four-year period in the history of the Faith in Africa stemmed directly from the resurgence and severity of the persecutions in Írán. In the mid-1950s the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, had linked the sufferings of the believers in Persia to the establishment of the Faith in Africa when he announced that the Mother Temple of Africa would be built in Kampala, Uganda, as a 'worthy answer to the challenge' of the repressions in Írán which had prevented the building of the Persian Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Now, twenty-five years later, the heroic struggle of the Persian believers once again resulted in a major new development in the Faith in Africa through the continent-wide efforts of national communities to publicize the persecutions through press, radio and television, and through public relations programmes designed to reach Heads of State, government officials and prominent people in all walks of life, to explain the plight of the Iranian Bahá'í Community and attract support for its relief. Thus the achievement of two important goals of the Seven Year Plan was advanced to a marked degree: that of contacting people in the upper strata of society and of increasing the use of the media for proclaiming the Faith.

In Nigeria, such efforts reached officials and notables in all nineteen states of this vast,



Bushman and other participants who attended an Auxiliary Board member deepening institute held in Khudumelapye, Botswana; July 1981.

populous country. In the Ivory Coast, twenty government ministers were contacted, and the authorities then officially condemned the persecutions. In Kenya, a special and extensive information folder on the situation in Írán was presented to the Head of State, to all Ministers and to prominent citizens, as well as to the media. In Gambia, public officials of all ranks, from the Head of State and his Ministers to thirty District Chiefs, were contacted and significant amounts of literature were distributed. In Senegal, a wider public recognition of the Faith was achieved through the extensive press coverage. In Togo, 90 per cent of the government officials down to regional level were reached, and the government recorded a favourable vote for the Faith in the United Nations Human Rights Commission. The Swaziland Bahá'í community had developed good, friendly relations with the Swazi King, Sobuza, and with his family, as well as with the authorities generally, and were also able to proclaim the Faith widely throughout the country. The believers in Malawi, Sierra Leone and Upper Volta undertook special programmes of proclamation to public officials and through the media. Togo successfully initiated the use of book exhibitions, as did Madagascar, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. In Reunion Island, all branches of the media were very usefully contacted regarding the Iranian situation. In Sierra Leone, books were placed for sale at a bookstore, and in several countries gifts of books were made to public and academic libraries. In the Seychelles Islands, radio was very well utilized. In Uganda, Burundi, Zambia and Benin there was very fruitful contact with public officials. In Zambia, the traditional rulers were also approached and introduced to the Faith. In Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania the Bahá'í communities participated as exhibitors at national and regional agriculture and trade shows.

Several Bahá'í communities had succeeded in obtaining regular weekly programmes on radio. The believers in Central African Republic, remarkably, celebrated their first complete decade of weekly Bahá'í radio broadcasts,

alternately in French and in the Sango language, and their admirable record of good public relations continued. Liberia obtained a 15-minute weekly radio programme, plus the broadcasting of Bahá'í prayers and readings morning and evening. Chad also had a weekly radio broadcast.

In the broader field of international relations, the Togo Community admirably supported United Nations events, including the special Years of the Handicapped and of Disarmament, and made use of distinguished guest speakers on these occasions. Botswana also did a fine job of supporting United Nations activities and programmes. In Kenya, where a number of United Nations agencies have their world or regional offices, there was frequent representation of the Faith at international conferences as well as very cordial exchange of speakers for United Nations Day programmes.

Teaching

The peoples of Africa have long been spiritually receptive to the Faith, and attracting individuals to the Cause has never been difficult. During the period of this report there continued to be a good, steady increase in the numbers of people entering the Faith, though the general pace of teaching slowed in some countries in contrast to the dramatic increase of earlier years. This was largely due to the requirements of consolidation and to the generally difficult social and political conditions prevailing in some areas. The number of newly-opened localities likewise increased steadily, though a pattern of lapsing Local Spiritual Assemblies emerged in areas where sizeable numbers of Assemblies had been formed in quick order.

The work of the Continental Board of Counsellors and the Auxiliary Board members in assisting the National Spiritual Assemblies and the National Teaching Committees to develop special teaching projects, particularly in fulfilment of the goal of encouraging entry of new believers into the Faith 'by troops', is noteworthy. Many such projects were both creative and fruitful. Teaching across the borders between countries was found to be very useful in West Africa and was successfully carried on by the believers in Liberia, Ivory Coast and Guinea, between Upper Volta and Togo, and by Senegal, Mauritania and Gambia. Also in southern Africa, there were projects which brought about co-operation amongst the friends in Zambia, Zaïre and Angola.

Several countries had outstanding or unusual results in the teaching field. In Benin, there was an exhilarating surge of success in the months following the Lagos International Conference when a number of satellite conferences and international travelling teachers brought new stimulation. In Botswana, there was intensified teaching amongst the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert. In Kenya, several projects, particularly attractive to the youth, were organized and successfully carried out for entry by troops, while in Tanzania, a similar very successful project took place on the Ukererwe Islands of Lake Victoria. In Togo, the members of the Gourma tribe, which had formerly rejected both Christianity and Islám, embraced the Faith with particular responsiveness. Through several intensive teaching projects in which the youth played a vital role, the size of the Togolese community was doubled in this four-year period. Nigeria also successfully persevered in developing 'entry by troops' activities, as did Ivory Coast where 700 new believers were recorded in one such project in the Bangolo area. Upper Volta managed to double its number of Local Spiritual Assemblies and localities and to send African travelling teachers to Mali and Ghana, while Mali, a small community, quadrupled its Local Spiritual Assemblies and localities. In Cape Verde, where the islanders are very receptive, all the islands were opened to the Faith, and the number of believers was increased several times over. Malawi had steady success in its teaching activities which were carried on by well-deepened Malawian believers. In Transkei, the pioneers and indigenous believers worked happily and successfully together in teaching teams. In both Chad and Zimbabwe, despite severe civil disturbances and necessary changes in teaching areas and patterns, good results were recorded. In both Zimbabwe and Cameroon, teaching in the cities received special emphasis. Both Zambia and Bophuthatswana concentrated heavily and with marked success on both individual and Local Spiritual Assembly extension teaching.

Many outstanding teaching conferences took

place during this period which greatly encouraged and stimulated the believers throughout the continent. The colourful and vibrant Lagos International Conference in August of 1982, attended by the Hand of the Cause John Robarts and 1,150 believers from 46 countries and 90 ethnic groups, followed by many fine satellite conferences throughout West Africa, as well as by three in Southern Africa and one in East Africa attended by the Hand of the Cause William Sears, all brought rich results in increased teaching and were a significant turning point in the affairs of the Faith in West Africa particularly. A number of regional teaching conferences brought together believers from sizeable groups of countries. One of the most successful was held at Ouagadougou in Upper Volta, attended by 100 believers from eight countries.

The need to reach all strata and components of society brought about a greater diversification of teaching methods and projects than had ever formerly been the case. In many areas special efforts were made to reach all sectors of the community in imaginative ways: for example, the effort in Tanzania to address the members of the various professions through teaching activities specifically related to their mode of work.

Consolidation

The major challenge faced by the majority of the National Bahá'í communities in Africa during this period was that of successfully consolidating the many teaching victories won during both the Nine and Five Year Plans: the thousands of new believers and localities and the hundreds of Local Spiritual Assemblies to be preserved and deepened. At the commencement of the period under review, there occurred a sudden outflow from the continent of pioneers who had tenaciously held to their posts until the end of the Five Year Plan but were unable to stay longer. This loss, combined with the seemingly inevitable drop in numbers of Local Spiritual Assemblies as the communities paused for breath, plus the inexperience of many Local Spiritual Assemblies and Regional Teaching Committees, brought the consolidation needs into sharp focus. In the larger communities this was particularly the case: Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaïre. The goals of the Seven Year Plan reflected a strong emphasis on this vital



Some of the forty-three participants who attended the first Bahá'í Summer School held in Victoria, Cameroon Republic; March 1980.

requirement. A truly heroic struggle commenced in which all the institutions of the Faith combined efforts in coming to grips with the urgency and scope of this problem, bringing about a significant broadening and diversification of activities including an increased focus on the use of the Creative Word of God as a deepening instrument.

During the first two phases of the Seven Year Plan there was strong emphasis in the activities of most national communities on the holding of deepening institutes and conferences as well as Summer or Winter Schools, all of which gradually became regular and successful aspects of Bahá'í community life. In the southern part of the continent an annual international Summer School which, by mutual agreement, was held in a different country each year, became an especially attractive event on the Bahá'í calendar. In Chad, deepening institutes and conferences were successfully combined with village teaching projects carried out by the Chadian believers as they travelled long distances by foot through the remote rural areas. In Upper Volta the emphasis was placed on helping Local Spiritual Assemblies to take responsibility for their own annual re-election. In Central African Republic, deepening of the individual believers and their participation in both the teaching and administration of the Faith were the objectives of special nine-day institutes; also, a twelve-lesson correspondence course was started for the assistants to the Auxiliary Board members. In Malawi as well, the emphasis was on strengthening the individual believers, including the women and youth, and conveying to them the Bahá'í way of life and service. In Zambia, special efforts were made to train the officers of the Local Spiritual Assemblies and success was achieved in raising up some very capable, devoted believers. In Swaziland, local deepening/teaching conferences for small areas accessible by foot proved useful. In Kenya, correspondence courses were started for the Local Spiritual Assemblies, and the 'mother' Assembly principle was applied in an effort to help the weaker Assemblies. The registration of Bahá'í births and deaths progressed quite methodically in some countries and was a project very well received by the believers in general. The establishment in Nigeria in 1982 of the West Africa Centre for Bahá'í Studies was another step in the consolidation process.

In a number of countries the problem of consolidation was compounded by the disturbed civil state of the country or its economic problems; but the believers struggled perseveringly to continue the teaching activities, preserve the local communities and fulfil their goals. Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Chad, Mozambique and Zaïre were amongst such countries. In other areas the activities of the Faith were temporarily suspended by government order, e.g. in Niger and Congo.

Reference should be made here to the very effective efforts made by Dr. 'Azíz Navídí to assist the many French-speaking National Spiritual Assemblies to cope with problems related to the banning of the Faith and to difficulties in obtaining official recognition of the Cause, as well as in a variety of other legal problems, not to mention his attendance on behalf of the Faith at international conferences and his successful public relations activities with numerous government leaders and people prominent in public or private life.

The Hands of the Cause

The visits of the Hands of the Cause of God William Sears and John Robarts played an important part during these years in the consolidation and progress of the Faith on the African Continent. The loss, however, of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, murdered in most brutal circumstances in his own home in Kampala, Uganda, with his wife and three youngest children, dealt a terrible blow to the rank and file of the believers whose love and respect he had attracted through his radiant spirit, his devotion to the Uganda Bahá'í community during its long travail, his warm sense of humour and his loving manner. Likewise, the passing of the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was sorely felt in Africa where he had laboured so assiduously and conscientiously in the promotion of the mass teaching work.

When he heard the shocking news of Mr. Olinga's death, the Hand of the Cause William Sears, former pioneer in Southern Africa, promptly offered to reside and serve again in Africa, at least for a period, after having been absent from its shores for a number of years. Mr. Sears's presence subsequently lent signifi-

cant support to the new Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa at the time of its formation in November, 1980, and his travels in the south served greatly to encourage and stimulate the believers in those parts of the continent. The Hand of the Cause John Robarts also travelled to visit the friends in Africa where he had formerly pioneered for many years, and was most warmly welcomed by many whom he had not seen in the long years since his return to Canada.

The Continental Board of Counsellors

The Continental Board of Counsellors for Africa, the members of the two Auxiliary Boards and their large number of assistants throughout the continent were very active partners with the National Spiritual Assemblies in virtually all aspects of the development of the Faith and the pursuit of the goals in Africa during this period. The campaign for improved standards in the teaching work which was launched by the Counsellors at the Lagos International Conference was very well received, and its prompt implementation now augurs well for the future in the sound spread of the Faith to new areas. The travels of the Counsellors and the Auxiliary Board members to many parts of the continent and their varied activities there seemed to encourage and guide the communities and to provide for both the Universal House of Justice and the International Teaching Centre a clear picture of what was transpiring everywhere. There was a heartening continuation of the close, warm collaboration between the Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assemblies which had long characterized their work together.

The Youth

The youth of the Bahá'í communities of Africa were a joy to behold in this period, especially the second generation of youngsters whose parents had been the stalwart pillars of the Cause in countries such as Uganda, Kenya and Cameroon since its inception in those areas. Many of these young people arose during the years of this review to study the teachings deeply, to spearhead the 'entry by troops' projects, to reach out with the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to their own educated generation in schools and colleges and to organize themselves for the service of the Faith. National Youth Committees became more prevalent and effective in their work; the scope of the youth activities was broadened to include conferences, school and university study classes, clubs, singing groups, social and sports activities. Likewise, the youth became an essential and vital element in the Bahá'í community as a whole.

The Women and Children

One of the most important and significant developments in the Faith in Africa during the period of this report was the greatly increased consciousness of the needs and, in some places, the solid work done in the field of Bahá'í child education. The improved production of syllabuses and lessons, the training of teachers, the running of tutorial schools and the holding of local children's classes, though still totally inadequate to meet the needs of the large number of Bahá'í children in Africa, offers firm ground for future progress.

The initiation in Nigeria of a Bahá'í children's quarterly magazine, *The Shining Stars*; the holding of a children's conference in Gambia and the efforts made for the introduction of Bahá'í religious knowledge classes in the schools there; the many children's classes held in Chad and the opening of a nursery school there; the running of a Bahá'í kindergarten in the precincts of the Mother Temple of Africa in Kampala; the opening of a number of 'education centres' in Zaïre; the production of lessons for children in Rwanda; the numerous children's activities on Reunion Island, are all examples of the types of child education programmes that had been initiated in various parts of the continent.

Parallel with the work amongst the children was the development of women's activities, some of which related to the role of women as mothers. The fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf stimulated the holding of women's conferences dedicated to her memory, some attended by prominent non-Bahá'í women. In Gambia, an essay competition on the role of women was conducted in her honour and a public award ceremony held. In Liberia, a special cassette tape was prepared about her life and services. In Togo, special conferences were held on family life. In Senegal, a special deepening course for women was sponsored. With



The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Mariental, South West Africa/Namibia, whose members are of five different tribes and speak as many languages; 14 September 1980.

the emphasis on women in the Faith, there was also a notable increase in the number of properly-conducted Bahá'í marriages in some countries. National women's and children's committees were appointed in many countries and have served to increase effectively the Bahá'í activity in both groups. In most countries, the number of women active in the Faith and serving on its institutions substantially increased.

Literature

Amongst the most encouraging signs of progress in Africa during this period was the more widespread and intensive translation, publication and dissemination of the Holy Writings and other literature about the Faith in the numerous vernacular languages of Africa. This literature programme was assisted through the formation of two new Bahá'í Publishing Trusts, in the Ivory Coast and Nigeria. Likewise, the legal registration of the Publishing Trust of Kenya and the re-activation of the Uganda Publishing Trust served to advance still further these objectives. The value of cassette tapes of the Holy Writings was gradually realized, and the work of producing such material took hold as the goal was pursued. The establishment of an International Audio-Visual Distribution Centre in Ivory Coast laid a foundation for the future in that field.

Especially notable victories in the field of literature were the translation and publication of *The New Garden*, by Hushmand Fatheazam, in four of the seven vernacular languages of Zambia and the publication and dissemination of *Paris Talks* and *Nabil's Narrative* in Swahili by the Publishing Trust of Kenya. Central African Republic, Cameroon, South Africa, Swaziland and Togo carried out particularly active programmes of translation and publication during this period.

The more regular production of national, regional, local and youth news bulletins, a number of them bilingual, served greatly to stimulate the believers, deepen them and inform them of what was planned and carried out in their own communities and abroad. This was a much needed and very beneficial development in Africa.

Properties

The acquisition of Bahá'í properties continued to add substance and grace to the Bahá'í community. In the Ivory Coast, a new National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds was built, and in Gabon and Mauritania the first National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds were acquired. In Benin, two regional centres were obtained and in Nigeria and Mali one each. In several countries, national and district centres were renovated or enlarged, and in numerous areas local centres were erected. In Bomi Hills, Liberia, cemetery land was acquired; and in Malebo, Equatorial Guinea, a National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds site was bought. The Mother Temple of Africa in Kampala was renovated throughout, as were the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and institute buildings nearby. In Chad, the Samandari Institute was completed and put to use. In Zambia, the temple site was developed through digging of a borehole, erection of a caretaker's dwelling, and through levelling, clearing and planting of many trees on the land. Likewise, in Zambia, a regional centre in Mumbwa was upgraded to an institute through addition of a dormitory and kitchen.

Three subjects remain to be mentioned in this report each one of which is essential and carries with it its own special perfume.

Pioneers and Travelling Teachers

The first is the pioneers, both international and home-front, without whose dedicated, sacrificing services the progress of the Cause in Africa would be severely handicapped. There are large populous countries and Bahá'í communities in Africa, such as Zaïre, Kenya, Tanzania, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Nigeria and Uganda, where the presence of the pioneers has long been and still is almost indispensable to the general perpetuation and welfare of the community. There are other areas as yet little open to the Faith where the pioneers have been working in almost virgin situations, such as Cape Verde Islands, the Guineas, Gabon, Somalia, Djibouti and St. Helena Island. But wherever they are and in whatever circumstances they labour their services have been vital and deeply appreciated. Similarly, the many devoted, able, experienced international and national travelling teachers who have visited the countries of Africa have contributed another very valuable element to the activities on that vast, needy continent.

Financial Self-support

The second is the subject of the efforts made for self-support by the national communities. There was a very considerable and sacrificial struggle in many countries to win this goal. Considerable solid success has attended this effort, which has been generously and substantially supported by the international pioneers everywhere but which has also been lovingly and touchingly the object of the concern and pride of the African believers too: as example, the simple village woman in Kenya who insisted on paying for the cablegram to President Khomeini appealing against the martyrdom of the Iranian believers.

Numerous countries were able to achieve self-sufficiency in regard to their administrative expenses, while a number of other countries achieved virtually total financial independence in all of their activities. The Nigeria community not only became self-supporting but, astoundingly, paid all of the heavy expense of holding the Lagos International Conference as well. Many other countries greatly reduced their dependence on the international funds of the Faith. And all without exception became more deeply conscious of the need to strive in that direction.

The Holy Land

And finally, mention must be made here of the developing role of the Holy Land in the spiritual life of the Bahá'í community of Africa. A gradual stream of African believers had begun to arrive as pilgrims at the World Centre of the Faith in 'Akká and Haifa, and a number of communities rejoiced and benefited in this period to receive their radiant returning pilgrims. Likewise, the International Convention of 1983 witnessed a far larger contingent of African delegates than ever before, with some of the communities sending all nine members of their National Spiritual Assemblies. Some of the first African women pilgrims and delegates arrived in the Holy Land in this period and returned to Africa to convey in their quiet way a new sense of the sacredness of the Faith and its Holy Places, a deep consciousness of the urgency of its affairs and

its teaching work, and a feeling of love of and devotion to the Universal House of Justice which will long serve to strengthen the ties which bind the Bahá'í world together and link it to its spiritual heart.

B. THE AMERICAS

The area comprising the Americas includes North, Central and South America, Bermuda, the Bahamas and the islands of the Caribbean.

At the close of the period under review there were thirty-eight National Spiritual Assemblies, more than 6,000 Local Spiritual Assemblies, and the Faith was established in more than 25,000 localities. Fortunately, this part of the Bahá'í world community still enjoys relative freedom to propagate the Faith.

Nevertheless, political unrest in Central and parts of South America hindered the progress of the Faith somewhat. In Nicaragua, some Bahá'ís left the country, many more were timid about attending meetings of any kind, and some of the pioneers had to leave. Bahá'í communities in the extensive Department of Zelaya were lost because the believers, most of them Indians, had been driven out. In spite of these difficulties, the morale of the Bahá'ís, and in particular, the National Spiritual Assembly and National Teaching Committee, has remained high; and starting in 1983, new expansion projects were initiated which are attracting new believers, especially youth, and resulting in new Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Travelling teachers were not often allowed to visit the believers in Argentina. Frequent disruptions in communications also affected the transmission of news and information within the Bahá'í community. The believers in Bolivia had to withstand such strong opposition from local fanatical elements, both political and religious, that appeals had to be made to the civil courts.

Disregarding the tests and difficulties, most of the believers have remained firm in the Faith and stand ready to respond to the great receptivity that obtains amidst the confusion and clamour.

During the period under review, five new National Spiritual Assemblies were formed in the Americas. At Riḍván 1981, three new National Assemblies came into being: Bermuda with its seat in Hamilton, the Leeward Islands with its seat in St. John's Antigua and the Windward Islands with its seat in Kingstown, St. Vincent. Riḍván 1983 saw the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of Dominica with its seat in Roseau and of St. Lucia with its seat in Castries.

Proclamation

As the year 1979 reached its midway point, the outbreak of persecutions in Írán powerfully galvanized the believers throughout the hemisphere as never before. The wide publicity accruing to the Faith in the wake of these tragic events raised proclamation to a height never before attained in the history of the Cause. Unprecedented results were obtained by many national communities when they appealed to their governments. For example, the Canadian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution condemning the increasing persecution of the Bahá'í community of Írán. Following this action, the National Spiritual Assembly successfully negotiated, with a very sympathetic Department of Immigration, the granting of refugee status to hundreds of bona fide Bahá'ís stranded outside Írán, and the process continues.

The intensification of the cruel hardships imposed upon the Bahá'ís in the cradle of the Faith and the sharp increase in the number of those martyred, drove the believers in the West to the depths of agony and, at the same time, made them more determined than ever to proclaim the Faith through all forms of mass communication media. The press in many places was extremely sympathetic and generous, often commenting on the non-inflammatory character of our releases, their accuracy and human appeal. Memorial programmes for those martyred brought national and local press and television coverage. One such programme for the seven martyrs of Yazd held in the United States at the Temple in Wilmette, supported by hundreds of simul-

taneous programmes throughout the country, was covered by national and local television and generated a flood of publicity.

In the United States on 25 May 1982, the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives heard the testimony of six witnesses concerning the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán. A two-hour videotape of this Congressional hearing was shown widely throughout the country generating further publicity.

A rabbi in Norfolk, Virginia, was moved by the persecutions to host a memorial programme in the synagogue and he made the book *A Cry from the Heart*, written by the Hand of the Cause William Sears, the centrepiece of a large mailing to his colleagues throughout the country. Bahá'í youth clubs distributed 3,500 copies of Mr. Sears's book on more than 280 college campuses.

In addition to numerous resolutions being passed in both Houses of the United States Congress, a record number of speeches recorded in the Congressional Record, and forceful editorials in almost all of the major newspapers in the country, public recognition reached new heights when President Reagan issued a statement strongly protesting the killing of Bahá'ís, calling upon the Iranian authorities to spare the lives of those who had been condemned to death, and inviting other world leaders to join him in appealing, on behalf of the Bahá'ís, to the government of Írán.

In Panama, wide publicity about the persecutions of Bahá'ís in Írán caused people in remote rural communities to enquire about the Faith.

Hundreds of copies of the book, *A Call to the Nations*, were presented to the higher levels of society in the French Antilles and the 'White Paper on Írán' was sent to mayors, government officials, the Prefect and Deputy-Prefect.

Numerous government officials throughout the Americas experienced indignation upon hearing of the cruelties meted out to the Bahá'ís and gave sympathetic attention to the appeals on their behalf. Some sent cables to the government of Írán, others paved the way for widespread media coverage of local Bahá'í activities. This was especially notable in Belize and Costa Rica.

There can be no doubt that the attacks on the Bahá'ís in Írán, unparalleled in viciousness and intensity since the early days of the Cause, opened the door to an unprecedented public recognition of the Faith and contributed to its gradual emergence from obscurity.

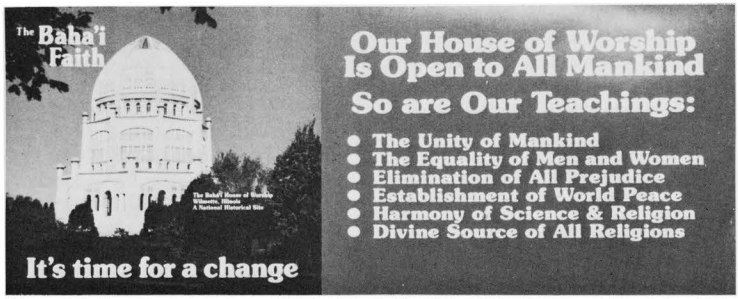
Another kind of proclamation activity aroused indigenous believers to a new level of participation. In 1981 the project called *Camino Del Sol* or 'Trail of Light' was launched through collaborative efforts of the Continental Board of Counsellors and several National Spiritual Assemblies in the Americas. Indigenous believers from North America travelled through Central and South America in a programme of cultural exchange which included participation in the Intercontinental Conference in Quito, Ecuador, and in the Continental Indigenous Council on the Blood Reserve in Canada, and which culminated in a presentation of traditional songs and dances by the indigenous people attending the Intercontinental Conference in Montreal, Canada.

It is estimated that close to 10,000 people became aware of the Faith through this project. In Guatemala, those showing intense interest and support around San Juan Chameloo, Alta Verapaz, included government officials, educators and students. The diversity of the visiting group clearly demonstrated the principle of the oneness of mankind and that, in itself, appealed to the population wherever they travelled. In Honduras, the team visited the Paya and Jicaque tribes and rekindled their eagerness to let the Faith illumine their lives.

Nor was that all. Other aspects of the teaching work quickened as well. Many projects were dedicated to the martyrs and to deceased Hands of the Cause.

Efforts have been made to align proclamation activities more closely with expansion and consolidation. In Nicaragua, several well planned and executed public meetings were held at the Intercontinental Hotel and were attended by leading citizens. Unsolicited press notices arising from such meetings have opened new doors.

Another kind of public recognition came to the Faith in Panama when the National Spiritual Assembly successfully petitioned the government to issue a stamp to commemorate



Bus posters, such as this one used in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., invited the public to investigate the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

the tenth anniversary, in April 1982, of the formal dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America.

Expansion and Consolidation

Perhaps one of the best signs of the growing maturity of the Bahá'í community is that expansion and consolidation activities are being integrated. The Colombian Bahá'í community achieved a high degree of success in this respect. For sixteen months, some twenty-two teams engaged in regular visits to communities to help in organizing Nineteen Day Feasts, children's classes, youth meetings, and discussions of family life as well as aiding in the enrolment of new believers. This organic approach brought 12,000 new believers into communities ready to absorb them into Bahá'í activities.

Based on this experience, another programme evolved which holds promise for even more effective integration of the expansion-consolidation process. Under this programme a group of five to ten teachers visit a community for five to ten days. In the mornings, the teachers engage in deepening and spiritual enrichment for themselves. In the afternoon, they visit families and attempt to converse with each member. Each one is invited to join the Faith. In the evenings, meetings are held with the entire community. By Riḍván 1983, seven to eight communities had been touched by the expansion-consolidation campaign. The results were exhilarating indeed. The number of Bahá'ís in each community, including children, had more or less tripled. A number of youth had arisen to participate in deepening classes, and the Local Spiritual Assemblies had developed a new vision of their function. The campaigns were also serving the purpose of raising new teachers and confirming them in the service of the Cause. Parallel to these activities, the Ruhi Institute was strengthened during this period and its field of service expanded. The nine courses pertaining to the first level of studies at the Institute programme were gradually taken to other parts of the country through extension courses, each lasting about two weeks. Finally, the courses were established as a tutorial programme serving not only Colombia but other Latin American countries. An increasing number of teachers from the Ruhi Institute began courses in villages and neighbourhoods of the cities on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, thus bringing the benefits of a very effective deepening course to a larger and larger number of youth.

Further development of the Ruhi Institute courses took place when in 1982 a pilot programme for the training of teachers for Bahá'í pre-school centres was established. This proved very successful and by Riḍván of 1983 Bahá'í kindergartens were functioning in seven villages in the region near Cali. These pre-school centres have proved to be important factors in the functioning of the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Honduras has also benefited from teaching campaigns that carry out expansion-consolidation activities simultaneously. Through a series of annual projects, entitled 'Operations' and carrying such names as 'Daybreak' and 'Badí'', the Bahá'í population was more than tripled and the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies substantially increased. These projects utilized a permanent nucleus of some

five experienced and capable Bahá'ís with the help, in different sections of the country, of local pioneers and teachers. The core team stayed in each area approximately a week, publicly proclaiming the Faith and teaching all sectors of the population. The area most receptive was that of the so-called 'Caribs', or 'Garifunas'—a mixture of the original Indian population of the Caribbean and black Africans, who live along the north coast of Honduras. Some of their villages now are from fifty to ninety per cent Bahá'í.

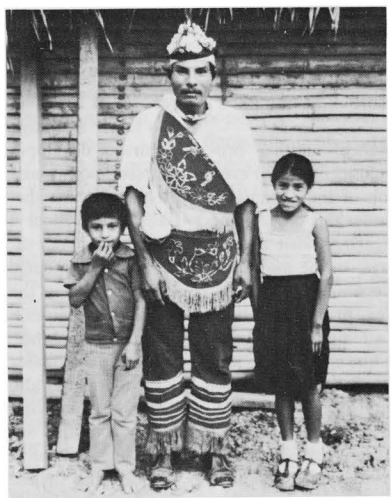
Another important indicator of increasing Bahá'í maturity is that indigenous peoples are taking more initiative in shouldering the responsibility for propagating and administering the affairs of the Faith. This trend is noted particularly in Alaska, Bolivia, Argentina, Canada, the United States and in some of the Caribbean Islands.

Institutes and Native Councils are favourite structures for indigenous activity. In July 1980, the Native American Council held in Wilmette brought together fifty tribes under the dome of the holiest Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. This activity, the fruit of collaboration of the Bahá'í communities of Alaska, Canada and the United States, was visually spectacular, spiritually dynamic, procedurally unique and a source of inspiration to all who experienced it. The movement of these believers through these countries released a spiritual impulse whose ramifications are incalculable.

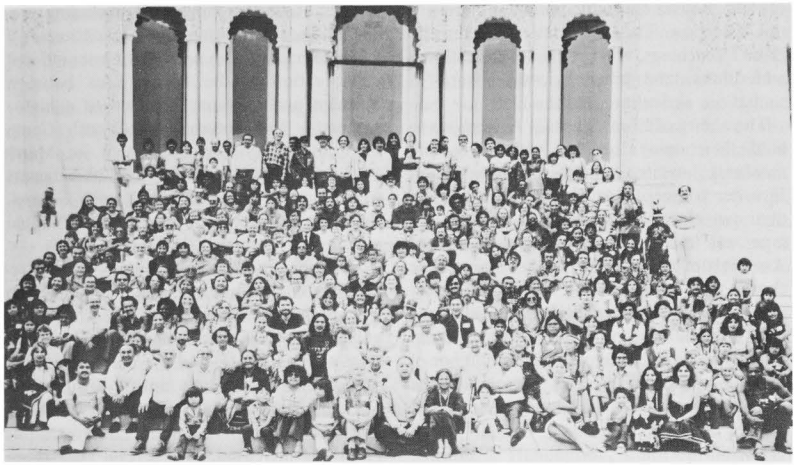
In Canada, Native Councils have become an important element in the encouragement of believers of Indian and Inuit heritage to freely consult about the expansion and consolidation of the Faith among their own groups and provided the milieu within which they could, themselves, assume responsibilities for the progress of the Cause of God. Similarly, 'Council' consultations have also been an effective arena in which the French-speaking believers could air their views and become inspired to further promote the work of the Faith.

Alaska's institute structure accommodates weekend activities. Five-day youth institutes were held yearly in June and December. Teaching in the local area was an integral part of this experience.

The Guaymis of Panama have arisen to become the executors of a plan to develop a cultural centre which will involve a Bahá'í



Antonio Cruz of Veracruz, Mexico, first Bahá'í of the Totonaco tribe in that city (wearing traditional dress).



Participants in the second continental indigenous council photographed on the steps of the House of Worship, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A. The gathering, held in July 1980, was attended by the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem; several Counsellors; members of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Alaska, Canada and the United States; and by representatives of more than fifty tribes indigenous to the Americas. Mr. Amoz Gibson is seen seated in the centre of the front row with Mrs. Mary Gibson.

educational programme directed towards moving the entire population under the shadow and protection of the Faith.

The convocation of the first Native Council in Panama which provided an unfettered sounding board for the Guaymis at the time of the visit of the first 'Trail of Light' contingent represented a tremendous step forward in the development of the consultative process in the Indian way. The impact was tremendous and helped instil in these believers new pride in their indigenous origins and the desire to recapture and preserve their heritage as they move forward and become effective contributors to the establishment of a future world-wide civilization, the crowning point of this Revelation.

Bush Negro believers in Surinam are likewise assuming responsibility for the spread of the Faith. A Regional Teaching Committee composed entirely of Bush Negro believers is now functioning actively. Frequent teaching trips to villages along the river, are organized. For transportation, the teaching teams use a small river boat which was built by the Bush Negro friends and which is powered by an outboard motor purchased with money from the national Bahá'í Fund. One district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds is in use along this river, and more local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds are in the planning stage.

The spiritual receptivity of the Bush Negroes is evidenced by comments heard in some villages where travelling teachers have taken the Faith more recently. These dear people gently asked why the Faith had been taken first to villages further up the river. They had heard the wonderful news, were anxious to receive the Faith, and did not wish to be 'by-passed' by the Bahá'í teachers.

Yet another sign of the growing maturity of Bahá'í communities is that the number attaining financial self-sufficiency has increased during this period and others are earnestly striving to achieve this goal. A closely related goal is that local and district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds be acquired and carefully maintained. That number, too, is growing.

Efforts to serve mankind may be seen in the development of tutorial schools and educational

centres. Bolivia has made notable progress in this direction. These centres will offer the Bahá'í Teachings, literacy classes for children and adults, and practical courses such as sanitation, agriculture and the like.

The ability of Local Spiritual Assemblies to hold their own elections, without outside assistance, attests to their growing maturity. In order to prepare remote villages to hold their own elections each Riḍván, an 'election' tape was made by the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska and certain villages were chosen to receive it. Some were able to elect their own Assemblies at Riḍván 1983.

In this maturing process, a most welcome trend is the steady increase in the number of Bahá'í Summer and Winter Schools and the gradual improvement in the quality of the courses being offered.

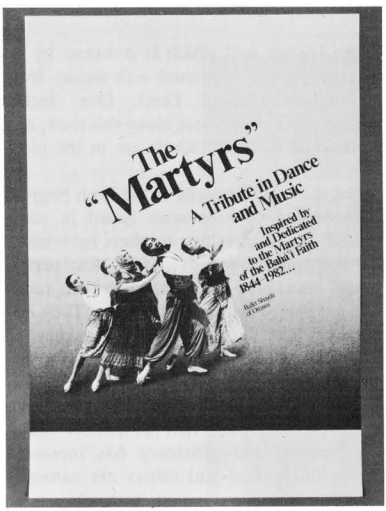
Youth

Galvanized by the martyrdom of some of their peers in Írán, thousands of youth have come forward, offering their services in all aspects of the teaching work including proclamation, expansion and consolidation.

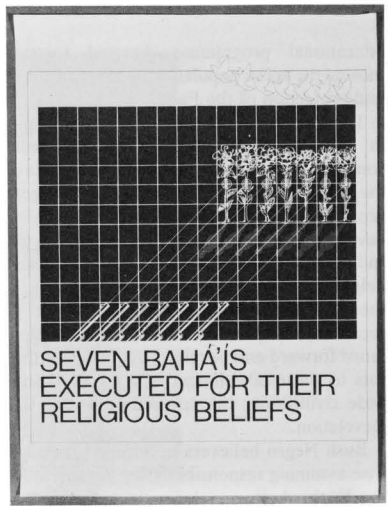
There has been an upsurge of international collaboration at the border area between Surinam and Guyana. This led to a highly successful first International Youth Camp held in Nw. Nickerie, Surinam, in March 1983, which was attended by 130 believers from Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana. Plans are under way to make this an annual event.

In Trinidad and Tobago, two active regional youth committees have gradually involved the Bahá'í youth of the country in village teaching, deepening meetings, proclamation activities, and the teaching of childrens' classes, leading up to a successful National Bahá'í Youth Conference. At the University of the West Indies, interest in the Faith has increased, and several staff members and students have enrolled.

The number of regional Youth and National Conferences called for in the Seven Year Plan has been surpassed many times throughout the region.



A poster advertising a dance created and performed by Ballet Shayda of Canada in memory of the martyred Bahá'ís of Írán.



The martyrdoms of seven Bahá'ís of Yazd in September 1980 inspired a local Bahá'í community in the United States to produce this poster.

A Continental Youth Conference held in Kansas City in July 1982 was graced by the participation of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.

Youth have done an outstanding job proclaiming the Faith on their college campuses. They have organized youth and high school clubs, participated in service projects, and developed 'buddy' systems for pre-youth.

The Hands of the Cause

The irretrievable loss of five Hands of the Cause during the first phase of the Plan made us all more keenly aware of the inestimable value of the services of the Chief Stewards of our Faith. The remaining Hands of the Cause solaced us in our grief and continued to extend their loving services, nurturing and inspiring Bahá'í communities in all parts of the world.

One of the most significant events to occur in Canada during 1982 was the extended visit of Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. In addition to the major role that this beloved Hand carried out as representative of the Universal House of Justice at the International Conference in Montreal, intensive visits within Canada were undertaken to such widely scattered communities as: Halifax, Sydney, and Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia; Saint John, New Brunswick; Summerside, Prince Edward Island; Montreal and the Magdalen Islands, Quebec; Toronto and Port Hope, Ontario; and Whitehorse and Carcross, Yukon.

Her deep love for the native people of North America was reflected in visits to many Indian reserves including: Blood Reserve, Alberta (where a major Native Council took place); Carcross Band Reserve, Yukon; Fountain Band and Thunder Bird Band Reserves in British Columbia; Peigan Reserve, Alberta; Dreamers Rock at Whitefish Bay Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario; Lennox Island Reserve, Prince Edward Island; and Eskasoni Reserve, Nova Scotia.

Believers in some of Canada's geographically remote communities, which all too seldom receive travelling teachers, will be forever grateful for her loving consideration in visiting: St. John's and Grand Falls, Newfoundland; Happy Valley, Labrador, and Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island. Even Canada's overseas northern goals were included with especially significant visits to Nuuk, Greenland, and Reykjavik, Iceland.

Bahá'í communities throughout Central and South America as well as the Island communities in the Caribbean have also enjoyed the bounty of visits from the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, John Robarts, 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, Dhikru'lláh Khádem and Paul Haney. Mr. Haney represented the Universal House of Justice at the Intercontinental Conference in Quito, Ecuador.

Touching, indeed, was the constant assistance of the Hand of the Cause William Sears to the U.S. Bahá'í Community in rallying the friends to provide the resources to launch the first North American Bahá'í radio station, WLGI, located at the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute in Hemingway, South Carolina. The inaugural broadcast is expected to be made in 1984.

Continental Board of Counsellors

Alaskans rejoiced at the appointment to the Continental Board of Counsellors of Lauretta King, a Tlingit and first Native Counsellor in North America.

The Bahá'í community of Panama was honoured in January 1981 by receiving all sixteen members of the Continental Board of Counsellors for its historic first plenary meeting following the consolidation of three Boards into one. The meeting was further enhanced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and Mr. Hooper Dunbar of the International Teaching Centre. Since that time there has been a steady stream of Counsellors through the Americas nurturing, encouraging and stimulating the friends.

The changes in the institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors which placed the United States community within the sphere of influence of the Board for all the Americas were to register their immediate positive effects when, in August 1981, ten members of the newly constituted sixteen-member Board of Counsellors came together with members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States for the inaugural consultations of these two institutions. They were joined, for part of the time, by several members of the



The Local Spiritual Assembly of Chucuito, Puno, Peru; 1981.

National Spiritual Assembly of Canada. The Counsellors, through their own travels, do all they can to keep the vision of the Faith before the friends.

The effective work of Auxiliary Board members and their assistants with the committees and agencies of National Spiritual Assemblies has been responsible in large measure for the achievement of local community goals. For example, in Falcón State, Venezuela, such close collaboration of the Regional Teaching Committee with Auxiliary Board members, native Bahá'í teachers and pioneers yielded excellent results. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies grew from five to eight, then nine and twelve. A number of teaching campaigns were held in the State. In Mene de Mauroa, a six-consecutive-weekend campaign was held and the Bahá'í population reached 228 believers in that town. Previously, a weekend proclamation activity was held in the local theatre with good attendance. Afterwards, a children's conference was successfully carried out, and well-organized consolidation activities have begun with the new believers of Mene de Mauroa.

The Counsellors have effectively championed spiritual enrichment for Bahá'í communities. Moreover, through their Auxiliary Boards more consistent emphasis has been placed on individuals using the Creative Word to transform their characters. This matter has also been placed in the forefront of courses at Bahá'í schools, conferences and institutes.

c. ASIA

In his message to the Bahá'í world, dated October 1953, the beloved Guardian referred to the continent of Asia as '. . . the cradle of the principal religions of mankind; the home of so many of the oldest and mightiest civilizations which have flourished on this planet; the crossways of so many kindreds and races; the battleground of so many peoples and nations; above whose horizons, in modern times, the suns of two independent revelations—the promise and consummation of a six-thousand-year-old religious cycle—have successively arisen; where the Authors of both of these revelations suffered banishment and died; within whose confines the Centre of a divinely-appointed Covenant was born, endured a forty-year incarceration and passed away; on whose western extremity the Qiblih



'Children of Bahá', a Bahá'í children's choir, performing during a meeting in observance of the United Nations Human Rights Day, University of Southern California, 9 December 1979. The singers wear shirts bearing the legend 'One planet, one people—please.'



'The Chosen Highway', a Bahá'í youth choir of New Era High School, Panchgani, Maharashtra, India. In June 1982 the members visited ten cities giving fifty-two performances before audiences totalling more than 16,000 listeners.

of the Bahá'í world has been definitely established; in whose heart the city proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh as the "Mother of the World" is enshrined; within whose borders another city regarded as "the cynosure of an adoring world" and the scene of the greatest and most glorious revelation the world has witnessed is embosomed; on whose soil so many saints, heroes and martyrs, associated with both of these revelations, have lived, struggled and died . . .'

This vast continent is now the scene of unparalleled expansion of the Faith and prodigious receptivity to the Teachings of Bahá-'u'lláh. Asia, the world's largest continent, with more than half of the world's population, is also proud of having more than half of the Bahá'í population of the world. Of the 25,121 Local Spiritual Assemblies in the world, 13,174 are in Asia; and, of a total of 113,111 localities where Bahá'ís reside, Asia alone has 55,273.

Among the innumerable important achievements which have been recorded during the period under review, the following may be cited as particularly outstanding: the development of innovative measures for the Bahá'í education of children and of specialized educational curricula for tribes; increased participation of women in all Bahá'í activities; exemplary dedication of Bahá'í youth to teaching the Faith and to active participation in projects relating to economic and social development; and the largest increase in the number of Chinese embracing the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in any period.

The friends in the Arabian countries of Western Asia and in Afghanistan are restricted in their activities. They are, however, a shining example of fortitude and of adherence to the Bahá'í way of life. On many occasions they have generously contributed towards the achievement of goals in international fields.

The events in Írán, the sacrifices of the friends in that cradle of the Faith, the martyrdom of so many holy and steadfast souls have been and continue to be a source of inspiration, a vitalizing force and an assurance of confirmation to all those who arise to teach and serve the Cause. A detailed report on the persecutions appears elsewhere in this volume of the international record.

Indonesia is another country where organized Bahá'í activities are banned and some of the friends who taught the Faith on an individual basis are now in prison.

In India, the Faith has spread among people of all shades and castes, women and children, the young and the old, the privileged and disadvantaged. The first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár for the whole of the Asian continent is being built in India. The phrase 'Unto our Lord, are we building the Temple' is heard on all lips.

Almost every day a conference, deepening class or a Summer or Winter school is held in some part of India. Here are found the largest Bahá'í tribal communities.

The Bahá'í Academy of India, established and developed through close co-operation between the National Spiritual Assembly and the Continental Board of Counsellors, promises to be an outstanding institution for the higher study of the Teachings.

Among the most exciting developments that are taking place in India is the establishment of educational institutions all over the country, including tutorial schools, primary schools and colleges. Notable among these are the New Era School, the Rabbani School, the Institute of Rural Technology and the Rural Development Programme. Unquestionably these institutions are invested with potentiality for becoming powerful instruments for the expansion and consolidation of the Faith in India.

Realizing that the status of women in India is very low, partly because of their lack of education and skills to become gainfully self-employed, a rural Women's Vocational Training Institute was established in Indore where Bahá'í women from nearby villages are trained in simple skills such as soap-making, candle-making and chalk-making to name but three.

Bangladesh has successfully achieved all its goals. Women's activities there are of high quality and play a significant role in Bahá'í community life. Co-ordinated by the National Bahá'í Women's Committee, deepening classes and conferences are organized for both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í women. The youth also are very active and have their own newsletter.

The historic achievement of obtaining official recognition of the Faith by the authorities is among the outstanding accomplishments of the Bahá'ís of Pakistan. Some of the other noteworthy achievements of this community

are the sustained and collective efforts to mobilize Bahá'í youth in the service of their Faith, the holding of successful Summer and Winter Schools, and the unprecedented increase in the number of teaching conferences.

Activities in Burma, a country which has one of the oldest Bahá'í communities in the world, have been for a long time and still continue to be subject to strict control by the authorities. These restrictions are general and not specifically directed against the activities of Bahá'ís. However, the efforts of the friends to promote cordial relations with people in authority, and their attempt to explain to them the principles of the Faith and the loyalty of the friends to their government, paved the way for the implementation of some teaching and consolidation projects leading to a remarkable increase in such activities and the revitalization of the community in general.

The prestige of the Tadong Bahá'í School is largely responsible for the continued growth of the Faith not only in Sikkim but in other Himalayan States including Darjeeling and Kalimpong. The government officials in these areas are friends of the Faith and attend Bahá'í annual functions by hundreds. The authorities are co-operative in all respects. These Himalayan States have populations of various religious backgrounds and the Tadong School has Tibetan, Lepcha, Bhutia and Indian students. A number of Bahá'í tutorial schools have been established. The women in these Himalayan States often take a leading part in general Bahá'í activities and in projects relating to social development.

The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Nepal was re-established in 1982. Cordial relations exist with officials and dignitaries. The Cause of God is progressing smoothly and satisfactorily.

The Bahá'í community of Sri Lanka has come through many difficult times and has survived tests and trials as well as hardship resulting from the political disturbances that have afflicted this beautiful island.

In terms of systematic expansion and consolidation, the period 1979–1983 may be considered one of the most productive in the history of the Faith in Thailand. The continued development and maturity of the National Spiritual Assembly has been a notable feature of the progress of the Faith in this country. An outstanding accomplishment has been the acceptance of the Faith by hundreds of Indochinese in the refugee camps and the



Some Bahá'ís of the Dang tribe, Gujarat, India; 1982.

establishment of a strong Local Spiritual Assembly in Phanat Nikhom Refugee Camp in north-east Thailand. Another significant development was the handing over to the National Spiritual Assembly of Thailand of a multi-purpose educational complex, called the Santitham Vithayakam School, established by Mrs. Shirin Fozdar. Situated in the Province of Yasothon with approximately sixty Local Spiritual Assemblies in close proximity, this complex has the potential to serve as the centre of socio-economic development projects.

During the period under review the most significant development in Laos was the programme of recovering Local Spiritual Assemblies lost previously due to political disturbances. Through the concerted efforts of the National Teaching Committee and dedicated individuals, the National Assembly was able to recover twenty Local Assemblies during the second phase of the Seven Year Plan. In spite of restrictions on travelling within the country the community of the Most Great Name organized well-attended, live-in teaching conferences in Vientiane. The good relations, mutual trust and respect maintained by the National Assembly with the authorities in Laos is one of the most meritorious achievements of the Bahá'ís in that country.

The Bahá'í community of Malaysia has continued to progress. There are two disparate communities in East and West Malaysia and each has different aspects of development.

East Malaysia has a large rural community with hundreds of localities. Many of the villages have good Bahá'í communities which hold Assembly meetings, Nineteen Day Feasts, children's classes and women's activities. Women are the mainstay of community activities. They organized several women's conferences and, together with the youth, are doing communal farming. East Malaysia is exemplary in the holding of large numbers of regional teaching conferences, youth conferences, women's conferences, children's classes and teachers' conferences.

In West Malaysia, as a result of government re-zoning, the number of Local Assemblies has been altered. The believers in the cities, towns and estates have all-Bahá'í activities for community and individual development. Conferences and courses for youth, as well as classes for women and children, are held all over the Peninsula. The Faith gained better recognition when the community was invited to send representatives to participate in a prayer session for peace and unity held on Armed Forces' Day. Bahá'í marriages have legal recognition and numerous Bahá'í Assistant Registrars have been appointed by the government to conduct marriages. In East Malaysia, also, native believers who are not covered by this marriage law seek to marry according to Bahá'í procedure.

Malaysian Bahá'ís, acting on the instructions of the National Spiritual Assembly, have undertaken a new project to donate blood during the Muslim month of Fasting during which Muslims are not available as blood donors. Bahá'í communities all over Malaysia have been quite successful and their activities have been accorded good publicity.

Bahá'í correspondence courses are issued in four languages with lessons geared to meet the needs of beginners, advanced students, Local Assembly members and children. Summer and Winter Schools are held in different parts of the country, and recently Summer Schools conducted in Tamil and Chinese have been held regularly.

The continued mobilization of Bahá'í youth for participation in expansion and consolidation; the successful conferences and Summer and Winter Schools which have been held; the increasing participation of women in Bahá'í activities; the satisfactory increase in the use of the press, radio and television for the proclamation of the Faith; and the translation and publication of literature in local languages are among the noteworthy achievements of the Bahá'ís of Korea.

The small dynamic community of Singapore has recently bought its own new National Centre. Singapore has sent travelling teachers to the Philippines, Thailand, Burma and India. Its contributions to the Bahá'í Funds, international and national, are very liberal.

In spite of the fact that some of the pioneers had to leave the Philippines, this community resolved to carry on resolutely to win the goals of the Plan and increase the members' knowledge of the Teachings. They have established successful tutorial schools under most difficult conditions and have established for themselves an excellent reputation with the authorities. This latter point is illustrated by the fact that



Some Bahá'í women who participated in a meeting celebrating the establishment of the Faith in Burma; Spring 1983.

the Bahá'ís of Baguio City were invited by the city government to participate in its campaign against drug addiction because it recognized that Bahá'ís are positive in their approach to their fellow men and can thus effectively promote unity. As part of this campaign the Bahá'ís will visit more than one hundred villages or *barangays* where they will work mostly with youth.

The valiant community of Japan has done excellent work in the teaching and administrative fields, has been successful in increasing the number of believers and has prepared for the formation of several new Local Spiritual Assemblies. The friends there have, in an organized manner, brought to the attention of members of parliament and government officials the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

The prospects are bright for the progress of the Faith in Taiwan. There is a great deal of Bahá'í activity, increases in the numbers of believers are anticipated, and plans have been laid for a country-wide teaching project. Further, the Publishing Trust is gaining in strength and has produced two beautiful new prayer books in Chinese, one a regular prayer book attractively printed and bound, and a second, designed for children, with Chinese and English texts. Relations between the Bahá'í community and the authorities are very cordial. Two members of the Taipei community are employed by the English-language radio station, one as manager and the other as newscaster.

The Bahá'ís of the world gaze expectantly at Asia whose peoples have shown such marked receptivity to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and where, when the true nature of the Bahá'í Revelation is understood and its followers are free to promulgate its life-giving, spiritual principles, great benefits will result.

D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

The period from Riḍván 1979 to Riḍván 1983 has been one of consolidation with some expansion in the very widespread and difficult-of-access Australasian area. The community in most island countries has settled back on a more solid foundation whilst at the grass roots level there is greater strength and many of the Local Spiritual Assemblies have grown in maturity. Difficult tests have been experienced in most areas as the communities evolved and gained new strength. Increasingly women are taking their place in the affairs of the Faith and youth are preparing for their new responsibilities. There prevails an increased recog-



Some participants who attended the regional teaching conference held in Auckland, New Zealand; June 1981.



The Local Spiritual Assembly of Albury, New South Wales, Australia; 1979. The establishment of this, the one hundredth Spiritual Assembly of Australia, represented completion of the goals of the Five Year Plan for that country.

nition that by living the life and working in accord with Bahá'í principles we shall better prepare ourselves for the next stage in the development of the Faith. With a new spirit pervading the community—a spirit released through the sufferings of our brothers and sisters in Írán—we witness results in teaching amongst Aboriginal peoples, joint projects between National Assemblies, circulation of travelling teachers and pioneers, and a greater use of radio and television. As the Faith has emerged from relative obscurity, the National Assemblies, especially in countries where the Faith has been long established, have acquired a new confidence in their approach to the authorities which has resulted in strengthening the prestige of the Faith. In the continental perspective, the collaboration between the Board of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies has developed progressively, whilst the Bahá'í International Community has continued to cement relations with the South Pacific Commission.

The Australasian continental zone was increased in November 1980 by the addition of four Central Pacific island countries—the Caroline Islands, Hawaiian Islands, Marshall Islands and the Mariana Islands—all with existing National Spiritual Assemblies. The new total of fourteen National Assemblies was increased by one with the formation during Riḍván 1981 of the National Spiritual Assembly of Tuvalu, a small, newly-emerged independent State of only 7,357 people living within the island group and an estimated 1,700 living elsewhere. The community has grown impressively. The expansion in Tuvalu has been matched by that in only three other Pacific island areas: Vanuatu saw mass entry on the island of Tanna, and Tonga and the Mariana Islands have enjoyed steady expansion.

Most other island communities were unable to maintain and consolidate the unusual successes of the Five Year Plan. Efforts at consolidation were either insufficient or hampered by the difficulties of travel. Sometimes circumstances beyond the control of pioneers made it impossible for them to remain at their posts. Thus the indigenous Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian believers have had to shoulder increasingly responsibilities that previously were carried out by the pioneers. There has been a heartening effort by these fine believers to improve the quality of their Bahá'í lives and to assume initiative in teaching and administrative activities.

The French areas of New Caledonia and Loyalty Islands, as well as French Polynesia, suffered many setbacks as did the Caroline Islands and Fiji. Even Kiribati, which during the Five Year Plan achieved resounding successes, fell back considerably. But in all these areas determined efforts are being made to improve the situation.

During the entire period the sufferings of the dear, courageous friends in Írán have been constantly in the thoughts and prayers of the believers. Through the efforts of the National Spiritual Assemblies these persecutions have been brought to the attention of the authorities. In Australia and Fiji this led to resolutions being passed in their parliaments. Media coverage has increased in all places. Proclamation and the establishment of cordial relations with officials and leaders of thought has continued throughout the zone. As usual, Hawaii has met with particular success in activities of this kind and has initiated imaginative measures.

In almost all areas the determination to vindicate the sufferings of the believers in the Cradle of the Faith has shown itself in the increased confidence with which the friends are arising to commit themselves anew to service. Australia and New Zealand have witnessed a steady growth in numbers and an unprecedented degree of community development. Their Local Assemblies are maturing, evidenced by their increased ability to more effectively handle extension teaching projects and the administrative affairs of the Faith. Development of Bahá'í scholarship was fostered in this period to an unprecedented degree. There has been an increase in the number of Bahá'í Summer Schools that were held and greater attention was devoted to the translation of the Revealed Word. There have been new and outstanding strides taken amongst Aboriginals in Australia and the Maoris in New Zealand. In Papua New Guinea, a country of some three million inhabitants, the community has recently rallied itself to gain 114 of the 140 Local Assemblies required in the Plan. It is interesting to note that more declarations resulted from the correspondence course than from any other form of

teaching. A dramatic effort in consolidation of this large stream of new believers featured a visit of a team by helicopter to the Mountain Brown area. Fiji has seen revived success amongst its large Indian population. Recent teaching efforts in the Marianas resulted in attracting many Filipinos and some indigenous Chamorro believers. There has been spontaneous teaching on distant islands: a Local Spiritual Assembly has been established on Tikopia, a small 'dot' of an island in the Eastern Solomons some 500 miles across the sea from the capital of Honiara, and in the Carolines the distant atoll of Satawal now has a group which includes a Chief.

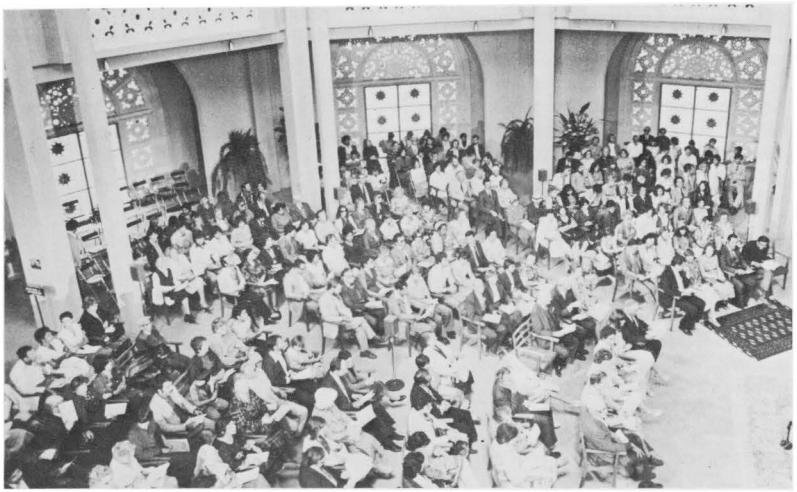
A highlight of this period was the Bahá'í International Conference held in Canberra, the capital of Australia, attended by 2,400 believers from forty-five countries of both Asia and Australasia. The Australian National Spiritual Assembly skilfully planned and implemented this outstanding conference commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, representing the Universal House of Justice, by his very presence provided a spiritual force recognized by all. Our own beloved Hand of the Cause, Collis Featherstone, led a spirited two-way telephone link-up with the more than 9,000 Bahá'ís assembled at the Montreal Conference. Dr. Giachery, in a telex sent to the World Centre, described this as UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS OF ANY CONFERENCE EVER ATTENDED and noted that it MAKES ME HIGHLY HOPEFUL OF GREAT DURABLE ACHIEVEMENTS ALL REGIONS BETWEEN POLES AXIS WITHIN BRIEF TIME.

The conference placed in focus the spiritual axis linking Australia and Japan, an axis which the beloved Guardian described as 'extending from the Antipodes to the northern islands of the Pacific, an axis whose northern and southern poles will act as powerful magnets, endowed with exceptional spiritual potency'.

The Continental Board of Counsellors was reconstituted on 3 November 1980 with the Hawaiian Islands and Micronesia added to its previous zone. Our gratitude and appreciation go to the three retiring Counsellors who gave years of outstanding and devoted service during which they travelled, often in difficult circumstances, all over this vast expanse of ocean. Two of these—Howard Harwood and Thelma Perks—had served from the inception of the Board in 1968; and the third, Violet Hoehnke, since May 1973. The remaining three members—Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í, Mr. Owen Battrick and Dr. Peter Khan—welcomed the appointment of three new members: Mr. Ben Ayala of the Hawaiian Islands, Mrs. Tinai Hancock of New Zealand and Mr. Lisiate Maka of Tonga. Counsellor Richard Benson was transferred from the former Northeast Asian Board to this zone, making the seventh member. The number of Auxiliary Board members was increased from forty-five to sixty-three to serve the enlarged zone. This period has been one in which the devoted efforts of 'these precious souls—the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants—' have contributed markedly to the strengthening of the fabric of the Cause.

There has been continuing improvement in the collaboration between the institutions of the Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assemblies as well as between the Auxiliary Board members and the Local Assemblies. This collaboration and the resulting effort has enhanced the deepening of the believers in their understanding of the principles and teachings of the Faith. Nineteen Day Feasts are better attended and are of higher calibre, and children's classes have grown and improved as have all local community activities. Pioneer effort and the movement of travelling teachers have increased within the continental zone and several National Assemblies have participated in joint projects. For example, there has been an exchange of travelling teachers between the Solomons and Vanuatu, between Australia and Papua New Guinea, and a teaching project by Australia and Japan in Micronesia. Australia and New Zealand have taken measures to revive the magazine *Herald of the South*.

Noticeable throughout the period has been the greater degree of participation of women, and more recently of youth. Women are making their presence and their value felt at the very foundation of the community, in child training and family life. The youth are coming to the forefront in teaching activities and are often the initiators of development projects in the area.



Some participants in the service held at the Bahá'í House of Worship, Sydney, Australia, in observance of United Nations Day; October 1980.

The eyes of the friends have been turning expectantly to Western Samoa where the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is now rising upon a beautiful hillside in Apia. Despite difficulties and delays the work has progressed steadily throughout the period and the dedication is anticipated some time in 1984.

The Bahá'í International Community has continued to be represented each year at the South Pacific Commission Conference by Counsellor Tinai Hancock. She is accompanied on each occasion by an alternate representative chosen from among the local believers in each venue of the conference.

In January 1923 the beloved Guardian referred to the Pacific Islands in delightful terms: '. . . their very names evoke within us so high a sense of hope and admiration that the passing of time and the vicissitudes of life can never weaken or remove.' As this brief survey goes to press, we who serve in that area, already blessed by the presence of the first reigning monarch to espouse the Faith, soon to be further blessed with a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár on a Pacific Island, and finding ourselves linked by this 'spiritual axis' with another area of great potential, can but have a feeling of wonder as we sense the forces of the Army of Light being challenged, tempered and strengthened for tasks that will test us further.

E. EUROPE

An outstanding feature of the Five Year Plan (1974–1979) was the establishment in Europe of Local Spiritual Assemblies across an area extending from the snows of the Arctic to the islands in the Mediterranean Sea. The value of these local institutions became clear in the four years under review in this survey. They grew in stature within their local Bahá'í communities and they served to broaden the base from which the Bahá'ís of Europe could arise as one and defend their persecuted brethren in Írán.

The trumpet-blast that sounded again and again as the persecutions in Írán continued



Some participants in the first teaching institute to be held in Sisimiut (formerly Holsteinsborg), Greenland; 25 July 1982. The thirteen Bahá'ís seen here are from six different countries.



National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the Republic of Ireland, Dublin; acquired September 1982.

reverberated throughout this continent. The National Spiritual Assemblies led their communities in protest against this blatant religious discrimination and cruel violation of human rights. Their actions were co-ordinated by the European Office of the Bahá'í International Community in Geneva.

Supportive response came from international, national and local levels, as well as from governments, cabinet ministers and from ecclesiastical circles. Most outstanding have been the resolutions of the Parliament and of the Council of Europe; the resolutions passed on two occasions by the Parliament of the European Economic Community; the debates in the British House of Lords; the resolutions of the German Bundestag and the Parliament of the Netherlands; and the wholehearted support of representatives of European governments of *démarches* and of the resolutions put forward in sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, meeting in Geneva. In Switzerland, the Federation of Protestant Churches issued a report on the plight of the Persian Bahá'ís. In England, the Dean of Canterbury participated in the ceremony when a tree was planted within the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral as a living memorial to the martyrs, the site marked by a plaque reading 'In memory of the Persian Bahá'ís who gave their lives for God'. The heads of Oxford Colleges registered their feelings on two occasions by signing statements protesting against the continuing persecutions.

It is impossible in this brief summary to mention all the national and local publicity accorded the Faith through the mass media in Europe as a result of its persecution in Írán. Outstanding have been articles in *Le Monde*, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, national radio and press publicity in Northern Ireland, and the response in the French-speaking countries of Europe to the book *Les Bahá'ís, ou Victoire sur la Violence* by Mrs. Christine Samandari (*née*) Hakim and in the United Kingdom to *Iran's Secret Pogrom* by Dr. Geoffrey Nash. A typical example of the quantity of press coverage devoted on the local level to the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís is the 1,110 column centimetres which appeared in the year 1982–1983 in the press of East Lothian, Scotland.

The sacrifices of the Bahá'ís of Írán have proclaimed the Faith continuously throughout this continent. Much of the energy of the Bahá'í communities, nationally and locally, has been channelled into these activities. This of itself has brought new experience and has had a unifying and consolidating effect on the communities. At the same time, many Bahá'ís have come to Europe from Írán as part of the world-wide dispersal which resulted from the persecutions in their native land. This has presented both a challenge and an opportunity to Bahá'í communities, already diversified, to achieve integration of east and west on an unprecedented scale. A not unusual example of 'unity in diversity' is found in one of Norway's Local Spiritual Assemblies, whose nine members are of five different nationalities.

One of the most far-reaching developments occurred in November 1980 when the Universal House of Justice increased from five to nine the membership of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Europe. The greater personal contact thus made possible served to strengthen the relationship between the Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assemblies and, through the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, also strengthened relationships with the Local Spiritual Assemblies and local communities. The co-operation achieved between these two major pillars of the Bahá'í Faith has had a profound effect upon every aspect of Bahá'í activity.

The composition of Bahá'í communities themselves has gradually changed. Bahá'í children have grown into youth and an increase in the number of young married couples has given a new meaning to Bahá'í family life. This in turn has brought a new awareness of the role of the Local Spiritual Assemblies in their relationships to children, youth and families, as well as to the older believers. In every country there has been a sustained interest in studying the Bahá'í Writings for guidance concerning the family and the spiritual education of children and youth. There is constant effort to develop joyous, dynamic and well-oriented Bahá'í communities that can triumph over the debilitating influences of a sceptical and materialistic environment.

Each national community has held Summer and Winter Schools regularly; Germany, Italy

and the United Kingdom have held several each year in different parts of their respective countries. With programmes of ever-increasing value and interest, the wonderful spirit of each of these Schools has attracted a growing number of participants from other countries. Norway, Sweden and Denmark, which previously joined together for these activities, held independent Summer Schools for the first time in 1979, and each has gone from strength to strength in the development of their Summer and Winter Schools.

A need became apparent for special provision for the growing number of children attending national and regional gatherings. The Bahá'ís of the Netherlands took the lead in conducting children's classes of particular excellence at such functions in their country. Children's Summer Schools and Summer Camps are held in several countries, notably Germany and France, where they are firmly established.

Teaching conferences, seminars, institutes, weekend and one-day schools have been held in every country and have called for a greater number of Bahá'í teachers. In Denmark and Iceland, in particular, successful weekend teacher-training programmes have been conducted for the past several years.

In four countries the national communities joyously reported that their growth has been such as to require their obtaining larger national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. New administrative headquarters of increased capacities have been acquired in Norway, the Republic of Ireland, France and Luxembourg. The National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland administers the excellent 'Landegg Conference Centre' for Bahá'í purposes. It is situated in the north-east of the country and promises to develop into a study centre serving all Europe.

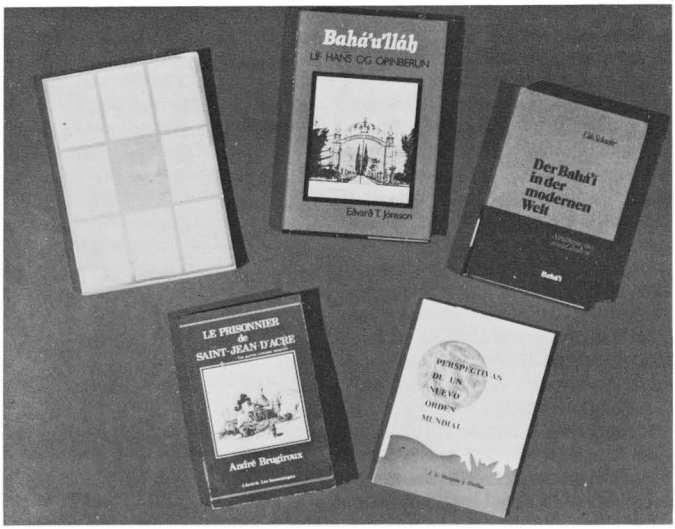
Scotland (which has its own legal system) and Denmark have joined those countries where Bahá'í marriages, conducted by Bahá'ís, are legally recognized.

Links with the United Nations have been strengthened through the celebration of Human Rights Day and United Nations Day, as well as through the holding of special events in support of UNICEF and UNESCO. The Bahá'í community of Denmark actively participated in the United Nations International Women's Conference held in Copenhagen in 1980, and in 1982 itself organized a special Women's Seminar.

The fourth European Youth Conference, held from 6 to 10 September 1980 at Fiesch, Switzerland, was attended by three Counsellors and more than 900 young Bahá'ís from every country in Western Europe and many other parts of the world. Strengthened by the experience of shared learning and social interaction in the spiritual and joyous atmosphere of the conference, the youth dispersed to serve with energy and enthusiasm in the Seven Year Plan. Their eagerness to undertake 'border teaching'—one of the international goals of the Plan in Europe—continues to bear fruit.

Among other co-operative activities, two 'North Sea Border Conferences' were held, with friends from Belgium, the Netherlands and the east coast of England participating. Switzerland, Austria and Germany joined in a successful 'Bodensee Proclamation Project'. Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands support activity in the newly-opened German-speaking area of Belgium. Finland and Sweden continue to work together in the Åland Islands. And the Bahá'ís in the far north of Norway, Sweden and Finland co-operate 'horizontally' across those three areas in Lapland. There are strong links between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. France and Switzerland work together, as do Italy, Corsica and Sardinia; and Cyprus works with both Greece and Turkey, especially in the field of publishing. In the Basque region, France and Spain co-operate.

Nine travelling teachers from Iceland have visited Greenland where the teaching work is steadily developing through the aid of the Danish Bahá'í community which has offered additional support by sending pioneers, travelling teachers and visitors. The first Local Spiritual Assembly in Greenland was established in the capital city, Nuuk, at Riḍván 1979. Eleven young Greenlanders have accepted the Faith since the much-appreciated visit there of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum in September 1982. Greenland is an example of intercontinental co-operation: the Bahá'í community of Canada has the goal of assisting in its development, and geographically it is part of the area of the Counsellors of the Americas who themselves—and through their



A selection of major original publications in European languages: from top (clockwise): Bahá'u'lláh, Líf Hans og Opinberun *(1982) by Eðvarð T. Jónsson (Icelandic);* Der Bahá'í in der modernen Welt *(1981) by Udo Schaefer (German);* Perspectivas de un Nuevo Orden Mundial *(1982) by J. L. Marqués y Utrillas (Spanish);* Le Prisonnier de Saint-Jean-D'Acre *(1982) by André Brugiroux (French);* Gli Otto Veli *(1981) by Augusto Robiati (Italian).*



National Youth Symposium, Seiano, Italy; June 1980.

Auxiliary Board members and assistants—are constantly in touch with the friends there. Both the American and the European Counsellors work with and give practical support to the National Spiritual Assembly of Denmark in its work in Greenland.

Numerous Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed in earlier Plans in the islands around Europe's coastline. In the summer of 1981 Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum brought joy to the friends in some of the northern islands when she visited Mull, the Outer Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands. She made a number of visits to Cyprus. In 1982, while visiting Europe, the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone visited the Baltic island of Bornholm which is one of those in which a Local Assembly is to be formed during the Seven Year Plan. An outstanding 'island victory' is the development of the Canary Islands, part of the Bahá'í community of Spain, whose progress by Riḍván 1982 had led them to the threshold of the establishment of their own National Spiritual Assembly. Responsibility for Malta was transferred from the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom to that of Italy at Riḍván 1980.

European Counsellors have made a point of visiting and maintaining close contact with the island Bahá'í communities from the North Atlantic to the Mediterranean Sea and they have also supported the work of National Spiritual Assemblies and their committees by making a special effort to keep in touch with the more isolated communities in each country, both through their personal travels and through the work of the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants.

The teaching work and the ensuing deepening and consolidation is conducted in sixteen different European languages. This gives rise to a constant need for translation and publication of the Holy Writings, as well as all manner of other books and deepening material. Some notable recent publications are the first book in Luxembourgian, a Bahá'í prayer book; *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá-'u'-lláh, A Synopsis and Codification of the* **Kitáb-i-Aqdas** and *Some Answered Questions* in Dutch; a compilation of Bahá'í prayers, *The Hidden Words* and *Some Answered Questions* in Greek; *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* in Swedish; a compilation of Writings of the Central Figures in Icelandic; and a book about the life of Bahá'u'lláh by Eðvarð T. Jónsson, the first Bahá'í book to be written in Icelandic; and the first introductory book translated into Faroese, *The Bahá'í Faith* by Gloria Faizi.

In 1981 Switzerland commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of its famous scientist and humanitarian, Professor August Forel, one of the earliest Swiss Bahá'ís. The Swiss Bahá'í community recalled his association with the Bahá'í Faith by producing and dedicating to him a special issue of its magazine *La Pensée Bahá'íe*. A doctoral dissertation by John Paul Vader entitled *For the Good of Mankind: August Forel and the Bahá'í Faith* written on that occasion received an award from the University of Lausanne in Professor Forel's native Canton of Vaud.

Europe has many personal links with 'Abdu'l-Bahá Who visited the continent in 1911 and again in 1913. In 1983 the Bahá'ís of Austria celebrated the seventieth anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Vienna by republishing Maria von Meymayer's drama *Qurratu'l-'Ayn* and distributing it to prominent persons and institutions throughout the country. In the United Kingdom, Bahá'í youth journeyed by train, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself had done, from London to Edinburgh, to join the Scots Bahá'ís in their observance of the seventieth anniversary of the Master's visit to the Scottish capital. The celebration began with the welcoming skirl of bagpipes as the train drew into Waverley Station and it continued on a joyous note for the whole weekend.

Portugal is one of the Bahá'í communities which has enjoyed outstanding success with general proclamation activities in the form of newspaper articles, exhibitions and television programmes.

The Bahá'í community of the Republic of Ireland, already outstanding for its devotion to the Cause, the services of its pioneers on the homefront and abroad, and for the loving enthusiasm of its travelling teachers, befittingly organized and welcomed the International Conference in Dublin in June 1982. It was attended by 1,900 Bahá'ís from sixty countries. This conference was one of a total of five convened by the Universal House of Justice and dedicated to the memory of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the fiftieth anniversary of



Some participants in the annual convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Iceland; 1981. Counsellor Betty Reed is seen in the centre of the second row.

whose passing it commemorated. It was the high point of the four years under review.

The message from the House of Justice to the conference gave a new direction to the European Bahá'í community. It called upon the Continental Board of Counsellors to consult with every National Spiritual Assembly in Europe and 'together, launch such a campaign of spiritualization and personal teaching, as has never been witnessed in your continent'. It urged that 'the Bahá'í community in every country in Europe . . . stand out as a beacon light'. After describing Europe's response to Christianity as the development 'through many vicissitudes' of 'the most widespread and effective civilization known', the message outlined the task of the Bahá'ís as that of arousing in the people of Europe a more magnificent response to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh 'than was ever made by the divided and contending peoples of olden times'. In a continent where there has developed among the populace a revulsion against religion and where there has been a powerful growth of materialism, this task is not an easy one, but it now animates and activates the European Bahá'í communities and will undoubtedly inspire them to unprecedented efforts.

2. THE ASSOCIATION FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES 1979–1983

GERALD FILSON

IN 1974 the Universal House of Justice called upon the Canadian Bahá'í community to 'cultivate opportunities for formal presentations, courses and lectureships on the Bahá'í Faith in Canadian universities and other institutions of higher learning'. Following a policy conference, the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada established the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith. It was felt that the Association would provide a suitable means of approach to intellectuals and universities and bring to these circles an awareness of the Faith and an acquaintance with the academic resources which are available to facilitate formal study of it. From 1974 to 1979 four annual meetings were held. The Association grew in membership, published a series of high quality monographs, initiated work on a textbook on the Faith of university calibre and stimulated formal presentations at universities and colleges throughout Canada.

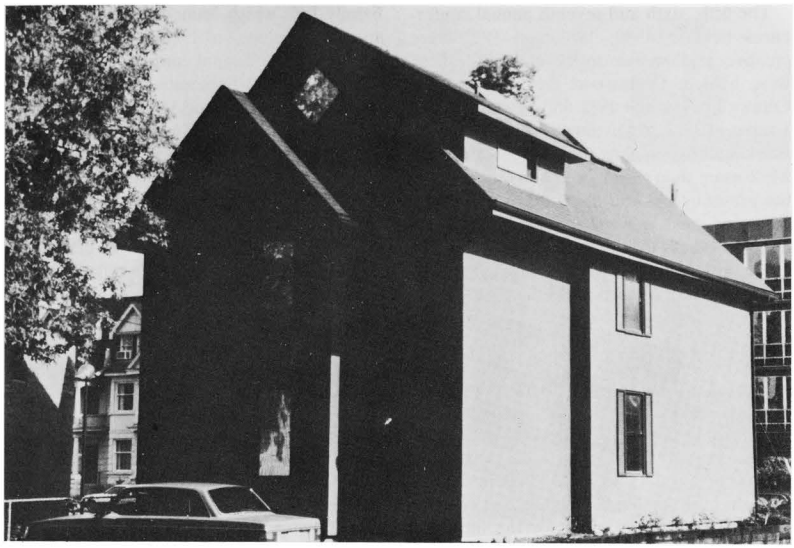
In the period Riḍván 1979 to Riḍván 1982 the Association for Bahá'í Studies has played an increasingly important role in the affairs of the international Bahá'í community and through its conferences and publications has provided an exciting forum for intellectual and spiritual development. The change of name which was recommended by the Canadian National Assembly and approved by the Universal House of Justice in April 1981 reflected the emerging nature of the Association's membership and activities with national affiliates established in a number of countries. Its executive committee included, for the first time, members from the United States as well as Canada. Serving on the current Executive Committee are Hossain Danesh, Glen Eyford, Richard Gagnon, Jane Goldstone, William Hatcher, Douglas Martin, Peter Morgan, Nasser Sabet and Christine Zerbinis, of Canada. Firuz Kazemzadeh and Dorothy Nelson serve as liaison officers in the United States.

The Association has constantly received invaluable and reassuring support, guidance and assistance from the Universal House of Justice and has enjoyed the participation and encouragement of the Hands of the Cause and members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors. It has also derived benefit from the spiritual and intellectual contributions of members of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Canada.

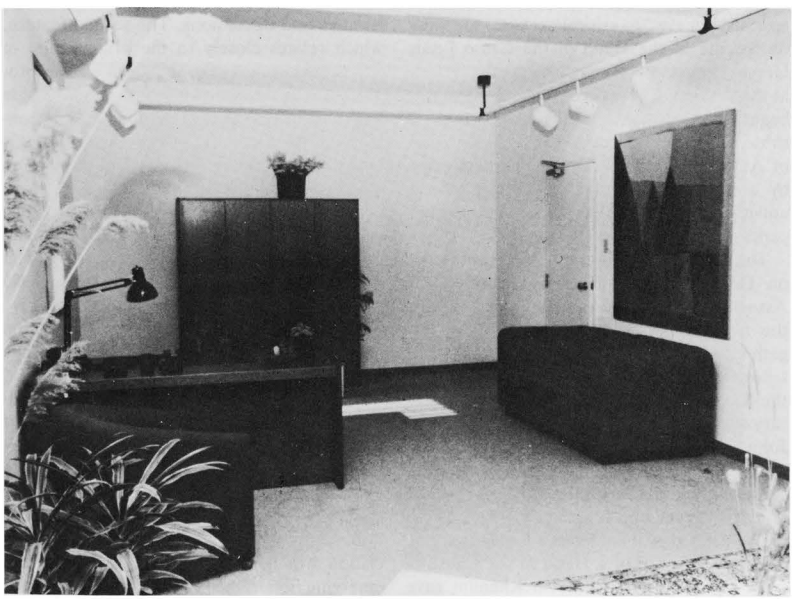
Highlights during the period under review —a period of transition from a Canadian to an international association—have included the opening of a modest but beautiful Centre for Bahá'í Studies, the first such centre in the Bahá'í world, at the heart of the University of Ottawa's campus in Canada's national capital; the holding of three annual conferences, two special theme conferences and several regional conferences; continued excellence in the standard of publications produced by the Association; and the launching of an affiliated organization, the Bahá'í International Health Agency, which began operations in July 1982 with Dr. Ethel Martens (researcher, social and preventive medicine) serving as executive secretary.

In 1979 the Universal House of Justice gave a further goal to the Canadian community for the Seven Year Plan: 'Expand the opportunities for teaching in Canadian institutions of higher learning and further develop the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith.' And in 1981, when the second phase of the Seven Year Plan was launched, the Universal House of Justice restated this goal and divided it into two parts: 'Foster the development of the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith' and 'Expand and intensify the teaching of the Faith in Canadian institutions of higher learning.'

The goal of cultivating opportunities for formal presentations and courses remained a primary objective of the Association, but the Universal House of Justice also encouraged specific attention to the development of the Association itself. The Association had become a significant feature of the intellectual, social and spiritual life of the Canadian community, and for increasing numbers of Bahá'ís worldwide.



Exterior view of the centre of the Association for Bahá'í Studies, Ottawa, Canada. Acquisition was announced in March 1981.



View of the reception area in the centre for Bahá'í Studies. The centre is located at the heart of the campus of the University of Ottawa.

The fifth, sixth and seventh annual conferences held in 1980, 1981 and 1982 were creative and stimulating events. All three were held in Ottawa—at the University of Ottawa in 1980 and 1981 and at the Château Laurier in 1982. Approximately three hundred Bahá'ís and guests attended in 1980 and 1981 while more than six hundred and fifty enjoyed the presentations and discussions at the 1982 gathering held a week prior to the International Bahá'í Conference in Montreal.

The fifth annual conference inaugurated an annual memorial lecture in honour of the Hand of the Cause Ḥasan M. Balyúzí who died in February 1980. The Hand of the Cause of God John A. Robarts, Dr. 'Abbás Afnán, Dr. Muḥammad Afnán and Mr. Douglas Martin spoke at that conference on the life and work of Mr. Balyúzí. Mr. Douglas Martin and Mr. Glenford Mitchell, secretaries of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Canada and the United States, respectively, made a joint presentation for the memorial lecture in 1981. Mrs. Gayle Morrison, whose *To Move the World: Louis G. Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America* appeared in 1982 to critical acclaim, speaking on the life of the Hand of the Cause Louis Gregory, gave the Ḥasan M. Balyúzí lecture at the 1982 conference. Another new feature, begun at the fifth conference and continued at subsequent conferences, was the presentation of Association contest awards for best essay by a high-school student, best essay by a university student and best individual research paper.

The first Bahá'í International Conference on Health and Healing, organized by the Association, was held immediately following the fifth annual conference. It brought together Bahá'í health professionals and their fellow Bahá'ís to discuss health in the light of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh and contemporary scientific thinking. The Hand of the Cause John A. Robarts inspired and encouraged conference participants and closed the historic gathering by delivering an address on the unity of science and religion.

The sixth annual conference was also graced with the presence of a Hand of the Cause of God. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum gave the opening and closing addresses at the International Conference on Marriage and Family Life which immediately followed the annual conference of 1981.

The seventh annual conference, held from 30 August to 2 September 1982, served to emphasize the growing international dimension of the Association. Many of the unprecedented number of participants who crowded into the beautiful Château Laurier ballroom came from a number of countries outside Canada. 'The Bahá'í Option', theme of the conference, examined solutions offered by Bahá'u'lláh to many contemporary problems confronting mankind. Human rights, personal and social values, justice, economics, telecommunications, workshops and symposia on scholarship, Bahá'í curricula and health were all included on the conference programme. A full day was devoted to a discussion of international development.

Two other features are now characteristic of the Association's conferences. First is the degree to which they reflect the importance in Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation of music and the arts. Presentations of the arts were not auxiliary to the main programme but are viewed as being as essential to the conferences as the lectures and discussions. The second feature, which relates closely to the original aim of the Association, is the inclusion on the programmes of well-known figures from outside the Bahá'í community, a concrete demonstration of the success the Association is enjoying in bringing to leaders of thought an awareness of the Faith and helping raise the prestige of the Faith through fostering cordial relationships with leading intellectuals and scholars. Dr. Jean-René Milot, Professor at the University of Montreal, spoke at the 1980 conference; Mrs. Yoshiko Nomura, Executive Director of the Lifelong Integrated Education Centre in Japan, made a presentation at the gathering in 1981; and Mr. Lewis Perinbam, Vice-President Special Programmes Branch of the Canadian International Development Agency, addressed the conference participants in 1982. These guest speakers were favourably impressed by the quality of the conferences. Indications are that future invitations to speak at conferences of the Association will be well received, a sign of the emerging importance of the kind of forum for scholarship and study which the Association provides.



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum addressing the international conference on marriage and family life, Ottawa, Canada; 1981.



The Hand of the Cause John Robarts with youth who received awards during the seventh annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies for scholarship and research on aspects of the Bahá'í Faith.

In addition to the emerging international activities of the Association, regional conference committees were established which held nine regional conferences in the period from 1979 to 1981. The conference held in Quebec was noteworthy in that it was the first Association conference to be conducted entirely in French. A further development was the sponsorship by the Association of sessions at Bahá'í schools in the United States. One hundred and fifty participants attended the three-day Green Acre Bahá'í School and the Bosch Bahá'í School sessions of the Association in 1981. There were similar sessions at these two Bahá'í schools in 1982 and 1983, and additional sessions at the Louhelen Bahá'í School.

By 1983 three regional conference committees were functioning in Canada and three in the United States: Pacific Northwest, Saskatoon and Quebec, in Canada; and California, Midwestern United States and New England in the U.S.A.

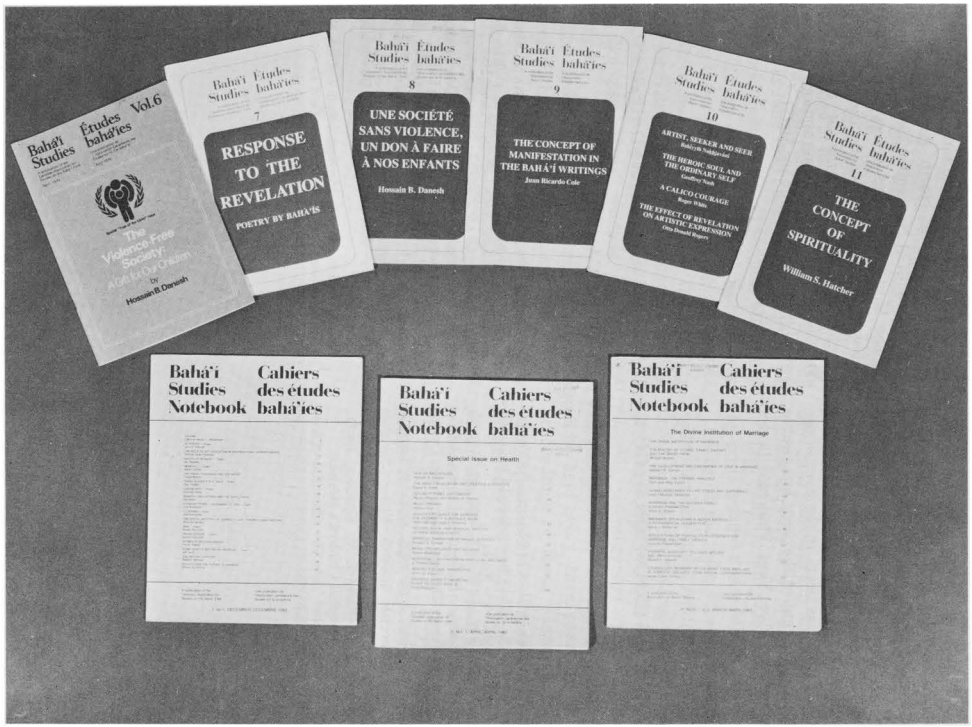
The publishing work of the Association expanded in the period under review with volumes 6 to 11 of *Bahá'í Studies* being produced. Volume 6, *The Violence-Free Society: A Gift for our Children*, by Dr. Hossain B. Danesh, was reprinted (30,000 copies) and provided a focus for a number of regional and local proclamation programmes and conferences in Canada. A translation into French of volume 6 appeared as volume 8. Volumes 7 and 9, *Response to the Revelation: Poetry by Bahá'ís*, by Dr. Geoffrey Nash, et al., and *The Concept of Manifestation in the Bahá'í Writings*, by Mr. Juan Ricardo Cole, were followed in 1982 by volume 10, a collection of articles on creativity by Dr. Bahíyyih Nakhjavání, Dr. Geoffrey Nash and Mr. Otto Donald Rogers, and a selection of poems by Mr. Roger White in homage to Emily Dickinson taken from his full-length work *One Bird, One Cage, One Flight*. Volume 2, *The Science of Religion*, by Dr. William S. Hatcher, was also reprinted. Finally, volume 11, *The Concept of Spirituality*, by Dr. William S. Hatcher, was published in 1982.

A new venture for the Association was the publication of *Bahá'í Studies Notebook*. This publication presented in an attractive format the presentations made at some of the conferences: the April 1981 issue focused on health and the March 1983 issue on marriage and family. The first *Bahá'í Studies Notebook* brought together poetry and essays on the Faith, and an issue on international development was in the final stages of publication in 1983. These two publications, *Bahá'í Studies* and *Bahá'í Studies Notebook*, have served to demonstrate the power of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh to illuminate contemporary problems and issues. They provide valuable resources for the important work of expanding and intensifying the teaching of the Faith in institutions of higher learning.

Another important effort of the Association has been the sponsoring of formal presentations at universities and colleges in both Canada and the United States. The universities of Ottawa, Western Ontario, McMaster, McGill, Simon Fraser, Ohio State, Concordia and Quebec (at Montreal) are some of the universities which have had formal presentations by Bahá'í speakers on behalf of the Association. Members of the Association spoke at university teaching hospitals and at a variety of conferences and seminars including the World Congress of Mental Health in Salzburg, Austria, in July 1979 and the Governor's Conference on Child Abuse in Nevada, in 1980. In May 1983 Association members will participate in the Third Annual Symposium on Religion in the Modern World and will represent the Bahá'í Faith at the 'Worldview 1984' Conference of the World Future Society.

These formal presentations represent important first steps towards the day when Bahá'í courses will be available at institutions of higher learning. Two initiatives in this specific area are worth noting: in 1980 the University of Toronto sponsored a non-credit course on the Bahá'í Faith and, in that same year, the University of British Columbia's Continuing Education Department offered a full semester course on the Faith.

As of Riḍván 1983 these various activities of the Association for Bahá'í Studies promise to accelerate in intensity with increasing significance for the intellectual and learned circles of society still unaware of or barely acquainted with the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. With the Centre for Bahá'í Studies well established and providing accommodation for the secretariat, a reference library and the affiliated Bahá'í



Issues of Bahá'í Studies *and* Bahá'í Studies Notebook *published by the Association for Bahá'í Studies in the period Riḍván 1979–1983.*

International Health Agency, with computerization of much of the Association's administrative and publishing work and, finally, with its international aspects expanding, the Association for Bahá'í Studies looks forward to rapid and exciting developments. Indeed, the Universal House of Justice confirmed the hopes and expectations of the Association's members and supporters in letters written on its behalf to the Association from which the following excerpts are taken:

'The efflorescence of the . . . Association for Bahá'í Studies has been, in the eyes of the House of Justice, one of the very favourable outcomes of the Five Year Plan and bodes well for the maturation and eminence of the Canadian community.' (19 March 1979)

'We are asked to convey its [the Universal House of Justice's] commendation to the Association for the steadily increasing scope of its interests, for its expanding membership and for the valuable stimulus it is providing particularly to the North American Bahá'í community.' (24 November 1982)

'The House of Justice is very pleased with the way in which the Association has been developing, and will pray at the Sacred Threshold for divine confirmations to surround its work.' (9 January 1983)

Appendix I

BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH AND HEALING
1–4 JUNE 1980
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
Programme

Health: A Global Perspective—Victor de Araujo, Ph.D., Representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, New York.

Spiritual Dimensions of Health Sciences—Hossain Danesh, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, University of Ottawa; Director Family Therapy Programme, Ottawa Civic Hospital.

Scientific Method and Search for Truth—Peter P. Morgan, M.D., D.P.H., Associate Scientific Editor, *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Ottawa.

Mind, Body and Soul—Faraneh V. Khadem, Ph.D., Neurophysiologist, Montreal Children's Hospital.

The Bahá'í Revelation and Lifestyle Alteration—David Smith, M.D., Ophthalmologist in private practice and Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Toronto.

Adolescent Quest for Tranquillity: The Dilemma of Drug Abuse—A. M. Ghadirian, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, McGill University, Montreal.

Positive Psychotherapy—N. Peseschkian, M.D., Psychiatrist in private practice, Wiesbaden, West Germany.

Smoking and Exercise—Peter P. Morgan, M.D., and Arthur Irwin, Ph.D., Kanata, Ontario.

Alcoholism, Drug Abuse and Youth—A. M. Ghadirian, M.D., and Ruth Eyford, M.S.W., St. Albert, Alberta.

Psychology Without Religion?—N. Peseschkian, M.D.

Total Stimulation for Children Recovering from Malnutrition—Linda Gershuny, B.A., Dipl. Montessori Hôpital Albert Schweitzer, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Nutrition: Key Factor in High-level Wellness—S. Raman, Ph.D., Ed.D., Associate Professor of Nutrition, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu.

Music Therapy—Jocelyn Boor, R.M.T., Shorewood, Wisconsin.

Healing Relationships in Marriage—Ruth Eyford, M.S.W.

The Importance for a Physician to Turn to God—Agnes Ghaznavi, M.D., Psychiatrist in private practice, Bienne, Switzerland.

The Bahá'í Approach to Sexuality—Panel: Agnes Ghaznavi, M.D., and Hossain Danesh, M.D.

What are the most urgent issues concerning health and wellbeing that require research and what are the recommendations in this respect?—Roundtable Discussion.

Ideas on the Natural Approach to Healing—Florence Altass, R.N., Sussex, England. (Miss Altass, age 96 and unable to travel, submitted a tape-recorded presentation.)

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AGENCY

MORE than fifty Bahá'ís who are health professionals in Canada, the United States and Chile were present in Ottawa, Canada, on 10–11 April 1982 when the Bahá'í International Health Agency was formally established. The creation of such an agency was recommended at the first Bahá'í International Conference on Health and Healing held in Ottawa in June 1980 under the sponsorship of the Association for Bahá'í Studies. The Hand of the Cause of God John A. Robarts was among those present at the April 1982 meeting which also was sponsored by the Association for Bahá'í Studies. Participants included medical doctors, nurses, counsellors, therapists, psychologists, social workers and medical students.

The proposal to create the agency was accepted by the executive committee of the Association for Bahá'í Studies, approved in principle by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada and referred to the Universal House of Justice for its guidance. In approving the creation of a Bahá'í International Health Agency, the House of Justice stated: 'The idea of a special group of Bahá'í health professionals is a useful one, and for the time being it is quite sufficient to develop it as a section within the Association . . .'

The agency was established with a view to co-ordinating and encouraging research and education among Bahá'ís who are health professionals and others who are interested or who have knowledge in this area. The agency could well prove to be of assistance in helping to place Bahá'í health professionals in pioneering posts around the world.

Goals of the agency, as proposed in 1980 and confirmed at the April 1982 policy conference, include compiling a world directory of Bahá'ís who work in health-related professions, scientists and resources; organizing an international Bahá'í conference on health to be held every three years; publishing the proceedings of these conferences; and developing and distributing educational health programmes for children and adults in various countries and cultures. These programmes will be made available in written and audio-visual form for use by Bahá'í radio stations, Bahá'í schools, Spiritual Assemblies and non-Bahá'í entities.



The Hand of the Cause John Robarts (standing third from right) with participants in the inaugural meeting of the Bahá'í International Health Agency, Ottawa, Canada; 10 April 1982.

4. BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP IN AUSTRALIA 1979–1983

'BAHÁ'Í scholarship is of great importance in the development and consolidation of the Bahá'í community,' the Universal House of Justice stated in its message entitled 'The Challenge and Promise of Bahá'í Scholarship', published in *The Bahá'í World*, volume XVII, p. 195. Among the goals given to the Australian Bahá'í community in the Seven Year Plan were: to foster a deeper understanding of the Bahá'í Writings; to make efforts to have the Faith presented in courses at schools, colleges and universities; and to encourage Bahá'ís to devise means of proclaiming the Faith to professional people.

With the approval of the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia, a conference on Bahá'í scholarship—the first of its kind to be held in this country—was organized by the Bahá'í Society of the University of Tasmania. More than one hundred believers from many parts of Australia gathered at Yerrinbool Bahá'í School in New South Wales from 9 to 12 April 1982 to discuss the emerging role of Bahá'í scholarship, its service to the individual and the Faith and its relation to scholarship in the non-Bahá'í world.

Counsellor Peter Khan presented a keynote address in which he surveyed the Writings of the Faith on Bahá'í scholarship. This was followed by the presentation of papers on a wide variety of topics which correlated aspects of the Bahá'í teachings with recent developments in physics, biology, medicine, psychology and educational theory. Papers discussing recent developments in music and art, from the perspective of the Bahá'í teachings, were supplemented by historical papers dealing with the lives of Mark Tobey and Juliet Thompson. An outstanding presentation by Dr. Baher Forghani, on the life of Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, the illustrious Persian Bahá'í scholar who taught in the United States at the turn of the century, provided new insights into an exemplary life of devotion and true scholarship. Described by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By* as a 'learned apologist', Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl was the author of *The Bahá'í Proofs*, *The Brilliant Proof*, the *Fará'id* and other important works.

It should be noted that in addition to speakers academically trained in their fields, participants in the programme included non-academics who were also intrigued by their subject matter and who evinced a healthy zeal in researching their topics for presentation.

There were three dominant features of this conference. All speakers used the authoritative Writings of the Faith as a standard and a framework for their scholarship and creativity; there was an admirable spirit of tolerance and respect for differing understandings and approaches within that framework; and, overall, the entire atmosphere was one of encouragement and support, with co-operation and modesty replacing the competitiveness, arrogance and pride which often characterize contemporary scholarly meetings.

A second conference on Bahá'í Studies was held from 1 to 4 April 1983, again at Yerrinbool, and again there were more than one hundred in attendance. The presentations touched on many aspects of human affairs. Three main categories of scholarly papers were offered:

(1) Studies of Scripture which brought understanding of some of the deeper aspects of the revealed Word.

(2) Studies of the relationship between the Bahá'í Faith and contemporary society and the way in which the principles and teachings of the Faith may be applied to resolve present-day social problems.

(3) Historical papers which provided a deeper insight into the lives and characters of the early Bahá'ís from whose example present-day believers may derive inspiration.

There were three invited addresses: Dr. Merdad Meshgin, 'Mishkín-Qalam: His Life and Work'; Counsellor Peter Khan, 'Further Considerations of Bahá'í Scholarship'; and Mr. James Heggie, 'The Early Days of the Bahá'í Faith in Australia'.

A feature of this conference was the holding of the first Australian Festival of Bahá'í

Artists. Mr. Phillip Hinton delighted the audience with his masterful renditions of poems and Mr. Cliff Stevens performed guitar selections.

Scholarship has a high station in the Bahá'í teachings, as the Universal House of Justice has reminded us. Bahá'í scholars who are well-versed in the Teachings, who uphold the Covenant, and who are guided by tact and wisdom and humbled by knowledge of their responsibilities will contribute greatly to upholding the dignity and honour of scholarship.

APPENDIX I

CONFERENCE ON BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP, 9–12 APRIL 1982

Bahá'í Scholarship—Dr. Peter Khan
Discussion: The meaning of Bahá'í scholarship
Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl—Dr. Baher Forghani
Science, Independent Investigation and the Bahá'í Consensus Reality— Robin Meehan
Some Bahá'í Views on Health and Healing—Shirley and A. J. Mauger
Science and the Future—Rod Markham
'Abdu'l-Bahá's Concept of the Ether—Dr. Peter Khan
Mark Tobey—Graham Hassall
Juliet Thompson—Erica Davidson
Prophecy and the Bahá'í Faith—Carl Whitehouse
The Use of Traditional Indian Symbols in Bahá'í Teaching—Dr. William Garlington
Discussion: The establishment of the Association for Bahá'í Studies in Australia
Discussion: Activities by Bahá'í Societies on Secondary and Tertiary (Post-Secondary) Campuses
Evolution—Adrian Salter
The 'Life After Life' Phenomenon—Dr. John Davidson
Marriage and Divorce: Bahá'í Law and Current Australian Conditions—Anne Stark
The Bahá'í Faith and the Healthy Personality—Dr. Janet Khan
Education in the Emerging Bahá'í World—Dr. Ray Meyer
Music: An Enriching Component in the Education of Bahá'ís—Tom Price

APPENDIX II

CONFERENCE ON BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP, 1–4 APRIL 1983

Mishkín-Qalam: His Life and Work—Dr. Merdad Meshgin
Further Considerations of Bahá'í Scholarship—Dr. Peter Khan
The Early Days of the Bahá'í Faith in Australia—James Heggie
A Consideration of Some Aspects of Mysticism and Acute Schizophrenia—Jacky Angus
A Case Study in Changing Attitudes—Sandra Bartlett
The Bahá'í Arc: An Impregnable Stronghold—F. Behi
Dreams and their Interpretation in the Bahá'í Faith—Dr. John Davidson
Introductory Notes on the Disconnected Letters of the Qur'án—Dr. Baher Forghani
Introductory Notes on the Life and Works of Ishráq Khávarí—Dr. Baher Forghani
The Nature of Bahá'í History—Graham Hassall
Bahá'í History in Australia—Graham Hassall
'The Metaphorical Nature of Physical Reality': Why are we born to Suffer and Die?—Dr. Alex Kavetsky
An Analysis of the Persecution of Bahá'í Women in Present-day Írán—Dr. Janet Khan
Youth and Their Future Responsibility—Rod Markham
The Role of Satellite Technology as a Tool for Social Change—A. J. Mauger
The Scientific Method: The Necessity for Evaluating Nutritional Information—Paul Mortal
Bahá'í Insights into the Relationship between Man and the Environment: The First Valley—Paul Stevenson
The Spiritual Axis and its Analogy in Cell Division (Mitosis)—Paul Stevenson
The Relationship between Men and Women: A Social History and Future Perspective—Nusheen Vahdat

5. BAHÁ'Í STUDIES SEMINARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER 1977–1980

PETER SMITH

FROM 1977 until 1980 the Departments of Religious Studies and of Sociology at the University of Lancaster lent their support to a succession of four annual Bahá'í Studies Seminars (16–17 April 1977; 15–16 April 1978; 7–8 April 1979; 11–13 April 1980) held under the convenership of Peter Smith, then a post-graduate student in the Department of Sociology. Designed to further academic research into the Bábí and Bahá'í religions, these seminars afforded opportunity for a number of post-graduates from Europe and America to present and discuss papers on various aspects of 'Bahá'í Studies'. Most of the substantive papers presented at the seminars have since found their way into print or have been incorporated into the participants' doctoral theses.

The papers presented were as follows:

Bramson, Loni (Louvain)

(1979) *Internal Opposition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament and the Establishment of the Guardianship*
—See Bramson's Ph.D. thesis, *The Bahá'í Faith and Its Evolution in the United States and Canada from 1922 to 1936* (Université Catholique de Louvain, 1980)

Cole, Juan Ricardo (U.C.L.A.)

(1980) *Rashíd Riḍá on the Bahá'í Faith in Egypt, 1897–1921*

Lambden, Stephen (Newcastle)

(1980) *Divine Splendour Motifs in the Bible and Writings of Bahá'u'lláh: 'Kábód' in the Old Testament, 'Doxa' in the New Testament and Aspects of the 'Theology of "Bahá" ' and the Sinai Epiphany Motif in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*

Lee, Anthony (U.C.L.A.)

(1978) *The Bahá'í community of 'Ishqábád from the beginnings to the Russian Revolution*
—Published in slightly revised form as 'The Rise of the Bahá'í Community of 'Ishqábád', *Bahá'í Studies* 5 (1979): 1–13

MacEoin, Denis (Cambridge, 1977–1979; Fez, 1979–1980)

(1977) *The Late Eighteenth Century Reformation in Shí'ism: Its Background and Influence*

(1978) *The Shaykhí Reaction to Bábism in the Early Period*
—Published as 'Shaykhí Reactions to the Báb', *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, ed. M. Momen (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1983), pp. 1–47
—For both the 1977 and 1978 papers see MacEoin's Ph.D. thesis, *From Shaykhism to Bábism: A Study of Charismatic Renewal in Shí'íh Islám* (University of Cambridge, 1979)

(1979) *The Concept of 'Jihád' in the Bábí and Bahá'í Movements.*
—Published in part as 'The Bábí Concept of Holy War', *Religion* 12 (1982): 93–129

(1980) *Ritual and Semi-ritual Observances in Bábism and Bahá'ísm*

Momen, Moojan

(1977) *Some Problems Connected with the Yazd Episode of 1850*
—See Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions, 1844–1944; Some Contemporary Western Accounts* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1981), pp. 106–113
Early Contact Between Bahá'ís and Christian Missionaries
—Published as 'Early Relations Between Christian Missionaries and the Bábí and Bahá'í Communities', *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, ed. M. Momen (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1983), pp. 44–82

(1979) *The Social Basis of the Bábí Upheavals:*

A Preliminary Analysis
—Published in *International Journal for Middle East Studies* 15 (1983): 157–183

(1980) *The Trial of Mullá 'Alí Basṭámí: A Combined Sunní-Shí'í Fatvá Against the Báb*
—Published in *Iran* 20 (1982): 113–143

Mossop, Denise

(1978) *The Mediatory Role of Bahá'í: A Comparison of Ṣúfí and Bahá'í Mysticism*

Peltola, Harri (Helsinki)

(1978) *The History of the Bahá'í Faith in Finland: A Case Study in the Sociology of Countercultures*

Scholl, Steven

(1980) *Imámí Shí'ism and the Bahá'í Faith*

Smith, Peter (Lancaster)

(1977) *The Routinization of Charisma? Some Comments on Peter L. Berger's 'Motif Messianique et Processus Social dans le Bahaisme'*
—Published in shortened and amended form as 'Motif research: Peter Berger and the Bahá'í Faith', *Religion* 8 (1978): 210–234

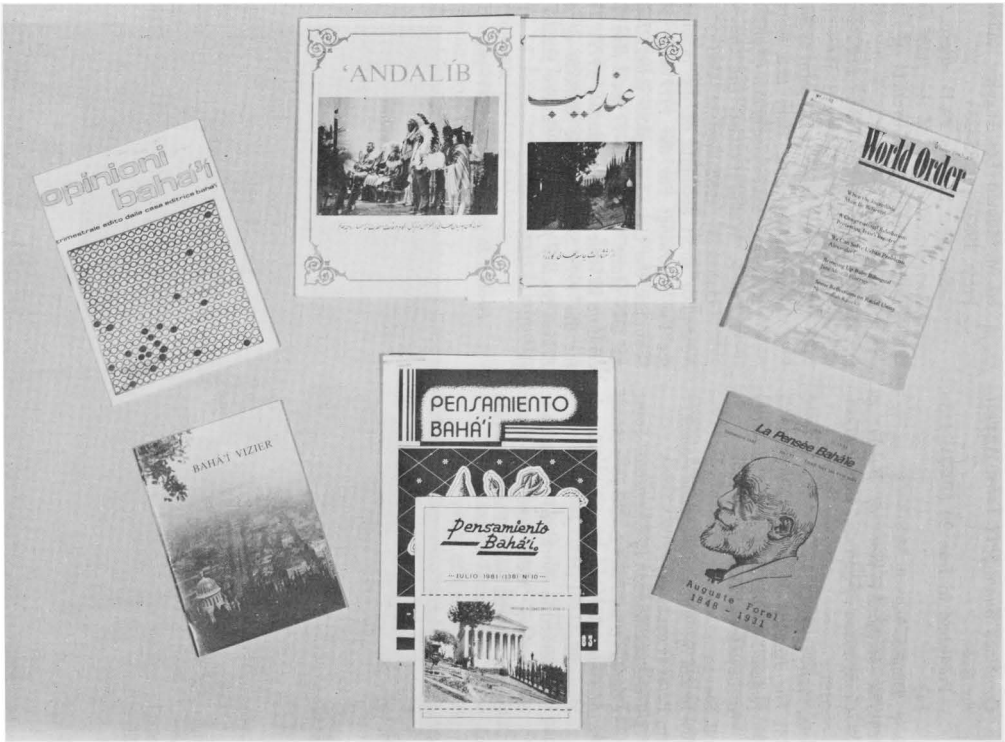
(1978) *The American Bahá'í community, 1894–1917*
—Published in expanded form in *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, ed. M. Momen (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1983), pp. 85–233.
—See also Smith's Ph.D. thesis, *A Sociological Study of the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions* (University of Lancaster, 1982)

(1979) *Millenarianism in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*
—Published in amended form as 'Millennialism in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions', *Millennialism and Charisma*, ed. R. Wallis (Belfast: The Queen's University, 1982), pp. 231–283

Note: For short accounts of the Seminars see the following: For the 1977 and 1978 Seminars, the United Kingdom *Bahá'í Journal* 245 (June 1978 : 16–17 [see also the erratum in issue no. 248 (January 1979): 11]; for the 1979 Seminar, the *Bulletin of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies* 6 (1979): 119–123.



Mrs. Gayle Morrison delivering the Ḥasan M. Balyúzí lecture during the seventh annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies; 1982.



A representative sampling of Bahá'í scholarly journals for general circulation issued in the period Riḍván 1979–1983 and published in the following languages (clockwise from top): Persian, English, French, Spanish, Dutch and Italian.

6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF BAHÁ'Í SCHOOLS DURING THE SEVEN YEAR PLAN

BARBARA BARRETT

. . . Bahá'u'lláh hath become manifest to educate all of the peoples of the world. He is the Universal Educator whether of the rich or the poor, whether of black or white, or of peoples from east or west, or north or south. 'Abdu'l-Bahá

There are certain pillars which have been established as the unshakable supports of the Faith of God. The mightiest of these is learning and the use of the mind, the expansion of consciousness, and the insight into the realities of the universe and the hidden mysteries of Almighty God. 'Abdu'l-Bahá

A SMARTLY-DRESSED, white-gloved squad of boys and girls carrying the banner of 'Colegio Nur', marches in a municipal parade before government authorities in Santiago, Chile;

A small group of three to five year-old tots in Lomaivuna, Fiji, gather for prayers, manners and moral training at the town's Bahá'í Center;

Boys and girls of a primary school in rural India, in a village of Uttar Pradesh, meet on the steps of a Hindu temple or under the welcome shade of a spreading banyan tree;

A Swazi kindergarten child arrives at Hlatikula pre-school for a pleasant day in a structured environment with thirty other youngsters;

While in Chuquisaca in the Bolivian Andes, *campesinos* wrapped snugly in their hand-woven woolens against the biting mountain air, throng to a newly-opened Tutorial Center seeking basic education (for children) and literacy classes (for adults).

Continents apart, separated by culture, language and experience, they all share a common value and are moved by one impulse —the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. All attend Bahá'í schools. The 'Bahá'í school' eludes a single definition. Though the schools have much in common, they are as different as the circumstances that gave them birth. They are as varied as the nations that hold them, the cultures that infuse them, the servants that create them and the wondrous range of children and adults who attend them. They represent the response to the mandate of Bahá'u'lláh to *bend your minds and wills to*



Students of the New Era School, Panchgani, Maharashtra State, India.



Anís Zunúzí School, Lilavoix, Haiti, dedicated in October 1982 in a ceremony presided over by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.

the education of the peoples and kindreds of the earth and the injunction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to *exert every effort to educate the children.* They are the answer to the instruction of the Universal House of Justice in its messages of Riḍván 136 (and even earlier) to 'encourage Local Spiritual Assemblies to establish Bahá'í tutorial schools where needed and feasible' or to 'continue to develop your Bahá'í schools and establish Bahá'í tutorial classes where needed.'

By Riḍván of 1983, functioning tutorial schools, founded in response to that call, totalled one hundred and forty-three; thirty-eight were in Africa, thirty-five in the Americas, sixty-nine in Asia and one in Australasia. The numbers change almost daily as Assemblies in scores of villages and towns, and a few cities, act vigorously to carry out the mandate of universal education embodied in the Teachings of their Faith.

The 'tutorial school' is a Bahá'í creation. It is a non-formal village school, perhaps with a physical structure—a simple shelter or adobe-brick building—and perhaps not; perhaps with a single teacher, certified or not, paid or unpaid, or partially reimbursed in kind (which may be foods and provisions or labor on his land); or perhaps staffed by a volunteer youth who has been schooled in a city, or by a parent or other literate villager. Its aim is to give rural children basic education to the degree possible *with the resources at hand.* This may sometimes mean supplementing public education, where this exists, with special tutoring in additional subjects such as English; or it may mean adding Bahá'í content to the educational experience with classes based on the Teachings. It will usually mean both—basic education with some classes that are specifically related to the Teachings of the Faith. It is not everywhere possible to make rigid distinctions as to service of children or adults, as to day or night operation, as to basic education or literacy as primary goal, since some facilities and staffs are operated in more than one way, and are used to accomplish more than one objective. And it is not always possible to make a sharp distinction between the tutorial school and the academic institution, as the former has sometimes evolved into the latter, acquiring permanency, a physi-

cal plant and professional teachers. In some cases, a next step has been certification by the government, and in a few, adoption into the public system of education.

The academic institutions are older in Bahá'í history, and fewer in number than the mushrooming tutorial schools springing up during the current Plan. Some outstanding examples of Bahá'í educational efforts predate the Seven Year Plan Message of 1979, and are embodied in formal academic institutions and housed in their own permanent and expanding facilities, indicating, perhaps, the direction that some of the recently founded tutorial schools will take in the course of their development. The following section discusses some countries' early experiences in founding Bahá'í schools and their subsequent development of tutorial schools.



Odusai School, Tororo District, Uganda; August 1981.

I

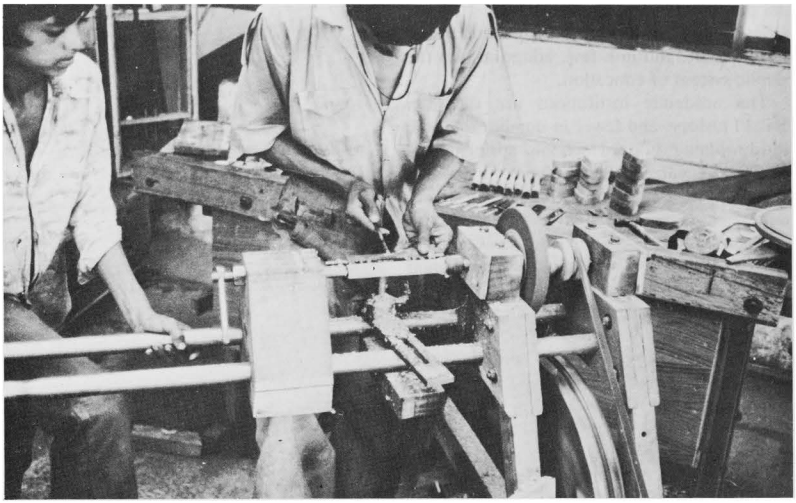
The first schools founded by Bahá'ís came in the lifetime of 'Abdu'l-Bahá when He urged the believers of Írán and 'Ishqábád, Turkistan, to found academic schools for both boys and girls. The famed Tarbíyat Schools were the result. Their success over decades is well known in Írán and to Bahá'ís around the world. They continued until fanaticism and repression closed them down.

Uganda

Two Bahá'í primary schools named for the Hand of the Cause Louis Gregory were established in 1961 at Odusai and Tilling in Tororo and Kumi Districts, due to generous contributions for the purpose by Mr. and Mrs. Rafi Mottahedeh. These schools, too, were affected by changing governmental policies. The Ministry of Education took over all curricula and teaching in formerly private institutions and religious schools. The ownership and physical maintenance of the two Bahá'í schools remain, however, in the hands of the institutions of the Faith, as does the teaching of the Bahá'í religion classes. The institutions of the Faith and the Bahá'í parents continue to take a keen and sustained interest in the progress and development of the schools.

In 1957, a German-born pioneer from the British Isles, Miss Claire Gung, termed by the Guardian 'The Mother of Africa', opened the first interracial kindergarten in Uganda near the historic palace of the Kabakas of Buganda at Mengo, Kampala. The school rapidly came to be one of the most respected pre-primary institutions in Uganda, eventually reaching an enrollment of some one hundred and ninety children of all races and backgrounds, including the children of many distinguished Ugandan families.

During the early years of the second decade of its existence, Auntie Claire's Kindergarten was transferred from its original somewhat humble quarters into a large new building entirely planned and constructed through the personal efforts and sacrifices of 'Auntie' Claire herself. Ownership and administration was transferred, in part, to the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda. Through the long, perilous years of political and social upheaval in Uganda, from 1971 to the present, Claire Gung stayed and persevered at her pioneer post, running her school though advancing age and ill health weighed heavily upon her. Though the trying restrictions of life in Uganda at present have reduced the numbers of parents able to provide kindergarten education for their children, the school remains open and Auntie Claire continues to win the love and respect of the Bahá'ís and the people of Kampala in general for her selfless



A woodworking class at New Era High School, Panchgani, India.



Laying the cornerstone at the site of the Bahá'í Youth Academy, Kanga Hills, Panchgani, Maharashtra State, India.

service to their children under all conditions. Miss Gung was also responsible for initiating and equipping the Kikaaya Bahá'í Kindergarten situated in the precincts of the Mother Temple of Africa as one of the Temple's dependencies. It stands on property contributed and developed by Auntie Claire herself.

India

The New Era School in Panchgani, Maharashtra State, dates from 1945 when it was opened as a small children's hostel. It has become an international school of stature with a student population of more than four hundred coming from twenty nations. Half are from Bahá'í families and the remainder are from Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim or other backgrounds. 'New Era' now consists of a pre-school, primary and secondary schools, and a small Junior College. Computer programming has recently been added to the curriculum. Public service projects have become a feature of the secondary school program. Other educational and development institutions have emerged from New Era, and its destiny is to include a fully-fledged University, as envisaged by Shoghi Effendi.[1] In 1982 the Bahá'í Youth Academy was created on the New Era campus to hold short courses of intensive study on a high academic level throughout the year for special groups of youth selected on the basis of common interests. One of the first sessions was for children of Persian pioneers living in India, another was for women, another for young men graduating from the Rabbani School. By May 1983 the Academy had held four separate sessions of several weeks each, from its opening in July 1982. A separate physical plant for the Youth Academy will soon be erected on a site in Kanga Hills which will include a complex of classrooms, a conference hall, library, offices, dormitories and dining room for sixty students. The same site will also hold the New Era Junior College.

Mention should be made here of the Rabbaní School, a higher secondary school for village boys in Gwalior, in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The Rabbani story is told elsewhere in this volume.[2]

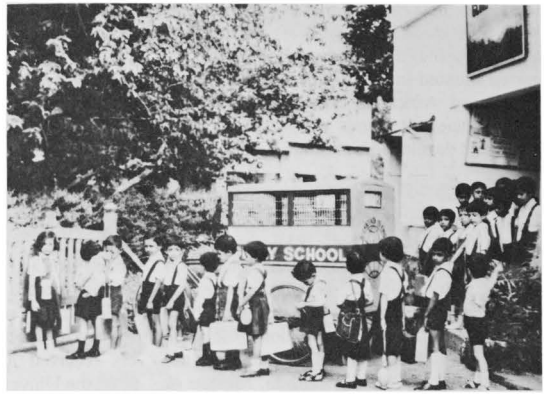
An English-medium school, the Glory School, has been established since February 1981 in Shantiniketan, West Bengal, a place made famous by Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Prize laureate and most renowned of India's men of letters. To Shantiniketan, where Tagore's home is maintained as a museum, and where his original school has expanded into a great university, students are attracted from all parts of the world. For these reasons, and for the strong Bahá'í associations with Shantiniketan,[3] the first Local Spiritual Assembly elected there in 1979 determined to open a Bahá'í school. When the Glory School opened its doors in February 1981 the organizers received a message of encouragement from the Universal House of Justice. In 1983 a hostel was inaugurated to attract children from other places, some of them Bahá'ís whose parents wished their children to have this experience. Glory operates a nursery, kindergarten and Classes I and II; its goal is to reach Class XII. The school has been self-supporting from the beginning but now seeks funding to acquire land for a permanent site, and for subsidizing more children in the boarding school.

A number of smaller schools in India include two in Andhra Pradesh in south-east India—another Glory English School and the Shoghi Children's Convent. Both are privately owned and run by Bahá'ís. The Glory School of Andhra Pradesh offers courses from lower kindergarten to fifth standard. The kindergarten through first standard are in the English medium, the fifth standard in Telugu only. Students are from very poor areas and unable to pay regular fees, thus the school has to have outside support. The Shoghi School has an enrollment of one hundred and ninety-four children in ten classes, Standards One through Five in the Telugu medium, and Kindergarten to Standard Three in English. The principal, Mr. G. Samba Siva Rao, and five teachers are Bahá'ís. In 1983 the school is earning eighty-

[1] See 'The New Era Bahá'í School', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, pp. 225–226; and 'Rural Development in India', ibid., pp. 227–228.

[2] See 'Rabbani School', p. 233 this volume.

[3] In Tagore's lifetime the Hand of the Cause of God Martha Root visited there. She stayed three days, left many books in the University library and in conversation with Tagore expressed the hope that a chair for study of the Bahá'í Faith would be established at Visva-Bharati University. The Hand of the Cause of God Dorothy Baker also visited Shantiniketan for a week. During the Ten Year Crusade Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam, currently a member of the Universal House of Justice, pioneered to Shantiniketan with his wife and family.



Glory School, Santiniketan, West Bengal State, India.



Glory School classroom; 1982.



Shoghi Children's School, Nunna, Andhra Pradesh, India.

five percent of its costs from tuition fees. Also in Andhra Pradesh, the Carmel Bahá'í school at Ravikampadu is run by Mr. Rambabu, an assistant to the Auxiliary Board, who teaches forty students in Standards I and II. His previous tutorial class in this village has grown into a Bahá'í school. The Anis School, opened in mid-1983, has an enrollment of sixty-seven and is increasing steadily.

The Ideal Primary School in Dharmanagar was founded in 1979 by homefront pioneer Mr. B. R. Singh. Though not recognized by the state government of Tripura, the school has attained permanency and has been encouraged by the National Spiritual Assembly to acquire a site of its own.

The Varqá Nursery School in Maharashtra State is run by pioneers to Ahmednagar. The New Garden is another nursery-primary school with twenty-six students in two sections. The Ooty Primary School and Hostel at Ootacamund in Tamil Nadu accommodates twenty-nine Iranian students living in India. And in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands the Glory Educational Institute will open in July 1983 with a kindergarten for thirty pupils.

Tutorials

India will have two hundred and twenty functioning tutorial schools by 1984. At mid-1983 there were fifty-two in being and many more in process. In the state of Uttar Pradesh alone, there were thirteen schools in existence and funding provided for forty more. They are supervised by the State Bahá'í School Committee of Uttar Pradesh, and they are expected to become self-sufficient in the next three years. The National Spiritual Assembly gives the strongest possible support to the fostering of tutorial schools by all State Committees. While education is compulsory in India by the law of the land, not every village school is scrupulously kept open, and not every teacher is as dedicated as the law might prescribe. In some villages, the Bahá'í schools provide the only source of education for all children, accommodating between eighty and a hundred children. The Bahá'í teacher is dedicated and sincere, receives training on what and how to teach in the usual school curriculum, and what Bahá'í moral and ethical teachings to impart. Women are being appointed to the school committees of the villages and are happy about their improved status. School attendance by girls is strongly promoted by the Bahá'ís. In the tutorial schools the school day usually begins with a prayer. The tutorials in general take the children through sixth standard, after which they are sent to the nearest town to a district school.

A Counsellor of the Continental Board in Asia has pointed out that the village children have been quick to memorize Bahá'í prayers and songs, and quick to learn Bahá'í history and principles. She has expressed the optimistic conviction that 'Through their Bahá'í education, it should be possible to eliminate caste and religious prejudice which has permeated the very core of Indian society.'

The Jaigaon School, on the border of



A Bahá'í tutorial school, Charolipada, Jhabua District, Madhya Pradesh, India.



Children in prayer at the Bahá'í tutorial school, Bairagra, Uttar Pradesh, India.



A Bahá'í tutorial school which meets in the Bahá'í Center of Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh, India; 1983.



A Bahá'í tutorial school, Markara, Etawah District, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Bhutan and India, is flushed with success. A new school building will begin this year to house more than two hundred students who have been meeting since 1975 in the Bahá'í Center of Jaigaon. The school is one of those which began as tutorial efforts in the early 70s. It now has eight teachers and adds a new class every year. It was founded by pioneer from India, R. C. Gupta.

Indonesia

Since 1970 pioneers to Indonesia have operated a 'Darút-Tarbíyyih' or 'House of Education' for Indonesian children, with the encouragement of the Universal House of Justice. It started modestly, as a kind of youth hostel or *ashram* for Bahá'í children from the Mentawai Islands. A Persian pioneer, Mme. 'Iṣmat (Esmat) Vaḥdat,[1] was the first to undertake the care of the young Indonesian children in her home, moving from her post in Java to Padang to do so. She supervised the care of the twelve-year-old sister of a Javanese pioneer to Mentawai, enabling the girl to attend school in Padang. The same year, a young Persian medical student from Djakarta, Manoochehr Tahmasebian, came to join Mme. Vaḥdat in developing the hostel. Four young boys from Siberut were brought to Padang to live, and the *ashram* began to expand. A third staff member joined the hostel in 1972 when Miss Navanita Sundram, a sociology graduate of Singapore University, married Tahmasebian. They undertook to provide a home-like setting where children from one of the poorest and most primitive areas of the world could benefit from education in Padang schools and receive a Bahá'í education 'at home'. A loving but structured environment was created within the pioneers' own home. Social and personal needs of the Mentawai children were met, skills were taught, self-reliance was encouraged. They were enabled to earn pocket money by the practice of a variety of skills and crafts taught in the hostel. Their academic education in Padang schools has proved successful, with some going on to higher education or technical schools. Three of the first four children who arrived in 1970 now attend high school and university, but still live in and participate in the hostel. Another is in his second year of medical studies, the first student from Mentawai ever to be admitted to a Medical Faculty. He has married a girl who is a 'graduate' of the Asrama (as the hostel is called in Padang), and together they manage another unit of the hostel.

The purpose of the Asrama was, and still is, the 'spiritual growth of the whole of Indonesia', as stated by the Universal House of Justice in its original approval of the project. The immediate objective was to consolidate the rapid growth of the Faith that had taken place in the Mentawai Islands during the 1950s when the late Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was a pioneer and Government Medical Officer in these islands. Mass teaching began there in 1953 when Dr. Muhájir arrived, a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for Mentawai, and by 1956, 6,000 of the 12,000 people of Siberut Island had become Bahá'ís. Twenty schools were established, one in each village. Javanese teachers, supported by the Regional Spiritual Assembly and, later, the National Spiritual Assembly, effectively gave general and Bahá'í education.

When the Faith was banned in Indonesia in 1962, there were twenty-five Local Assemblies in Mentawai. As the precious gains made at such cost during the previous decade began to recede the Bahá'ís felt impelled to offer education to Mentawai children. They began to think in terms of 'adopting' Bahá'í children of Siberut, one of the most backward areas of Indonesia, sponsoring their education in nearby Padang and raising them in their homes as Bahá'ís. In 1968–1969, plans were formulated, approved by the Universal House of Justice, and the hostel was born.

By 1980 there were twenty-four Mentawai children and two small children of the pioneers making up the Asrama community and it was necessary to expand beyond the physical limits of the Tahmasebians' household. At that time a small house was acquired in Nangalo, a suburb of Padang, and five children ranging in age from six to twelve were brought from the islands. In 1982 land was purchased in another suburb and a third Asrama was built by the Bahá'ís. The 'architect' who drew the plans was an Asrama boy who was a graduate of Technical High School. Even the small children of the pioneers helped in digging and preparing the foundation. The

[1] See 'In Memoriam', p. 743.



The ashram *or hostel in Padang, Indonesia, for Bahá'í children from the Mentawai Islands; founding 'parents' and twenty-five children of the original hostel; 1980. Mme. 'Iṣmat (Esmat) Vahdat, a Persian pioneer who was the first to undertake the care of young Indonesian children in her home, and who passed away in 1980, is seated, center. To her left Manoocher Tahmasebian and his wife Nita (née Sundram), developers of the first hostel in 1970 and its several offshoots in existence at the present time.*

third in the series of hostels opened its doors without fanfare in July 1982, with another young woman 'graduate' of the original Asrama in charge of a group of small boys from eight to ten years. It was tangible evidence of success of the hostel concept and of the vision of those who had given years of love and sacrifice to its development. By the end of 1982 the children and youth in the three hostels numbered forty-six (three of them the children born to the founding pioneer couple and raised as full participants in the daily life of the hostel).

Though the *ashrams* were never regarded as schools, the education given the children during the past fourteen years—academic, social and spiritual—could never have been realized in any other way. The Asramas of Padang qualify, therefore, as one of the most innovative and valid experiences of the Bahá'í educational spectrum.

Sikkim

The Bahá'í School at Tadong, Gangtok, enjoys great prestige and is an important factor in the spread of the Faith, not only in Sikkim, but in the other Himalayan states. The school's students are from a variety of religious backgrounds, reflecting the population of the Himalayan region. They are Tibetan and Indian, Lepcha and Bhutia. Tadong was founded by pioneers from India, in 1975. Its original enrollment was twenty-five students. Today five hundred and sixty-two students are enrolled in classes, and a number of them are also boarding in a hostel. A new five-story building for the school is under construction, providing space as well for the offices of the National Spiritual Assembly. The school now includes Nursery through Standard VI. Courses will be increased by adding one level each year, through Secondary.

Three more tutorial schools began to function in Sikkim during the Plan. Established by their respective Local Spiritual Assemblies, they meet in the local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of Pachey Khani, Pachey Phirphiray and

Pakyong. With the tremendously successful Tadong School as model, and the devoted assistance of pioneers from India, the schools seem to promise a similarly successful growth. At Pachey Khani, thirty-eight children are enrolled in the morning session, and thirty adults in the evening session. Bahá'í education and academic training are given. Counsellor Shirin Boman has travelled often to these Sikkim communities during the course of the Seven Year Plan, giving encouragement and stimulating the commitment to education of the Sikkimese Bahá'í communities.



A classroom in the Tadong Bahá'í Primary School, Gangtok, Sikkim; 1980.



Students of the Pachey Phirphiray tutorial school, Sikkim; 1983. Seated center back is Mrs. Shirin Boman, member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia.

Chile

Colegio Núr in La Cisterna, Chile, a suburb of Santiago, is a Bahá'í-owned, Bahá'í-administered, state-supported school begun in March 1978. But it has its roots in the 1960s, with the initiative of Mrs. Silvia San Cristóbal, an educator, who gradually rallied the support of other Bahá'í teachers and the Santiago community. By May of 1975, after months of careful study, the Local Assembly had approved a project to operate an already existing *colegio* (school) and presented the idea to the National Assembly. The National Assembly, in turn, consulted the Continental Board of Counsellors and, after their careful study, sent the proposal for consideration to the Universal House of Justice. This proposal was the first of its kind in the occident, according to its Director, Carlos Rivera San Cristóbal, who calls it the 'Mother of Educational Work in Chile'.

The first stage in this project of the Local Spiritual Assembly of La Cisterna was to operate a school already in being and recognized, Colegio Integral, which offered primary school and the first year of secondary. On 21 January 1976 the National Spiritual Assembly received a telex from the Universal House of Justice, approving their officially administering a *colegio* and offering a monthly sum toward rent, fees and expenses. On 1 March the Liceo Integral began activities which would later give rise to Colegio Núr. With an enrollment of seventy-one pupils and Mrs. San Cristóbal as Director, and with nine other Bahá'ís on the teaching staff, the Liceo began slowly to develop as a model for Bahá'í education. All the teachers were employed in state schools and gave a half-day to the Liceo without salary or any remuneration for their work. They continued in this way for five years. During its first year of operation the Bahá'í Colegio received visits from Counsellors, National Assembly members, and traveling teachers. In July of 1976 a letter from the Universal House of Justice expressed warm approval of the venture and offered prayers for its success. In 1978 the Supreme Body encouraged the National Assembly to continue with the Bahá'í school and approved the purchase of a property of its own, contributing an initial sum toward that end.

After an intensive search of the entire Commune for an appropriate facility, Colegio Núr began classes on 15 March 1978 at its present location, in La Cisterna, with a student body of sixty-six. Application was made to the Ministry of Education for accreditation. Many of the Bahá'í friends rallied round the new effort, and during 1979 the student population grew to ninety-two and the curriculum increased by the addition of the



Students of Colegio Núr, La Cisterna, Santiago, Chile, in parade formation; 1983.

second year of high school. Efforts were continued to obtain official recognition from the state. In December of 1979 the School became fully accredited by official decree of the Ministry of Education. The years 1980–1981 were years of great progress, with the constant support of all the Bahá'í institutions and the dedicated efforts of a group of Bahá'ís who were determined the work would succeed. Two new classrooms were constructed; the third year of secondary was added; and the decree of *Cooperador de la Función Docente* was obtained from the government. An administrative council was named by the National Spiritual Assembly to take responsibility for the school's Bahá'í content, religion classes and some administrative aspects. In 1981 the *Colegio* applied for state funding which was granted. From June of that year, for the first time, with state subvention, the Bahá'í teachers began to receive some pay for their work. The faculty consisted then of thirty-nine teachers, fourteen of them Bahá'ís. The final year of secondary was added, completing the school's academic structure. Another significant achievement of 1981 was a decree of the Ministry of Educa-

tion permitting the suspension of classes on Bahá'í Holy Days.

Three hundred and fifty students are distributed among fifteen courses. About twenty percent of them are Bahá'ís. The majority come from large and low-income families. About eighty percent continue their education at the school year after year in spite of their families sometimes moving to other neighborhoods. The teachers have said they feel that the reason for their pupils' great attachment to the school is the atmosphere of love that pervades it. It seems also to be transmitted to the families of the students. A remarkable percentage of parents participate regularly in parents' meetings, not to criticize, as is all too common, but to cooperate and offer help.

Religious instruction, in accordance with the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, is one of the items of the curriculum of Núr school. One hour weekly is devoted to classes on progressive revelation, the history of religion and the principles of the Faith, adapted to various levels of learning. The school council has indicated that the religion classes should be related to the Social Science classes, drawing historical parallels, pointing out relationships, etc. The teachers' purpose must also be to infuse spiritual values into the course work, to strive for character formation and development of good habits. The teachings of the Faith imparted should be focused on the realities of the students' daily lives.

Many improvements in the physical plant and equipment continue to be made, and the community supports the development of the school. New gardens, new baths and facilities for physical education are some recent gains, and future plans call for many more basic renovation and expansion items, as permitted. The school is eighty percent financially self-sufficient.

In addition to its early achievement of an urban school, the Chilean Bahá'í community was among the first in the hemisphere to enter decisively into providing formal education for its rural Bahá'í population. The origin of the rural schools was the attempt to fulfill the goal of tutorial schools given to many countries in the Five Year Plan. As the Bahá'ís tried to establish such non-formal schools, consulting with the institutions of the Faith, the idea slowly arose, 'Why not formal schools in villages as well?' With the background of experience of Colegio Núr, the possibility of government subsidy, and other proffered financial help the National Assembly resolved to open the first rural educational institution, the A. Q. Faizí School.[1] It is in its fourth year of operation at Loncopulle, a small Mapuche Indian village in the province of Cautin. The majority of the villagers are Bahá'ís, as are the majority of the seventy to eighty children who attend the school. It offers basic education, grades one through eight and held its first eighth grade graduation in 1983. Its Director, Miss Consuelo Muñoz, is a homefront pioneer, and member of the National Spiritual Assembly, who went to live among the Bahá'ís of Loncopulle, with her husband, Jorge Muñoz. They are assisted by two other teachers in the unselfish effort to bring basic education to the area of greatest concentration of Bahá'í population. The location was chosen because of the receptivity to the Faith on the part of the Mapuches of Cautin Province. The Muhájir School[2] at Bollilco, also in the Mapuche area of Region IX, was inaugurated in November of 1981. It serves a similar population and is similarly staffed by homefront pioneers. Miss Loreto Jara was its first director and teacher; she is now assisted by other Bahá'í volunteers. By 1983, in its third year of operation, Muhájir School was serving about fifty children, grades one through five. In addition, there was literacy training for adults and some horticultural programs were undertaken. A private charitable foundation has chosen the Muhájir School as a center for some cooperative activities with surrounding farmers.

Both rural schools have been officially recognized by the government and benefit from state subsidy for operating expenses. For their buildings, for improvements, equipment and materials they depend on the Bahá'í Fund, on gifts from individuals, and even from Local Assemblies in the United States. Here, as in Santiago, staff members say, the distinguishing feature of these village schools is an atmosphere of love. For example, none of the teachers in other schools of the region have ever been successful in getting the

[1] Named after the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí.
[2] Named after the Hand of the Cause Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir.

children to read and sing in Mapuche, the language they speak in their homes. In both Bahá'í schools this has been achieved with ease. School–community relationships are extremely warm.

Current goals toward which Chile's schools, both rural and urban, are working might be stated as 'learning to function' as Bahá'í schools. As explained by a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas, this means putting the official curriculum in practice with an acceptable level of administrative organization, establishing the daily routine of regular classes and educational activities and infusing it all with the presence of the Faith, mainly by creating an atmosphere of love and spirituality. To date the Faith is taught only at a very basic level in the religion class of the official curriculum. The Counsellor observes, however, the impressive results of the presence of the Faith in education even at this minimal level, and anticipates eagerly the fruits of a totally Bahá'í educational system as it gradually unfolds in Chile and elsewhere. He posits a long-range goal of 'development of content and methods for Bahá'í moral education leading to a true change of behavior in students . . . activities that include the school and its classrooms, the home, and the continuous education of the teachers.'

Thailand

In 1963 the Santitham School was established in Yasothon for children of farms and villages in the northeast. Mrs. Shirin Fozdar who was associated with the school from its inception, began to solicit support for its expansion in 1981. Construction of a commodious new building began in March 1982. Much outside support, government and private, has been enlisted. The Santitham School is now the property of the National Spiritual Assembly. It operates kindergarten and preprimary classes, and is beginning to offer courses in business and commercial subjects. Secondary school has been suspended during construction work.

In Phattalung Province of south Thailand a community reading center and library was opened in October 1982, in a pleasant building constructed in the open and airy local style. It serves for meetings of the Thung Muang Kwang Bahá'í community. Also in the same province a child education center was opened in 1983 in the Khuan Khreo Center, a building erected by an all-out community effort.



Colegio Núr, a Bahá'í school in La Cisterna, Santiago, Chile.

Haiti

The Anís Zunúzí School in Lilavoix, near Port-au-Prince is a primary school for rural children which began its first classes in 1980, after a two-year period of preparation and construction. The cost of the facility, named after the young martyred companion of the Báb, was provided by a Bahá'í family of Belgium.

The School was formally dedicated in October 1982 in a ceremony presided over by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and attended by many high notabilities of the Haitian Government, including a special representative of the President. Six hundred people witnessed the historic event, among them three members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas and all the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Haiti. Other eminent visitors were: the Ambassador of Canada, the Directors General of the Ministries of Education and Vocational Training, members of Parliament, the mayor and other officials of nearby Lilavoix.

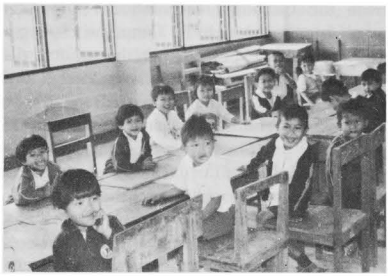
Classes are from kindergarten through elementary levels, with plans for later expansion. The next phase will add a variety of trade and vocational courses for older students and adults. A village leadership program brings local youth to be trained as tutors and to return to their villages to set up classes in basic reading, writing and trade skills. The program is designed to obviate the all-too-common pattern of trained youth *leaving* their needy villages, rather than putting their new skills into use there. A conscious effort is made to counter this tendency. As a part of the school's curriculum, regular classes in religion are held weekly. They include lessons on all the major religions of the world, taught from a Bahá'í perspective. In addition, there is a Bahá'í children's class each Sunday afternoon and an adult deepening class once each week. These are taught by Mrs. Mattie Thimm, the wife of the Headmaster, who also teaches three Bahá'í children's classes a week in villages near the school.

An extension program is a cooperative effort of the National Assemblies of Haiti and Canada. Their aim is to enlist ten to fifteen trainees who will teach in three-to-five preschool and family education centers in selected villages. This is made possible by a grant from the Canadian International Development Agency through the Canadian Embassy in Haiti. It is expected that the school will become a resource center to improve the educational lot of the people of the whole area, its programs and activities benefiting many.

Zunúzí School affords an interesting example of international cooperation in a project which will have a strong impact on Haitian education well into the future. A Persian Bahá'í architect designed the modern complex; a Texas-based artist designed a glazed tile mural for the central courtyard; a Haitian stone mason trained the laborers and built some of the walls; a mechanical engineer from Canada was job supervisor; an Englishman was in charge of cost control and supervision. The school's principal is German-born; his wife, who teaches English and kindergarten, is an American. (They are Mr. Hans-Jürgen Thimm and Mrs. Mattie Thimm.) A French-Canadian woman teaches first-year courses, and the staff is comprised principally of Haitians. A six-member international Board of Directors includes members from Germany, Írán, the United States, Ecuador and Haiti.

The modern structure is a complex of buildings around a central courtyard, designed by a Bahá'í architect who, in return for donating his services, was given the freedom to innovate, using construction methods and materials he deemed suitable. He used this opportunity to develop the ideas he had been advocating that would lower construction costs in developing countries, while upgrading quality. His design maximizes the positive aspects of the Haitian climate, and embodies features such as massive overhangs around buildings, high ceilings with pitched roof oriented to attract prevailing winds and the use of screenblocks instead of windows, which result in a comfortable environment during Haiti's hottest temperatures. The landscaping further improves the design, with trees and planting that will contribute to comfort.

While operating costs are substantially provided by the same family who gave the physical plant, there is also room for contributions. Sponsorship of individual students is invited by Bahá'ís from abroad. Tuition is set at three dollars per month, but matriculation



The nursery class of the Santitham School.



The Santitham School, Yasothon, Thailand; August 1982.



Inauguration of Anís Zunúzí School, Lilavoix, Haiti; 20 October 1982.



The Faizí School (named after the Hand of the Cause A. Q. Faizí), Loncopulle, Department of Nueva Imperial, Chile, the zone of the Mapuche people.

is open to all, while actual costs run about fifteen dollars per student per month. The attempt is to fulfill the wish of the Guardian with respect to Bahá'í educational institutions: 'Let them, freely and without charge, open the doors of their schools and their higher institutions for the study of sciences and the liberal arts, to non-Bahá'í children and youth who are poor and in need.'

Pakistan

The New Day Montessori School in Karachi opened in March 1978 with only the first level and three students. By June of 1982 it had an enrollment of one hundred and seventy-five and offered a four-year course. Supervised by the National Spiritual Assembly, and staffed by several Montessori-trained Bahá'í teachers, the school is expected to continue growing through Fifth Standard and eventually to include a secondary level.

Brazil

Two academic institutions mark Brazil's entrance into the formal school experience. *Escola das Nações*, a school in Brazilia, the nation's capital, accommodates one hundred and fifty students from thirty-eight countries. Most are the children of diplomats. Almost all the teachers are Bahá'ís. The school is expanding, seeking land and financial support. The Nova Era School is for pre-school and kindergarten children, ages two to six. It opened in 1980 with forty pupils and by December 1982, had ninety-five. Though not announcing their sources, because of religious intolerance, the teachers give the children prayers and selections from the Writings. Brazilian Bahá'ís also operate three tutorial schools in other areas.

II

Including those already mentioned above, forty-one national communities have been assigned the development of tutorial schools as a goal of the Seven Year Plan. The following are some others who have had notable results.

The Philippines

The Philippines Bahá'í community, by the spring of 1983, had eight tutorial schools in operation among the tribal peoples of the islands of Mindoro, Mindanao and Palawan. Most were begun during the Five Year Plan. Of special interest are the schools on eastern Mindoro among a tribal group known collectively as Mangyan, whose language is a subject of many academic studies. They read and write in a 48-character syllabary of Indic derivation. Despite westernization of much of the Philippines and a resultant loss of culture, beliefs, originality and language, the Mangyans have kept their distinctive script and may be the only such tribe using these characters. The area was opened to the Faith in the 1960s and 70s by traveling teachers. In 1977 the first Assembly was established among the Hanunoo people, a sub-group of the hinterland whose culture has been the topic of scholarly dissertations. The tutorial school is located at Tapi-Nabiran about thirty-five kilometers from the town of Mansalay. The students number about twenty boys and girls who attend regular classes six days a week, for six hours a day. They also celebrate the Nineteen Day Feast and Bahá'í Holy Days. The Local Spiritual Assembly provides the teachers' needs for shelter and food from their own crops. The Hanunoo children proved to be very quick learners. Their curriculum has three aspects: academic, vocational and spiritual.

In 1980 a school was opened in Perpetual Help. Iriga City, on the island of Luzon for sixty-eight children of the Agta tribes, as the National Assembly increased its commitment to tutorial schools under the Seven Year Plan. A three-room schoolhouse and a cottage for the teachers were built with the help of several Local Assemblies in the area which also give support to the school and its dedicated Bahá'í teachers. From time to time, when there is a harvest, they bring gifts of food to the school. In addition to the daily elementary school curriculum there are adult education classes and deepening sessions for youth and older believers. The National Spiritual Assembly has reported that children from the school have no difficulty in being accepted at public school when old enough to travel greater distances, and in fact, that they are usually placed in a more advanced grade level than anyone would have anticipated.

Fiji

A kindergarten run by a Bahá'í women's

group grew out of the community development efforts of the Lomaivuna Local Spiritual Assembly which were considerable and varied. The school was undertaken by the Bahá'í women (who had little previous experience) at the request of an official of the local government. The venture began with seven preschool children aged three to five and quickly became a group of twenty-one children with two teachers. The little school, which meets at the Bahá'í Center, is running successfully and is seeking official recognition by the Department of Education. Their kindergarten methods are based on the ANISA model developed by Bahá'ís in North America.

Papua New Guinea

A Community School in Rabaul for fifteen children is operated by a pioneer in her home. The National Spiritual Assembly supports the school and it is approved by the Department of Education. Instruction is in English. A preschool in Madina will be expanded into a tutorial school to include non-Bahá'í children.

Sierra Leone

The village of Vaama has begun tutorial education which seems to hold potential for developing into a permanent school, given the responsiveness of the community and its readiness to undertake the education of its children. The National Assembly calls it 'an example of what can happen when a village embraces wholeheartedly the lifegiving Message of Bahá'u'lláh.' Vaama is located in the Pujehun District. In 1983, only three months after having been constituted an Assembly, they had already built a Bahá'í Center, hosted a very successful Women's Conference and organized a tutorial school for their children. Inspired by Bahá'u'lláh's emphasis on education, they set aside land for raising cash crops to earn money for support of a school. The land for the Bahá'í Center where the school is conducted was donated by a member of the community and is built at the back of his home. The local Bahá'ís did all the work and supplied all the materials except for two bags of cement which were provided by the National Spiritual Assembly. To support the school, some Bahá'í men went hunting monkeys to sell in Liberia. They raised money for a blackboard, a teacher's desk and chairs and tables for the children. The village works the teacher's farm so that he is free to teach during the day. The Local Assembly consults the National Spiritual Assembly about subjects to be taught.

The United States

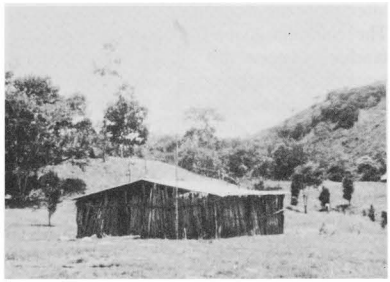
In the U.S.A. the Louis Gregory Institute at Hemingway, South Carolina, offers educational and tutorial enrichment for children and youth who are the products of a deficient rural educational system. A plan is in being which will reach out to the general population of the area in substantial and creative ways. It will meet needs for basic skills and at the same time increase the motivation and self-confidence of the student (child through adult). Future courses are being designed in computer use, language arts, mathematics and arts and crafts. The Institute, named for the American Hand of the Cause of God, was dedicated and opened in 1972. It came in response to the need for Bahá'í education in an area of dense Bahá'í population. It is the same area which will witness the birth of the first Bahá'í radio station of North America in 1984. The educational impact of such a Bahá'í-owned and operated station will also be very great. The Director of the Institute has said: 'Our aim is universal education.'

Panama

Ten tutorial schools are functioning among the Guaymis, the indigenous peoples along the Costa Rican border, distinguished for their ready acceptance of the Faith and their ability to develop Bahá'í community life. A massive effort will be made among the Guaymi people as the projected cultural center in their area gets under way. Four schools are reported in the area of the Choco and Cuna peoples. Future plans include four more tutorial schools in Darien, to be funded by the National Assembly, and two Choco youth have volunteered to re-establish tutorial schools far up river where no government schools exist. Officials of the Panamanian government have shown interest in the Bahá'í tutorial school projects and the Guaymi Cultural Center.

Paraguay

Five tutorial schools continue to function



Tutorial school, Quebrada Nigua, Panama.



Tutorial school, Piggs Peak, Swaziland; opened 12 November 1982.



Gingalili pre-school, Nakuru District, Kenya; opened 1983.



Village tutorial school, Iriga City area, Philippines.

after one was closed for lack of a teacher. The National Assembly plans and prepares teaching material for all schools and trains teachers. Some operating costs are met by the Local Assemblies and some by 'kind friends.'

Bolivia

The Bolivian National Spiritual Assembly plunged into the tutorial school program in 1983, setting up a 'Yachay Wasi' Bahá'í Tutorial Center in the Sultani Institute in Chuquisaca, the heart of the indigenous area of Bolivia and central to the area of great Bahá'í population. Its main purpose is to train the teachers for one hundred tutorial schools to be established in the country, many of them in the Departments of Chuquisaca and Cochabamba. In 1984 the Yachay Wasi will be housed in its own splendid facility at Alto Delicias, Sucre. The center will provide teacher training and other educational services principally for the Quechua and Aymara-speaking Bahá'ís of Bolivia. Ten tutorial centers will be opened in early 1984.

Ecuador

The Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum Institute in Otavalo, which first housed the famed Radio Bahá'í, is now a focus of deepening and teaching as well as tutorial activity. Its nearby 'choza' built to hold Bahá'í gatherings and Sunday morning radio broadcasts with public attendance, accommodates after-school, remedial-type activities. Mass conversion in the earliest days, between 1959 and 1960, gave rise to five tutorial schools, one of them in Angla-Vagabundo. From this village have come the most outstanding Quechua teachers of Ecuador. An inspired proposal advanced by Counsellor Raúl Pavón in 1983 advances the concept of a Permanent Center for Education of Indigenous Bahá'ís, similar to the Guaymi Cultural Center plan. The far-reaching concept would include every aspect of community development through education. How this concept develops in Ecuador remains to be seen. (For early efforts in Bahá'í education in Ecuador see 'In Memoriam', Pavóns, this volume, p. 000.)

Chad, Senegal and Malawi

All three National Assemblies report entry into the tutorial school field. Senegal has a school in Casamance, and another opens shortly in the same area. Chad's Anís School arose out of that country's dynamic Victory Campaign of 1982. It now has three grades and a kindergarten. Chinkhole village tutorial school in Malawi holds its classes in the Bahá'í Center. Adults, Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, are taught to read and write. The motivation of the Bahá'í students is said to be their wish to read the words of Bahá'u'lláh.

Rwanda has six functioning tutorial schools and plans for many more.

Burundi. The Kagunuzi School has recently begun to function, financed initially by the National Assembly, but expected to attract the support of the local community.

Cameroon Republic has opened a tutorial school in a Pygmy zone.

Central African Republic. A pioneer is teaching 'alphabetization' for women and children at 'Unity Farm Tutorial School.'

Ghana's tutorial school begun at Timonde in 1981 has experienced a unique form of success. It has been absorbed into the public school system of the country, though it is still operated by the Local Spiritual Assembly.

In *Kenya* a nursery school is opening at the Bahá'í Center of Gingalili under the direction of a Kenyan teacher who is trained in nursery management. By next year it is expected that the National Spiritual Assembly will promote the establishment of five similar pre-primary schools based on the experience of Gingalili.

Swaziland has two pre-schools in operation, one at Hlatikula, on a fee-paying basis. The National Assembly plans to reinvest any surplus after expenses are met, to provide scholarships and to open another such school in a poorer area. Piggs Peak community also has a pre-school.

Togo has four tutorial schools, two of which hold evening literacy classes for adults in addition to daytime teaching of children from seven to fourteen years.



Bahá'í Center of Khuan Khreo, Phatthalung Province, South Thailand, used for child education; September 1983.



Louhelen School, Davison, Michigan, U.S.A.; built 1982.



Louis G. Gregory Institute, Hemingway, South Carolina, U.S.A.; 1983.



Tutorial school, Bangwade, Upper Zaire; March 1983.

Northeast Zaire's early entry into the tutorial school effort at the beginning of the Plan proved to be overly ambitious. Since 1982 they have retrenched and are now operating forty-four Bahá'í Educational Centers. Students pay a modest fee and the local community provides most of the expenses. A pilot project is under way for a literacy center for Pygmies.

Zambia can boast five functioning village tutorial schools, and an institute at Mwinilunga.

Trinidad reports sponsorship of a kindergarten in South Trinidad.

Vanuatu

On the island of Tanna, where rapid growth of the Faith has taken place since 1981, a peripatetic teaching project has operated intermittently. Since the late 1970s pioneers have served as itinerant teachers, going from village to village for short stays, offering classes in basic education for both children and adults.

III. RELATED GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Bahá'í efforts in education were given a boost by the natural working out of the Seven Year Plan goals to 'ensure Bahá'í education of children' through teacher training and curriculum development. In the Americas the most significant contribution to a new educational model may well stem from efforts to see to the Bahá'í education of children. Teacher-training events have been held in twenty countries of the Americas, with one hundred and ninety-two such gatherings already carried out by Riḍván of 1983.



Tutorial pre-school, Bulembu, Swaziland; 1982.

One outcome of teacher-training efforts for Bahá'í education of children has been the development of teaching abilities among members of Bahá'í communities, the emergence of adults and youth newly-qualified to 'educate' their own and their community's children. Their work in developing curricula, their obedience in carrying out their spiritual obligation to share the Revelation with the children of the community has a 'multiplier effect' on education. The children's horizons are broadened, their cultural life enriched. The *use of the mind, the expansion of consciousness* referred to by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, feeds the *insight into the realities of the universe and the hidden mysteries of Almighty God*, and vice versa. And in several places, the testimony of secular teachers has shown that the learning capacity of children has increased as a direct result of their Bahá'í education.

Colombia's Ruhi Institute is a good example of deepening-cum-education. It has provided a model to several countries of the region. It is uniquely Bahá'í, developed to meet the needs of rural Colombia, but with application to similar societies in many parts of the hemisphere. Housed in a rural setting near Cali, Colombia, the Ruhi Institute is more a philosophy than a place. Ruhi-trained youth have visited neighboring countries of the Americas and the Caribbean, sharing their techniques by holding sessions of the Ruhi Institute. The Ruhi Institute, developed by the National Spiritual Assembly under the guidance of Counsellor Farzám Arbáb, consists of programs of deepening and consolidation. The Tutorial deepening program consists of four levels of nine courses, a total of thirty-six, covering many spiritual themes designed to help the student along a personal path of service to the Cause. The deeds of service begin with simple actions and gradually grow in complexity. An individual familiar with the Ruhi courses who wishes to study more deeply may choose individual tutoring, regular classes with a group in a village or neighborhood once or twice a week, weekend institutes, or

intensive institutes of one to four weeks' duration. The success of the Ruhi Institute is probably due to the basic concept, as stated in its information booklet: 'The basis of any true process of learning is the understanding of the Revelation of God through His Manifestation.' Another key to success has been the choice of 'Service to the Cause' as the axis around which courses are developed. The basic idea is that 'each Bahá'í may walk a joyous path of service to the Cause which, at the same time, increases his own capacity to understand and to perform ever greater deeds of service.' The Ruhi model seems to embody the idea contained in the statement of 'Abdu'l-Bahá above.

Opportunities to introduce Bahá'í educational content into school settings have multiplied. In such widely separated locations of the planet as Malaysia, Trinidad, Norway and some states of India, Bahá'ís have diligently filled slots opened for them in the public school systems or created, through their timely intervention, the opportunity to provide religious training to Bahá'í children. Programs reaching into school systems, offering a general Bahá'í orientation to all children or a one-time visit from a traveling teacher, have been welcomed in some locations, notably Zimbabwe, Guyana, Portugal, to name but a few. A full survey of these activities has not been made, but they are known to exist in every continent.

The range of Bahá'í interest in education is endless. Bahá'ís of Bolivia look forward to establishing a University at Santa Cruz with educational extension programs for rural areas; the National Assembly of Belgium participates since 1980 in a Faculty of Comparative Religion at Antwerp, an institution of higher education, founded by the Ministry of Education and approved by Royal Decree; the Guaymi Cultural Center in Panama will become a center for many aspects of personal, vocational and community education and training in addition to its basic cultural and administrative thrust; a literacy program introduced by Ethiopian Bahá'ís and based on their own original publications, was supported by the government; the magnificent Louhelen School facility, erected at Davison, Michigan, in 1982, will develop into a year-round residential school; Peru's 'New Era Cultural Association', acting on behalf of that National Spiritual Assembly, will collaborate with the Peruvian Ministry of Education in literacy and post-literacy activities centering in Radio Bahá'í of Lake Titicaca; Bahá'ís of Imbabura Province, Ecuador, introduced the concept of 'mural newspapers' as a tool of community education among the non-literate population. Numerous plans for future projects and interim reports on ideas only recently conceived, indicate a swelling interest among Bahá'ís in every aspect of education.

CONCLUSION

The various educational efforts that have 'sprung up' or have been painstakingly raised, burgeoning or struggling for existence, have in common the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. Whatever the experimental forms through which Bahá'í education must pass, whatever adaptations emerge from earlier academic theories or practices, the Bahá'í school will always be, it is hoped, grounded in the Revelation, and be the fruit of the didactic principles of the Divine Educator. The 'true education' spoken of by Bahá'u'lláh may be the heritage from this era of development. A new model may arise from the merger of what has heretofore been thought of as academic or secular education with the spiritual content of the Revelation itself—the enabling factor in producing the True Education of this and future epochs.

7. BAHÁ'Í YOUTH ACADEMY OF INDIA

THE Bahá'í Youth Academy was established on 27 June 1982 in Panchgani, India. Its aim is to become a permanent institution for Bahá'í scholarship as well as to provide a national centre for the deepening and training of Bahá'ís from all parts of India who, armed with new-found knowledge and skills, may then return to their home States and set up similar programmes and training institutes for the local believers in their own languages.

Although the Academy plans eventually to hold study courses of from six months' to two years' duration, at its present stage of development and with its limited facilities it conducts courses of from one to seven weeks. Each course is tailored to the need of a specific group of believers such as State Teaching Committee members, State and Local Youth Committee members, assistants to Auxiliary Board members, pioneers, Bahá'í women, editors of State newsletters and graduates of the New Era and Rabbani Schools. The first year of the Academy's experience indicated that this system of holding courses for specific groups instead of holding general deepening programmes open to all is more effective as it enables the instructors to concentrate on the specific needs of the particular group and to adjust the lessons to the level of understanding of the students.

Since its inception the Academy has held three successful courses, each with a different emphasis. The first course, of six weeks' duration, was a general one for youth and drew thirty-six participants. It was held simultaneously with a similar course in Persian for ninety-nine Persian pioneers from India and abroad.

The second course was lengthened to seven weeks to include a week-long 'spiritualization' element, and was designed specifically for the members of State Teaching Committees. The course focused on the functions and administration of these valuable teaching arms of the National Spiritual Assembly.

The third course, three weeks long, was for Bahá'í women and included special classes on the role and station of Bahá'í women in the community and the family as well as a class on famous women in Bahá'í history.

By March 1983, one hundred and sixty-two students from sixteen States in India, the Andaman Islands, and the neighbouring countries of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka had completed courses at the Academy. Each of the courses, though having its own unique character and emphasis, follows the same basic outline: six classes per day, each class one hour in length, for six days each week. Each class has its own daily assignments and most of them require the students to sit for a final examination at the end of the course. The core subjects covered in every Academy course are: Bahá'í administration; laws and ordinances; Bahá'í history; the Covenant; protection of the Faith and meeting opposition; Bahá'í education and Bahá'í principles. Additional classes to date have included: teaching the Faith; a study of selected chapters from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Some Answered Questions*; progressive revelation and the history of religions; the station of women in the Bahá'í dispensation and a study of some famous Bahá'í women; the role of women in Bahá'í administration; organizing Bahá'í activities; family life and a study of the spiritual implications of Bahá'u'lláh's *The Seven Valleys*. In addition, an extracurricular course in black-and-white photography and darkroom techniques has been a regular and popular feature of each course. Students find that the courses are both rigorous and thrilling. Most teachers use the methods of discussion and question-and-answer, thus involving the students actively in the learning process rather than requiring them to listen passively to a lecture.

Secondary to their studies, but also an essential part of each student's experience at the Academy, is the fellowship and contact he enjoys with his fellow believers, not only those who come from different parts of India and neighbouring countries but with the Bahá'í friends of Panchgani who are themselves from all parts of the world. In Panchgani the students may enjoy Bahá'í films and slide programmes and learn Bahá'í songs in both English and Hindi. They may visit the New Era School and the Institute of Rural Technology. No less valuable for the students



Members of the faculty, staff and students who participated in the second course of the Bahá'í Youth Academy of India; 17 October–5 December 1982.

and ultimately for the entire Bahá'í community is the interaction with their Bahá'í brothers and sisters from different States, who are of different races and religious backgrounds and who speak different languages. In a country as varied and diverse as India, the experience of Bahá'í community life at the Academy is in itself the most powerful demonstration, to those within the Bahá'í community and those without, of the unifying power of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.

A third component of the Academy programme is vocational training designed to equip students with a practical skill that will be useful and will enable them to be self-supporting either at home or in pioneering posts abroad. Although necessarily limited in scope at present, it is visualized that this element will expand to include training in auto mechanics, electrical wiring, tailoring, cycle repair, radio and television repair and other skills.

Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My words, is Bahá'u'lláh's exhortation, *that ye may unravel its secrets, and discover all the pearls of wisdom that lie hid in its depths.* Within the first day or two of a course students at the Academy find themselves fully immersed in a study of the vast ocean of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. Within the first week they catch glimmerings of the immensity, majesty and transforming power of the Holy Writings, while their teachers observe in them a more fully awakened sense of belonging to a Cause that is mightier than they had realized previously. Usually, about halfway through a course, the students begin to feel 'drowned' in a sea of assignments, wondering whether it is really necessary to cover so much material in so short a time; but by the last week most of them request that the Academy extend the course for at least another week, having come to realize that despite their arduous labours they have merely skimmed the surface of the vast and limitless ocean of Bahá'u'lláh's Words. And when their examinations are over the students' normal sense of relief is tempered by a desire to know more, to delve even more deeply. It will be apparent that such an intensive study experience has the potential to transform the Bahá'í communities of India and surrounding countries where there are many Bahá'ís with the desire and capacity to study deeply the

Holy Writings but who are hindered in their efforts through lack of opportunity, lack of access to Bahá'í books or the need of assistance to study in English, there being only a limited number of works as yet translated into languages indigenous to India and these being of varying quality.

Teachers at the Academy are drawn from the highly qualified cadre of professional educators in the Panchgani Bahá'í community, including the Principal and counsellor and staff members of the New Era School. Assistance is also given by Bahá'ís from other parts of India who are distinguished for their knowledge of the Faith and their ability to teach. This group of visiting teachers has included members of the Continental Board of Counsellors, Auxiliary Board members and members of national committees in India, and will in future include outstanding Bahá'í teachers from abroad.

In the Spring of 1982 the National Bahá'í Youth Committee of India, in consultation with Counsellor Burháni'd-Dín Afshín, conceived the idea of establishing the Academy. Its rapid growth and progress during its first year inspired the National Spiritual Assembly to designate it an independent institution to function directly under the aegis of the National Assembly. From the beginning the Continental Board of Counsellors gave the nascent institution its wholehearted support, contributing both guidance and funds. When planning was begun for the first course, the Academy had only one full-time staff member, the Director. An Assistant-Director was needed and was promptly engaged. After completion of the second course the staff grew to five.

In addition to the general organizing of the different courses and the correspondence and report-writing that is involved, the Academy has four separate departments with their own duties. The Department of Library and Correspondence Courses organizes the Academy Library (which is already, perhaps, the largest Bahá'í library in India), prepares and distributes to Academy students and pioneers deepening materials in both Persian and English, supervises the English correspondence course, stores and files all materials used in Academy courses and operates a book-selling service in Panchgani. The Audio-Visual Department is in charge of showing films and slide programmes during Academy courses, makes cassette tapes of deepening material and music with Bahá'í themes, prepares photographs and other materials for sale and has in hand plans for preparing films and video tapes on different Bahá'í subjects for use both in the villages and in the Academy classroom. In addition there is a Department of Finance and a Department of Organization. Each department is managed by one person with various assistants as necessary.

Before the completion of its first year the Academy will hold three more courses: a five-week course for students at the New Era School to help prepare them for their pioneering services to all parts of the world; a course for graduating students at the Rabbani Bahá'í School; and a course for youth, especially those who are members of State and Local Youth Committees.

There has long been a crying need for such an institution in India, a vast country whose population has demonstrated great receptivity to the Bahá'í teachings. Through the ever-present and keenly felt confirmations of the Ancient Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh; through the encouragement and prayers of the Universal House of Justice and the International Teaching Centre; through the vision of the National Youth Committee and the support and co-operation of the Continental Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly, the Academy has triumphed over the difficulties of birth to emerge as a viable institution which promises to be an increasingly effective instrument for service to the Cause of God in India and beyond its borders.

(Based on an article in *Bahá'í News*, India, March 1983.)

8. THE RABBANI SCHOOL AT GWALIOR, INDIA

STEPHEN H. WAITE

THE Rabbani School at Gwalior stands today as one of a growing number of Bahá'í schools in India and throughout the world. In India, the New Era School at Panchgani was established in 1945, followed by Rabbani in 1977; and now in the first part of this decade, many new schools throughout India and Sikkim are beginning. They all follow in the footsteps of the famous Tarbíyat Bahá'í Schools in Írán. Interestingly, many of the present Bahá'í schools. Rabbani prominently among them, are more than simple academic institutions; they are a new type of model through which the transforming influence of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order flows; they are not only schools but centres of community development, social service projects and adult literacy and training programmes. All reach out to the surrounding communities. They are among the 'agencies of this Administrative Order that have combined to bring into focus new possibilities in the evolution of the Bahá'í world'.[1]

THE MANDATE OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

The Rabbani School is being developed under the loving and careful guidance of the Universal House of Justice and the National Spiritual Assembly of India. Its purpose is unique. The House of Justice, in its letter of 28 July 1974, stated that '. . . the primary purpose for establishing the Rabbani School, beyond offering needed services to many Bahá'í families, is to assist the teaching and consolidation work in India through training potential village teachers'. The school's fundamental aim is thus to train a substantial number of staunch and deepened Bahá'í teachers. Towards this end, the curriculum has three major aspects: academic, vocational and Bahá'í. In the words of the Universal House of Justice, the students, after their years at the school, '. . . will have had the opportunity to achieve competence in the required academic subjects and will also have participated in a supervised work plan which will have provided real experience in valuable skills. In addition, during this period they will have become imbued with the Bahá'í life of worship and service as observed in the school, and will have become involved in direct Bahá'í teaching.'

The development of the Rabbani School was included as one of India's goals during the Five Year Plan (1974–1979), and its further development is a goal of the present Seven Year Plan.

THREE ASPECTS OF THE CURRICULUM: MORAL, VOCATIONAL, ACADEMIC

The most distinctive feature of education at the Rabbani School is that boys live for six years in a Bahá'í environment that helps them to become members of 'a new race of men', of high moral fibre, strength of character and resourcefulness. They rise each morning with Bahá'í prayers, and live according to the Bahá'í calendar of Holy Days, Feasts, the Fast and other festivals and observances. They learn how to conduct Bahá'í meetings and to consult properly; study Bahá'í administration extensively, and experience first-hand its functions in mock assembly meetings, on school committees, and in actual Riḍván elections. Through memorization of Bahá'í texts and prayers, as well as important excerpts from other Holy Scriptures, they develop a wide range of knowledge and acquire a store of songs, literature and teaching albums to take to their villages.

The entire student body has been divided into teams of ten students. The teams travel

[1] The Universal House of Justice, 20 October 1983.

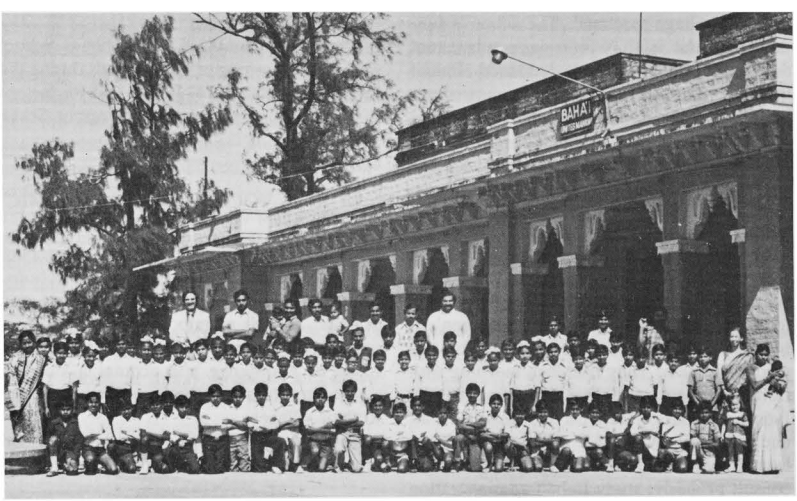
on selected Sundays to nearby villages to conduct children's schools and deepening classes. Members of the faculty accompany them on these trips. As the school expands into village development activities, students will become more directly involved in the dissemination of technical skills which will be of direct economic, social and health benefit to the surrounding villages. This training should equip the students to function as deepened, experienced Bahá'í teachers of good character with sufficient skills at their disposal to help both technically and spiritually in the advancement of their villages.

The development of a full-fledged six-year Bahá'í academic curriculum where boys study daily the Bahá'í Faith, their mother religion—Hinduism—and other great religions, as well as moral principles, has proven to be a very great challenge. Faculty members and various committees at the school have attempted to develop materials in Hindi. Much work remains to be done.

The vocational emphasis at the school derives from the mandate letter of 28 July 1974 from the Universal House of Justice in which it is specified that the school '. . . will ultimately be strongly vocational in its atmosphere and curriculum'. This is essential since the school aims primarily to train boys to return to their villages. The vocational curriculum now includes agriculture, animal husbandry and poultry; and will include fish farming, sanitation, village technologies and basic building trades. Interested students may also be trained in small-scale industrial skills. Presently, vocational skills are taught in several hours of practical work per week to complement the theory taught in class. For example, boys take responsibility for a small plot of land where they grow and harvest crops, or for a small poultry unit where all aspects of work are under their supervision.

Development of a vocational programme has proven to be difficult mainly because of the high capital investments required at the beginning, although substantial amounts of the school's acreage have been brought under cultivation, a large poultry farm is in operation, a dairy has been started, and carpentry training will soon be introduced.

The most highly developed aspect of the programme is the academic school. In 1983 Rabbani became a fully recognized Higher Secondary School, with classes six through eleven. Approximately twenty per cent of all Rabbani boys taking the State middle board examination have attained merit positions,



Faculty and students of Rabbani School; 1983.

while most of the others have done very well. The first graduating class stood successfully for the eleventh standard Higher Secondary Examination in 1983.

SELF-HELP TOWARDS SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Incorporating the vocations within the academic and theoretical programme is emphasized in such a way as to make Rabbani a self-help school; that is, it will '. . . embody a self-help component whereby the village students will undertake a measure of the work of farm and school', as envisioned by the Universal House of Justice. Taking such responsibility for the physical work and contributing towards the cost of their education helps foster self-reliance in these youths. In 1983 a graduated system of fees based on the parents' ability to pay was introduced. The fees vary from family to family. Bahá'í funds and direct donations to the school provide scholarships.

The school's scholarship fund has developed steadily as Bahá'ís around the world have offered increasing support. Annually, twenty-five to forty per cent of the school's operating budget has been received through the scholarship fund. In addition to fees and farm income, the remaining amount needed to operate the school has come from the national and international funds of the Faith. Approximately $225 (U.S.) per year covers full fees for each boy. In 1977 parents paid only eight per cent of this. In the 1983–1984 school year they paid nearly thirty-eight per cent, and the boys' labour amounted to twenty-two per cent.

Self-help is part of a larger effort to render the school self-sufficient. Economic activities at the school are presently aimed at offsetting operating costs with profit from the sales of eggs and hens and some produce from agriculture. Plans are being considered for other activities which will not only support the school's operating costs but will make substantial contributions to the capitalization costs. Until the 1983–1984 school year, however, capitalization was made possible by the national and international funds and by contributions from individuals.

HISTORY AND STAGES OF GROWTH

The Rabbani School is located on the plains of north-central India just outside the city of Gwalior. Its seventy-two acres of farmland, a large main building and several auxiliary buildings were purchased on 20 February 1964 by the National Spiritual Assembly of India. The property is beautiful, with large trees and many date palms that make it a virtual oasis amidst the surrounding scrub forest. The previous owner, the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, had used it as a lodge when hunting wild boar. The school was established near Gwalior because continuous teaching efforts, begun in that area in 1962, resulted in a large Bahá'í population. Nearly 3,100 Local Spiritual Assemblies exist in this region of Northern Madhya Pradesh. The potential of this property to serve the development of the Faith in the heart of this area was clearly seen by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who encouraged its purchase and is credited with giving it the name 'Rabbani'. Presently, many of the students come from this region as well as from five other States—Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Manipur and Sikkim—and from the neighbouring country of Nepal.

During the early years, a number of institutes were held at Rabbani, as well as large conferences called in honour of visits by five Hands of the Cause. Two very large conferences were held in 1964 and 1968 when the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum visited. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, and his wife, visited in 1967. In 1969 Rabbani was host to the Hands of the Cause Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí and Dr. Adelbert Mühlschlegel who were accompanied by Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited several times; his last visit was in 1978.

The operation of a school on the Rabbani

property has not been continuous since it first started in 1967. A boarding school was in operation from 1967 to 1970, the students numbering nearly seventy, sixteen of whom were from Tibetan refugee families. Regular academic activities were held in standards five through nine. From 1970 to 1977, however, the school ceased to function, and boys were taken to a boarding hostel in Gwalior. They received academic training at other schools and moral training at the hostel. In 1974 the hostel, with the twelve remaining students, was shifted to Indore for one year.

During the period from 1970 to 1974 the National Spiritual Assembly supervised a subcommittee that studied the requirements for re-establishing the Rabbani School and clarifying its objectives. Also during this time, because of the urgent need to find a qualified Bahá'í to serve as the school's Director, contact was made with two American believers, Dr. Stephen Waite and Mrs. Sherman Waite. Dr. Waite visited the school in April 1974 and decided to accept the challenge of its restoration. Shortly after completing his doctoral thesis in education at the University of Massachusetts Dr. Waite, together with his wife, arrived to stay in December 1975. The Waites were joined at that time by Mr. Ray Betts, a seventy-one-year-old pioneer from the United States and Belize who had had several years of experience in tropical agriculture. Mr. Betts spent nearly a year at the Rabbani School improving the soil and fruit trees, introducing composting and the use of natural fertilizers and mulching. With great humour he persevered through the trials of inspection by curious villagers and of being hard of hearing, which made learning a new language quite difficult. Mr. Betts recently passed on to the Abhá Kingdom.

Before the school could reopen there were the problems of obtaining electricity, plumbing and adequate living space. By organizing the villagers to make agricultural proposals for electricity, and helping them to arrange for bank loans, it was possible to obtain an electrical connection that had been sought unsuccessfully in that area for five years. In addition, a work crew came from Panchgani, site of the New Era Bahá'í School, to help build a shower and toilet facility, dining hall, gobar gas plant to produce methane, and to install all the plumbing.

The Rabbani School was reopened in July 1977 with forty-seven boys in the sixth grade and a faculty of four. All students were housed in the main building which contained classrooms, offices and staff rooms. Each year after that a new group of students was admitted in the sixth standard until, in the 1982–1983 academic year, one hundred and eighty-seven students were in attendance.

In 1977 a second pioneering family joined the newly-reopened school, Mr. and Mrs. Feroze and Elizabeth Dallas from the United Kingdom, and their two children. Mr. Dallas served as Director of Agriculture and Mrs. Dallas served as School Nurse. Mr. Dallas's knowledge of Hindi revived from his childhood days in Bombay, coupled with his extensive training abroad, made him well qualified for the position he filled. The farm was gradually established and a fishery begun. An agriculture curriculum was developed combining theoretical study with practical activities.

During these years faculty members joined the staff, both as teachers, and in agriculture and other capacities. In 1982–1983 a teaching staff of fourteen, and a support staff of over thirty, served at the school. Rabbani's teachers come from several different Hindi-speaking States in India. Also from 1982 to 1984 a number of Iranian friends served on the staff in various positions.

GROWTH OF THE PHYSICAL PLANT: PROJECTING RABBANI INTO THE FUTURE

During the initial years of the school's operation existing buildings were modified to meet all school needs. Only a few major structures such as kitchen-dining and bathroom facilities were added during those years. Further expansion was planned with the adoption of an architectural master plan which was made possible by the voluntary efforts of two dedicated Bahá'í architects, Mr. Thomas Kubala and Mr. Allen Washatko, of Cedarberg, Wisconsin, U.S.A. They designed all the required facilities for a school of five



Ploughing with the Rabbani School's team of water-buffalo (used in addition to a tractor).

hundred students, taking advantage where possible of modern innovations in solar and wind technology. The first dormitory for sixty-four boys, the cornerstone of which was laid on 4 November 1981 by Mr. and Mrs. Hushmand Fatheazam, was completed in July of 1983. An additional dormitory will be completed in 1984. The master plan includes dormitories, classrooms, staff apartments, a Bahá'í deepening institute, vocational facilities, additional animal husbandry areas, sports grounds, public service buildings (such as the community development project building currently under construction) and at the centre will be a prayer hall located on an island in the heart of the campus.

Recently, with the assistance of Bahá'í funds and grants from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), several community development projects have been initiated at Rabbani. They will be merged within several years. The first is the Rabbani Rural Health Project functioning in three communities to train villagers as voluntary health care workers. Their job is to promote immunization, sanitation, prenatal, intranatal and postnatal care, improved maternal and child nutrition and to provide knowledge and treatment of selected illnesses, with referral of more serious cases.

In mid-1983 a second grant was given to Rabbani by the Canadian International Development Agency, with one-third of the funds provided by the Bahá'í community and two-thirds by CIDA. Work began in December 1983 with plans for the development of twenty villages. Initially, assessments are being made in the villages to ascertain what is needed and what the people can contribute themselves. In many of the adopted villages no schools exist, yet considerable interest in education has been expressed. Part of the plan, therefore, is to assist in the establishment of Bahá'í primary day schools. In many cases inactive and untrained Local Spiritual Assemblies are being assisted to learn to manage these schools in co-operation with the project personnel. Great emphasis is being placed on training each Local Spiritual Assembly and community, as this will be the means for ensuring a balanced development of the village. It has been noted that villagers often find it easier to organize around practical, daily issues, so such an undertaking will provide the substance for the Local Assembly's consultation and deepening. The school

will provide a primary school education for the young children of the village, and adult literacy programmes. Bahá'í deepening programmes will be channelled through each school as a centre for community activities. The Rabbani School premises are being developed for vocational training for both Rabbani students and for people from these villages. Many government programmes recognize the value of such training and provide loans to the villagers for the development of a poultry unit or a small-scale industrial unit. Within a few years the training of community health workers will also be integrated into this larger project.

The ultimate aim of this community development project is to assist the adopted communities to develop spiritually, economically, socially, educationally and in health so that they become distinctive Bahá'í villages. These villages in turn will provide an example for other villages nearby. Also, as development efforts are undertaken all over India, the experience gained at Rabbani will be of use to others. The community development programmes will gradually be integrated into the school programme, allowing a total shift in the emphasis of the school away from the academic to the practical. Boys will receive on-the-job training in these villages as they are called upon to teach or to help establish a programme or industry in a village. Rabbani boys will also play a more involved role in the Bahá'í deepening work conducted in each village.

Rabbani is gradually becoming much more than a school as it integrates itself into the surrounding Bahá'í communities. It will retain its academic programme for both students and adults, the Bahá'í deepening programme for individuals, Assemblies, children and youth, and the community development programmes, including public services such as health care and adult literacy training.



A class on the Writings of the Báb conducted for eighth grade boys of Rabbani School by Mrs. Sherman Waite.

9. TRAIL OF LIGHT

BARBARA BARRETT

THE 'Trail of Light' blazed through Latin America by indigenous Bahá'ís from North America in the summer of 1982 gave thrilling evidence of the bond of Faith that unites the hemisphere's indigenous Bahá'ís. Nine Bahá'ís, members of seven native tribes of North America—Cree, Blackfoot, Metis and Tlingit of Canada; Upik Eskimo and Tlingit of Alaska; Navajo and Makah of the United States—traveled and taught in ten countries during June, July and August. They visited Mexico, Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Chile, Peru, Bolivia and finally Ecuador, where their visit was planned to coincide with the opening of the International Bahá'í Conference at Quito on 6–8 August. They spoke, danced and sang before varied groups, forging links of friendship with their Latin American brothers in the Faith, and especially with their brother-indigenous, the native tribal peoples of the south. The public acceptance of the visitors from North America surprised even the planners. Everywhere they were received with admiration, enthusiasm and fraternal spirit. Many Bahá'ís were moved to observe that this was an important step toward realizing 'Abdu'l-Bahá's vision of the destiny of the Western hemisphere's native peoples. In the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* He wrote:

> *You must attach great importance to the Indians, the original inhabitants of America . . . should these Indians be educated and properly guided, there can be no doubt that through the Divine teachings they will become so enlightened that the whole earth will be illumined.*

The Trail of Light began in Arizona on the Navajo Reservation where an International Teaching Conference on the property of the future Southwest Bahá'í Institute brought the team members together for the first time on 19–20 June. Reports mention 'a sense of history in the making' as three members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas helped to launch the first trip of its kind. They were Mrs. Lauretta King of Alaska, Mr. Raúl Pavón of Colombia and Mrs. Carmen de Burafato of Mexico. Mrs. de Burafato described the original migrations of native peoples of the hemisphere, saying that the travels of the Bahá'ís along a 'trail of light' was a dream come true. Mrs. King, who is a Tlingit from Eagle River, Alaska, was able to share her sensitive perception of Indian teaching needs. A memorable session with Mr. Pavón on the spirit and principles of teaching was translated from Spanish into English and then into Navajo. A memorial service for Mr. Amoz Gibson, recently deceased member of the Universal House of Justice, flooded the hearts of those gathered there with memories of his early Navajo pioneering days and reminded them of his love for the Navajos. The 'Trail of Light' was there dedicated to his memory.

Two teams set out from Arizona. One went to five countries of Central America and the other to Chile, Bolivia and Peru, meeting up in Quito, Ecuador, at the International Conference. The southern contingent was made up of:

Rita Blumenstein of Palmer, Alaska, a Yupik Eskimo who speaks Yupik, performs native dances, makes traditional baskets and is adept at the Eskimo art of skin-sewing;

Chester Kahn of Houck, Arizona, Navajo, a knowledgeable Bahá'í teacher of rich experience in the Faith, who performs Navajo songs and dances; (Later that summer Mr. Kahn was elected a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States)

Rebecca McKennet, of Juneau Alaska, of Tlingit Indian and Japanese ancestry, who sings Tlingit cultural songs and is one of few remaining members of a Tlingit royal family. She wears a beautiful native costume;

Louise Profeit, of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada, a Tlingit who recites prayers in her native tongue. She is a registered nurse working in health education whose Bahá'í experience includes Local Spiritual Assembly and National Teaching Committee membership. Mrs. Profeit is from a respected Yukon family and is the mother of three children.



This picture of the four members of the southern contingent of Trail of Light appeared in newspapers of Chile. They are, left to right: Chester Kahn, Rebecca McKennett, Rita Blumenstein, Louise Profeit.



The southern team visits the Aguaruna tribe in the jungle area of northern Peru. Hundreds of Aguarunas came with their chiefs to see the Trail of Light, and the two groups performed for each other.



The North American visitors with four members of the indigenous community of Porras, Bolivia.

Their schedule took them first to Chile for nine days—22–30 June.

CHILE

The National Assembly wrote: 'Praised be God for the "Trail of Light" . . . Their impact on the Bahá'í community and the mass media will be felt strongly for a long time to come . . .' They performed in a park in Santiago, recorded music and interviews for Bahá'í radio and gave a public performance in Concepcion. 'Publicity for the group', reported Chile's Feast Newsletter, 'put the Faith in the first rank, since not only were there numerous articles in the press in Concepcion, Temuco and Santiago, but also photos and articles on the covers of dailies of Temuco and Concepcion and of the *Chronicle* of Santiago, an English newspaper. In Temuco the Sunday supplement of 4 July devoted the entire first page to the subject. Radio interviews were outstanding in all the cities.' In Region IX (where eighty-nine of Chile's Local Assemblies are and 14,000 Bahá'ís live) there were public performances at two Bahá'í schools, a presentation at the Bahá'í Institute and at the Cultural Center of the City of Temuco with two hundred and fifty present, and an appearance at a municipal school in Temuco for an audience of six hundred children and faculty.

'Among all the activities, the most moving was the heart-to-heart contact with our brothers the Mapuche Bahá'ís', stated the National Spiritual Assembly. 'The high point came at the end of the performance in Temuco when they danced the 'Eagle Dance' with a Chilean Mapuche group, Kalle-Kalle Mapu. They made the amazing discovery that Tlingit and Mapuche have almost exactly the same Eagle Dance. The audience was ecstatic, responding to the dance with a standing ovation. Mr. Athos Costas, Counsellor of the Continental Board in the Americas, who



The nine members who made up the Trail of Light teams in June 1982, together for the first time at the Southwest Bahá'í Institute in Arizona, U.S.A., before beginning their southward journey to Central and South America. Left to right: Walter Austin, Tlingit, of Kake, Alaska; Rick Belcourt, Metis, from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; Rita Blumenstein, Yupik Eskimo, of Palmer, Alaska; Audrey McCarty, Makah, of Washington, U.S.A.; Chester Kahn, Navajo, of Houck, Arizona, U.S.A.; Rita Markishtum, Makah, of Washington, U.S.A.; Pat Twigge, Blackfoot, from Blood Reserve in Alberta, Canada; Rebecca McKennett, of Tlingit and Japanese ancestry, from Juneau, Alaska; Louise Profeit, Tlingit, of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada.

accompanied the team said, 'The full effect of this visit still has not been manifested.'

BOLIVIA

Leaving Chile on 1 July, the same group visited the cities of La Paz, Cochabamba, Sucre, Potosí and Oruro during eighteen days in Bolivia, giving public meetings in cultural centers, schools and universities. Between city visits they met rural indigenous Bahá'ís and their neighbors. One memorable visit to the countryside is described by the group's photographer and sometime translator, Gregg Suhm (a pioneer to Ecuador and staff member of Radio Bahá'í of Otavlo). He traveled with the team to the town of Cajas Kasa high in the Andes. He writes, 'After a seven-hour jeep ride through rough terrain the team came upon an arch of stones perched on a boulder . . . An explosion of dynamite (a sign of respect paid to honored guests) startled the team, but let neighbors know that a special event was to take place.' As the team approached, the wood flute and drum bands of three Local Spiritual Assemblies struck up lively Bolivian tunes. Heartfelt greetings of 'Alláh-u-Abhá' were exchanged as Trail members choked back tears of joy at the warmth of their reception. After a lunch served inside the modest local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds built of adobe brick, they made their presentation outside against a backdrop of barren hills and a deep blue sky. Afterwards, the Quechua believers, wearing multi-colored woven caps, played their long flutes called *samponas*. All joined in dancing around the circle of musicians. Sturdy children sang lustily their songs of love for Bahá'u'lláh and the joy of being Bahá'ís. It ended too soon. Hands reached out in farewell. Another stick of dynamite was set off as a 'goodbye', and the jeep moved away while the team sang 'Alláh-u-Abhá' with the encounter etched in their memories.

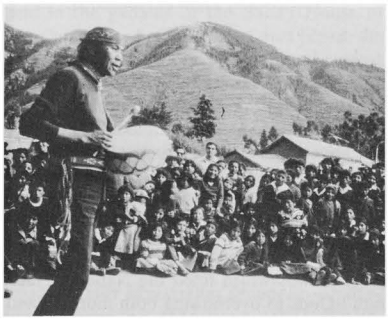
A typical 'city' day for the busy team would include a television interview, a proclamation in ceremonial costume at a Cultural Center, a fireside and a radio interview, as in Potosi on 9 July (preceded by early rising for dawn prayers and a seven-hour jeep ride). In La Paz, on 14 July, the President of Bolivia welcomed the team. Also present were twelve Ministers of Departments from around the country, some of whom were themselves indigenous. The Governor of the Department of La Paz also greeted the Trail members in his office, stating that he identified with many of the Bahá'í principles. Other major events in the capital included two twenty-minute cultural programs for the state-owned television which were later aired nationwide.

PERU

On 18 July the team was received at the border between Bolivia and Peru by members of the staff of Radio Bahá'í of Puno. They rested that night and on the next day went as guests of honor to a gigantic indigenous music festival hosted by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Caspa. Three thousand Aymara Indians from surrounding villages attended. From morning to afternoon there were performances by the visitors in their native dress and by local groups. In Caspa the team was joined by Counsellor Mas'úd Khamsí who spoke over the microphone to the vast crowd, emphasizing the importance of the visit by the northerners and of the fulfillment of Indian prophecy through the coming of the Trail of Light. Auxiliary Board member Andrés Jachacollo spoke in Aymara with strength and fervor. The crowd listened intently as each North American shared his thoughts and some aspects of his culture.

In the late afternoon of the same day the team performed in the stadium of the town of Juli for more than a thousand persons. The following day they were guests at the official inauguration of the Bahá'í Teaching Institute building at Chucuito, adjacent to the Bahá'í radio station. Thousands of villagers attended and many more heard the program on the air. In Puno on the 21st, the Trail group visited the College of Fine Arts and the radio and television stations. In Cuzco on the 22nd, they met hundreds of *campesinos* and toured the magnificent ruins of Machu Pichu, capital of the ancient Inca empire. Some described the visit as a kind of 'pilgrimage' to pay homage to the once-great civilization with which they felt a kinship. The vestiges of that civilization inspired a feeling of awe for the majestic beauty and the evidences of high technology. The visitors were accompanied by Exaltación Quispé and his wife. (Quispé is the first indigenous Bahá'í of Cuzco.)

In Lima they visited newspapers and were interviewed on a television news show wearing their colorful costumes. From there they were flown to northern Peru to visit the jungle area of the Aguaruna Indians. At an all-day Council given by the Naranjilla Bajo Bahá'í community they met hundreds of Aguarunas and their chiefs, performing for them, feasting with them and expressing common concerns and values. From Lima the southern group left for Ecuador to join the other team at Quito where their participation was one of the highlights of the International Conference.



An outdoor performance in Pucyura, Peru.

The team that went to five Central American countries included:

Walter Austin, Tlingit of Kake, Alaska, who speaks and writes the Tlingit language and is an effective public orator;

Rick Belcourt, Metis (a mixture of Plains Indian and French ancestry), from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, who has a profound grasp of native culture and history, plays guitar and performs the traditional pipe ceremony;

Rita Markishtum, Makah, of Washington, U.S.A., who has served the Bahá'í community in many capacities, and who performs traditional dances;

Audrey McCarty, Makah, also of Washington, also a dancer and narrator of native legends;

Pat Twigge, Blackfoot from Blood Reserve in Alberta, Canada. (He was, unfortunately, with the group only through Mexico as a chronic back ailment became aggravated by dancing, forcing him to return home.)

MEXICO

'Five beautiful souls have won the hearts of the people, both Bahá'í and public,' wrote Counsellor Artemus Lamb. The five-member Trail group arrived in Mexico City on 21 June accompanied by Counsellor Lauretta King and Fletcher Bennett, Auxiliary Board member from Canada who filmed the activities. In Tampico, State of Veracruz, interviews were held with the leading newspaper, the University newspaper and television and radio stations. In Pablanta there were many meetings with Totonaco Indians of that region and a proclamation for more than one hundred. In Oaxaca City about three hundred people were drawn to a public meeting where the team demonstrated their tribal dances and songs and shared Bahá'í Teachings. In the indigenous village of Lachigoloo one hundred and seventy-five persons attended a public meeting. Both meetings were the largest of their kind ever held by Bahá'ís in the State of Oaxaca. Media publicity was extensive.

At the Bahá'í Center in Merida, Yucatan, an interview was filmed for television news, and an article and photograph were published in a Merida paper. In other parts of the Yucatan peninsula more than one hundred Bahá'ís and their friends attended each event. In Quintana Roo a proclamation in an open-air theatre belonging to the government attracted an audience of over six hundred. The performers shared samples of their tribal songs, dances and traditions as well as the basic teachings of the Faith. The next morning brought an interview with the President of the city.

Counsellor Lamb wrote: 'It is impossible to estimate the spiritual impact of this historic project, but it is certainly very great, both on local Bahá'ís and on friends of the Faith and the public. Everywhere people were amazed to learn that the Faith had penetrated the indigenous areas of North America; furthermore, they were deeply impressed by the spirituality, capacity and love of the team. Already in Mexico, new concepts, ideas and plans are being discussed on how to carry this process forward, both on a national and an international level.'

BELIZE

On 9 July the team left for Belize, reduced to four members. They talked and performed for public meetings in Corozal, Orange Walk and Belize City, attracting large crowds in the last two places. Their dances and songs and some talks on the Faith were videotaped for Belize television. They recorded two radio shows for the regular Bahá'í program of Belize. A newspaper story on 9 July was headlined, 'First Time in Belize! American Indians Visit.' It called the 'Trail of Light' an exciting, energetic, colorful group of Bahá'í Indians and named their tribes, inviting the public to hear them talk about their religion at the Town Hall.



The Trail of Light in Honduras.

HONDURAS

Torrential rains made travel almost impossible during the three-day stay of the team in Honduras, 13–15 April. Nevertheless, a visit was made to Yoro where the Indian chiefs were begging for them to come. Four hundred native people, including several tribal chiefs, heard the Message. On a washed-out road between Tegucigalpa and Viaseto the river was so swollen that the team had to cross on logs. At the top of a hill, after a long walk in the intense heat, the team met with one hundred people in a log cabin. The chief of the village told a traditional tale of their ancestors who had said that one day friends from the north would come looking for them. 'Now you are here,' he said, 'now you have found us and our hearts are bound together.' In spite of widespread hunger in the village of Viaseto, the people shared their food with great love and generosity. It was here that Rita Markishtum of the Makah tribe of Neah Bay, Washington, speaking on the oral traditions of her people, said: 'There is a prophecy that a man in Canada saw the beginning of the spiritual rebirth of the Makahs. He said that he saw a council fire gather, not only at Neah Bay, but he saw that same fire move to Alaska, down through the United States, and even into Central and South America. So, when the invitation was extended to us to go on this trip, it was more than just a teaching endeavor, rather, it was to be part of a tremendous undertaking . . .'

The Paya Indians of Olancho, a smaller group, were so inspired that they did not want to let the visitors go. Forty enrolled in the Faith. The team members called this the most receptive of any group visited.

GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, two sparkling performances of dance, song and inspired talks on the Faith drew crowds which filled the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds to overflowing both morning and afternoon. Violence in other Indian areas of the country caused the four days in mid-July to be spent in Quezaltenango and surrounding villages. In Cantel a small theatre that had been rented quickly filled up. The Mayor sent word that the entire village wanted to see the program and asked that it be moved to the main square. It was, and an estimated five hundred attended. In San Juan Ostuncalco the team visited the Mayor, had supper with Bahá'ís in a home, then went to a large theatre which promptly filled with an enthusiastic audience of twelve hundred—a record attendance for a Bahá'í event. The final number that evening was performed by a local group whose director is the husband of a Bahá'í. They were nine young ladies (not Bahá'ís) who sang three Bahá'í songs. In Quezaltenango there were two radio interviews, a visit to the Mayor and lunch with Bahá'ís at the Center, followed by a meeting for three hundred at a central hall. The keen interest of the public, the authorities and the media in the Trail of Light and its performances was due, in the opinion of Counsellor

Lamb, to the members' 'warm and loving attitude and their deep spirituality and devotion.'

PANAMA

The travelers arrived in Panama on 21 July to start a schedule that included radio and television appearances and public programs which were given wide newspaper coverage. Visits were made to Puerto Armuelles and David and a meeting at the Magisterio Panameño Unido brought a capacity audience. A Teaching Conference with 'Camino del Sol', as the Trail of Light was called in Spanish, was held in the gardens of the Bahá'í House of Worship on the first of August, just before the team left for Ecuador. Probably the most significant event of the Central American tour was the first Native Bahá'í Council of the region. From the Muhájir Institute at Boca de Soloy, scene of the mass meeting of indigenous, a cable was sent to the Universal House of Justice on 30 July, recording the victory:

OVERJOYED OUTCOME FIRST NATIVE COUNCIL GUAYMI INDIANS CATALYZED INSPIRING KIN TRAIL OF LIGHT SIGNALIZING BEGINNING FULFILLMENT INDIGENOUS TRADITIONS BAHAI PROPHECIES. CONSULTATION FRUITFUL CONTINUED SPIRITUAL CULTURAL INTERCHANGE DEVELOPMENT. MORE THAN 1000 GUAYMI BELIEVERS JOINED BY PANAMANIAN CUNA COSTA RICAN GUAYMI TALAMANCA TERIBE REPRESENTATIVES DESPITE TORRENTIAL RAINS. HISTORIC GATHERING FURTHER BLESSED PRESENCE COUNSELLOR PRINGLE AND INDIGENOUS AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBER. RECOMMENDATION MADE FUND INITIATED ESTABLISHMENT NATIVE COUNCIL PANAMANIANS COSTA RICAN TRIBES RISING INDIGENOUS ENKINDLEMENT FAITH BAHAULLAH. LOVING GREETINGS. BAHAI NATIVE COUNCIL SOLOY PANAMA.

In answer, the Universal House of Justice sent the following message:

HIGHLY PLEASED SIGNAL SUCCESS FIRST NATIVE COUNCIL GUAYMIS INSPIRED PRESENCE MEMBERS TRAIL OF LIGHT FELLOW INDIGENOUS BELIEVERS PANAMA COSTA RICA. ARDENTLY PRAYING ENTHUSIASM ENGENDERED THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION WILL STIMULATE PARTICIPANTS ARISE FULFILL DESTINY PROMISED MASTER.

ECUADOR

From 29 July to 9 August the Trail of Light teams converged in Ecuador to the delight of their more than fourteen hundred Bahá'í brothers and sisters from forty-three countries, including representatives of twenty-four National Spiritual Assemblies and of more than twenty Indian tribes. When the two teams joined on 4 August in Quito for their first reunion since the Arizona Conference, high excitement and a sense of jubilation prevailed as they shared joys and difficulties experienced along the 'Trail of Light'. The Hand of the Cause Paul Haney paid them tribute, as did the Counsellors of the Americas who had been instrumental in the creation, organization and carrying out of the entire project.

Highlights of the teams' contributions in Ecuador outside the Conference setting were: an appearance at a university in the coastal city of Guayaquil; a newspaper interview and a television performance in the same city; a visit to Otavalo, home of Radio Bahá'í; and a television appearance in the capital, publicizing the International Conference. The moving performances they had given in scores of places during June, July and August were repeated for an audience of two thousand at '*Noche Folklórico*', a night-time event to which the public were invited. The climax of the Quito Conference came as the Trail of Light, accompanied by Counsellors Lauretta King and Raúl Pavón, made a moving presentation in which they called onto the stage Bahá'ís of twenty-seven Indian tribes.

A final leg of the trip took team members to Canada to attend the third North American Bahá'í Native Council held on the Blood Reserve in southwestern Alberta on 12–15 August. There they shared moving accounts of the Latin American tour with four hundred and sixty Bahá'ís and friends—members of sixty Indian tribes. And on 3–5 September, in their last appearance, the Trail of Light was introduced to approximately ten thousand Bahá'ís attending the International Bahá'í Conference in Montreal. They were warmly praised for their historic trek which had done so much to justify the Master's confidence in the high destiny of the native Americans.

10. THE CENTENARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN INDIA 1880–1980

INDIA holds a unique place of honour in Bahá'í history in that from the earliest days of the era inaugurated by the Báb there were Indians who searched out and accepted the teachings of the New Day. Shaykh Sa'id-i-Hindí, an Indian, was among the Letters of the Living. An Indian dervish travelled to Chihríq in response to a dream in which the Báb appeared to him, accepted his Lord and was given the name by Him 'Qahru'lláh' (the Wrath of God). Others from India attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

It was Bahá'u'lláh Himself who instructed Jamal Effendi, a Persian scholar of noble birth and high rank, to proceed to India and acquaint its people with the Bahá'í teachings. Jamal Effendi arrived in Bombay in 1872 and proceeded to travel throughout the country. Despite the language difficulty he managed to convey the Bahá'í teachings to many distinguished people. Jamal Effendi's vast knowledge, eloquent tongue and unfailing courtesy attracted many persons to him, and he was the guest of a number of prominent Indians of high standing. At innumerable meetings and discussions Jamal Effendi outlined Bahá'u'lláh's teachings for the upliftment of mankind and many recognized the truth of his words and embraced the Bahá'í Cause.

It was not until 1880 that Jamal Effendi's strenuous efforts produced permanent results. In that year the first Bahá'í group was formed at Bombay and from there the Faith spread rapidly to Poona, Calcutta, Karachi and Delhi where Local Spiritual Assemblies were eventually established.

In 1923 the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma was formed. With the formation of a national administrative body, several teaching plans were instituted with the result that the number of adherents, local centres and Local Spiritual Assemblies multiplied steadily. Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), once part of the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly, formed their own National Assemblies in 1957, 1959 and 1962 respectively.

The celebrations of the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Bahá'í Faith in the subcontinent were inaugurated on 2 May 1980 at Bahá'í House in New Delhi with a reception attended by approximately four hundred guests. Many dignitaries were present including the Minister for Foreign Affairs. An attractive exhibition of Bahá'í publications was mounted for the occasion. The event was fully reported on radio, television and in the newspapers. *Contour*, a popular publication of the *Hindustan Times* carried in its issue of 24 May 1980 not only a two-page article on the origins, aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith but full-page photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and of the model of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

The National Spiritual Assembly received numerous messages of congratulation in relation to the centenary observance. In her message the Prime Minister stated: 'The Bahá'í Faith seeks to bring people together to enable them to realize their unity and their own inner potentialities for growth. It commands wide respect in our own land which believes in rendering equal homage to all religions and creeds.'

The President wrote: 'India has always stood for universal brotherhood and the message of Bahá'ís is in keeping with the past spiritual tradition of India. The need of the hour is to bring about this universal outlook and thereby to create a new world order based on peace, progress and prosperity.'

Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao, the Minister for External Affairs, in his opening address at the centenary gathering said that Bahá'u'lláh inaugurated the age of planetary society, the coming of age of the entire human race when there began to dawn in human consciousness the need to build a global society based on interdependence and justice. At this centenary celebration, he added, we might well pause and consider how much more immediate and pressing Bahá'u'lláh's teachings have become since they were first promul-

gated. He concluded his address by wishing the Bahá'ís of India the fulfilment of their highest hopes in serving the noble Bahá'í ideals.

The former Chief Justice of India, M. H. Beg, acted as chairman of the function. He concluded his learned and inspiring address by saying that he rejoiced at the bold challenge of the call of Bahá'u'lláh for people of all religions to disregard labels and unite in the service of mankind.

Dr. H. M. Munje and Dr. S. Vasudevan, the Bahá'í speakers, delivered their addresses in Hindi and English respectively. Minutes after the conclusion of the festivities Delhi television included an item about the celebration in their telecast, and national networks carried the news throughout the country. Thus the opening notes of the centenary celebration were sounded in the capital and were later echoed in similar gatherings throughout all States of India. The National Spiritual Assembly reported that between May and October 1980 forty-four Local Spiritual Assemblies had held centenary observances which had achieved wide publicity through the press and radio. Important dignitaries of each community participated in the programmes. 'One of the important aspects of these functions', the National Assembly stated, 'is that they were arranged through local resources.' The Local Spiritual Assembly of Bombay produced a special commemorative brochure to mark its centenary celebration.

Among the four main resolutions passed at the first National Convention of the Bahá'ís of India more than a half-century ago were the extending of an invitation to the beloved Master to visit India and the desire to have a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár built in that country. The Bahá'ís attending the National Convention of 1980 not only celebrated the centenary of the founding of the Faith in India but thrilled to the announcement that a contract had been awarded for the construction at Bahapur of a House of Worship for the Indian subcontinent. Those attending the National Convention cabled the Universal House of Justice saying, in part: OVERJOYED NEWS CONTRACT MAIN CONSTRUCTION TEMPLE AWARDED COINCIDING INAUGURATION CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE FOUNDING OF THE FAITH SUBCONTINENT. WE ARE CERTAIN THIS WILL GALVANIZE ENTIRE INDIAN COMMUNITY HEIGHTS HEROIC SACRIFICE.

On 1 May the Universal House of Justice replied:

GRATEFUL SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED PARTICIPANTS CONVENTION HELD AUSPICIOUS OCCASIONS SIGNING CONTRACT CONSTRUCTION BEAUTIFUL TEMPLE HEART SUBCONTINENT INAUGURATION CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS DESIGNED PROMOTE LIFEGIVING MESSAGE BAHAULLAH GREATER NUMBER RECEPTIVE SOULS ALL STRATA SOCIETY LENGTH BREADTH WIDTH INDIA. ARDENTLY PRAYING DIVINE THRESHOLD SUPPLICATING BLESSINGS ASSISTANCE OUTSTANDING SERVICES BAHAI COMMUNITY INDIA ALREADY DISTINGUISHED BY MAGNIFICENT ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH HAVE BRIGHTENED HOPES ATTRACTED ADMIRATION ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD.



A representative sampling of newspaper clippings reporting on the centenary of the founding of the Bahá'í Faith in India; April 1980.

11. THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF ÍRÁN

Riḍván 1979–Riḍván 1983

GEOFFREY NASH

DURING the period 1979 to 1983 the revolutionary régime in Írán perpetrated the first full-scale persecution of Írán's Bahá'í community since 1955–1956. In fact, this latest pogrom developed into the most severe onslaught in this century against the Bahá'í Faith, its members, endowments, holy places and institutions. By April 1983 well over one hundred Bahá'ís had been martyred or kidnapped. The wave of persecutions threatened to intensify overnight, swelling the number of deaths from hundreds to thousands. The desecration of the House of the Báb (1979), and the confiscation of holy places, administrative and social facilities owned by the community, not to speak of the loss of cemeteries, has left the Bahá'í community of Írán outwardly deprived of five generations' external development. The anguish experienced can, in human terms, barely be estimated. It can perhaps only be observed that throughout their ordeal, the Bahá'ís of Írán, under the self-sacrificing generalship of two martyred National Spiritual Assemblies and their heroic successors, and as many Auxiliary Board members, have retained a consciousness of their heritage in the arena of persecution that befittingly has raised them, in the eyes of the Bahá'í community outside the Cradle of the Faith, to rank alongside the Dawn-Breakers of the Heroic Age. This consciousness, so poignantly felt by any reader of the day-to-day unfolding of the persecution, in which individuals and institutions successively rose up, only to fall to the assassin's bullet, calls to mind the incident at Bárfurúsh, chronicled by Nabíl, in which one by one the followers of the Báb arose to proclaim the new *adhán* ('call to prayer'), and were each shot down, in spite of which the call was completed. This became the motto of the first National Spiritual Assembly.

To appreciate the providential outcome of this new persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís for the growth of the Bahá'í Faith as a whole, one can do no better than study the observations Shoghi Effendi made on the pogrom of 1955, observations which seem even more apposite today:

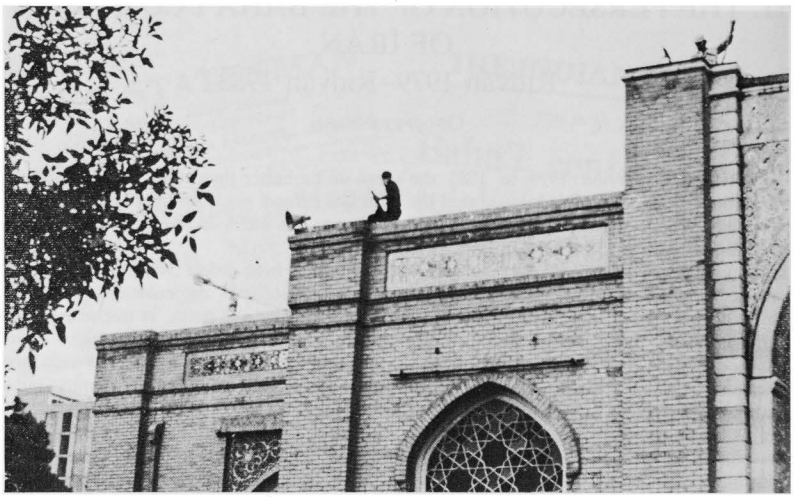
'. . . this fresh ordeal that has, in pursuance of the mysterious dispensations of Providence, afflicted the Faith, at this unexpected hour, far from dealing a fatal blow to its institutions or existence, should be regarded as a blessing in disguise, not a "calamity" but a "providence" of God . . .

'Whatever its outcome, this sudden commotion that has seized the Bahá'í world, that has revived the hopes and emboldened the host of the adversaries of the Faith intent on quenching its light and obliterating it from the face of the earth, has served as a trumpet call in the sounding of which the press of the world, the cries of its vociferous enemies, the public remonstrances of both men of good will and those in authority have joined, proclaiming far and wide its existence, publicizing its history, defending its verities, unveiling its truths, demonstrating the character of its institutions and advertising its aims and purposes.'

And speaking (in the same place) of the publicity the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís then had won for the Faith, the Guardian emphasized that this '. . . cannot but prove to be a prelude, however slow the process involved, to the emancipation of these same valiant sufferers from the galling fetters of an antiquated religious orthodoxy, which, great as has been its decline in the course of over a century, still wields considerable power and exercises a widespread influence in high circles as well as among the masses.'[1]

It is in this context that we must view the outwardly tragic series of events that has befallen the Bahá'í community of Írán during the period in question.

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, Wilmette, Illinois, 1965, pp. 139–141.



The national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the Bahá'ís of Írán, Ṭihrán, seized by Revolutionary Guards on 15 February 1979.



Home of a Bahá'í family in Shíráz after being looted and destroyed; 1979.

TRANSLATION

(Emblem of the Islamic Republic of Iran)
Ministry of Home Affairs
Governorate of Fars

Confidential

Date.....
Ref. No.....

Mrs./Mr. (Name of recipient), suspended employee of the Governorate of Fars.

Now that, as a result of the Revolution of the Muslim nation, the Islamic Republic has been established in this country, and all of the exploited masses of the world are turning their attention to the orders of the great leader of this revolution in order to liberate themselves from the tyranny of the great Idols of the time, the undersigned feels it incumbent to notify you of the following.

You have already been advised and guided by this Governorate to repent and sever your relations with the misguided group (Bahá'í), and thereby return to the life-giving bosom of Islam to enjoy the fragrance of the Words of God (Qur'án). Such repentance will be accepted in accordance with the injunctions of the Holy Qur'án and you will be able to continue your services in this office and receive your unpaid dues. Otherwise, you will be dismissed from government service, charged with having a corrupt character, and you will be deprived of all your rights.

On behalf of the Governorate of Fars

(signed) Ni'matu'lláh Tuqá'

Translation into English of a circular letter dated March 1982 which was addressed to a Bahá'í who was suspended from employment in government service. The letter threatens dismissal, and deprivation of salary and other rights, unless the recipient severs association with the Bahá'í Faith.

A. SURVEY OF EVENTS

The Growing Storm: the period January 1979 to January 1980

From the outset of the revolutionary upheaval that removed Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, Bahá'ís were subject to attack from several quarters. In the summer of the previous year (1978), and again in December, the agents of the government had harassed the Bahá'ís in several localities in order to transfer onto them the wrath of the anti-government crowds. Bahá'ís were dismissed from government posts in an effort to bolster the government's fast-waning popularity. Bahá'í homes were burned by SAVAK (secret police) agents, and in the Shíráz area a high-ranking local cleric turned back anti-Bahá'í mobs incited by SAVAK. However, once the change in régime had been effected, the non-participation in the process of revolution of the Bahá'í community, which is forbidden by its Faith to involve itself in politics, enabled traditionally hostile elements to conduct a campaign against it.

Faced with a chaotic proliferation of bodies

claiming revolutionary authority, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán, in the months immediately following the revolution, made representations to many leaders, as well as to the press, concerning the true nature of Bahá'í activity and institutions in Írán. This was an attempt to combat the increasingly widespread accusation that the Bahá'ís of Írán had actively supported the régime of the Shah, and had been members of SAVAK. In particular, Bahá'í representatives met with high-ranking clergy in Shíráz, Qum and Mashhad in February 1979. However, such representations, which continued in various forms preceding the arrest and disappearance of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán in August 1980, proved unavailing. Persecutions grew in volume, and while the source of these has undoubtedly been the fundamentalist clerics, their allies and supporters among the Revolutionary Guards and 'Komitehs', secular parties within Írán made little effort to stay their hands, and indeed in some cases have gone on record as attacking the Bahá'ís.

The same is true of the moderate clerics who have remained outside the Islamic régime. Bahá'í representatives in the early days more often than not reported a sympathetic hearing, yet events belied their initial optimism.

While it appears that the weakness of the provisional government, set up soon after the return of Ayatollah Khomeini to Írán in February, suggests that the opening stage of applied pressure on the Bahá'ís was not government sponsored, the extent to which Bahá'ís were harassed during this period, and, more significantly, the speed with which Bahá'í properties were confiscated, points to the existence of not only anti-Bahá'í cliques, but a more widespread sympathy for the measures being taken against the Bahá'í community. The take-over of the two Bahá'í companies, Nawnahálán (investment company) and Umaná' (foundation for the maintenance and purchase of Bahá'í community properties and holy places), proceeded in two stages: first, they were raided by Revolutionary Guards (February), their offices searched and keys impounded; then they were progressively occupied, their staffs dismissed and, by the summer, their premises taken over by Revolutionary Guards; and, finally, by the end of the year, they had been officially stripped of their assets, and non-Bahá'í directors, inimical to the aims of the companies themselves, had been appointed over them. However, this was not the close of the matter—Bahá'ís formerly associated with the administration of these companies were, in several instances, later on subjected by the new directors to crude demands for 'compensation'.

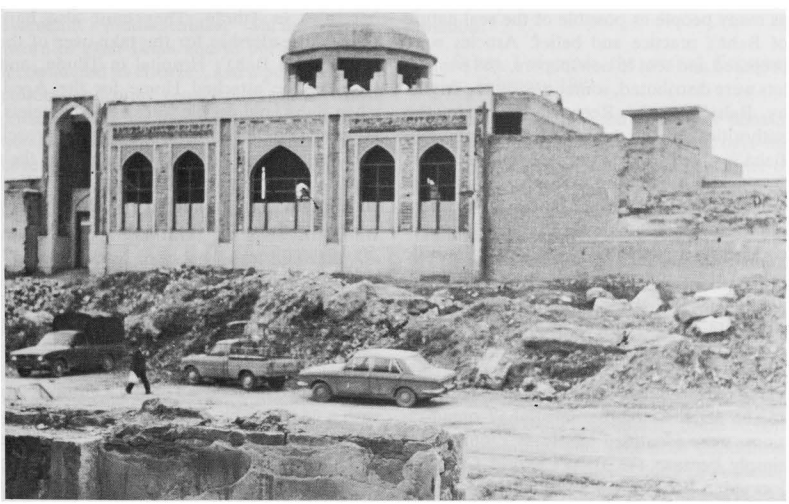
Although there was strong suspicion that this prompt action taken against the Bahá'ís, involving the occupation of all their holy properties, including the Houses of the Báb in Shíráz and of Bahá'u'lláh in Ṭihrán and Tákur, was in many areas the work of forces spearheaded by Tablighat-i-Islami,[1] the crude violence directed by mobs against the properties and businesses of Bahá'ís enabled the authorities to represent the overall situation as the fruit of revolutionary chaos. Indeed, the confusion of this period, in which Bahá'ís were by no means the only ones to suffer (the other religious minorities were also subject to harassment), gives credence to the view that local 'Komitehs' were simply going ahead and settling scores of their own. Thus before, during and after the transfer of power Bahá'ís all across the country were the objects of campaigns of violence in which homes were attacked, businesses and shops burned, livestock destroyed, and individuals harassed and assaulted. Bahá'í cemeteries, in particular, were attacked, desecrated and in some cases set on fire. In February, forcible recantations were staged, often at the local mosque, notably in Sarvistán and in the area of Shíráz.

However, as the year wore on, and the Bahá'í properties, occupied initially, it was said, for their own 'protection', remained in the hands of the Revolutionary Guards, this stance of the government, and particularly that of the clergy-controlled Revolutionary Council headed by Ayatollah Beheshti—the effective source of policy in the first year of the Islamic Republic—became increasingly unbelievable. To begin with, all efforts by Bahá'ís and their sympathizers to gain for the community a declared status as a protected minority under the new Islamic constitution,

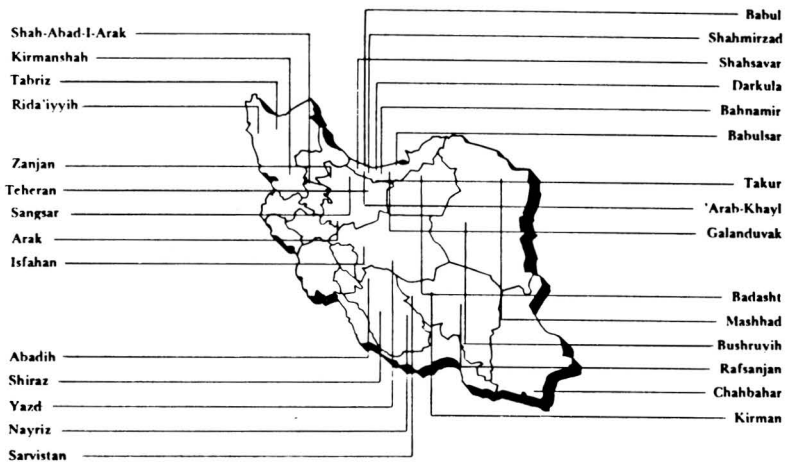
[1] See Section B, 'Identity of the Persecutors, and Charges Levelled against the Bahá'ís', p. 267.

went by the board. Under these circumstances the publicly announced abstention of the Bahá'í community from the April referendum for the Islamic Republic was a courageous stand that could be expected to win the Bahá'ís few friends. Also courageous was the visit to Qum of a delegation of Sangsar Bahá'ís who requested and obtained an audience with Ayatollah Khomeini on the question of compensation for their Bahá'í Centre (Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds), destroyed by local mobs. The Ayatollah ordered local Komitehs to desist from harassing Bahá'ís, but this did not prevent the occupation of the House of the Báb at the end of the month. In fact, there was an evident deterioration in the situation for the Bahá'ís, virtually month by month. In March, Mr. Yúsif Subḥání, a prominent Bahá'í of Ṭihrán, was arrested, as was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, albeit temporarily. The director of the Nawnahálán Company was in hiding. The Bahá'í Centre of Mashhad was occupied on the orders of senior Ayatollahs Shirazi and Qumi, later to be critics of the human rights record of the Islamic Government. In the Hamadán, Shíráz and Tabríz areas Bahá'ís were called upon to recant their faith. By the summer the situation was worsening. The Buyr-Aḥmad tribe, driven from their villages by threatening mobs in the earlier part of the year, was living in refugee camps in the vicinity of Katá, Iṣfahán. After further harassment there, some six hundred of them set out for Iṣfahán itself, where they arrived in early May. These Bahá'ís, for the most part of peasant stock, belied the propaganda of the authorities that the Bahá'í Faith was made up of SAVAK employees and Zionist agents. Under considerable intimidation to renounce their religion they remained firm, and were rendered assistance by their more affluent co-believers of Iṣfahán before they were finally enabled to return to their homes. Meanwhile, Bahá'í homes in Ádhirbáyján were attacked, and the Local Spiritual Assembly members in Fárs and Hamadán provinces were required to conceal themselves. Two Bahá'í girls, along with a Zoroastrian, were forced to recant and were married to Muslims. The act was announced over the radio in Yazd. Forcible conversions were being announced regularly in the press, thus giving the lie to official statements that no one was persecuted for his or her religion in Írán.

In the face of this mounting pressure, the



Site of the House of the Báb. In September 1979 the building was seized and demolished by the Islamic authorities; in 1981 the site was made into a road and public square.



Towns and cities in Írán in which Bahá'í holy places, cemeteries and other properties have been seized or destroyed.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán conducted a campaign designed to inform as many people as possible of the real nature of Bahá'í practice and belief. Articles were prepared and sent to newspapers, and pamphlets were distributed, sometimes on the streets by Bahá'í youth. Representations to the authorities at the highest level continued. Bahá'ís abroad made discreet approaches to Iranian consulates and embassies but did not criticize or slander the Iranian government nor even create the impression that they were conducting a campaign of opposition outside Írán. Yet the outcome of all this was renewed pressure, and in an atmosphere of increasingly orchestrated anti-Zionist feeling, Ayatollah Khomeini himself gave the go-ahead for the uprooting of Zionist sympathizers—a code name for the Bahá'ís who, due at least in part to the activities of the anti-Bahá'í organizations, were identified falsely as Zionist spies simply because the Bahá'í World Centre is located in Israel. The anti-Bahá'í groups were almost certainly responsible for the kidnapping of well-known Bahá'ís, including Mr. Shaykh Muḥammad Muvaḥḥid in Ṭihrán on 24 May, and Dr. 'Alímurád Dávúdí, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, on 11 November, also in Ṭihrán. They must also have provided leadership for the take-over of the Míthágíyyih Bahá'í Hospital in Ṭihrán, and later on the attached Home for the Aged, when Bahá'í old people were made homeless. Although not at this point willing to approach the international media to publicize their position, the Bahá'ís learned that the Reuters' correspondent in the capital had already been under pressure not to report the Bahá'ís' predicament.

However, the focal point of the overall persecution—the attack upon and desecration of the House of the Báb—finally broke the news embargo. This event occurred in September (1979) and sources suggest it was at first planned and carried out by a group acting with a considerable amount of local independence in Shíráz. Yet, as had proved to be the case before, the central authorities in the capital stepped in only briefly as a token of order, but eventually concurred completely in a nefarious scheme to obliterate all traces of the holiest Bahá'í structure in Írán. For the

House of the Báb, assaulted and substantially demolished between the 8th and 10th of September, received a guard appointed by the authorities in Qum, who also promised a committee of enquiry. Nevertheless, two months later the work of destruction was resumed, and the building almost razed to the ground. It was discovered that plans existed for the construction of a square in the vicinity of the mosque adjoining the House of the Báb that would require building on the site of the House. There was no question but that the plans, which were iterated several times later, were intended to accomplish the removal without trace of this holy Bahá'í Shrine. The international publicity given this event by the media certainly embarrassed the authorities in Ṭihrán when the story first broke in September. But neither this nor the cables dispatched to Ayatollah Khomeini in Qum and Ayatollah Beheshti in Ṭihrán, from Bahá'ís all over the world, resulted in any action being taken to restore the holy place to its rightful owners.

There could be no doubt that the symbolism of this sanctified place for Shí'ih antagonism towards the Bahá'í religion in Írán, guaranteed that its desecration must further intensify an already precariously balanced struggle between, on the one hand, an increasingly ascendant fundamentalist Shí'ih régime, sworn to exalt Islám and to put down those it considered its enemies, and a peaceful, non-political, religious community which, whilst possessing neither the intention nor the sanction to combat violence with violence, would never acquiesce in its own spiritual extinction.

Contemporaneous with this, the order for arrest of Bahá'ís went out from revolutionary committees in Shahsavár, 'Ábádán and Tabríz Those detained included Local Spiritual Assembly members. In addition, homes in Tabríz were raided and literature seized. In late October Bahá'ís in the ministries of education, health and social administration were dismissed from their jobs. In Shahsavár, in November, the chief of police admitted to the existence of a circular prohibiting Bahá'í meetings, and that same month arrests were stepped up in Tabríz, Kirmán and Káshán. In Búshihr Bahá'ís were dismissed from their jobs, and in Ábádán a father was denied a birth certificate for his infant son on the grounds that he was a Bahá'í. In September Mr. Bahár Vujdání was executed in Mahábád, and in December Mr. 'Aẓamatu'lláh Fahandizh in Ṭihrán; moreover, early in the year, at least three other Bahá'ís had been killed. For all of these people, the fact that they were Bahá'ís had been the significant factor which brought about their deaths.

With the fundamentalist clerics and their allies tightening their hold on the country, reliable information was received which indicated that persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í community was intensifying 'gradually, quietly, but surely'. In the first month of 1980 another prominent Bahá'í, Mr. Rúḥí Rawshaní, was taken away to unknown whereabouts, whilst the Bahá'í headquarters in Ṭihrán, already seized, was made the headquarters of the 'Reconstruction Foundation' set up by order of Ayatollah Khomeini, who conveyed from Qum to the Bahá'ís the need to be 'patient' and wait for the election of the first President of the Islamic Republic. National Spiritual Assembly members met Ayatollah Beheshti and Dr. Habibi, spokesman for the Revolutionary Council. No indication was received from these prominent officials which could have prepared the Bahá'í community of Írán for what was to come yet: the full brunt of a cruel persecution, a campaign of extermination.

The Storm Unloosed: the period February 1980 to February 1981

Against the foreground of a bitter debate, both internationally and within Írán, over the detention of hostages from the personnel of the American Embassy in Ṭihrán, the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í community in Írán entered a second, more dangerous stage in February 1980. Perhaps the thinking behind this development took into consideration the outside world's and the internal Iranian preoccupation with the American hostages. It seems more than likely, however, that the anti-Bahá'í groups and their sympathizers within the Iranian government believed their attack on the Bahá'í community could be conducted smoothly, and with little opposition. The attitude of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán, up to now, and indeed until January 1981, continued to be one of restraint when it came to apprising the world of what was happening to their Bahá'í breth-

ren. It feared, no doubt with justification, that a campaign charging the leaders of Írán with maltreatment of the Bahá'ís would have serious repercussions upon the believers themselves. At the same time, the National Spiritual Assembly continued fearlessly and, as it transpired, poignantly, without regard for the safety of its members, to represent the injustice of the treatment of the Bahá'í community to the Islamic authorities.

The new stage of repression was launched with abductions and also raids on the homes of several National Spiritual Assembly members and a Counsellor, resulting in the imprisonment of Mr. Badí'u'lláh Farid, a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán; Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí, head of the Bahá'í secretariat in Ṭihrán; and later, after a National Spiritual Assembly meeting at which he had been present, the arrest of Counsellor Masíḥ Farhangí. The two National Spiritual Assembly members, Mr. Yúsif Qadímí and Dr. Ḥusayn Nají, escaped arrest because they were not at home when the guards called for them. Mrs. Nají was taken, however, and held with the intention of forcing Dr. Nají to give himself up. The abduction of these Bahá'ís raised the issue of who exactly was conducting such arrests. In the case of Dr. Nají it was ascertained that no official warrant for his arrest had been issued. The matter acquired a nightmare significance later in the year when all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly were abducted and their kidnapping never thereafter officially admitted nor their fate revealed.

During this period the anxiety of the National Assembly for the deteriorating plight of the Bahá'í community was compounded by the refusal of any of the authorities to recognize that a threat of persecution actually existed. This front continued even while the arrest of well-known Bahá'ís and members of the administrative bodies was gathering momentum. In April eight Bahá'ís were arrested in Tabríz; all but three were later released because they signed a pledge promising not to take part in the future in Bahá'í administrative activities. The three who refused were members of the Local Spiritual Assembly; two were subsequently put on trial and executed (14 July). These were Mr. Yadu'lláh Ástání and Dr. Farámarz Samandarí. In May four Bahá'ís of Ṭihrán went on trial charged with sundry offences, but great play was made of their having had contact with Israel either as visitors or financial contributors to the Bahá'í endowments there. Their execution undoubtedly rested on the fact that they were Bahá'ís, although the 'Zionist' complexion of their activities was the reason adduced for their deaths. In the areas outside the towns and cities, persecution was even more rough and ready: an old Bahá'í shepherd in Andrún, near Bírjand, was found clubbed and stoned to death.

In June, at a time of deepening political crisis in the country, violence, both random and officially promoted, was directed against the Bahá'ís of Yazd. Known historically for its fanatical treatment of the Bahá'ís, notably in 1903 when over one hundred were murdered in its vicinity by mobs raised by elements among the local clergy, Yazd was the scene of arrests, harassment, burning of property, and exclusion from their workplaces of the Bahá'ís. To begin with, four members of the Local Spiritual Assembly were arrested. Then, in his Friday sermon, Ayatollah Sadduqi demanded that the Bahá'ís be driven from their posts in government offices and brought before the authorities. His incendiary remarks were sufficient to send the mob on the rampage against Bahá'í homes and properties, and resulted in one hundred being prevented from working. Moreover, the cleric's remarks were printed in a Ṭihrán newspaper, thus giving them a national airing. As fears for the safety of the Bahá'ís grew, the incident was publicized abroad in an article in the Paris newspaper, *Le Monde*. Low-key lobbying of human rights groups and journalists in the international forums, which had been progressing since the spring, was stepped up. But even now the Bahá'ís remained exceptionally wary of being directly associated with any campaign against the Iranian authorities. Finally, at the end of the month, there came the news of the execution in Ṭihrán of Mr. Yúsif Subḥání.

Now fears arose for the fate of Bahá'í prisoners in Tabríz, Yazd, Shíráz and Ṭihrán. Although the National Assembly used all the means at its disposal, including direct appeals to the government and approaches to the International Red Cross, the two Bahá'ís tried

in Tabríz—Mr. Ástání and Dr. Samandarí—were summarily executed, and preparations went ahead for the trial of those in Yazd, against a background of further anti-Bahá'í incitement by Ayatollah Sadduqi, this time broadcast over television and radio. Also, in Ṭihrán, Ayatollah Ali Khomeini issued dark threats against the Bahá'ís, albeit without expressly naming them.

At such a time of mounting tension—during which more Bahá'ís were arrested in Yazd and in the area of Shahabád, and assets belonging to some of the Bahá'ís in Hamadán were frozen—the National Assembly confirmed its plans for a new membership of the National Spiritual Assembly to step into the breach 'if and when the present members are arrested'. Neither the growing notice being taken in the world press of the plight of Írán's Bahá'ís, nor the passing of a resolution on their behalf in the Canadian Parliament, had any effect on the deteriorating situation in Írán. In August, there appeared false and provocative accusations in the Iranian media concerning the participation of Bahá'ís in the July coup attempt by officers in the armed forces. A commander of a corps of Revolutionary Guards in Ṭihrán launched the story first, on television, and it was repeated during the month several times in the press.

Worse fears were raised by the confirmation as Prime Minister of Mohammed Ali Raja'i, a longstanding enemy of the Bahá'í Faith, who had been instrumental, as Minister of Education in 1979, in instigating the dismissal of Bahá'ís from their posts as teachers and educational administrators. Moreover, August had also witnessed the arrest of two British Anglican missionaries, and mounting pressure against the Christian community in general. It should be remembered that Ayatollah Khomeini himself, in his lectures on *Islamic Government* (1973),[1] had linked the Christian missions in Írán with the Bahá'ís as corrupters of Muslim youth. One version of the coup charge against the Bahá'ís—given by the Pars News Agency—associated the Bahá'ís with a recently departed missionary who, it was said, was collaborating with the American government in a plot to overthrow the Iranian government.

No conclusion was possible but that unified action was being planned against the Bahá'ís by the highest circles in Írán when, on 21 August, the National Spiritual Assembly was interrupted in session and its members taken away to an unknown destination. Two Auxiliary Board members who were present at the meeting were also taken away. In the first months that followed this grave setback for the Bahá'ís of Írán, strong circumstantial evidence suggested that the eleven prisoners had been taken to the Evin prison in Ṭihrán. The Attorney General of Írán initially confirmed orally that he had signed an order for their arrest, but soon afterwards he, along with other top figures in the régime, denied all knowledge of the affair. Another theory is that the Bahá'ís had been arrested by a terrorist or guerrilla group outside the government that wished to embarrass it. Unless firm evidence arises, any judgement as to the fate of these brave people would only be conjecture. Suffice it to say that after the discovery in late December 1981 of the bodies of five who took their place on the National Spiritual Assembly, the Universal House of Justice wrote in a cable to National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world: THIS HEINOUS ACT CAUSES US FEAR THAT MEMBERS PREVIOUS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE TWO AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS WHO DISAPPEARED AUGUST 1980 AS WELL AS TWO OTHERS WHOSE WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN OVER TWO YEARS HAVE SUFFERED SAME FATE.

Thus, we have to conclude, passed from this world the first National Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís in the history of the Bahá'í Faith to suffer the ultimate penalty of death for belief. The members' names are:

Mr. 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Taslímí
Mr. Húshang Maḥmúdí
Mr. Ibráhím Raḥmání
Dr. Ḥusayn Nají
Mr. Manúhir Qá'im-Maqámí
Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Muqarrabí
Mr. Yúsif Qadimí
Mrs. Bahíyyih Nádirí
Dr. Kámbíz Ṣádiqzádih

[1] 'In our own city of Tehran now there are centers of evil propaganda run by the churches, the Zionists, and the Baha'is in order to lead our people astray and make them abandon the ordinances and teachings of Islam.' Ayatollah Khomeini, 'Islamic Government', in *Islam and Revolution, writings and declarations of Imam Khomeini*, translated and annotated by Hamid Algar, Berkeley, California, 1981, p. 128.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán (disappeared August 1980 and presumed secretly executed) with four members of the National Assembly that replaced them (eight of whose members were executed in December 1981) and other prominent members of the Iranian Bahá'í community who were martyred. Seated (left to right): Manúhir Qá'im-Maqámí, Ḥusayn Nají, 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Taslímí, Húshang Maḥmúdí, Zhínús Maḥmúdí, Gítí Vaḥíd (absent through illness from the National Assembly meeting in December 1981 thus escaping execution), Bahíyyih Nádirí. Standing (left to right): 'Aṭa'u'lláh Muqarribí, Kámbíz Ṣádiqzádih, Ibráhím Raḥmání, Yusíf Qadímí, Buzurg 'Alavíyán, Kúrush Ṭalá'í, Qudratu'lláh Rawḥání, Jalál 'Azízí, Ḥishmatu'lláh Rawḥání, Khusraw Muhandisí, Maḥmúd Majdhúb, Kámrán Ṣamímí.

Together with these were the first two Auxiliary Board members to suffer the same fate:

Dr. Yúsif 'Abbásíyán
Dr. Hishmatu'lláh Rawḥání

As if the disappearance of their generals were not enough to dismay the Bahá'ís of Írán, seven members of the community in Yazd were executed on 8 September, after a trial that was partly televised. Among the condemned was an old man in his eighties. The names of the Bahá'ís and their photographs were prominently displayed in the press, as was the announcement of the Revolutionary Court that the Bahá'ís had been executed to compensate for the lives of Muslims who had yielded theirs in the revolutionary struggle. The first large-scale, judicial elimination of Bahá'ís, the execution of seven in Yazd, was accompanied by a fanfare of publicity. But nevertheless, when the Bahá'í answer to the charges laid against them was faded out of the television broadcast, this caused some unrest in the town. Later on, when world public opinion, and a sizeable section of Iranian society, had become aroused by these despicable, insidious liquidations of innocent people, the authorities gave up announcing them. They even dispensed with the routine of informing relatives of the executions and giving them the opportunity to redeem and bury the bodies of their loved ones. Later, the bodies of martyred Bahá'ís would be consigned to cemeteries marked for 'infidels'.

In mid-September more resolutions were passed on behalf of the Bahá'ís, in the European Parliament at Strasbourg, and at the United Nations at Geneva, where the Subcommission on the Protection of Minorities carried a motion unopposed. As before, no material change resulted from this activity on the diplomatic front, although it seems the Iranian government, now locked in a battle between its radical clergy and secular 'moderates', was embarrassed by it. Trials of Bahá'ís in Ṭihrán and Hamadán were prepared. Mr. Háshim Farnúsh, an Auxiliary Board member and member of the emergency committee, was arrested in Karaj. Mr. Buzurg 'Alavíyán, a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán and businessman, was subjected to a lengthy interrogation concerning the Bahá'í World Centre in Israel. At this time, and throughout the present persecution, the nature of the Bahá'í institutions in the Holy Land has been wantonly distorted by the enemies of the Bahá'í Faith to fit into their picture of the Bahá'ís as imperialist agents and Zionist spies. Yet the pressure placed upon Bahá'ís before and after their 'trials' invariably turned on their being given their freedom in return for a signed statement disclaiming their belief, or, alternatively, their suffering the confiscation of all their goods and, frequently, forfeit of their lives, in the case of refusal. Demands for ransoms were definitely illegal (though too often officially sanctioned) but they were usually only a temporary means of securing freedom from persecution. Only open and public recantation could achieve this, and the handful who did so were rewarded, fêted by mullás, and had their names printed in the newspapers. Such activity was doubtless designed to undermine the will of the Bahá'ís overall.

Throughout the winter, 1980–1981, dismissal of Bahá'ís from their employment continued. Thousands of Bahá'ís from all over Írán were now in need, and the National Assembly was busy with their succour. Outside Írán an international Persian Relief Fund was established by the Universal House of Justice. Further efforts were being extended to get a commission of international lawyers into Írán to examine the position of the Bahá'í community. However, as the year came to an end, pressure against the Bahá'ís was increased, as Ayatollah Rahnema accused the leadership of the Bahá'ís of corruption, and called for their trial. In his newspaper article, he said the mass of Bahá'ís had been misled and should be shown kindness and the way back to Islám. Though Bahá'í prisoners in Yazd were released, scores more remained in prison in other cities and towns, and in January the news of the assassination of Professor Manúchihr Ḥakím in his Ṭihrán clinic cast a shadow over the entire Bahá'í community. This murder was most likely accomplished by the Fedayeen-i-Islami, but the confiscation of Professor Ḥakím's property, and the deaf ear turned to all demands by his wife for restitution from the Komiteh responsible,

implied the tacit approval of the authorities. Raids and arrests were conducted against the Bahá'ís of Kirmánsháh in February, and as diplomatic activity on behalf of the Bahá'ís continued outside Írán, the National Assembly concluded in a memorandum that 'all doors in Írán are being closed', and gave its agreement to 'large-scale international activities and publicity'. There was no guarantee that such procedure might not heap fresh hardship on the Bahá'ís, but the National Spiritual Assembly clearly felt there was no alternative.

Entering the 'Dark Centre': the period March 1981 to January 1982

A senior figure in the Iranian government, who later lost his post as the clerical party established itself as the one governing party, is known to have given a foreign diplomat his view concerning the régime's persecution of the Bahá'ís, and the effect international diplomatic pressure on their behalf might have. He is reported as having said: 'World public opinion and moral pressure have no impact on the mullas, in fact, such pressures often cause them to become more adamant and obstinate.' To this obduracy should be added, in any attempt to understand the motivation of the persecutors, their fanatical zeal in eliminating any and all whom they consider as their political opponents. Moreover, the persecution of the Bahá'ís, in spite of its essentially religious basis, was not without political overtones, as was evidenced by the fact that many of the executions of Bahá'ís were carried out at times of acute political struggle in the country. It could be said that at the beginning one of the reasons for executing Bahá'ís was the thinking that such actions would win popularity. Later, when this no longer seemed to be the case, the Bahá'ís were eliminated under the cover of periods of emergency. Nor should it be forgotten that the 'political crimes' said to have been committed by the Bahá'ís could always be linked with greater political issues of the time, such as the 'Zionist conspiracy' which was particularly important in the first year after the Revolution, and the actual coup attempt of July 1980, which could be discredited by linking it with the Christian missionaries and the Bahá'ís. In both instances there can be seen the already established Iranian practice of using the Bahá'ís as scapegoats. (This is also applicable to the case of Amir Abbas Hoveyda, and other important political figures in the Sháh's régime, wrongly but continually accused of being Bahá'ís.) And, as noted earlier, though the persecutors of the Bahá'ís are now clearly identified as the historical enemies of the Bahá'í Faith, the fundamentalist clerics and their allies, other political groups in Írán made hardly any attempt to protect them, thus demonstrating the almost universal political as well as religious prejudice that was extant concerning the Bahá'ís.[1] Undoubtedly, a major reason for this is a general ignorance in Írán of the true character of the Bahá'í Faith.

If, in 1980, Yazd had acquired the dubious reputation of being the worst location for persecution of Bahá'ís, the city of Shíráz, in the spring of 1981, achieved eminence as inaugurating a new stage in the pogrom. The measure of endorsement given from the highest quarters in Ṭihrán to the execution of five Bahá'ís in two separate batches in the spring of 1981 unmasked the fact, so long concealed, that an official campaign against the Bahá'í community of Írán was in operation. The executions of Mr. Mihdí Anvarí and Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání on 17 March, and of Mr. Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat, Mr. Sattár Khushkhú and Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Mihdízádih on 30 April, established, according to contemporary observers, that membership in Bahá'í Assemblies was of itself a criminal offence. Mr. Anvarí and Mr. Dihqání were accused at their trial of being members of Bahá'í Assemblies and having contact with the Universal House of Justice. They were also charged with having collaborated with 'Colonel Vaḥdat'—Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat, who at the time of their trial was awaiting sentence for his 'spying' activities. Mr. Vaḥdat had, in fact, been the chairman of a relief committee for the Bahá'ís suffering privation within the Shíráz area. His wife, who had grown ill, was imprisoned as well. The execution of Mr. Vaḥdat, and two more of his Bahá'í 'collaborators', at the end of

[1] See H. M. Balyuzi, *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá'í Faith*, London, 1970, ch. VII, 'Edward Browne, Orientalist', for an account of persecutions of the Bahá'í community in Írán in the first decade of the twentieth century, and the political considerations that accompanied them.

April, represented nothing less than a cynical move by the authorities against the Bahá'í administration. Hitherto, imprisonments and executions could be dismissed by the government as just retribution for crimes committed, having nothing to do with the victims' religion. Now such a defence was laid bare, though it did not prevent its employment on subsequent occasions. Besides these executions, other Bahá'ís were sentenced to long terms in prison by the Shíráz courts. There was now no doubt that moves against the Bahá'ís were being sanctioned by the central authorities in Ṭihrán. (Attendance at the burials of the latter three was officially restricted after the funerals of Mr. Anvarí and Mr. Dihqání had drawn thousands.)

As the summer of 1981 progressed Írán entered a period of intense political and social turmoil, and the reverberations could not but affect the Bahá'í community, vulnerable as it always has been in the land of its birth at times of national upheaval. Growing political demonstrations and an effective, if limited, state of civil war between the clerics and supporters of the Islamic Republican Party, now effectively the party of the government, on the one hand, and on the other the Mojahedin supporters of the ousted President, Bani-Sadr, created an atmosphere of near anarchy. In May there were Shí'ih–Sunní clashes to complicate matters, and for the first time, an attack by fanatics upon the Armenian Christian district in Iṣfahán (Julfá). Also during this month the plan to construct a square—or, as some reports now suggested, a road—over the site of the House of the Báb, moved a step nearer fruition when pressure to quit their homes was exerted upon the Bahá'í householders in the vicinity. Elsewhere in Fárs province some seventy Bahá'í families were under duress to recant or lose all their property. And as the governmental split came to a crisis in mid-June, there occurred the worst spate of executions of Bahá'ís to date. On 14 June seven died before a firing squad in Hamadán. Between nine and ten days later two rounds of executions left seven more dead in Ṭihrán. These Bahá'ís of both cities had been in prison for relatively long periods: in the cases of Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí, Mr. Badí'u'lláh Farid and Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí, the period of imprisonment had been sixteen months before they died in Ṭihrán.

There was a strong possibility that in the end their executions were hastily carried out and were related in some way to the agitated conditions of the time. Over two thousand mourners attended the funerals of the dead Bahá'ís in the capital city—they now became known as the second 'seven martyrs of Ṭihrán', standing alongside the seven celebrated Bábí martyrs who had died in that place so many years before. As for the 'seven martyrs of Hamadán', it had been discovered from examination of their corpses that six of these brave men had been physically tortured before their deaths. The body of the seventh had been riddled with bullets. It is even possible that during this period the missing eleven Bahá'ís, including the members of the first National Spiritual Assembly, met a similar fate.

On 28 June a bomb exploded at the headquartes of the governing Islamic Republican Party, killing over seventy leading members, including the Chief Justice, Ayatollah Beheshti. Next month, a government source informed a correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* that the bomb blast was the work of Israel acting through the Bahá'ís in Ṭihrán. In such a climate arrests of Bahá'ís grew, including ten in Mashhad, two of whom, Mr. Kamálu'd-Dín Bakhtávar and Mr. Ni'matulláh Kátibpúr-Shahídí, were executed in Káshmar on 26 July. In Kalmán, three members of the Local Spiritual Assembly were arrested and taken to Dáryún, Iṣfahán. Other Bahá'ís in the area were taken to Dáryún, including five who, in early September, were executed there. Thirty-one villagers near Iṣfahán recanted under pressure from mobs led by Hujjat Sa'ádatí, an instigator of activities against the Bahá'ís in that area. A Bahá'í medical student in Iṣfahán, in the sixth and final year of her studies, was prevented from completing her course because of her religion; and also in Iṣfahán seven Bahá'ís were arrested, and homes were raided and literature seized. Finally, on 29 July, nine Bahá'ís were executed in Tabríz, bringing to twenty-five the number of Bahá'ís so dealt with in the two months of June and July. The situation for the Bahá'ís had escalated in an alarming fashion—it had truly reached a point of no return. In September the National

Assembly learned through an unofficial channel of the government that after the political opposition had been eliminated, the turn of the Bahá'ís would come in earnest.

As if to underline this, in August and September Yazd was once more the scene of intense pressure. This time matters centred on a list of one hundred and seventeen Bahá'ís—later increased to one hundred and fifty—who were summoned to appear before the Revolutionary Court after their bank accounts had been frozen. The deadline was extended to the end of September, and for a six-week period the fate of these Bahá'ís—or those of them still alive, for the list included names of those now dead—hung in the balance. In the interim a motion specifically referring to the sufferings of the Bahá'í community of Írán was raised at the United Nations in Geneva, where the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted its second resolution on behalf of the Bahá'ís—this time more directly censorious of the Iranian government than its first resolution a year before. Perhaps this diplomatic activity bore fruit, for the ultimatum against the Bahá'ís of Yazd was allowed to drop soon afterwards. Nevertheless, five Bahá'ís were executed in Dáryún, near Iṣfahán, on 11 September, and in Ṭihrán, on 29 August, Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh 'Azízí of England was also shot. Also in August sixty fundamentalists arrived in the Bahá'í village of Mázgán, near Káshán—they had been sent from Qum for the purpose of exerting pressure on the Bahá'ís to recant, but they were later called back in disgrace. The Bahá'ís who died in Dáryún met their fate without any announcement being made of their deaths; indeed, the bodies of three of them were buried in a Muslim cemetery. This set the precedent for the events surrounding the execution, in December, of the members of the second National Spiritual Assembly. Meanwhile, Mr. 'Azízí's relatives suffered harassment; five were imprisoned, including his mother, then in her eighties.

With the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán helpless to influence events, and international action on behalf of the Bahá'ís under way, persecution within Írán grew more pervasive. Bahá'í college students and school children began to face dismissal from schools, starting, as so often before, in Yazd. In addition, the business licences of Bahá'ís in one area of Mázindarán were invalidated, and in Urúmíyyih arrests of Bahá'ís, including old women and children, rose to thirty-eight within a short time. Harassment and attacks continued around Bírjand. A circular letter was issued instructing Iranian embassies and consulates not to renew the passports of Bahá'ís and political dissidents living abroad. Even the Iranian *émigré* press began to realize that the Bahá'ís—uniquely out of all those suffering in Írán—were being persecuted on religious grounds alone. Then in November, amidst continuing confiscation of the property of Bahá'ís and a fresh raid on the Bahá'í national office, there were arrested six members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán, an institution of strategic importance to the beleaguered Bahá'í administration. At their interrogation they were beaten. Their plight foreshadowed the third major coup against the Iranian Bahá'í community. After the sack of the House of the Báb, and the kidnapping of the first National Spiritual Assembly the third major blow was the arrest and secret execution of eight of the nine members of the second National Spiritual Assembly.[1] This time there could be no doubt of the government's complicity in the event. Every single member of this protecting, governing body of the Bahá'ís of Írán was known by name to the authorities. Some had courageously had contact, directly and indirectly, with representatives of the government. They had, like their predecessors on the first National Spiritual Assembly, fearlessly championed the cause of their fellow-believers before the authorities, and they had done so in the knowledge that one day their lives must be forfeit. Their deaths, contrived and accomplished by their persecutors in an ignominious fashion—the bodies of five were by chance discovered in a graveyard marked for 'infidels'—struck at the very core of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán. And when on 4 January 1982 seven more Bahá'ís met their deaths, including six members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán and the lady in whose house they had been meeting, it was apparent that the leadership of

[1] The ninth member, a woman, was indisposed and could not attend the meeting. She later succeeded in escaping from Írán.



A desecrated Bahá'í cemetery. Gravestones were demolished, defaced or befouled.



Mourners gathered for the funeral of Dr. Manúchihr Ḥakím, assassinated in Ṭihrán on 12 January 1981.

the Bahá'í community at its highest level had been wiped out. Their names are:

The National Spiritual Assembly (eight members)

Mr. Kámrán Ṣamímí
Mrs. Zhínús Ni'mat Maḥmúdí
Mr. Maḥmúd Majdhúb
Mr. Jalá'l 'Azízí
Mr. Mihdí Amín-Amín
Dr. Sírús Rawshaní
Dr. 'Izzatu'lláh Furúhí
Mr. Qudratu'lláh Rawḥání

The Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán (six members)

Mr. Kúrush Ṭalá'í
Mr. Khusraw Muhandisí
Mr. Iskandar 'Azízí
Mr. Fatḥu'lláh Firdawsí
Mr. Aṭa'u'lláh Yávarí'
Mrs. Shívá Maḥmúdí Asadu'lláh-Zádih

Mrs. Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá Baqá, the hostess in whose home the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán were gathered, died with them.

It should be noted that steps were taken immediately to elect nine new members to serve on the National Spiritual Assembly although it was known that they could well meet the same fate as their predecessors.

Existing on a Precipice: the period February 1980 to April 1983

The pressure on the Bahá'í community operated at all levels. At the end of 1981 Ṭihrán's Bahá'í cemetery was confiscated and a municipal garden planned for its site. Bahá'ís were told they must be buried alongside 'anti-revolutionaries', and, indeed, executed members of an opposition guerrilla movement had already been buried by the authorities in the Bahá'í cemetery in Shíráz. Several months after the Bahá'í cemetery in Ṭihrán was closed two of its staff were arrested. The dismissal of Bahá'ís from a wide range of government and semi-official employment received confirmation when a circular letter from the Ministry of Labour was published in *Kayhan*, 8 December 1981. This set out that 'the punishment for anyone who is a member of the misguided Bahá'í group, which Muslims unanimously consider to be outside of Islam and whose by-laws are based on the denial of God's religion, is dismissal for life from government service'.

In February 1982 the National Spiritual Assembly reported that the Bahá'í community was under increasing stress in respect of its members' financial needs. At a time when unemployment in Írán as a whole was rising to critical proportions and swelling the unrest, the Bahá'í community was under an added handicap. Formerly able to serve the country through the skilled and educated personnel in its ranks, the Bahá'í community now laboured under official opprobrium. Many of its professional people had either left the country, or been imprisoned or executed, and almost all had lost their employment. Newspapers recorded daily the names of people who it was claimed were Bahá'ís but who it was said now denied their faith in order to retain right to their pensions.[1] In Fárs province the Health Department addressed a document to the Department of Economics and Finance cancelling the pensions and salaries of retired and regular employees because of their membership in the 'misguided sect'—thirty-six names of Bahá'ís were listed. Not only in Fárs province was such activity occurring. When it is remembered how, earlier, Bahá'í army officers were denied their pensions, and letters of dismissal were sent to individual Bahá'ís on account of their religion from other national institutions, such as the National Oil Company and the Ministry of Education, and when it is recalled that Bahá'í doctors had been discharged and applications from Bahá'í students rejected, in both cases on grounds of their religion, it becomes clear that a policy against the Bahá'ís had been adopted by all the official authorities. So thorough and heartless was this policy that in one instance a widow, who was dismissed from her work for being a Bahá'í, was forbidden a share of her dead husband's salary, as decreed in regulations, in spite of the fact she had two young dependent children; worse, she was even denied custody of her children.

Further confirmation that a campaign against the Bahá'ís was being waged by the highest authorities was available in the pronounce-

[1] For the most part, such names could not be identified by the Bahá'ís as members of the community.

ments of government figures in the media. In January 1982 Ayatollah Musavi-Ardibili, the Chief Justice of the Islamic Republic, referred to the Bahá'ís as 'infidels' in an article appearing in *Kayhan*. In the same piece, the Prosecutor of the Revolutionary Courts, Ayatollah Muhammadi Gilani, made the point that according to the Qur'án the punishment for infidels was death. However, outside Írán the case of the authorities was faring badly. In March the United Nations Commission on Human Rights passed a resolution criticizing the Iranian government's persecution of the Bahá'ís within its borders. Finally, at the Third Committee of the General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters in November, Írán took the offensive by circulating to representatives a document entitled: 'Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran—A Review of the Facts.' The report did no more, however, than repeat the accusations levelled against the Bahá'ís from the outset of the Islamic Republic. The stance of the government remained, incredibly, that in spite of all that had been said and done within Írán since 1979, no one had suffered in that country on account of his religion. Yet it had been no uncommon thing to read in the newspapers in Írán—as for example in *Kayhan*, 1 December 1981—that Mr. so-and-so had recanted his faith as a Bahá'í in the presence of the Revolutionary Prosecutor (in the above reported case, Ayatollah Muhammadi Gilani). On occasion, the newspaper might even report that an executed prisoner refused to recant his religion.

Thus the ordeal of the Bahá'ís continued. While the war between Írán and 'Iráq proceeded alongside the Iranian government's war with its internal political enemies, and tens of thousands were dying in both contests, it remained true that the Bahá'ís were 'the only Iranians . . . victimized exclusively for religious reasons'.[1] By March 1982 over one hundred Bahá'ís had been killed or executed, and as many were in prison. Students would have had to produce certificates of conversion in order to gain admittance into state schools, and there had been talk of ration coupons being denied to those who were not members of one of the four officially recognized religions. That this threat did not materialize has been attributed by some unbiased observers to the international voice raised against the régime's treatment of the Bahá'ís. 'The outcry by the international media as well as by human rights organizations, including the New York-based Freedom House, Amnesty International and the prestigious Committee for the Free World, however, appeared to have persuaded the Iranian régime to move back from the brink of a "final solution" to the Bahá'í problem.[2]

During the late winter and early spring of 1982 the detached observer could be forgiven for seeing a religious community cowed into silence and displaying signs of confusion. Hundreds were fleeing over the borders, whilst many others, within the country, were effectively on the run or in hiding. The authorities were now arresting the entire membership of Local Spiritual Assemblies—as in April, when they detained eight members of the Qazvín Bahá'í Assembly. (In July four of these were executed, and another three, under pressure, recanted.) In Shíráz, Ṭihrán, Yazd and elsewhere the number of Bahá'ís being arrested grew almost daily. Some were released—e.g. four in Ṭihrán—as part of the amnesty announced by Ayatollah Khomeini in late February. Then, just as quickly, others would take their places. Shíráz now became the chief area of danger. In March seventeen Bahá'í homes in the city were confiscated and thirty-five bank accounts of Bahá'ís were frozen. Meanwhile, executions proceeded apace: two in February, one in Ṭihrán and another in Bábulsar. In these cases the families were not notified, and the victims were buried in non-Bahá'í cemeteries. In April two Bahá'ís were executed, one in Urúmíyyih, the other in Mashhad. Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Gulshaní, victim of the hangman in Mashhad, was reported later in *Kayhan* as having been executed owing to his being *murtad*—that is, an apostate from Islám. Mr. Gulshaní had written a small booklet entitled *Why I am a Bahá'í*, and this was taken as evidence that he had endeavoured to seduce Muslims from their faith. The ominous phenomenon of the mass-intimidation of Bahá'ís was not a new thing—it had occurred with the

[1] Sepehr Zabih, *Iran Since the Revolution*, London, 1982, p. 229.

[2] ibid.

Buyr-Aḥmad tribe in a mountain area, with several Bahá'í villages, and with those in Yazd who were summoned before the Revolutionary Court. In April it was the turn of the Bahá'ís of Saysán, who were intimidated by the Imám-Jum'ih of Bustan-Abad to become Muslims within one month or face grave consequences. While this pressure was averted, in September fifty Bahá'ís from Saysán were forced to append their thumb-prints to documents they later learned purported to be proof of their having recanted. The episode was publicized in the newspapers, though not the letters of vehement denial written by these Bahá'ís to the same newspapers, avowing their continuing Bahá'í belief. In early May the government initiated renewed repression against a number of different communities and organizations, including the Shaykhís of Kirmán. That month six Bahá'í Assembly members were arrested in Zanján, and two were executed in Urúmíyyih. Five more executions followed: three in Karaj (8 May), and two in Ṭihrán (16 May).

The early summer passed with what the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán called an 'uneasy lull' for the Bahá'ís. In late June, however, over thirty Bahá'ís who were employees of the Bank Saderat were detained in Shíráz. These Bahá'ís spent over a month in prison before being released in August. In mid-July another Bahá'í was executed in Shíráz. In August a further execution took place in Urúmíyyih. (West Ádhirbáyján, where this town is located, had been the scene of bitter fighting between the government forces and local insurgents, including Kurdish guerrillas.) The Bahá'ís of Urúmíyyih had been under pressure all year and four had been executed. It is worth noting that in these violent times, a new charge against the Bahá'ís, that of attempting to subvert the government, had been added to the charges customarily brought against them. In September, Manúchihr Vafá'í was murdered in Ṭihrán, and a note left on his body saying he had been killed because he was a Bahá'í. The summer—in the two years previous a particularly grave period for execution of Bahá'ís—passed with six executions between June and late August.

In the six-month period between mid-October 1982 and mid-April 1983 the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í community teetered towards a crevasse. As war flared again between Kurdish forces and the government, and pressure was placed upon the recognized religious minorities to conform to the government's code of Islamic behaviour, and shortages became an ever more oppressive feature of daily life in Írán, a realignment in the balance of political forces brought steadily to the fore a conservative clerical faction called the Hujjatíyyih. The signal triumph of this group was to be the purge of the Tudeh (Communist) Party in May 1983, which it inspired and saw implemented through its sympathizers in the government. The Hujjatíyyih had grown to eminence specifically as the anti-Bahá'í society. As its influence in government grew, the case of the Bahá'ís looked still more precarious with each passing month. In one city in particular, this faction had achieved a powerful hegemony. Following the arrest of most of the members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kirmánsháh in October, and the scattering of those members still at large, the focus of arrests turned to Shíráz. By early November some forty Bahá'ís were imprisoned in the latter city. That same month Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Awjí was executed in Shíráz, as was, subsequently, Dr. Ḍíyá'u'lláh Aḥrárí, whose crime, according to *Kayhan* which reported his death, had been 'spying for Zionism'. Two more Bahá'ís were condemned to death in December—this time in Zanján—and more were arrested in Ṭihrán, Míyán-Duáb and Urúmíyyih. But Shíráz became the centre of a deepening crisis for the Bahá'í community of Írán. There were reports that the still numerous Bahá'í prisoners were being tortured. A *démarche* made by fifteen European countries and expressing the fears of the signatories for the fate of the Iranian Bahá'ís was delivered to Ṭihrán in January.

That month Ayatollah Khomeini announced measures to curb the arbitrary power of the Revolutionary Courts. But this 'liberalization' policy left the Bahá'ís behind. Another Bahá'í, Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Síyávushí, was executed in Shíráz, and it was learned in February through a newspaper report that twenty-two of the prisoners in Shíráz were under sentence of death. Presumably all that was between them and their executions was the harsh pressure applied in such cases by the prison authorities

to get them to recant. In another newspaper piece in February the President of the Revolutionary Court in Shíráz gave a chilling warning to the Bahá'ís: '. . . before it is too late . . . recant Bahá'ísm'. It was 'absolutely certain that in the Islamic Republic of Iran there [was] no place whatsoever for Bahá'ís and Bahá'ísm . . . they [had] created a state within a state and a government and administration different from Islam'. In March three more Bahá'ís were executed secretly in Shíráz. It was not known whether these—and the one who had died in January—were among the original twenty-two sentenced to death. Meanwhile, as the political campaign waged at the behest of the Hujjatíyyih gained momentum through April, the position of the anti-Bahá'í society within the Iranian administration was going from strength to strength. The scene in Shíráz was being set for the worst sequence of judicial killing of members of the Bahá'í Faith since the start of the campaign against them in 1979.

B. IDENTITY OF THE PERSECUTORS, AND CHARGES LEVELLED AGAINST THE BAHÁ'ÍS

The Anti-Bahá'í Groups

Two prominent groups have been particularly responsible for the harassment of the Bahá'í community of Írán. Both have their roots deep in the Pahlavi period, when their activities were either countenanced by the authorities, or ignored. Both achieved influence and even representation in the highest circles of the government of the Islamic Republic of Írán.

The Tablighat-i-Islami group was founded during the early years of the reign of Shah Mohammed Reza, and adopted a non-political stance which enabled it to function without let during the later years of the Shah's reign. The founder of Tablighat-i-Islami was Shaykh Mahmud Halabi, a cleric who made a special study of the Bahá'í Faith, including its organization and its tenets. Shaykh Halabi wrote books and pamphlets rejecting the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, including a hostile commentary on Bahá'u'lláh's *Kitáb-i-Íqán*. Hard-core members of Tablighat-i-Islami took courses of an intensive nature preparing them for detailed refutation and assailing of the Bahá'í teachings. Members of this organization used to frequent Bahá'í meetings during the Pahlavi period, with the aim of causing disruption. They were also active at some periods disseminating anti-Bahá'í propaganda in the towns and villages of Írán. Their intent was to poison the minds of ordinary people against the Bahá'ís.

The Mujahedin organization, which was opposed to Tablighat-i-Islami, published a document in their paper, *Mujahid*, on 9 June 1980. This came from the office of SAVAK, and allowed Tablighat-i-Islami to function as long as its activities were not the cause of 'provocation and disturbance'. The document was in fact a response to an invitation by Tablighat-i-Islami for SAVAK to join their organization in attacking the Bahá'ís in a 'systematic way'. It should be noted that although the document was a proof of some complicity between SAVAK and Tablighat-i-Islami, it does not necessarily support the view that SAVAK actively co-operated with the anti-Bahá'í group.

There is some evidence to show that in the early months after the Islamic revolution Tablighat-i-Islami spearheaded the seizure of Bahá'í properties and holy places. Shaykh Halabi, who remained the group's ideologue, was reputed to have the ear of Ayatollah Taleqani, Ayatollah Gulpaygani—an old adversary of the Bahá'í Faith—and Ayatollah Khomeini himself. He is considered to have been largely responsible for the charge widely levelled against the Bahá'ís that they were agents of Zionism. Another sometime member of the group was Muhammad-Ali Raja'i, first Minister of Education, then Prime Minister, and finally President of the Islamic Republic. As Minister of Education Raja'i had been responsible for a circular letter dismissing Bahá'ís from their jobs as teachers.

During the period 1982–1983 this group, now known as the Hujjatíyyih Society, began to acquire a greater political influence on the affairs of the country. It was now in an even better position for carrying out its avowed programme of eliminating the Bahá'í Faith.[1] Observers saw this faction as instrumental in

[1] In 1982 a series of articles in the Tihrán newspaper, *Subbih Azadegan*, identified the leadership, aims and methods of the Hujjatíyyih Society.

the fierce persecution of the Bahá'í believers in Shíráz in 1982–1983.

The Fedayeen-i-Islami was founded in the 1940s. In the early period of Sháh Mohammed Reza's reign—particularly when the Sháh's own position was weak and that of the clergy momentarily strong (1951–1955)—the Fedayeen-i-Islami was influential and active in assassinating government officials. It has been said that this group encouraged the popular preacher Abu'l-Qasim Falsafi in his sermons against the Bahá'í Faith in 1955. They were also responsible for the occasional assassination of Bahá'ís, for example, Dr. Sulaymán Berjís (Birjís) who was killed in this period.[1] As an active faction within the revolutionary forces, they were probably behind the kidnapping and assassination of at least a few Bahá'ís, including, it has been suggested, Professor Manúchihr Ḥakím (12 January 1981). The Fedayeen-i-Islami, like the Hujjatíyyih Society, had strong sympathizers in the government, including some notorious religious judges and a former member who had become an extremely influential minister.

In addition to these two main groups, other factions within the revolution are known to have been anti-Bahá'í and active against the Bahá'í Faith. One of these, called 'The Society for Fighting Against Religious Transgressions' (*Mubarizih ba Munkarat*), is said to have had its own prison, whose inmates included Bahá'ís, and was responsible for looting and sealing off Bahá'í homes in Ṭihrán.

Accusations laid against the Bahá'ís

The anti-Bahá'í groups were not alone in Írán in condemning the Bahá'ís. Prominent Shí'ih clerics of the last three decades were not reluctant to voice their anti-Bahá'í sentiments.

One such figure was the supreme Shí'ih Mujtahid of the 1950s, Ayatollah Burujirdi, who sympathized with Tablighat-i-Islami, and who wrote to Shaykh Falsafi complaining of the influence of the Bahá'ís, and expressing 'the hope that a general purge of Bahá'ís from all government positions would be implemented'.[2] Ayatollah Khomeini himself—as we have seen—referred to the Bahá'í Faith as a corrupt influence, and even the moderate and relatively liberal-minded Ayatollah Shariatmadari issued a *fatvá* with an implicit anti-Bahá'í bias.[3] Whatever might have been the theological and political divisions with the Shí'ih clergy, execration of the Bahá'í Faith was an issue upon which they could all join.

This universal scorn of the Bahá'í Faith amongst the Shí'ih clergy amounted in effect to a deep-seated fear of the theological premises and aims of the new religion. It was this fear which animated their assaults on the Bahá'í community, from the middle of the previous century up to the present. The Bahá'í teachings on issues like the return of the twelfth Imám and the fulfilment of the prophecies of Shí'ih Islám in the coming of the Báb, the completion of the dispensation of the Qur'án and the consequent annulment of the authority of the clerics and learned who claimed to be its sole exponents, cut across the entire *raison d'être* of these religious leaders, and they had arisen with each generation to attempt to extirpate the power of the Bahá'í Faith. These Shí'ih clerics used as their excuse —for they knew that open debate on the fundamental theological issues would not be advantageous to their cause—such opportunist charges as might besmear the Bahá'ís and bring down on them the rancour of the people. Hence they chose, in the last century, to clothe the Bahá'ís with the unpopular mantle of British and Russian Imperialism, and in the later twentieth, they painted the Bahá'ís with the fashionable opprobrium of being agents of the United States and servers of Zionism. And when the occasion arose—with the fall of the upopular régime of the Shah—they sought to discredit the Bahá'ís by associating them with the deposed monarch.

The crucial debate immediately after the Revolution of 1978–1979 centred on the part the Bahá'ís had played, or *not* played, in it. The other religious minorities could claim that they had been represented in the revolutionary coalition that overthrew the Shah. The Bahá'ís—for the obvious reason that they were forbidden by their religious teaching to involve themselves in politics—could not. However, the Bahá'ís non-involvement in

[1] Dr. Sulaymán Berjís (Birjís) of Káshán, assassinated 3 February 1950. See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 684.

[2] Shahrough Akhavi, *Clergy–State Relations in the Pahlavi Period*, New York, 1980, p. 78.

[3] See M. M. J. Fischer, *Iran from Religious Dispute to Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass., 1980, p. 174, n. 7.

politics had never been recognized or accepted in Írán, and the popular prejudice that the Shah had surrounded himself with Bahá'ís who had effectively run his government as well as the secret police, SAVAK, would be hard to dispel. Within a few weeks of the establishment of Premier Bazargan's provisional government in February 1979, a supporter of the new régime in America, Mansur Farhang, gave voice to these very accusations in a panel programme on American television.

It was upon this base—the one which maintained that the Bahá'ís had collaborated politically with the Shah and his secret police—that the attack against the Bahá'í community in Írán was initially launched. Added to these charges were the further accusations that the Bahá'ís had intimate links with the government of Israel, contributed to its funds and promoted its interests. The Bahá'ís, in short, were Zionist spies.

Finally, two more charges were raised. As well as being spies for Israel, the Bahá'ís were agents of the Western powers and, in particular, of the United States and Great Britain. All such trumped up charges were covers for decrying them as 'enemies of Islám', the real basis of Shí'ih Islám's fanatical hatred of the Bahá'í Faith being its claim to embody a further revelation of divine truth after that of Islám.

The Bahá'í International Community, which was active in countering such arguments and generally defending the Bahá'ís as well as bringing their plight to the attention of the world diplomatic community through the United Nations in New York and Geneva, through the media and by approaches to governments, included in its publication 'Bahá'ís in Írán: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious Minority' answers to accusations most commonly levelled against the Bahá'ís of Írán. These were supplemented by the statement it prepared in response to the Iranian government's document entitled *Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran—A Review of the Facts.*

Below are some extracts from the Bahá'í publications:

'1. *Bahá'ís are accused of being supporters of the late Shah, of having co-operated with and benefited from the former régime, and of being a political organization opposed to the present Iranian government.*

'The allegation that the Bahá'ís supported and benefited from the former régime is founded upon the fact that the Bahá'í community did not denounce the Pahlavi régime or affiliate itself with political or other organizations opposed to the régime, and that a small number of Bahá'ís were appointed to prominent positions in the civil service of that régime.

'In accordance with the teachings of their Faith, Bahá'ís must show loyalty and obedience to the government of the country in which they live, whatever its form or policies. Accordingly, they do not engage in subversive activities. In addition, Bahá'ís are forbidden by the laws of their Faith from becoming involved in partisan politics or from holding any political post. These principles are fundamental and do not change with changing governments.

'. . . So fundamental is the principle of not accepting any political post that, in one case under the Pahlavi régime, when a Bahá'í accepted appointment as a Cabinet Minister, he was expelled from the Bahá'í community.

'2. *Bahá'ís are accused of collaboration with SAVAK.*

'Denunciation of any organ of government is contrary to the Bahá'í principle of loyalty and obedience to government and therefore no condemnation of SAVAK and its activities was ever made by the Iranian Bahá'ís, either individually or collectively. Once again, the silence of the Bahá'ís has been used as evidence of support and approbation.

'It can categorically be stated that the Bahá'í community of Írán was never associated with the operations of SAVAK. Such activities and organizations are contrary to the most fundamental principles of the Bahá'í Faith, whose teachings explicitly condemn the methods of unscrupulous politicians, forbid any form of violence, and lay upon every adherent the responsibility for respecting the dignity of his fellow-men and for upholding individual human rights.

'No evidence exists of any collaboration between SAVAK and the Bahá'í community or between SAVAK and any individual Bahá'í. SAVAK officials such as Parviz Sabeti, who have been described as Bahá'ís, were not

Bahá'ís. The alleged membership of such individuals in the Bahá'í Faith stems from the fact that their fathers or families had once been Bahá'ís. It is, however, a basic principle of the Bahá'í religion that the gift of faith springs from the free choice of the individual and cannot be automatically and blindly inherited from an earlier generation.

'3.[1] *Bahá'ís are accused of being agents of Zionism.*

'The Bahá'í World Centre was, in fact, established in the last century, long before the State of Israel came into existence, and has nothing to do with Zionism. The Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh, was exiled to the Holy Land in compliance with the orders of two Islamic governments (Írán and Turkey). He remained in the Holy Land until His death in 1892. His Shrine was raised there, and the Holy Land thus became the world spiritual centre of the Bahá'í Faith.

'Bahá'í pilgrims from all parts of the world regularly travel to Israel to visit the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and other sites closely associated with their Faith. Thousands of Iranian Bahá'ís made this pilgrimage during the time when they were permitted by law to visit Israel.

'In accordance with the clear requirements of the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, its world spiritual and administrative centres must always be united in one locality. Accordingly, the world administrative centre of the Bahá'í Faith has always been and must continue to be in the Holy Land. It cannot be relocated for the sake of a temporary political expediency.

'Contributions sent by Bahá'ís to the Bahá'í World Centre in Israel are solely and exclusively for the upkeep of their Holy Shrines and historic sites, and for the administration of their Faith. Almost all Bahá'ís in Írán have made such contributions, and this fact is often used to support charges against them of collusion with Israel.

'4.[2] *It is alleged that the Bahá'í Faith was used by the colonial powers as a tool for colonial expansion into Muslim countries.*

'At the time of the invitation [see below], news of the martyrdom of the Báb . . . and the massacre of 20,000 of His followers, had spread to the West and had aroused much sympathy and interest among Europeans. Bahá'u'lláh . . . was exiled by the Iranian government and imprisoned in Baghdád, 'Iráq. His plight attracted the sympathetic attention of the British consul-general in Baghdád, who offered Him the protection of British citizenship and also offered to arrange residence for Him in India or in any other place agreeable to Him. Bahá'u'lláh declined these offers and chose instead to remain a prisoner in Baghdád.

'It was not unusual at that time, nor is it unusual today, for government officials to offer aid and sanctuary to those they perceive as being the victims of oppression in other countries. This kind of intervention is commonly recognized as being humanitarian and non-political in nature. The attempt to portray the humanitarian assistance offered to Bahá'u'lláh as being part of a sinister project of colonial expansion is clearly ridiculous.'

In the same document, other instances raised by the Iranian report—such as the services rendered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the people of Palestine during the First World War, and His receiving of a British Knighthood (which are cited as further proof of the 'colonial' argument)—are given answers. Indeed, these arguments are best summed up by the Bahá'í International Community's rebuttal of the Iranian case in the following sentence, 'All of the allegations made against the Bahá'ís in Írán are based on deliberate misinterpretations of the aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings.' To this could be added the rider: such allegations were also made through deliberate misinterpretation of the facts.

One further charge, not mentioned above, is perhaps even more insidious. This is the accusation that certain Bahá'ís were responsible for 'promoting prostitution'; in reality, this meant the witnesses to Bahá'í marriages who signed their names on the marriage certificates. Under the Pahlavis Bahá'í marriages were not officially recognized, but were not discredited either. Under the Islamic Republic the fact that the Bahá'í Faith was not recognized in the constitution meant that the

[1] The first three heads are quoted from *The Bahá'ís in Írán*; no. 3 above is no. 4 in the original.

[2] This extract is from the answer to *Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran* and refers specifically to the invitation extended to Bahá'u'lláh by the British consul-general in Baghdád mentioned in *God Passes By* and cited by the Iranian report as proof of Britain's support of movements which, it says, weakened the opposition to colonialism in Muslim societies.

laws and ordinances of the Bahá'í Faith were neither respected nor recognized. Thus Bahá'í marriages of many years' standing were held to be invalid, and the children of such unions were considered illegitimate. Those Bahá'ís who appended their names to Bahá'í marriage certificates were in danger of arrest and trial on the charge noted above.

The charges laid against the Bahá'í community in Írán have been refuted in the international forums and turned back upon the accusers who in turn have been indicted for their denial of basic human rights to the Bahá'ís. The Bahá'í Faith has been recognized in the eyes of the world as a bona fide, independent religion, with laws and ordinances of its own, and as such the plight of its followers in the land of its birth, where they have been without rights and recognition since the inception of their Faith, has been roundly condemned by a substantial section of the world community. It can truly be said that the trials and indignities heaped upon the Bahá'ís of Írán by their traditional persecutors have achieved the opposite ends to those for which they were intended: instead of eradicating the Bahá'í Faith once and for all, its enemies have only succeeded in giving it greater prominence before the eyes of mankind.

C. PATTERN OF PERSECUTION

This section is made up of reports of the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís, coming mostly from eyewitnesses, participants or knowledgeable friends and acquaintances of the victims.

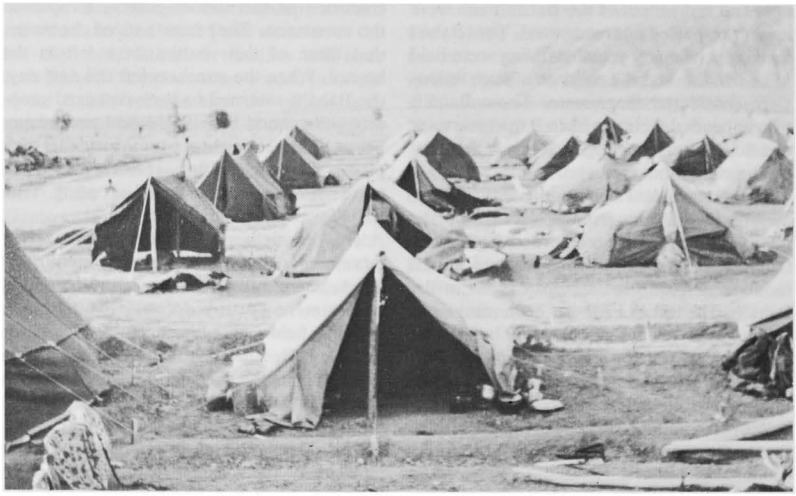
Pressure in the villages and in the countryside

The Buyr-Aḥmad tribe lives in the mountainous region of central Írán between Iṣfahán and Fárs provinces. The tribe consists of eleven clans, one of which, the Sádát-Maḥmúdí, is more prosperous than the others. Most of the Bahá'ís in this area belong to this clan.

'On 12 January 1979, a few hundred non-Bahá'í people of the Sádát-Maḥmúdí clan surrounded the little town of Gurúzih. This hamlet consisted of eight families, six of which were Bahá'ís. They fired shots and threw stones at them and burned the fences around their houses. The Bahá'í families, in the confusion of this sudden attack, escaped to the mountains. They later noticed, however, that three of their babies were left in the houses. When the attackers left the next day, the Bahá'ís returned to their damaged property and calmed their frightened and hungry babies. The next night the same incidents took place. The attackers first set fire to the motor of the mill and then started shooting. One Bahá'í was injured by gun-fire.

'On the sixth night, the attacks became more severe, the mill was completely burned down, household furnishings were looted, all houses were destroyed, cattle were stolen, and the fields were damaged and orchards uprooted. Because of this the Bahá'ís had to take refuge in the village of Darih-shúr (which has forty Bahá'í families out of forty-eight households). However, in this village, the friends faced the same attacks, and the intensity of the recent events brought upon them the same fate as had befallen the Bahá'ís of Gurúzih. After two months of resisting attacks and skirmishes by armed men, they, too, were sadly forced to leave their homes and seek refuge in the central town of Katá. The attacks on this village were so severe that the few Muslim inhabitants also had to flee; however, their property and belongings were later returned to them, whereas the Bahá'ís were forced to leave the ruins of their homes, their cattle, and their fields to the looters. The neighbouring villages of Katuk, Murgh-Chinár, Guládan, Ábgarmak, Baráftáb, Darih-gazí, Minj and Hast received the same treatment. A number of Bahá'ís received gunshot injuries.

'In the beginning, many of the fleeing Bahá'ís sought refuge in Katá, which consisted of seventy-eight households where all but ten were Bahá'ís. Each Bahá'í family of this village had the bounty of receiving and caring for a number of the refugees from other villages. As more refugees arrived in Katá, the circle around them became increasingly constricting. On five occasions, a number of Mullás came to Katá to ask the Bahá'ís to recant their faith if they wanted to save their lives and property. One of the tribal leaders, Ḥabíb Bahádur, extracted a considerable sum of money from the Bahá'ís and promised to protect them from the attacks. This, however, turned out to be a trick, and his gunmen attacked them more severely. From the 6th of



Tent settlement of Bahá'í refugees from Katá, Buyir-Aḥmad tribal district, near Iṣfahán; May–July 1979.



A Bahá'í family in the aftermath of harassment by a hostile mob which drove them from their home.

May, Ḥabíb Bahádur's forces, as well as others, surrounded the village. Two armed men and two regular policemen, under the supervision of a Mullá, came to Katá and announced that they had given the Bahá'ís their final warning. They said that the Bahá'ís now had no escape, and they therefore had to go to the Mujtahid and recant their faith if they wanted to stay alive. One of the Mullás was heard saying to Ḥabíb Bahádur that, in the past four months, he and a number of clergymen had made every endeavour to make the Bahá'ís recant their faith and become Muslims; however, they had failed. Now this privilege was turned over to him to force the Bahá'ís to accept Islám. Fierce shooting broke out and continued all day from all directions. The Bahá'ís, men and women, young and old, gathered together in one place, praying and chanting Tablets. They decided to send a delegation to the attackers to tell them that since a number of their wives and daughters were in the fields, they needed some time to bring them back to the village, and then they could decide collectively what to do. Fortunately, they were given five days of grace and this period of time gave them the opportunity to consult with the Local Spiritual Assembly of Iṣfahán, which advised them to come to that city as soon as possible. They started on their way, a journey which was hazardous in itself, but it became even more perilous because of the heavy rains, lack of transportation, and because they had to carry with them as many of their belongings as they could manage.

'The first convoy of refugees from the tribal region of Buyr-Aḥmad started arriving in Iṣfahán at 5:00 p.m. on 7 May 1979. They were placed in the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of that city, and a special committee was assigned to care for them. In less than forty-eight hours, blankets, food, carpets, etc., were provided for them. The first three days after their arrival were the most difficult for the refugees. They had come from a very difficult and dangerous journey and had lost one of their fellow Bahá'ís on the way, who died after having been severely beaten. Three of the women gave birth prematurely, soon after their arrival. All these unfortunate Bahá'ís were transferred to the campsite except for a group of women and children, as well as the old and the infirm. This group was in the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds when armed men from the Islamic Revolutionary Court suddenly arrived, and, taking with them the members of the special committee for the Bahá'í refugees, commanded the oppressed souls to vacate the premises in twenty-four hours and to leave the city within seventy-two hours. However, the members of the "Komiteh" did not even wait for the twenty-four hours. After two hours another group of gunmen came to the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and very roughly threw out these innocent people, among them an old lady who was paralysed. Although the government authorities gave instructions that the refugees should not be harassed, and the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds should not be occupied, the Revolutionary Guards paid no heed.

'One afternoon, two weeks after the camp was established in the desert campsite of Mihyár, a number of gunmen, uninvited, entered the grounds with a loudspeaker and said they were sent by the Revolutionary Committee. They first gave a sermon and issued repeated insults about the Faith and its Central Figures and slandered the Bahá'í administration. The Bahá'ís very bravely countered their accusations. One of the armed men asked publicly, "Who is the Bahá'í teacher in this camp?" A man grasped the hand of a Bahá'í child of tender years, took him to the loudspeaker and said, "This is one of our Bahá'í teachers." The child very bravely and reverently chanted a beautiful prayer. The courage which was demonstrated by this young child when intoning the Words of God had a tremendous impact on the Revolutionary Guards. Their attitude changed immediately and one of them apologetically said they came to the camp merely to see if the Bahá'ís needed anything. As soon as the camp was established and shelter, food and other necessities provided, some Bahá'ís from Iṣfahán started a school programme at the campsite so that the young Bahá'ís, who had to leave their schools, could continue their studies. Early morning prayer meetings were set up and were attended by almost all of the more than 1,200 inhabitants of the camp. Some learned Bahá'ís began deepening classes for children and adults, and a tent was immediately set up as a dispensary by the Bahá'í doctors. The Bahá'ís of Buyr-Aḥmad suffered

for almost three months, beginning from early May until the middle of July. They were able to return to their villages only when the Mullá who instigated the wave of persecutions against the Bahá'ís in this area was disgraced by the Revolutionary authorities for his misbehaviour on some other counts and was banished from the region.'

Kalálih is a small town in the midst of the Turkoman desert thirty miles east of Gunbad-i-Kávús. It has a sizeable Sunní population and had until recently about twenty-one Bahá'í families. In September 1981 a new Imám-Jum'ih arrived and in a Friday sermon issued orders to the Shí'ih population to entirely boycott the Bahá'ís, and two days later the municipal authorities abrogated the licences to trade of all the Bahá'í shopkeepers. The local Bahá'ís appealed with no avail to the Mayor and the District Governor. Several hostile incidents occurred against individual Bahá'ís before the coming of Muḥarram (the first ten days of the first month of the Muslim year observed by Shí'ihs as part of their mourning period for the Imáms).

'The Bahá'ís are used to and expect outrageous incidents during the ten days' mourning period in the month of Muḥarram.

'On the third day (8 November 1981), suddenly a group of armed militiamen invaded the Bahá'í shops, driving out the customers and snatching the articles they had bought. "These are Bahá'ís!" they shouted. "Don't you know that it is forbidden to deal with these infidels?" They had hoped to gather people around and cause a riot, but those who passed by merely whispered, "Why bother these innocent people?" Instead, the militiamen sought the aid of the ruffians of the town. About fourteen of these assembled in the central square shouting anti-Bahá'í slogans and endeavouring to attract a crowd.

'Finally, a number of Muslim citizens, though they knew the consequence if they interfered, came to the aid of the Bahá'í shopkeepers and chased the ruffians off. Later, officers of the Gendarmerie came and closed the Bahá'ís' shops so as to avoid further disturbance. In obedience to the authorities the Bahá'ís complied.

'9 November. Twelve Bahá'í students were expelled from four high schools in town. Though the majority of students and teachers deplore this unjust treatment of their fellow students and friends, they are too scared to speak out. On the same day the Imám-Jum'ih issued an order forbidding the sale of necessities of life such as bread, meat, and kerosene to the Bahá'ís. Anyone doing business with Bahá'ís would receive one hundred lashes. The news created fear and panic in the town. It was rumoured that the Imám-Jum'ih had ordered the Bahá'ís to be brought to the mosque on Friday in order to have them recant. The Local Spiritual Assembly considered the option of all the Bahá'ís leaving the town. However, that same night the Imám-Jum'ih of Gunbad-i-Kávús, having received representatives from Qum who presumably brought him new instructions, came to Kalálih and prevailed upon the new Imám-Jum'ih there to postpone his plan. Nevertheless, no one now dared to speak in favour of the Bahá'ís. Four days later, in a typical incident, a Bahá'í woman went to the bakery with her child. All the bakers and butchers had been forbidden to serve Bahá'ís. A fanatic in the queue told the baker the woman was a Bahá'í and he must not sell her bread. However, the man whispered to the lady to give her basket to the child and leave the shop. But again, when the baker moved to put a loaf in the child's basket, the fanatic shouted in protest. Whereupon the shopkeeper cried, "How can I refuse bread to this innocent child? What am I to say in answer to God's reprimand in the next world!" He gave the child the bread and let him go. The adversary remained silent. In fact, the people of Kalálih determined that the Bahá'ís should have what they needed, even if this required taking provisions to their homes.'

Eventually, in early December, the situation changed for the Bahá'ís, and they were allowed to re-open their shops, the ban on the sale of food to them was gradually lifted, and the Bahá'í children were enabled to go back to school. In this instance, the local people had refused to side with the powerful local cleric and his efforts against the Bahá'ís were, in the end, frustrated.

The village of Balu is situated in West Ádhirbáyján; the nearest town is Urúmíyyih.

'On Monday, 30 May 1981, in the village of Balu, Miss Mítrá Aqdasí [age fifteen], daughter of Mr. 'Atta'ulláh Aqdasí and a

student of the secondary school, did not return home after her final examination. Her father went to the school and enquired about his daughter, but the headmistress was away, and he learned from the students that Mítrá had been taken to town by the teacher, Ms. Ṣafiyyih Asaduqli [Asadughlú]. The next day Mr. Aqdasí again returned to the school to enquire after his daughter. The headmistress expressed her sorrow, but did not give him the address of the teacher who had custody of Mítrá. Mr. Aqdasí then filed complaints with the Education Office of Urúmíyyih, and asked that his daughter be found and returned to her family. After an investigation, the Central Komiteh informed Mr. Aqdasí that his daughter was in the custody of the Religious Judge. Mr. Aqdasí then referred his case to the Revolutionary Court, but the Religious Judge explained that Mítrá had become a Muslim and that Mr. Aqdasí now had no rights as a father and could not see her. In reply, Mr. Aqdasí said that his daughter was still only fifteen and had not yet chosen a religion, and she was free to choose for herself. However, he desired to see her and hear the story from her own mouth. But though he pursued the matter through the office of the Attorney-General of Urúmíyyih, Mr. Aqdasí did not succeed in seeing his daughter. The Attorney-General did request by letter that the Court allow Mr. Aqdasí to have access to her, but the Court gave a negative written reply. Some days after, in fact, the Court forcibly demanded that Mr. Aqdasí hand over Mítrá's identity card. When under duress he reluctantly complied, he was sent an official receipt.'

Subsequently, after some months, Mítrá Aqdasí was returned to her family.

Murder and Assassination

Ibráhím Ma'naví lived in Ḥiṣár, a village in Khurásán, where he owned his house and some land. A bachelor of about seventy years of age, he had some knowledge of medicines and treated people of the area as there was no doctor.

'The Bahá'ís of Ḥiṣár had suffered greatly in the past. Towards the end of 1978 loudspeakers from the local mosque began to arouse the population against them. Finally, at the beginning of February 1979, a mob of some five thousand from Ḥiṣár and its environs, armed with hatchets, spades and pickaxes, and provided with petrol and paraffin, converged upon the village intent on doing mischief to the Bahá'ís. One Shaykh Sahmí, who had befriended the Bahá'ís in the past, prevented the rabble from carrying out their aim, but advised the members of the Local Assembly either to accept Islám or to quit the village, or pay an expiatory fine. Some Bahá'ís —the friends having been given ten days to decide—consulted with their fellow believers on the Assembly of Mashhad. Tension in the village increased. A group went to the home of Mr. Ma'naví, looted his property, and carried him off. A later search revealed no trace of his body except clots of blood and a broken set of artificial teeth. It was apparent that he had been beaten to death.

'Mr. Ma'naví had served on the Local Spiritual Assembly, and as a boy of fifteen, he had been so badly beaten on account of his religion that he had been near to death. His injuries had rendered him impotent, so he never married. It was six months before the oppressive atmosphere lifted for the Bahá'ís of Ḥiṣár, and they were free to purchase necessities of life and move as they wished.'

Mír-Asadu'lláh Mukhtárí was seventy years of age at the time of his death. He had moved to the village of Andrún near Bírjand, Khurásán, some thirty-five years before where, as a Bahá'í, he had repeatedly and patiently suffered persecution at the hands of local fanatics.

'At the end of the month of Ádhar 1357 (between November and December 1978), towards the fall of the Pahlavi regime, about one hundred men from the village of Shírk went to Andarún and besieged the homes of the Bahá'ís. They collected all their Bahá'í books and documents and started torturing Asadu'lláh, asking him to recant his faith. His steadfastness made the crowd even angrier. They wanted to cut his throat. Someone else suggested they burn him alive. Asadu'lláh said, "I have some beautiful logs in my storage bin and a container of kerosene." He then took from his pocket a box of matches, gave it to the leader of the mob and said, "Even if you burn me alive, I am still a Bahá'í and will never give up my faith!"

'That same night they beat him severely and

started pillaging his belongings. His wife aided them by holding a lantern close by so they could attend to their looting more easily. The family was left without a single blanket or carpet that night. Asadu'lláh, accompanied by his wife and children, left for Bírjand.

'They returned to Andrún two and a half months later, and in the month of Isfand, 1358 (between February and March 1979), Asadu'lláh bought a few sheep. He could not afford to employ anyone to help him and had no other means of support except to tend his flock of sheep, which at least provided food for his family. On many occasions he told his wife that one of these days it was possible he would not return home because he might be killed.

'On 18 May 1980, Asadu'lláh took his knapsack, canteen, a few loaves of bread and other supplies, and went out to the pasture with his sheep. At dusk, the sheep returned to their fold alone. Asadu'lláh's children tried all night to find their father. At dawn, five kilometres from Andarún village and about one kilometre off the main road, his body was found soaked in blood. He had been stoned and clubbed and, according to the attending physician, he had also been choked. He was found lying face down on the ground with his knapsack still on his back.

'At the office of the security guards, and in the presence of officers as well as the physician, a number of people, including the murderers, had come to attend the inquest. They shouted violently that they did not want Asadu'lláh's body buried in Andarún. They boasted that they had killed him with their own hands, and added that the Bahá'ís in Andarún were condemned to death and soon all would be killed. The policemen tried to quiet them, but these ruffians did not care and in front of the police and guards they started throwing stones at the Bahá'ís. The confessed murderers were finally subdued and taken by the police to Bírjand, where they were charged with the murder of Asadu'lláh. In their appeal to Mashhad, however, they were exonerated, and in the middle of November 1980 they returned to Shírk to a hero's welcome.'

Mr. Muḥammad-Ḥusayn Ma'súmí and his wife, Shikkar-Nisá', had a farm in the village of Nuk, near Bírjand.

'On 22 November 1980, at around 10:00 p.m. on a bright moonlit evening, the man told his wife that he had to go out to fill the feeding trough for the sheep. His wife urged him to hurry as the tea would become cold. She was drinking hers and had not even finished half of it when she heard the door open. Since there was a curtain in front of the door, she could not see anyone. She called out her husband's name, but there was no reply.

'Suddenly several masked men entered the room, and Shikkar-Nisá' knew they had evil intentions since the door of the courtyard had been locked and they would have had to climb the wall to enter the premises. The kerosene lamp in the room provided only dim light, and even if the men had not been masked, she would not have been able to recognize them.

'Out of fear, she dropped her half-filled glass of tea. The men, without speaking, grabbed her by the arms and hands and dragged her inside the room. She cried out her husband's name, shouting for help, and one of the men tried to choke her to keep her from screaming. She begged them in a gentle, low voice not to harm her husband. One man held her tightly so she could not move, and another went out and brought in some rope. While she continued pleading with them not to harm her husband, they tied her securely from head to toe and paid no attention to her request. Then they took her into the corridor, placed her near the wall, and brought a heavy wooden door from the corner of the house and put it on top of her. She still did not know what their intentions were. Soon, however, when they put some dry wood on top of the door and brought a kerosene lamp and poured its contents all over the wood and onto her clothes, she was horrified to realize they planned to burn her alive!'

Later she related that her assailants then abandoned her. The flames reached the ropes which were made of nylon and the intense heat melted them, enabling her to free herself, even though half of her body was burnt. She found her husband's overcoat, wrapped herself in it, and ran to her neighbours for assistance.

'When her neighbours opened the door, they were horrified to see her with her charred hands burned to the bone, and their children started to cry. She told them everything that had happened, and asked them to go to help

her husband. The man in the household did not have the courage to leave the house, and was thinking of what he could do. After much pleading from her he went on the roof to see if he could see what was happening in the vicinity of the stable where she said her husband had gone. Although the moon was full, he said he could not detect anything untoward occurring.

'She could wait no longer, so she borrowed a hurricane lantern from them, carried it in her burned hands, and rushed out to look for her husband. After searching for a while, she saw a form in a ditch, ran to it, and found to her horror it was her husband. He had been burned to death.

'One of the eyewitnesses that night told a member of the family that when everyone was looking at the crime from a distance, one of the bystanders, who was thought to be the leader of the murderous gang, was fearfully surprised when he saw Shikkar-Nisá', who was supposed to be ashes by then, standing alive near the ditch. He was afraid she might recognize him and the others and said he would go and find out what had happened. He was the only one who rushed to the burning ditch, and it is thought that he hit the skull of that helpless woman, because after he went to her she lost her power of speech.

'The man returned to where the bystanders stood—men, women and children—and all of them returned to their homes. None came forward to help this half-burned woman and offer her refuge. None went to inform her son-in-law who lived in the neighbouring village of Zírk, only one half-mile away. In the middle of the night this wronged soul, with her burning heart and body, left the charred remains of her husband in a ditch in the bitter cold of the desert, and returned home and locked herself alone in the house.'

Tragically, Mrs. Ma'súmí had to wait many hours, unattended, before her son-in-law was informed of her ordeal. When he discovered her she was speechless. By the time she reached hospital she was in a coma, and she finally died six days afterwards. Her assailants were not detained.

Mr. 'Askar Muḥammadí lived in Rahímkhání, a Kurdish village in Kirmán province. He had moved there from Tabríz, some years ago, with his two brothers.

'On 2 April 1982, Mr. Muḥammadí returned from his brother's house to find a number of armed guards at his door. Having searched his home and found nothing, they enquired whether he had any armaments in the house. He answered that he was a Bahá'í, and therefore forbidden on account of his religion to carry arms. When they learned he was a Bahá'í, the guards ordered Mr. Muḥammadí downstairs and, as he turned to go, shot him in the back. After throwing his body in the yard they helped themselves to spoils from his house. As they were leaving they met 'Abbás Muḥammadí, and asked for his brother's identity card which they knew he possessed. Seeing 'Askar Muḥammadí's picture they were able to identify him as the man they had just shot. 'Abbás asked them what crime his brother had committed that warranted his death, and was told: "He was a Bahá'í, and to kill a Bahá'í is a good deed for devout Muslims." Mr. Muḥammadí left three sons of whom the eldest was thirteen.'

Professor Manúchihr Ḥakím, the renowned gastro-enterologist and Professor of Anatomy at Ṭihrán University, Fáculty of Medicine, had a clinic in Ṭihrán, and had served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán. Several days before his death he received phone calls threatening his life, as well as a visit from revolutionaries demanding a list of names of Bahá'í doctors, which he refused to give.

'On 12 January 1981, Professor Ḥakím was working in his surgery in a wing of his residence. It was evening and he was alone, waiting for a patient who had made the last appointment of the day, but had not yet appeared. He told his receptionist she could leave, he would wait a while longer for his patient. The housekeeper was away doing the shopping. The door of the surgery was unbolted.

'When the housekeeper returned, she at once sensed that something was amiss: contrary to the usual practice, the door of the receptionist's room was open but the room was unoccupied. Proceeding to the surgery she found the Professor in a half-sitting posture in a corner. There was a bullet wound in his head. On the floor were some banknotes and his gold watch; a streak of blood to the door indicated that Professor Ḥakím had not

even in his last moments departed from his customary act of courtesy of seeing his patient out.

'Following a police investigation, their report concluded that the motive of the murder was not robbery or political vengeance; the only other possible motive was that of religion; it appeared that the murderers must have had a violent antipathy to the religious persuasion of the deceased.

'The newspapers, aware for the most part that Professor Ḥakím had been murdered because he was a Bahá'í, were with one exception—Mízán of Tihrán, No. 104, which carried a brief notice—afraid to report his death. However, a magazine—*Ṭib va Dárú*, No. 62, 4 February 1981—subsequently published an article by Dr. Shukru'lláh Asadízádih, noting the Professor's achievements.

'Shortly after this tragedy, the residence of Professor Ḥakím and its entire contents were confiscated by order of a Komiteh of Ṭihrán. Professor Ḥakím had married a Frenchwoman, and had two grown-up children.' (See *Les Baha'is ou victoire sur la violence*, by Christine Samandarí-Hakím, Lausanne: Editions Pierre Marcel Favre, written shortly after her father's death.)

The Path to Martyrdom

The following accounts of the arrests, imprisonments, trials and executions of individuals and groups of Bahá'ís, for the most part, come from first-hand witnesses or those closely associated with them.

Mr. Yúsif Subḥání was one of the first Bahá'ís to be judicially executed for his beliefs. A well-known businessman, he was imprisoned in March 1979, and died on 27 June 1980, in Ṭihrán. The following account is from a Bahá'í who had visited Mr. Subḥání before his death.

'I was sitting in such a way that I could see the courtyard of the prison through the shutters. I saw Mr. Subḥání, as had always been his habit, walking very erect and taking long and quick strides, and the few guardsmen who were with him had difficulty keeping pace with him. He arrived in the hall with eighteen guards and prison staff members. The atmosphere was charged with spirituality, heroism and courage. He embraced everyone in our group with warmth and happiness. Raising his right hand, the first thing he said, addressing both his relatives and the prison staff in a strong and unshaking voice, was "Let it be known to you and to all the friends who are not here that I am being killed because of my belief in Bahá'u'lláh. This is the source of my honour, my ultimate wish. I also said this at my trial in the Revolutionary Court. During the court proceedings two people gave false testimony in my case and God will soon punish them for what they have done."

'One of the guards who had led the group told Mr. Subḥání, "We have not yet heard anything and have not received any order [for execution]." Mr. Subḥání replied, "I am quite sure of my fate. For the past four days my heart has told me what is in store for me. I am willingly waiting for that moment. When they told me in prison that my cell had been changed, I knew what it meant, and I happily announced to my fellow prisoners that I was going to be killed; so I bade them all farewell."

'All of us had chairs to sit on in that big hall. Mr. Subḥání was radiating happiness and when we saw him in this elated state we were ashamed of ourselves because before coming to see him we had been preparing ourselves to console and encourage him! In fact, his courage gave us strength and removed our fears. He was constantly smiling and joking with the members of his family, and told his wife: "Never weep for me or show your grief because that will disturb my soul." He advised that after his death no family members should wear black, and since his wife had on a colourful dress, he told her to wear it to his funeral. He added, "If you knew how happy I am, you would rejoice. During the past few days, it is as if I have had a direct connection with Bahá'u'lláh, and I am counting every second for the end of my life to come. Had it not been against the wish of God, I would have made a will calling on you to observe the occasion of my death with a big feast instead of a memorial service. If these gentlemen [pointing at the guards] would allow me, I would dance to the gallows and distribute sweets to them." The guards and staff members were highly moved and all except one left the hall with bowed heads. Some of them were heard murmuring to each other, "It is a

pity that such a man has to be killed", and others said, "Praised be this man."

'Among the relatives present was the son of Mr. Ghúlám Ḥusayn A'ẓamí, who had been killed thirty-five days before. Mr. Subḥání told him, "You should be proud of your father because he had the same spirit as I have today." The boy, who had been very sad, was transformed, and the next day removed his black suit and said that Mr. Subḥání had given him assurance. He has since become even more firm in the Faith.

'Mr. Subḥání asked the brother of Mr. A'ẓamí if he still exercised and continued his track activities because "those who wish to give body and soul to Bahá'u'lláh should be healthy and strong like me." Then he said some kind words to one of the guards who was in command of the firing squad, and asked him to convey his greetings to Mr. Kachú'í, the chief of his prison ward. Then he jokingly told the man, "Do you see how strong my chest and muscles are? Tell your men to shoot very hard because I don't think the regular bullets will cause any pain to this strong body of mine; and tell them that this chest is full of the love of Bahá'u'lláh, and ask if they would allow me, myself, to give the command to fire." The man answered, "Whatever you say." This man, called Ḥáj-Áqá by Mr. Subḥání, was greatly ashamed and very moved for a few moments, and he left the hall, saying to one of the Bahá'ís, "What a man!"

'Our meeting with Mr. Subḥání lasted for forty-five minutes, and in an atmosphere of enthusiasm, joy and heroism. Mr. Subḥání said that if such things did not happen, the Cause of God would not progress. Then, addressing his family, he admonished them to avoid having any sense of revenge against those who had given false testimony at his trial, as he had left them to God, who would surely punish the wrongdoers.

'During the last minutes of our meeting with him he asked us to inform the Universal House of Justice how joyful he was at the time of his martyrdom, so that the Supreme Body would be happy.

'With great respect one of the guardsmen said that the time of the visit was over. Mr. Subḥání embraced his family and relatives and later embraced all of the guardsmen who were waiting, kissed them, and told them how grateful he was to them. At the end he embraced and kissed Ḥáj-Áqá Ṣálihí [commander of the firing squad].

'When he shook hands and embraced me at the last moment, he jokingly said, "They are going to kill *me*! Why are *your* hands so cold? See how warm mine are?"

'On his way out of the room and from a distance he shouted to the son and brother of A'ẓamí, "Don't you have a message for your father and brother? I'm going to see him in a few hours."

'He returned to his cell with the same firm steps and erect posture. All of the guards accompanying him, as well as those stationed in the area who were having their dinner, were astonished at him.' Dr. Farámarz Samandarí and Mr. Yadu'lláh Ástání both died after three months imprisonment in Tabríz. They were accused of the standard Bahá'í 'crimes', and their executions were conducted hastily on 14 July 1980.

'At 10:00 p.m. on Sunday, 13 July 1980, the five Bahá'í prisoners in Tabríz were having their dinner when two guardsmen came in and announced that Dr. Samandarí and Mr. Ástání should collect their belongings and follow them. Dr. Samandarí asked, "What for?", and one of the guards simply replied, "You are to be executed." Dr. Samandarí protested, saying, "I have not even been tried yet." However, the guard responded, "It's none of my business."

'All the prisoners in the cell protested loudly, and the other three Bahá'ís went forward and said they should also be executed as they all had one and the same "crime"—they were Bahá'ís. The guards said, "Your turn has not yet come."

'The two condemned men were taken out of the cell and then hurriedly wrote their wills. At 11:00 p.m. the other prisoners heard gunshots and knew their two friends had been executed.'

Yazd—September 1980

On 2 September 1980 fifteen Bahá'ís were put on trial in Yazd, charged with misleading Muslims, belonging to the party of Zionism, and spying for the United States and Israel. The proceedings were taped. The accused prepared a statement in their defence. During the trial one of the Bahá'ís asked if the Bahá'í

Faith were being put on trial, and he received the answer: 'We are trying the leaders of the Bahá'ís.' The prisoners were not informed of the verdict, but on 8 September seven of them were taken away and shot. Each one was tied to a post, given the option of recanting and receiving a pardon, and then shot in a hail of bullets. One of the Bahá'ís refused to be blindfolded. Another, an elderly farmer in his eighties, bent with age, was unable to stand erect; an examination of his body revealed that three bullets went through his abdomen rather than his chest.

The following is a brief account by the wife of one of the martyrs:

'On the first day of July 1980, we were awakened at about 1:15 a.m. by the ringing of the doorbell. My husband immediately said they had come to take him away. Twenty Revolutionary Guards under the command of a man called Kashmírí, actually invaded our home without presenting a written summons [search warrant] from the Attorney-General. They used our telephone several times, and took all of our Bahá'í books and typewriters [English and Persian], on which letters of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Yazd had been typed. However, that night they did not touch the picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Later, the typewriters were presented at the trial as evidence of espionage. The same night they arrested six other Bahá'ís.

'We did not have any information about the prisoners for twenty-five days and they would not issue a permit for us to see them. We complained and petitioned all appropriate government and religious institutions, including Ayatollah Sadduqi, but to no avail. We even sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini, the President, and others, all of which also had no effect. After the twenty-five days passed, they allowed us to meet with the prisoners for just ten minutes.

'Two months went by and they moved the prisoners to another prison, this time keeping them in a dark underground room without any outside windows. They took the prisoners out of this dark cell once every fifteen days for ten minutes only. We did not have any more visits with them during this time.

'On 7 September 1980, they phoned us to come and meet with the prisoners, and all of the families went to see their loved ones. I noticed that my husband was very pale because of the lack of sunshine, and he had difficulty opening his eyes in the light. He said they were told of being transferred to another city and a decision about them would be made that night. With this understanding, we left the prison.

'At 7:00 a.m. the next day, somebody phoned on behalf of the Revolutionary Komiteh and told us that seven Bahá'ís had been executed for espionage.'

Another account concludes:

'One of the guards who took the seven Bahá'ís away was located and confided to a Bahá'í friend that the prisoners had been taken to Bagh-i-Khán, which is a few kilometres outside Yazd. The Bahá'ís were told they were going to be executed in a few minutes and were given a brief period to write their wills. Then each was tied to a tree. The firing was erratic and more excessive than was necessary. The guard who was telling the story said that he had been one of the security guards, and the executioners were masked so as not to be identified.'

The names of the seven are:

Mr. Núru'lláh Akhtarkhávarí
Mr. Maḥmúd Ḥasanzádih
Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Dhabíḥíyán
Mr. Firaydún Farídaní (Auxiliary Board member)
Mr. 'Abdu'l-Vahháb Kázimí-Manshádí
Mr. 'Alí Muṭahharí
Mr. Jalál Mustaqím

Tabríz

Mr. Riḍá Fírúzí, born into the Muslim Faith in 1904, became a Bahá'í in 1927, and for years lived on in the place of his birth, the small town of Ahar, Ádhirbáyján. At age seventy-six he was detained in Tabríz where his son had already been imprisoned, and to where he journeyed at the wish of the National Spiritual Assembly, knowing he would likewise be put in jail. He was arrested in the village of Ahar before being sent on to Tabríz. There he had three trial sessions, was condemned to death without the knowledge of his family, told he was going to be transported to a prison in another town, and was eventually executed on 9 November 1980.

'At about 6:00 p.m. his son was called and told to bid farewell as he was being sent to

Ardibíl. His son reported that when he saw his father he was puzzled by the confidence and elation that had seized him. He knew it would be the last meeting with his father. Later, when the family went to the prison to visit Mr. Fírúzí, they were told he had been executed and they could collect his body from "Vádí Raḥmat". All of Mr. Fírúzí's assets were confiscated.'

Shíráz—March–April 1981

The circumstances surrounding the death of five Bahá'ís of Shíráz at this period have been described earlier. The two extracts that follow accurately convey the ambience surrounding their deaths.

'The martyrdom of the two Bahá'ís from Ábádih, in Shíráz, Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání and Mr. Mihdí Anvarí (17 March 1981), has generally created quite a stir. Until the last moment of their lives, the Revolutionary Guards tried to make them recant their faith in order to stay the execution. They even staged a mock execution, firing into the air, again demanding that the prisoners recant their faith. These tactics bore no results. Mr. Anvarí had expressed in his last will and testament the request that his family should distribute sweets among those who had executed him. The family took some money to the authorities and stated that in accordance with the will of Mr. Anvarí, they should take the money and buy and distribute sweets to those who had executed him. They specifically stated that they did not wish to know who the executioners were; this is why they brought money instead of the sweets.'

Mr. Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat, Mr. Sattár Khushkhú, and Iḥsánu'lláh Mihdízádih were executed more than a month later (30 April 1981):

'An eye-witness was present on that fateful day. He reported that when Iḥsán [Mihdízádih] was brought to the scene with his two companions, he fell on his knees before the guards, saying: "I am at your disposal. As you see, I have no means of defending myself, nor do I have the intention of doing so. It is my last wish, however, to know which one of you is to fire the bullet which would cause my death." None of the guards responded to his plea. He repeated his entreaty, and then sorely wept as he redirected his plea to them. Finally one of them said: "I." At this point Iḥsán knelt before the man who spoke, and kissed his feet, and cried out: "Praise be to God that in the last moments of my life I succeeded in carrying out an injunction of the Blessed Beauty. I am now ready and at your disposal. I do have, however, another request. Could you *not* blindfold me? Could you leave me free so that with my open eyes, as you fire, I may see my end?" Mr. Vaḥdat immediately made a similar request, saying: "It is my wish to welcome the bullets with open eyes." These events took place on Thursday, 30 April 1981, at 7:00 p.m. in Shíráz.'

Hamadán—June 1981

The summer of 1981 witnessed a cruel spate of executions of prominent figures in the Bahá'í community of Írán. Among these stands out the torture and execution of seven members of the Bahá'í Local Assembly of Hamadán, amongst whom were counted two medical doctors. Several of these Bahá'ís were detained and questioned in 1979. Drs. Vafá'í and Na'ímí were arrested and imprisoned before the others in February 1980. The friends were summoned to the Revolutionary Court on 9 August, were released and then summoned again on 12 August, when they were taken to the police prison. After three and a half months, during which time they saw nothing of their families, the six were moved to the political prison where they joined Dr. Vafá'í. Whilst they were in prison the homes of these Bahá'ís were confiscated, and their bank accounts frozen. After their deaths their families were not allowed to return to their homes. The following extracts are from accounts written by their families and friends.

'On 15 July 1979, a number of armed Revolutionary Guards entered the home of Ḥusayn Muṭlaq, searched it for several hours, then took Ḥusayn to the Army Headquarters. He was detained for nine days during which time he was asked many questions concerning his work as secretary of the local Bahá'í Assembly. Finally, the Bahá'ís managed to secure his release on bail. In December of the same year, Ḥusayn journeyed to Spain where his children were living. During the period of forty-five days he was in Spain, Ḥusayn Muṭlaq could not be prevailed upon to re-



Mourners gathered for the funeral of the martyrs Mihdí Anvarí and Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání, executed on 17 March 1981 in Shíráz.



Relatives visiting the graves of Bahá'í martyrs whose bodies were unceremoniously interred in ground set aside for the burial of 'infidels'; 1979.

main. He had a very strong feeling that his place was in Írán. During the period in prison, Ḥusayn occupied himself with art work—the calligraphy of the Greatest Name and several books of prayers. His memoir, which he wrote during the last days, comprised over three hundred pages. He also started to compose poetry, though he had never done so before.'

'During Dr. Vafá'í's trial, a witness testified against him in the following terms: "I know him. He was a doctor for SAVAK. I was taken to him and he ordered hot water to be poured over my chest." Dr. Vafá'í asked the man if he would take his shirt off so that the spot that had been burned could be seen. The man explained: "It wasn't so bad as to leave a mark." Thereupon Dr. Vafá'í laughed: "Gentlemen, he was probably given a bath and he thinks boiling water was poured over him!" '

'Dr. Na'ímí was employed by the Department of Malaria Eradication of Hamadán, first as assistant superintendent, later as superintendent . . . He acted as chairman of the Hamadán Local Spiritual Assembly. He bought an apartment, one room of which he used for an office and the others for a Bahá'í friend and his family who had been driven out of a neighbouring town. After the doctor's death, when his property had been confiscated, this family was evicted from the flat.'

'Mr. Ṭarázu'lláh Khuzayn [1917–1981] was the oldest member of the Bahá'í group. He was a humorist; at one time, when the friends objected to his snoring, he said: "Well, if you don't like it, leave the prison!" '

'Ḥusayn Khándil [1943–1981] was particularly worried for his three little children during the time he was in prison. When the prisoners were taken to the general prison his children came to visit their father twice a week. He told his father (Yadu'lláh) not to make efforts for his release, since in any eventuality the end was death, and he believed he was destined to be martyred for his faith. During the last days he made a poster of the Greatest Name for his sister-in-law.'

'The saddest part of the story was, unfortunately, its ending. When the bodies of the executed Bahá'ís were washed for burial, the marks of torture were discovered. The ribs of Tarázu'lláh Khuzayn were crushed, and his hands were slashed. His legs and thighs had been pierced with a bayonet, and the injuries had turned his skin black and the tissues were swollen. [He was sixty-four when he died.] Suhráb Ḥabíbí's back had been branded with a hot ring—his own—and he had severe burns. The fingers of Ḥusayn Khándil were slashed and his abdomen had been cut open. Dr. Na'ímí's back had been broken and Dr. Vafá'í's thighs had been cut open; Suhayl Ḥabíbí's shoulders had been broken and smashed. Ḥusayn Muṭlaq had not been tortured but his body showed the greatest number of bullet wounds.' (They were executed on 13 June 1981.)

Ṭihrán—June 1981

On 23 June 1981 the following Bahá'ís were executed in Ṭihrán: Mr. Buzurg 'Alavíyán, Mr. Háshim Farnúsh and Mr. Farhang Mavaddat. Buzurg 'Alavíyán was a businessman in his mid-sixties who had served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán. He managed to leave an extensive account of his imprisonment and interrogation which is, however, too long to extract. Háshim Farnúsh was a distinguished teacher of the Bahá'í Faith, and had served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Karaj. Farhang Mavaddat was fifty-six years old, and the father of three adult children. He was described as a 'quiet man, the very image of a Bahá'í'. Like Mr. Farnúsh, he served on the Local Assembly in Karaj.

On 24 June four prominent Bahá'ís died in front of firing squads in Ṭihrán. They were: Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí, a physician and member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, who had a distinguished career in the service of the Bahá'í Faith for which he had spent periods in 'Iráq and Turkey, and who had served on the National Spiritual Assemblies of both Írán and 'Iráq; Mr. Badí'u'lláh Faríd, whose services in the field of Bahá'í literature were particularly noteworthy; Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí, and Mr. Varqá Tibyáníyán.

Mashhad—July 1981

Mr. Kamálu'd-Dín Bakhtávar, a writer, scholar and teacher of the Bahá'í Faith, was executed in Mashhad on 26 July; alongside him was Mr. Ni'matulláh Kátibpúr-Shahídí, sixty-seven years old, and a representative of the Umaná' company in Mashhad. A public address system was arranged outside the

courtroom during their trial, and the two prisoners made statements concerning their Faith which were thus relayed to the crowd.

Tabríz—July 1981

Seven members of the Local Spiritual Assembly, together with an Auxiliary Board member and another Bahá'í, died in Tabríz on 30 July. They were: Mr. Manúchihr Khádí'í, a fifty-five-year-old engineer, survived by a wife and two sons; Dr. Ismá'íl Zihtáb, a dentist in his mid-fifties, survived by a wife, two sons and two daughters; Dr. Masrúr Dakhílí, around fifty, with a wife, two daughters and one son; Mr. Ḥusayn Asadu'lláhzádih, a draughtsman, married, aged over seventy; Mr. Mihdí Báhirí, a family man in his forties; Dr. Parvíz Fírúzí, a pharmacist of thirty-eight; Mr. Alláhvirdí Mitháqí and Mr. 'Abdu'l-'Alí Asadyárí, both teachers, married, in their fifties; and Mr. Ḥabibu'lláh Taḥqíqí, an engineer, married, also in his fifties.

Dáryún, Iṣfahán—September 1981

'As a result of the machinations of some leading clerics, a number of Bahá'ís were imprisoned in the province of Iṣfahán in the summer of 1981. Others became fugitives, and five were executed. The five were inoffensive people, farmers and trappers by occupation. They had often been the subject of persecution, but had borne it with patience and forbearance.'

(Over thirty Bahá'í villagers were at this time pressed to recant their faith by an inquisition under the direction of Shaykh Riḍau'lláh Sa'ádatí.

'Mr. 'Izzatu'lláh 'Átífí was a farmer and resident of Afús; Bahman 'Átífí was his younger brother. Gushtásb Thábit Rásikh was from Chigan, and he was a young married man with children. Mr. 'Aṭáu'lláh Rawḥání was from Farídan, and was married with seven children. Mr. Aḥmad Riḍvání was also from Farídan, and had a large family.

'They were subject to threats and inducements in turn. They were permitted to return home [from prison] with the intention of weakening their resolve by exposing them to the pleading of their families. Instead, these encouraged them to remain firm. After this they were not allowed to see their families again. On 11 September, after physical and psychological torture, the five Bahá'ís were taken from their cells at midnight, blindfolded, and told to run in the prison yard while shots were fired at their feet. Finally they were riddled with machine-gun bullets. When the son of 'Átífí was told he could collect their bodies, he was informed they had been shot while trying to escape. Their relatives were ordered to dig holes and bury the bodies without display. No burial service was allowed, and the corpses were consigned to their graves enclosed in plastic bags. The families were not even allowed to look upon the faces of their dead.'

D. LAST LETTERS, WILLS AND TESTAMENTS

Excerpts from the will and testament, and last letters, of Mr. Mihdí Anvarí, of Shíráz, while he fasted in prison, prior to his execution on 17 March 1981:

. . . The value and personality of an individual are related to his patience and steadfastness in times of adversities. Two men were looking out through the bars of their prison. One looked heavenward and exclaimed, 'What a bright sky! What glittering stars!' The other, gazing down to the earth, remarked, 'What a dusty mess.'

If one attains to the recognition of truth, he will never be tormented with worries . . .

During our imprisonment, except for brief periods when we were obliged to rest, we have filled our hours with prayers. No moment is passed without our being occupied in the remembrance of God. Outwardly, people may conclude that we are indifferent or stoical, but our hearts are out of our control. Through our devotions we have endeavoured to prepare our hearts to serve as a seat of the divine—I do not know if we are worthy to have our hearts become the recipients of His mercy; however, we desire His bounties and favours . . .

The means which change this fire [of tribulation] into a rosegarden are the rains of reliance on God and the sweet breezes of devotion. 'He doeth what He willeth . . .' The fire of love cannot be quenched by water nor extinguished by a breeze . . .

Our hands are empty but our aspirations and resolve are high. When the test comes the

resolve of people will be proven and their reliance will be manifested . . .

I ardently pray that my deeds be accepted at the Threshold of God. I have nothing to offer but sins, however. Mine was a humble life and I surrender it for the good of humanity.

May God grant us the favour of attaining His good pleasure!

Last letter of Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání of Shíráz, while he fasted in prison, before his execution on 17 March 1981:

. . . I thank God that I am able to sacrifice my life for my religion and have committed no crime. I counsel all my children and relatives to be patient and forbearing before the will of God as I, myself, bow my head before His wish and good pleasure.

I again yield thanks that I am not being killed because of any crime or transgression that would bring shame to my family. I have, in fact, attained an honour that I never imagined I would deserve to attain. It is a great bounty to be numbered among the twenty-five thousand who have drunk from the cup of martyrdom. I beg God, the Almighty, to forgive any sins I may have committed in this world and to grant me His mercy.

At this moment I sit beside Mr. Mihdí Anvarí. I do not know how many hours remain for us. May God assist you and the dear friends all over the world. Be proud; be happy!

I leave you under the protection of God . . . Believe me, I am not disturbed or sad but overwhelmed with inexpressible emotions . . .

Excerpt from letter of Auxiliary Board member Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat, of Shíráz, written from prison before his execution on 30 April 1981:

O God, Thou art aware that I have no other wish than to attain a good end. O God, grant that we may win Thy good pleasure.

With a sincere heart I seek the good pleasure of God and am prepared for martyrdom. I am free of worry and I consider martyrdom a source of honour for myself and my children. I beseech Thee, O God, by the sacred blood of the Báb, the Exalted One, to cause us to attain a good ending. I supplicate God to grant me such a degree of faith and power as not to cause my footsteps to falter in the face of tribulations, even of martyrdom, and make me fail to attain the glorious end, that greatest honour.

I call to mind the poem:

The fire of love is alive
even when Death arrives;
It is a lamp carried from
this house to the other!

I have prayed tens of times that God may grant me to drink of the wine of martyrdom and that my sacrifice may result in other friends' release and return to the warmth and comfort of their homes and families.

Yesterday I wrote to my children urging them to pray for me that I might be enabled to partake of the grace of God and offer my blood in His path.

With great patience and forbearance, with utmost faith, I express my allegiance to Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith; to the Báb. His unique Forerunner; to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Mystery of God, Exemplar and Interpreter of His Teachings; to Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of God's Cause; and to the Universal House of Justice, the infallible institution which today guides the destiny of the Faith; and to all Bahá'í institutions.

I ask my children to hold, with great love and firmness, memorial meetings for me, and to show to all, but especially the families of my fellow-prisoners, a spirit of steadfastness and forbearance.

Last letter of Mr. Sattár Khushkhú, of Shíráz, written from prison before his execution on 30 April 1981:

. . . Have no doubt about my courage and spiritual fortitude. I have passed the days of my life with honour, engaged in worthy efforts. I have tried always to be of help to the weak. Now I do not wish people to have pity for me. I only beg prayers from my relatives and friends—as I repeatedly begged when they visited me in prison—that I shall have a good end.

Even in the presence of the religious judge I never uttered a word indicating my weakness. Although I faced the cruellest insults and gravest charges our imprisonment has not been for our personal deeds. Perhaps it is for the good of the Cause of God that at this point in time a few should be imprisoned and some

even attain to the high rank of martyrs, for the liberation of the Bahá'í community from the claws of the enemies requires sacrifice on the part of a few of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. Therefore, should it be decreed that this humble creature be as a mere point in the great circle of the Cause it would be the greatest honour for him and his family. I am not sad, therefore, but happy and proud. Even if it should be decreed that I be released from this prison I rejoice that in my captivity I have become a new creation. It would then be my hope to serve the Cause with greater devotion and find another outlet through which I might sacrifice. I believe in the decrees of God and know that no leaf stirs but through His will.

In this 'palace' that my fellow Bahá'ís and I now occupy, I am not sad; rather, I am happier than ever before in all the years of my life. My family should know that we have been granted an honour; the world and all its wealth cannot bestow an equivalent joy. It is but the grace of God that one as weak and unworthy as I should have been granted such unending honour, the gift of spiritual and eternal life.

I ask that you remember me during your devotions so that I may be enabled to remain steadfast to my last breath and fulfil the vows I have made to my Beloved. In this way I can be a source of pride to my family.

Last letter of Mr. Suhráb (Muḥammad-Báqir) Ḥabíbí, of Hamadán, written from prison before his execution on 14 June 1981.

My dear and affectionate Parvín, my dear children, apples of my eye,

It is five minutes to 11 p.m. on 23/3/1360 [13 June 1981]. We have been summoned by the revolutionary court and called to the field of martyrdom. My wish is that you may share the tranquillity of conscience and confidence of heart that I feel in these last moments before my physical separation from you. It is stated in our Sacred Writings that we Bahá'ís should always observe calmness, dignity and moderation.

At this hour I express my recognition of the station of the Exalted Lord [the Báb] and of the Ancient Beauty as Manifestations of God; of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of God's Covenant; of the Guardian of the Cause of God as the interpreter of the Teachings; and of the station of the Universal House of Justice.

Farewell, farewell to all of you. I wish you all success.

You, dear Ilhám, and Ru'yá, are very fortunate girls to have a mother like mama who is not only your mother but your friend and confidant. I have not much to tell you now. All that I might wish to tell you is already recorded in the Sacred Words of God. Remember me in your devotions; I shall feel close to you in spirit. Always try to serve under the Bahá'í administration.

As for worldly belongings, I have only an uncompleted house and some unpaid debts. You are welcome to dispose of the house or use it in any way you deem fit.

My dear Parvín, take good care of the children. My children, take good care of mama. May your father be sacrificed for you. I hope that you will not cry and mourn for this is against the wish of God.

Before I finish, I remind you again that whenever you feel moved to converse with me, read the Words of God. Whatever is in the true essence of my heart is recorded in the Books and Tablets.

I have [made] two bracelets which are in the pocket of my short-sleeved shirt in prison. There is a ring in the pocket of the jacket which I am wearing.

My dear wife Parvín, I wish you happiness and success during your life. The will of God is that we should be physically separated, but spiritually we are always together. Do not grieve and have no sorrow because of what has happened to me. Be steadfast like a high mountain. My dearest children, Ilhám and Ru'yá, will be under your care.

Ask forgiveness from all my friends and family.

Your affectionate husband,

Suhráb

Last letter of Mr. Ṭarázu'lláh Khuzayn, of Hamadán, written from prison before his execution on 14 June 1981.

9th Núr 138 B.E.
23.3.1360

My dear Shamsí; my loving Mother and Brother,

It is now 11 p.m. We have been transferred

from the prison to the court premises. They are about to execute all seven of us. Praised be God, we are all in the utmost submission to His will and are most content! God willing, we shall have a good ending. I hereby bid farewell to you dear ones and to other members of the family.

I have finished the two tapestries.[1] On these I have woven my name, the prison of Hamadán and the date, 138 Bahá'í Era. They are among my personal effects. Please take them from the prison.

I have 430 tumáns in cash, a watch, my clothing, and a copy of the charge sheet and of my defence. The rest of my belongings are in the sack. My shaving equipment is by the sack and the blanket is near the bedding. Collect all of them.

I have previously written my will and testament. Please follow what is written in it.

I am grateful to the believers for the trouble they have taken on my behalf and beg forgiveness from them all. Kindly express my thanks to all who have come to visit us in prison.

I beseech your prayers. I hope that our insignificant blood will water the blessed tree of the Cause of God, that the Faith will soon gain its independence and the Bahá'ís of Iran their freedom, and that future generations will be able to serve the Cause with the greatest comfort.

I had started this evening to make a bracelet for my dear Faríbá and intended to weave her initials, F.M., into the design. Unfortunately I had no time to finish it; it was left behind when we were transferred here. I wish I had time to weave bracelets for Faríbá and Anítá, but this was not to be. Tell Túrán Khánum to kiss my brother, Qudrat, for me. The money entrusted to Túrán Khánum by Mr. Nuṣrat'u'lláh may be spent in my memorial meetings in Ṭihrán and Hamadán.

Yours devotedly,

Ṭarázu'lláh Khuzayn

Last letter of Mr. Suhayl Muḥammad-Báqir Ḥabíbí, of Hamadán, written from prison before his execution on 14 June 1981. He opens with Bahá'í prayers.

He is God!

O my God! May my life be sacrificed for Thy lovers! Make the blood of this despondent one to be shed in the way of those who are Thy friends and cause this withered body to become dust on the path trodden by Thy loved ones, O Thou Who art my God!

('Abdu'l-Bahá)

O God, my God! I testify to Thy oneness and Thy singleness. I beg of Thee, O Thou Possessor of Names and Fashioner of the Heavens, by the influence of Thine exalted Word and the potency of Thy Supreme Pen, to aid me with the standards of Thy power and might, and to protect me from the mischief of Thine enemies who have broken Thy Covenant and Testament.

(Bahá'u'lláh)

I bear witness, O my God, that Thou hast created me to know Thee and to worship Thee. I testify, at this moment, to my powerlessness and to Thy might, to my poverty and to Thy wealth.

There is none other God but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

(Bahá'u'lláh)

O my relatives! Place your trust in God. Fix your gaze at all times on His bestowals. This is my last exhortation to you. I have reached the fulfilment of my wish.

11:00 p.m.
Sunday 23.3.60
before my martyrdom,

Muḥammad-Báqir Ḥabíbí

Last letter of Mr. Ḥusayn Muṭlaq Árání, of Hamadán, written from prison before his execution on 14 June 1981:

My dear Báhirih, Payám and Parísá, and my beautiful Nází,

There is an end to every life. How wonderful it is when the end is accompanied by honour, truth and faith! In my last moments of life I beseech the Blessed Beauty to grant you hearts full of faith, love and kindness toward all people. I rejoice that my life has had a happy ending.

My love to all my relatives. Convey my sincere love, with great humility, to all, especially my Aunt and her family, and to the Grandfather.

Báhirih, my dear wife, my only regret is

[1] It should be noted that during their year-long imprisonment the Bahá'í prisoners in Hamadán occupied themselves by weaving tapestries.

that you alone, after my departure, will carry the heavy burden in life.

I pray even for those who have judged and wronged me. I hope that the truth of my case will be clarified to all people.

My dear Parísá, it is your birthday and I have prayed for you. In fact, I pray for all. Tonight I have had the most glorious prayers of my life.

I bid farewell to my brothers and sisters, and to my mother from whom I seek forgiveness. With my kisses.

Thank you for your love and kindness.

Ḥusayn Muṭlaq Árání
10:45 p.m. 23.3.60

Last will and testament of Mr. Farhang Mavaddat of Ṭihrán, written in Evin prison, before his execution on 23 June 1981:

1st Tír 1360

This is the will and testament of me, Farhang Mavaddat, written in Evin prison.

I offer my thanks and praise to God the Almighty and tender my complete recognition of the truth of all the Manifestations of God.

I exhort my dear children to rely upon the will of God and to be steadfast in their study of the Bahá'í Writings. They should also pray for their father. I earnestly request my dear Mihrí, who has always been a peerless wife to me to continue to care for my children and to be content with the will of God.

Should any property remain in my ownership it must be divided equally among my children. My body must be buried in the Eternal Rosegarden [Bahá'í cemetery] in accordance with the Bahá'í burial laws.

I request my friends to pray for me. If I have committed any wrong or have been disrespectful to any one, I hereby beg forgiveness.

My dear family should remember that a verse from a poem is quoted in one of the writings of the beloved Guardian, which offers comfort:

Glad tidings, glad tidings to the lovers
That the time of separation shall pass,
The time of Oneness shall come
And the Lord Himself shall rule.

Greetings to my dear father. I hope he is pleased with me.

Farídih, my dear sister, and her loving children, are always remembered by me.

Kisses to my dear ones—my children Payám, Nází and Naghmih—and to my dear wife, Mihrí. Preserve your bonds of unity and love.

At this moment my whole being is infused with a sense of honour; God grant that you also feel proud of your father.

I am sorry if my handwriting is not good; it is because I do not have my glasses with me.

It is my wish that my children will not wear mourning; rather, they should chant the Tablet of Visitation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on my behalf.

In this glorious journey I am in the company of Háshim Farnúsh and Buzurg 'Alavíyán.

My dearest Mihrí, are you well pleased with me?

(signed)
Farhang Mavaddat

Last letter of Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí, of Ṭihrán, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Asia, written from prison before his execution on 24 June 1981:

date: 60/4/3

My dear Wife,

At this last moment of my transitory life, when I am on my way to the realm of eternity, I bid you farewell. I beg you to accept, with great patience and forbearance, what God has willed. Be thankful; be patient!

During our forty-four years together I have felt nothing but tranquillity and comfort. I had no wish except companionship with you. I hope you are pleased with me and will not deny me your loving prayers. 'I have come from God and to God do I return.'

The beginning and the end of all is in the Hand of Providence; faith in God is a balm to the hearts and a cause of tranquillity of the souls and of our beings.

I am greatly relieved at this moment, content and pleased. I yield my thanks to God that He has vouchsafed to me this final overwhelming blessing. Praised be God, the Lord of all the worlds! If my hands are empty of the treasures of the world, they have always been raised in prayers and thanksgiving to

Him. And so, at this moment, my hands are raised in gratitude to my Lord.

I sent my watch through one of the guards to Ward No. 2. They are supposed to give it to you with other of my belongings. I have less than 400 tumáns in cash in my pocket. Our wedding ring and the Greatest Name were also given to the guards in order to be kept in the family.

Give my earnest greetings to all my dear ones. I am pleased with all of them. In the realm above I shall beg for all of you welfare and happiness. Friends and relatives are in my prayers at this moment. I think of them, one and all, and see them in my mind's eye. Console Ṭahírih Khánum and my other sisters. If possible, have prayers said at the graveside of my parents. God be with you.

Yours affectionately,

Masíḥ Farhangí



The House of Bahá'u'lláh in Tákur, district of Núr, Mázindarán, Írán, confiscated by the Revolutionary Government in the spring of 1979, for the purported purpose of 'protecting' the property. On 10 December 1981 the Universal House of Justice announced to the Bahá'í World that this Bahá'í Holy Place had been totally demolished and the site, with its land and gardens, offered for sale to the public by the authorities.

E. BAHÁ'ÍS KILLED IN ÍRÁN
Riḍván 1978–Riḍván 1983

He is God

O LORD my God! O Thou Helper of the feeble, Succourer of the poor and Deliverer of the helpless who turn unto Thee.

With utmost lowliness I raise my suppliant hands to Thy kingdom of beauty and fervently call upon Thee with my inner tongue, saying: O God, my God! Aid me to adore Thee; strengthen my loins to serve Thee; assist me by Thy grace in my servitude to Thee; suffer me to remain steadfast in my obedience to Thee; pour forth upon me the liberal effusions of Thy bounty, let the glances of the eye of Thy loving-kindness be directed towards me, and immerse me in the ocean of Thy forgiveness. Grant that I may be confirmed in my allegiance to Thy Faith, and bestow upon me a fuller measure of certitude and assurance, that I may wholly dispense with the world, may turn my face with entire devotion towards Thy face, be reinforced by the compelling power of proofs and testimonies, and, invested with majesty and power, may pass beyond every region of heaven and earth. Verily Thou art the Merciful, the All-Glorious, the Kind, the Compassionate.

O Lord! These are the survivors of the martyrs, that company of blessed souls. They have sustained every tribulation and displayed patience in the face of grievous injustice. They have forsaken all comfort and prosperity, have willingly submitted to dire suffering and adversity in the path of Thy love, and are still held captive in the clutches of their enemies who continually torment them with sore torment, and oppress them because they walk steadfastly in Thy straight path. There is no one to help them, no one to befriend them. Apart from the ignoble and the wicked, there is no one to associate and consort with them.

O Lord! These souls have tasted bitter agony in this earthly life and have, as a sign of their love for the shining beauty of Thy countenance and in their eagerness to attain Thy celestial kingdom, tolerated every gross indignity that the people of tyranny have inflicted upon them.

O Lord! Fill their ears with the verses of divine assistance and of a speedy victory, and deliver them from the oppression of such as wield terrible might. Withhold the hands of the wicked, and leave not these souls to be torn by the claws and teeth of fierce beasts, for they are captivated by their love for Thee, entrusted with the mysteries of Thy holiness, stand humbly at Thy door and have attained to Thine exalted precinct.

O Lord! Graciously reinforce them with a new spirit; illumine their eyes by enabling them to behold Thy wondrous evidences in the gloom of night; destine for them all good that aboundeth in Thy Kingdom of eternal mysteries; make them as brilliant stars shining over all regions, luxuriant trees laden with fruit and branches moving in the breezes of dawn.

Verily, Thou art the Bountiful, the Mighty, the Omnipotent, the Unconstrained. There is none other God but Thee, the God of love and tender mercy, the All-Glorious, the Ever-Forgiving.

'Abdu'l-Bahá



Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.

Bahá'u'lláh

No.	*Name*	*Date*	*Place*	*Method*
		1978		
1.	Mr. Aḥmad Ismá'ílí	unknown	Ahram	Killed
2.	Mr. Ḍíyá'u'lláh Ḥaqíqat	27 Aug.	Jahrum	Killed
3.	Mr. Ḥájí-Muḥammad 'Azízí	10 Oct.	Khurmúj	Beaten
4.	Mr. Ḥátam Rúzbihí	Dec.	Buyr-Aḥmad	Mobbed
5.	Mr. Ján-'Alí Rúzbihí	Dec.	Buyr-Aḥmad	Mobbed
6.	Mr. Shír-Muḥammad Dastpísh	Dec.	Buyr-Aḥmad	Mobbed
7.	Mr. Ṣifátu'lláh Fahandizh	14 Dec.	Shíráz	Mobbed
8.	Mrs. Muqaddas Fahandizh	14 Dec.	Shíráz	Mobbed
9.	Mr. Parvíz Afnání	22 Dec.	Míyán-Duáb	Mobbed
10.	Mr. Khusraw Afnání	22 Dec.	Míyán-Duáb	Mobbed
		1979		
11.	Mr. Ibráhím Ma'naví	early 1979	Ḥiṣár	Killed
12.	Mr. Ḥusayn Shakúrí	2 Apr.	Ushnavíyyih	Killed
13.	Mr. Bahár Vujdání	27 Sept.	Mahábád	Executed
14.	Mr. 'Alí Sattárzádih	28 Oct.	Búkán	Killed
15.	Mr. 'Aẓmatu'lláh Fahandizh	14 Dec.	Shíráz	Executed
		1980		
16.	Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Panáhí	4 Feb.	Urúmíyyih	Assassinated
17.	Mr. Ghulám-Ḥusayn A'ẓamí	6 May	Ṭihrán	Executed
18.	Mr. Badí'u'lláh Yazdání	6 May	Ṭihrán	Executed
19.	Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Mu'íní	6 May	Ṭihrán	Executed
20.	Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Khursandí	9 May	Ṭihrán	Hanged
21.	Mr. Parvíz Bayání	11 May	Píránshahr	Executed
22.	Mr. Mír-Asadu'lláh Mukhtárí	18 May	Andarún	Stoned
23.	Mr. Ḥasan Ismá'ílzádih	Jun.	Sanandaj	Killed
24.	Mr. Yúsuf Subḥání	27 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
25.	Dr. Farámarz Samandarí	14 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
26.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Ástání	14 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
27.	Mr. 'Alí Dádásh-Akbarí	16 Jul.	Rasht	Executed
28.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Maḥbúbíyán	30 Jul.	Ṭihrán	Executed
29.	Mr. Dhabíḥu'lláh Mu'míní	15 Aug.	Ṭihrán	Executed
30.	Mr. Núru'lláh Akhtar-Khávarí	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed
31.	Mr. Maḥmúd Ḥasanzádih	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed
32.	Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Dhabíḥíyán	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed



Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.

Bahá'u'lláh

No.	*Name*	*Date*	*Place*	*Method*
33.	Mr. Firaydún Farídání	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed
34.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-Vahháb Kázimí-Manshádí	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed
35.	Mr. Jalál Mustaqím	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed
36.	Mr. 'Alí Muṭahharí	8 Sept.	Yazd	Executed
37.	Mr. Riḍá Fírúzí	9 Nov.	Tabríz	Executed
38.	Mr. Muḥammad-Ḥusayn Ma'ṣúmí	23 Nov.	Núk, Bírjand	Burned
39.	Mrs. Shikkar-Nisá' Ma'ṣúmí	23 Nov.	Núk, Bírjand	Burned
40.	Mr. Bihrúz Saná'í	17 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
		1981		
41.	Dr. Manúchihr Ḥakím	12 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Assassinated
42.	Mr. Mihdí Anvarí	17 Mar.	Shíráz	Executed
43.	Dr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání	17 Mar.	Shíráz	Executed
44.	Mrs. Núráníyyih Yársháṭir	Apr.	Ṭihrán	Assassinated
45.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat	30 Apr.	Shíráz	Executed
46.	Mr. Sattár Khushkhú	30 Apr.	Shíráz	Executed
47.	Mr. Iḥsánu'lláh Mihdí-Zádih	30 Apr.	Shíráz	Executed
48.	Mr. Suhráb (Muḥammad) Ḥabíbí	14 Jun.	Shíráz	Executed
49.	Mr. Ḥusayn Khándil	14 Jun.	Hamadán	Executed
50.	Mr. Ṭarázu'lláh Khuzayn	14 Jun.	Hamadán	Executed
51.	Dr. Fírúz Na'ímí	14 Jun.	Hamadán	Executed
52.	Dr. Náṣir Vafá'í	14 Jun.	Hamadán	Executed
53.	Mr. Suhayl (Muḥammad-Báqir) Ḥabíbí	14 Jun.	Hamadán	Executed
54.	Mr. Ḥusayn Muṭlaq	14 Jun.	Hamadán	Executed
55.	Mr. Buzurg 'Alavíyán	23 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
56.	Mr. Háshim Farnúsh	23 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
57.	Mr. Farhang Mavaddat	23 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
58.	Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí	24 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
59.	Mr. Badí'u'lláh Farid	24 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
60.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí	24 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
61.	Mr. Varqá Tibyániyán (Tibyání)	24 Jun.	Ṭihrán	Executed
62.	Mr. Kamálu'd-Dín Bakhtávar	26 Jul.	Mashhad	Executed
63.	Mr. Ni'matu'lláh Kátibpúr-Shahídí	26 Jul.	Mashhad	Executed
64.	Mr. Alláh-Virdí Míthágí	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
65.	Mr. Manúchihr Khaḍí'í	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
66.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-'Alí Asadyárí	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
67.	Mr. Ḥusayn Asadu'lláh-Zádih	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
68.	Mr. Ismá'íl Zihtáb	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed



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Bahá'u'lláh

No.	*Name*	*Date*	*Place*	*Method*
69.	Dr. Parvíz Fírúzí	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
70.	Mr. Mihdí Báhirí	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
71.	Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Taḥqíqí	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
72.	Dr. Masrúr Dakhílí	29 Jul.	Tabríz	Executed
73.	Mr. Ḥusayn Rastigár-Námdár	5 Aug.	Ṭihrán	Executed
74.	Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh 'Azízí	29 Aug.	Ṭihrán	Executed
75.	Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Rawḥání	11 Sept.	Dáryún, Iṣfahán	Executed
76.	Mr. Aḥmad Riḍvání	11 Sept.	Dáryún, Iṣfahán	Executed
77.	Mr. Gushtásb Thábit-Rásikh	11 Sept.	Dáryún, Iṣfahán	Executed
78.	Mr. 'Izzat 'Áṭifí	11 Sept.	Dáryún, Iṣfahán	Executed
79.	Mr. Bahman 'Áṭifí	11 Sept.	Dáryún, Iṣfahán	Executed
80.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Sipihr-Arfa'	18 Nov.	Ṭihrán	Executed
81.	Mr. Kámrán Ṣamímí	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
82.	Mrs. Zhínús Maḥmúdí	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
83.	Mr. Maḥmúd Majdhúb	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
84.	Mr. Jalál 'Azízí	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
85.	Mr. Mihdí Amín Amín	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
86.	Dr. Sírús Rawshaní	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
87.	Dr. 'Izzatu'lláh Furúhí	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
88.	Mr. Qudratu'lláh Rawḥání	27 Dec.	Ṭihrán	Executed
		1982		
89.	Mr. Kúrush Ṭalá'í	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
90.	Mr. Khusraw Muhandisí	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
91.	Mr. Iskandar 'Azízí	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
92.	Mr. Fatḥu'lláh Firdawsí	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
93.	Mr. 'Aṭá'u'lláh Yávarí	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
94.	Mrs. Shívá Asadu'lláh-Zádih	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
95.	Mrs. Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá Baqá	4 Jan.	Ṭihrán	Executed
96.	Mr. Ibráhím Khayrkháh	26 Feb.	Bábul-Sar	Executed
97.	Mr. Ḥusayn Vaḥdat-i-Ḥaq	28 Feb.	Ṭihrán	Executed
98.	Mr. 'Iḥsánu'lláh Khayyámí	12 Apr.	Urúmíyyih	Executed
99.	Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Gulshaní	29 Apr.	Mashhad	Executed
100.	Mr. 'Askar Muhammadí	2 Apr.	Raḥímkhán	Assassinated
101.	Mr. Maḥmúd Farúhar	8 May	Karaj	Executed
102.	Mrs. Ishraqíyyih Farúhar	8 May	Karaj	Executed
103.	Mr. Badí'u'lláh Ḥaqpaykar	8 May	Karaj	Executed
104.	Mr. Ágáhu'lláh Tízfahm	10 May	Urúmíyyih	Executed



Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name.

Bahá'u'lláh

No.	*Name*	*Date*	*Place*	*Method*
105.	Miss Jalálíyyih Mushta'il-Uskú'í	10 May	Urúmíyyih	Executed
106.	Mrs. Írán Raḥímpúr (Khurmá'í)	12 May	Dizfúl	Executed
107.	Mr. Sa'du'lláh Bábázádih	16 May	Kháníábád	Executed
108.	Mr. Naṣru'lláh Amíní	16 May	Kháníábád	Executed
109.	Mr. Muḥammad Manṣúrí	9 Jul.	Qazvín	Executed
110.	Mr. Jadídu'lláh Ashraf	9 Jul.	Qazvín	Executed
111.	Mr. Muḥammad 'Abbásí	9 Jul.	Qazvín	Executed
112.	Mr. Manúchihr Farzánih-Mu'ayyad	9 Jul.	Qazvín	Executed
113.	Mr. Manúchihr Vafá'í	9 Jul.	Ṭihrán	Assassinated
114.	Mr. 'Abbás-'Alí Ṣádiqípúr	15 Jul.	Shíráz	Executed
115.	Mr. 'Alí Na'ímíyán	1 Aug.	Urúmíyyih	Executed
116.	Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh Awjí	16 Nov.	Shíráz	Executed
117.	Dr. Díyá'u'lláh Aḥrárí	21 Nov.	Shíráz	Executed
118.	Ḥusayn Nayyírí-Iṣfahání	29 Nov.	Iṣfahán	Died in prison
119.	Mrs. Guldánih Yúsifí 'Alípúr	24 Dec.	Sárí	Mobbed

1983

120.	Mr. Hidáyat Síyávushí	1 Jan.	Shíráz	Executed
121.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Maḥmúdnizhád	12 Mar.	Shíráz	Executed
122.	Mr. Raḥmatu'lláh Vafá'í	12 Mar.	Shíráz	Executed
123.	Mrs. Ṭúbá Zá'irpúr	12 Mar.	Shíráz	Executed
124.	Mr. Jalál Ḥakímán	1 May	Ṭihrán	Executed
125.	Mr. Suhayl Ṣafá'í	1 May	Iṣfahán	Executed

The following Bahá'ís were kidnapped and are presumed dead:
Muḥammad Muvaḥḥid (24 May 1979); Dr. 'Alímurád Dávúdí (11 November 1979); Rúḥí Rawshaní (1 March 1980); and on 21 August 1980 the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly, 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Taslímí, Húshang Maḥmúdí, Ibráhím Raḥmání, Dr. Ḥusayn Nají, Manúhir Qá'im-Maqámí, 'Aṭá'u'lláh Muqarribí, Yúsif Qadímí, Bahíyyih Nádirí and Dr. Kámbíz Ṣádiqzádih, together with two members of the Auxiliary Board, Dr. Yúsif 'Abbásíyán and Dr. Hishmatu'lláh Rawḥání.

Note: Photographs of all the martyrs did not reach the World Centre before this volume of *The Bahá'í World* went to press, but those which did appear on the following pages.



Ṣifátu'lláh Fahandizh



'Avaḍ-Gul Fahandizh



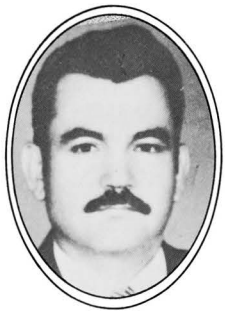
Muḥammad Muvaḥḥid



Bahár Vujdání



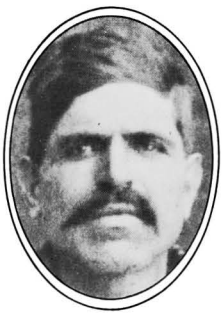
'Alímurád Dávúdí



'Aẓamatu'lláh Fahandizh



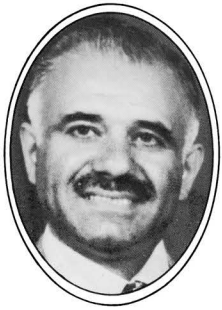
Badí'u'lláh Yazdání



Mír-Asadu'lláh Mukhtári



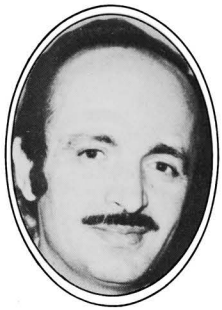
Yúsif Subḥání



Farámarz Samandarí



Yadu'lláh Ástání



Yadu'lláh Maḥbúbíyán



'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Taslímí



Húshang Maḥmúdí



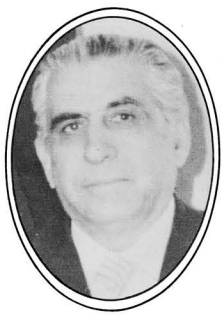
Ibráhím Raḥmání



Ḥusayn Nají



Manúhir Qá'im-Maqámí



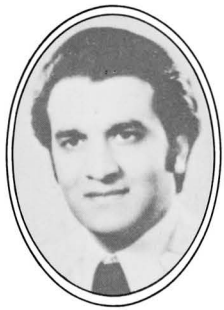
'Aṭá'u'lláh Muqarrabí



Yúsif Qadímí



Bahíyyih Nádirí



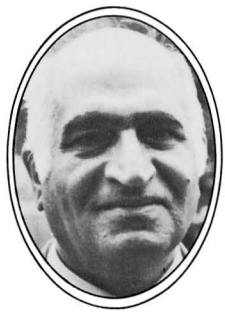
Kámbíz Ṣádiqzádih



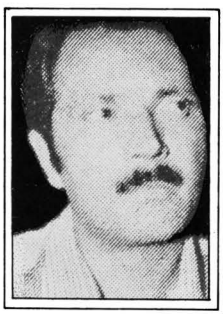
Yúsif 'Abbásíyán



Hishmatu'lláh Rawḥání



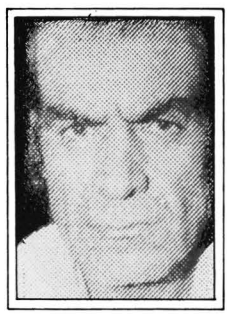
Núru'lláh Akhtar-Khávarí



Maḥmúd Ḥasanzádih



'Abdu'l-Vahháb Kázimí-Manshádí



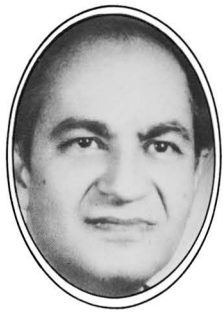
Jalál Mustaqím



'Azízu'lláh Dhabíḥíyán



'Alí Muṭahharí



Firaydún Faridání



Riḍá Fírúzí



Shikkar-Nisá' Ma'súmí



Muḥammad-Ḥusayn Ma'súmí



Bihrúz Saná'í



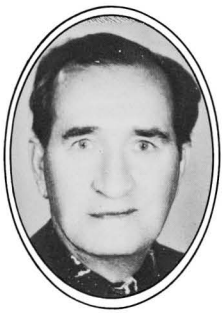
Manúchihr Ḥakím



Mihdí Anvarí



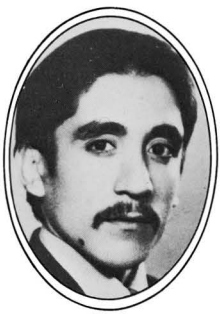
Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání



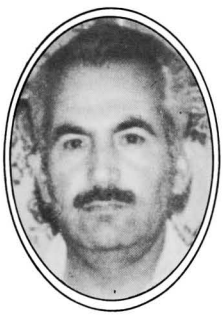
Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat



Sattár Khushkhú



Iḥsánu'lláh Mihdí-Zádih



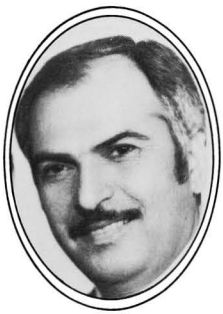
Suhráb (Muḥammad) Ḥabíbí



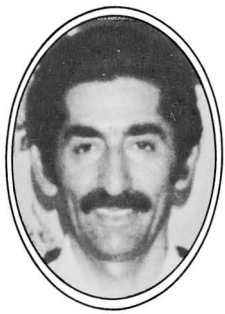
Ḥusayn Khándil



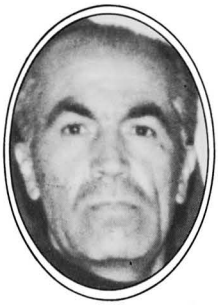
Ṭarázu'lláh Khuzavn



Fírúz Na'ímí



Náṣir Vafá'í



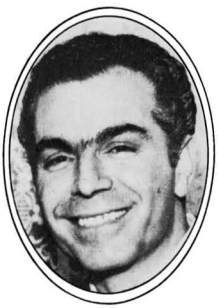
Suhayl (Muḥammad-Báqir) Ḥabíbí



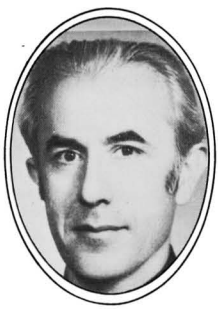
Ḥusayn Muṭlaq



Buzurg ʿAlavíyán



Háshim Farnúsh



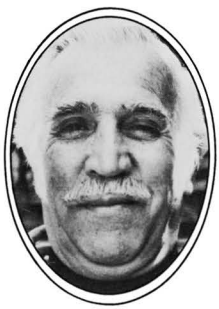
Farhang Mavaddat



Masíḥ Farhangí



Badíʿu'lláh Faríd



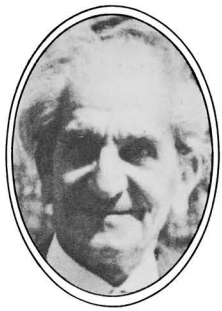
Yadu'lláh Pústchí



Varqá Tibyáníyán (Tibyání)



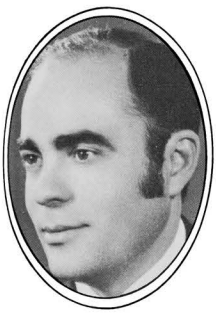
Kamálu'd-Dín Bakhtávar



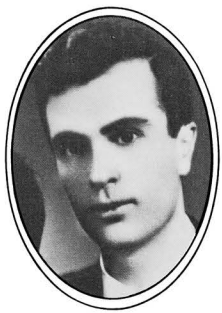
Ni'matu'lláh Kátibpúr-Shahídí



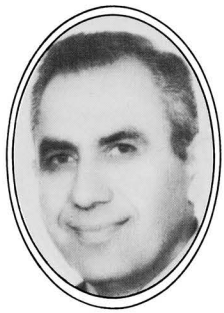
Ḥusayn Asadu'lláh-Zádih



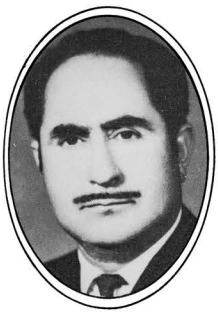
Parvíz Fírúzí



Mihdí Báhirí



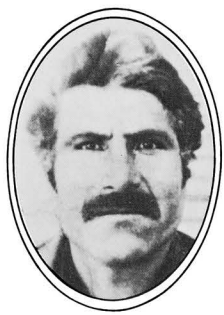
Ḥabíbu'lláh Taḥqíqí



Masrúr Dakhílí



Ḥabíbu'lláh 'Azízí



'Aṭá'u'lláh Rawḥání



Aḥmad Riḍvání



'Izzat 'Áṭifí



Bahman 'Áṭifí



Yadu'lláh Sipihr-Arfa'



Kámrán Ṣamímí



Zhínús Maḥmúdí



Maḥmúd Majdhúb



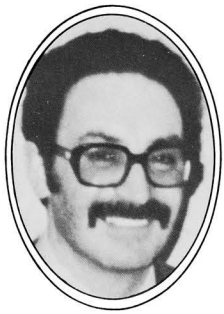
Jalál 'Azízí



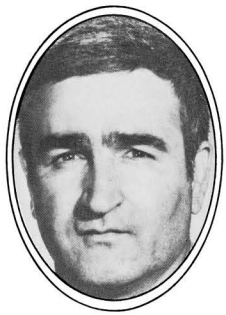
Mihdí Amín Amín



Sírís Rawshaní



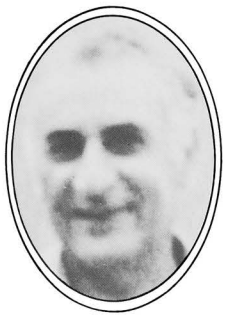
'Izzatu'lláh Furúhí



Qudratu'lláh Rawḥání



Kúrush Ṭalá'í



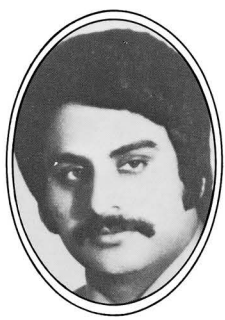
Iskandar 'Azízí



Fatḥu'lláh Firdawsí



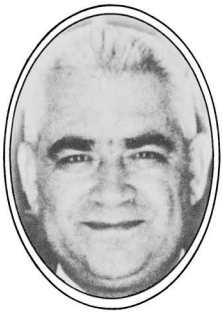
Shívá Asadu'lláh-Zádih



'Aṭá'u'lláh Yávarí



Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá Baqá



Ḥusayn Vaḥdat-i-Ḥaq



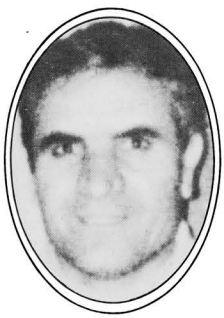
'Iḥsánu'lláh Khayyámí



Maḥmúd Farúhar



Ishraqíyyih Farúhar



Ágáhu'lláh Tízfahm



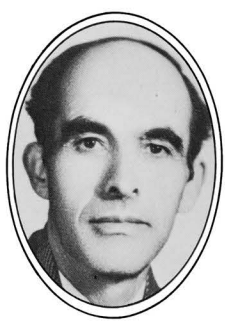
Jalálíyyih Mushta'il-Uskú'í



Sa'du'lláh Bábázádih



Írán Raḥímpúr (Khurmá'í)



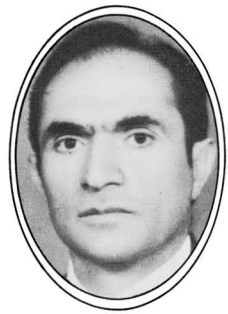
Naṣru'lláh Amíní



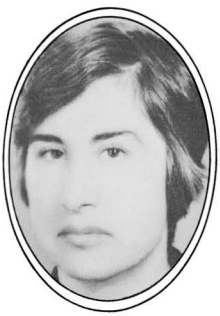
Hidáyat Síyávushí



Yadu'lláh Maḥmúdnizhád



Raḥmatu'lláh Vafá'í



Ṭúbá Zá'irpúr



Jalál Ḥakímán



Suhayl Ṣafá'í



'Alí-Akbar Khursandí

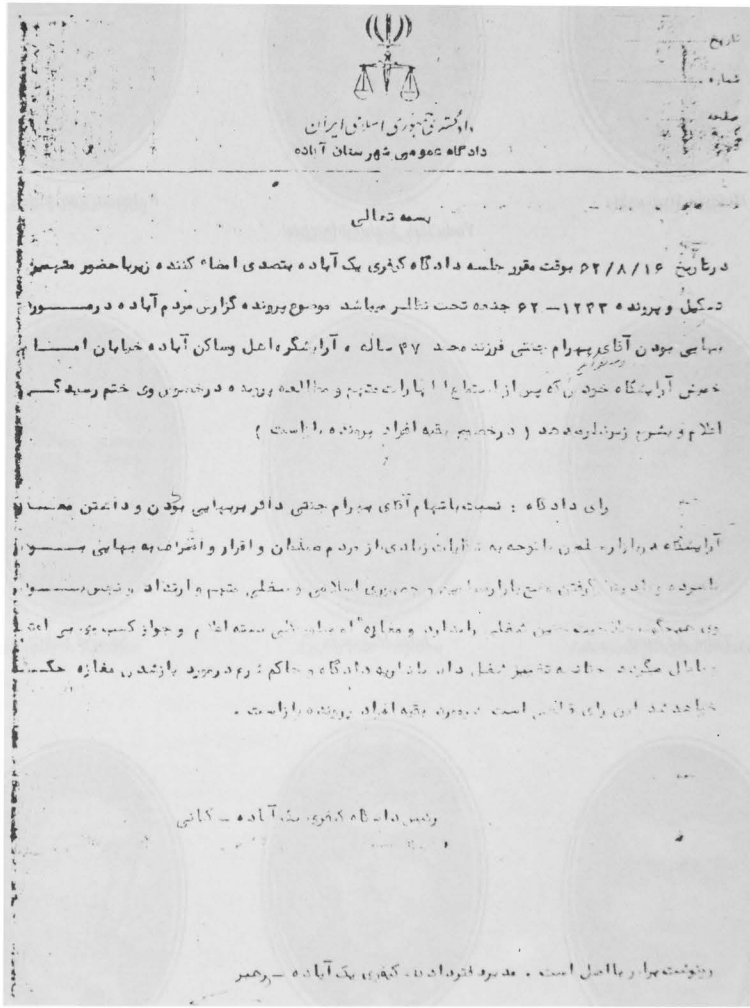


Shir-Muḥammad Dastpísh

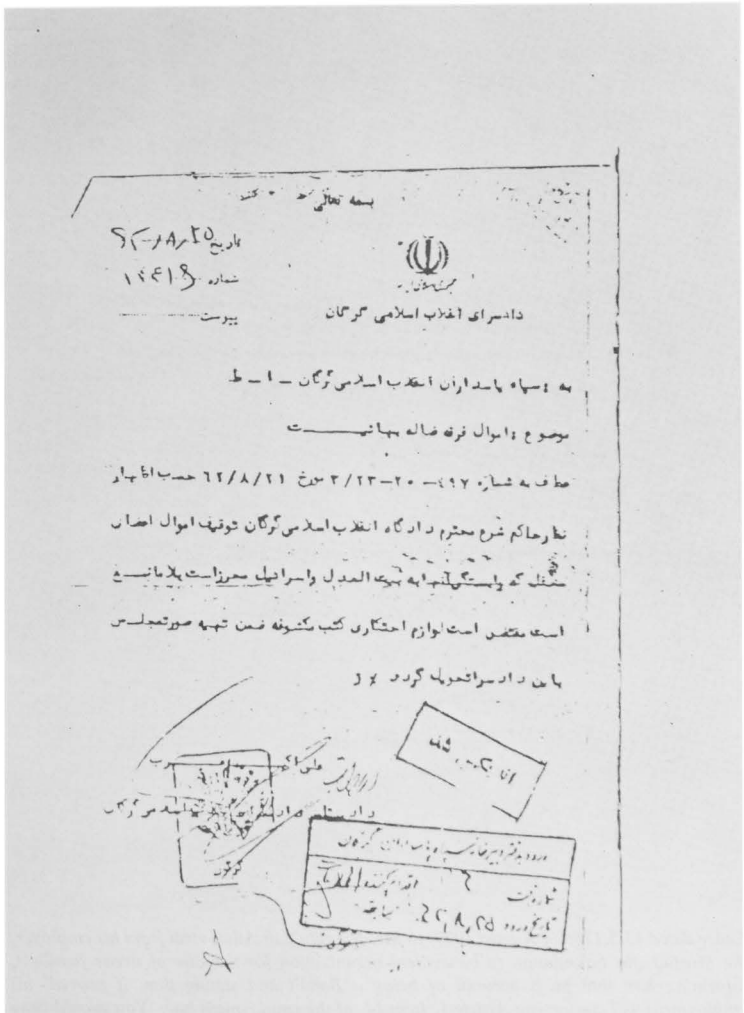


Ḥabíbu'lláh Panáhí

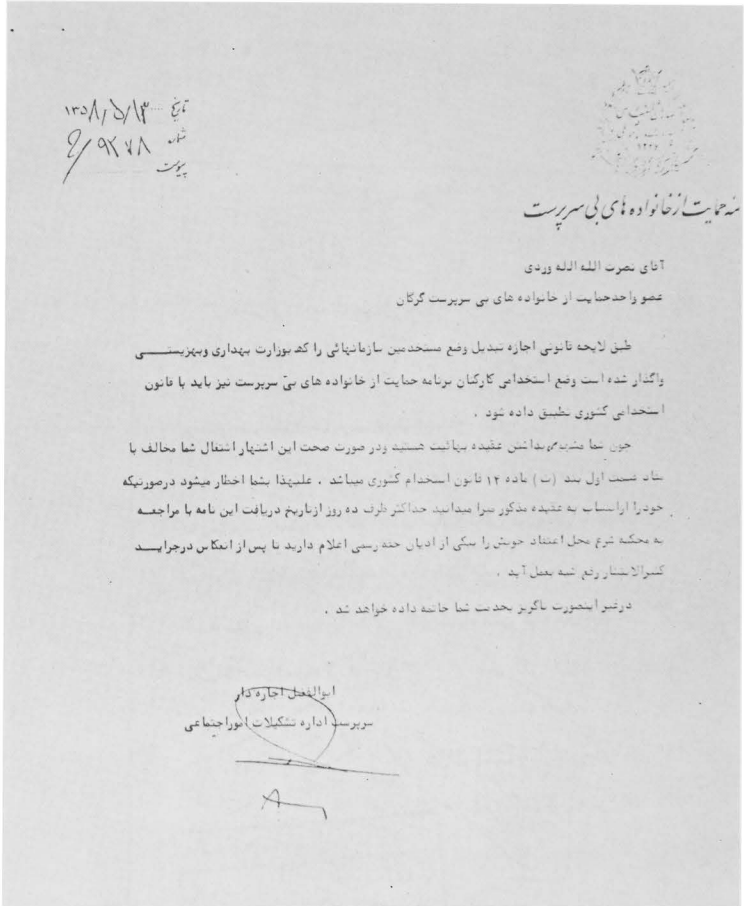
F. DOCUMENTATION OF THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF ÍRÁN 1979–1983



Letter from the General Court of the District of Ábádih conveying the court's verdict, dated 16.8.1362 (17 November 1983), that Mr. Bahrám Jannatí cannot operate his business as a barber in the bazaar alongside Muslims because, as a Bahá'í, he is an apostate and defiled, and is not allowed to operate such a business; therefore his shop should be closed and his business permit revoked.



Order dated 25.8.1362 (16 November 1983) from the Attorney-General to the local branch of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Gurgán permitting confiscation of properties of the members of the Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly in accordance with the decree of the religious judge of the Revolutionary Court.



تاریخ ۱۳۵۸/۵/۱۳
شماره ۹/۹۲۷۸
پیوست

بنیاد حمایت از خانواده های بی سرپرست

آقای نصرت الله الله ورده ی

عضو واحد حمایت از خانواده های بی سرپرست گرگان

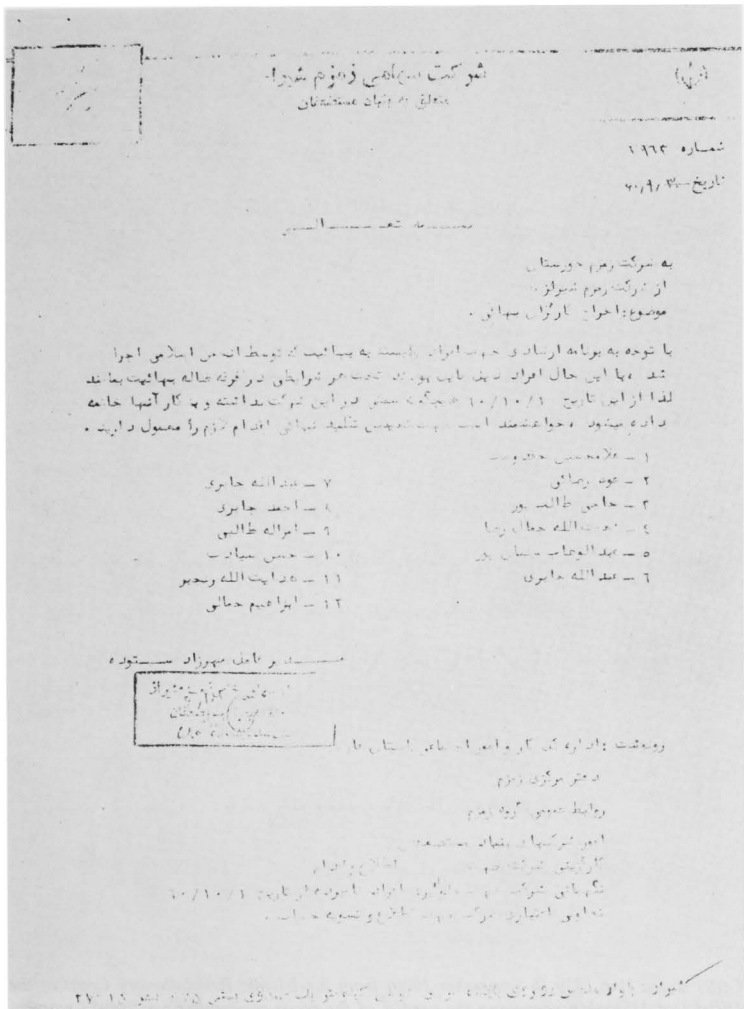
طبق لایحه قانونی اجازه تبدیل وضع مستخدمین سازمانهائی را که بوزارت بهداری وبهزیستی واگذار شده است وضع استخدامی کارکنان برنامه حمایت از خانواده های بی سرپرست نیز باید با قانون استخدامی کشوری تطبیق داده شود .

چون شما مشمول مقدمات عقیده بمالکیت شخصیه ودر صورت صحت این اشتهار اشتغال شما مخالف با ماده مسلمه اول بند (ب) ماده ۱۲ قانون استخدام کشوری میباشد . علیهذا بشما اخطار میشود درصورتیکه خودرا ازانتساب به عقیده مذکور تبرا ننمائید حداکثر ظرف ده روز ازتاریخ دریافت این نامه با مراجعه به محکمه شرع محل اعتقاد خویش را سبکی از ادیان حقه رسمی اعلام دارید تا پس از انعکاس درجرایـد کثیرالانتشار رفع شبه محل آید .

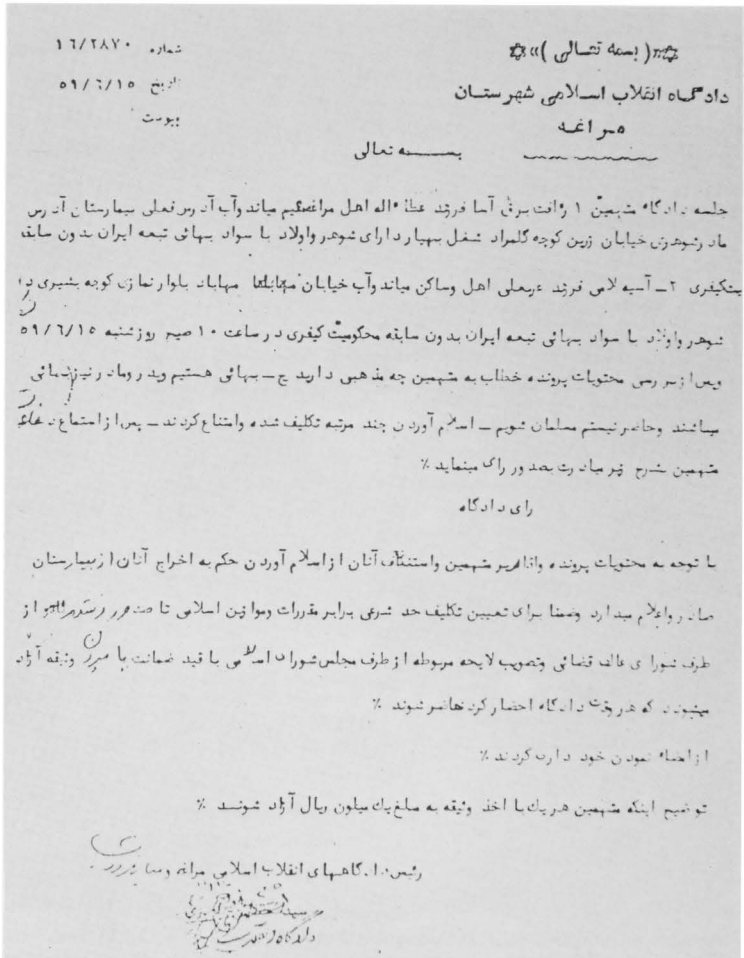
درغیر اینصورت باگوش بحدمت شما خاتمه داده خواهد شد .

ابوالفضل اجاره دار
سرپرست اداره تشکیلات انوراجتماعی

Letter dated 13.5.1358 (4 August 1979) to Mr. Nuṣratu'lláh Alláh-virdí from his employer, the Mustaḍ'afín Foundation (a benevolent organization for the care of needy families), informing him that he is accused of being a Bahá'í and stating that, if proved, his employment will contravene Article 1, Item 14, of the employment law: 'You should deny your allegiance to this faith within ten days from the date of the receipt of this letter by appearing before the religious court and pledging your allegiance to one of the recognized religions of the country and announcing your action in one of the large and widely-circulated newspapers. If you fail to do so, you will be dismissed from your job.'



Letter dated 30.9.1360 (21 December 1981) from the Government-operated Zam-Zam Company of Shíráz, addressed to the head office in Khuzistán, naming twelve Bahá'ís 'who insist that they want to continue to be members of the aberrant Bahaism; therefore they are dismissed'.



(بسمه تعالی)

شماره ۱۶/۲۸۷۰

تاریخ ۵۹/۶/۱۵

پیوست

دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی شهرستان

مراغه

بسمه تعالی

جلسه دادگاه شنبه ۱ رافت برق آسا فرزند عطا اله اهل مراغه مقیم میاند وآب آن در نعلی بیمارستان آن رس ماد رشوهرش خیابان زرین کوچه گلسرد شغل بهیار دارای شوهر واولاد با سواد بهائی تبعه ایران بدون سابقه پیشگیری ۲ ـ آسیه لامی فرزند عربعلی اهل وساکن میاند وآب خیابان مهابلغا مهابلغا باوار نمازی کوچه بشیری دا شوهر واولاد با سواد بهائی تبعه ایران بدون سابقه محکومیت کیفری در ساعت ۱۰ صبح روز شنبه ۵۹/۶/۱۵

پس از بررسی محتویات پرونده خطاب به شهمین چه مذهبی دارید ج ـ بهائی هستیم وبد رومادر نیز بهائی میباشند وخاهر نیستم مسلمان شویم ـ اسلام آوردن چند مرتبه تکلیف شده واستناع کردند ـ پس از استماع دفاعیات شهمین شرح زیر مبادرت بصدور رای مینماید ٪

رای دادگاه

با توجه به محتویات پرونده واقاریر شهمین واستنطاق آنان از اسلام آوردن حکم به اخراج آنان از بیمارستان مادر واعلام میدارد وضمنا برای تعیین تکلیف حد شرعی برابر مقررات وموازین اسلامی تا صدور رسیدگی از طرف شورای عالی قضائی وتصویب لایحه مربوطه از طرف مجلس شورای اسلامی با قید ضمانت با مبلغ وثیقه آزاد میشوند که هر وقت دادگاه احضار کند حاضر شوند ٪

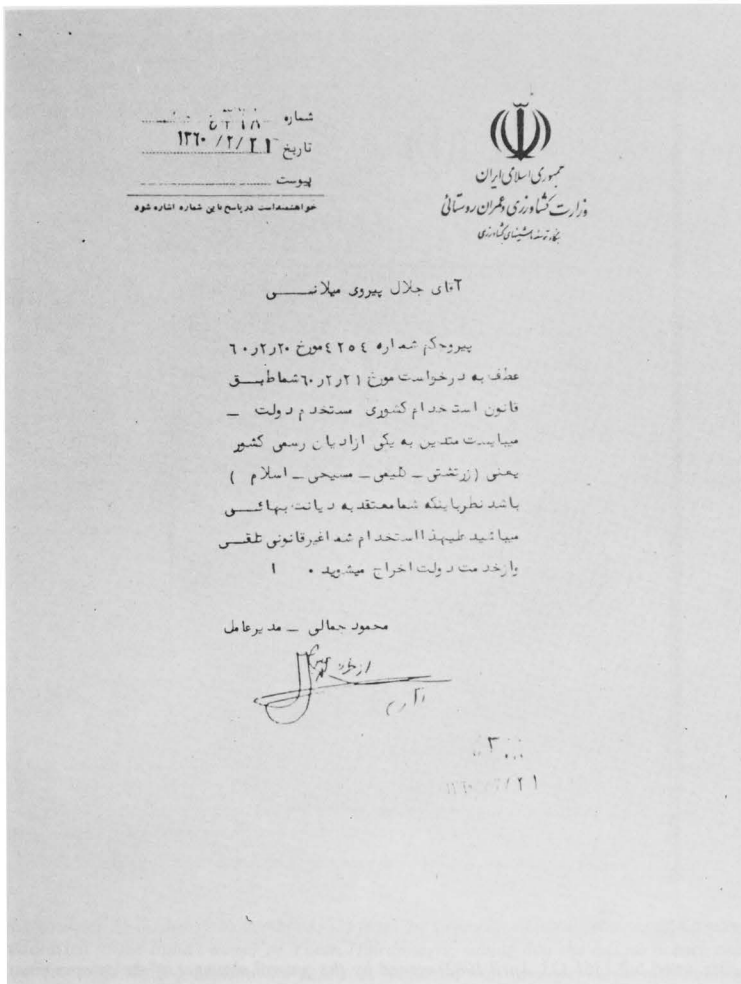
از اقامه نمودن خود داری کردند ٪

توضیح اینکه شهمین هریک با اخذ وثیقه به مبلغ یک میلون ریال آزاد شوند ٪

رئیس دادگاههای انقلاب اسلامی مراغه وسا

دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی

Letter dated 15.6.1359 (6 September 1980) from the Islamic Revolutionary Court of the District of Marághih conveying the verdict of the court concerning two Bahá'í women, Ra'fat Barqásá and Ásíyih Ghulámí, employees of the Government hospital, and stating that they should be dismissed from their jobs because they are Bahá'ís and should post a cash bond pending the decision of the higher court regarding their actual penalty. The two women refused to sign the verdict of the court and were released on bail of one million rials each.



جمهوری اسلامی ایران
وزارت کشاورزی و عمران روستائی
بنیاد توسعه و پشتیبانی کشاورزی

شماره ۶۲۱۸
تاریخ ۱۳۶۰/۲/۲۱
پیوست
خواهشمند است در پاسخ باین شماره اشاره شود

آقای جلال پیروی میلانـــی

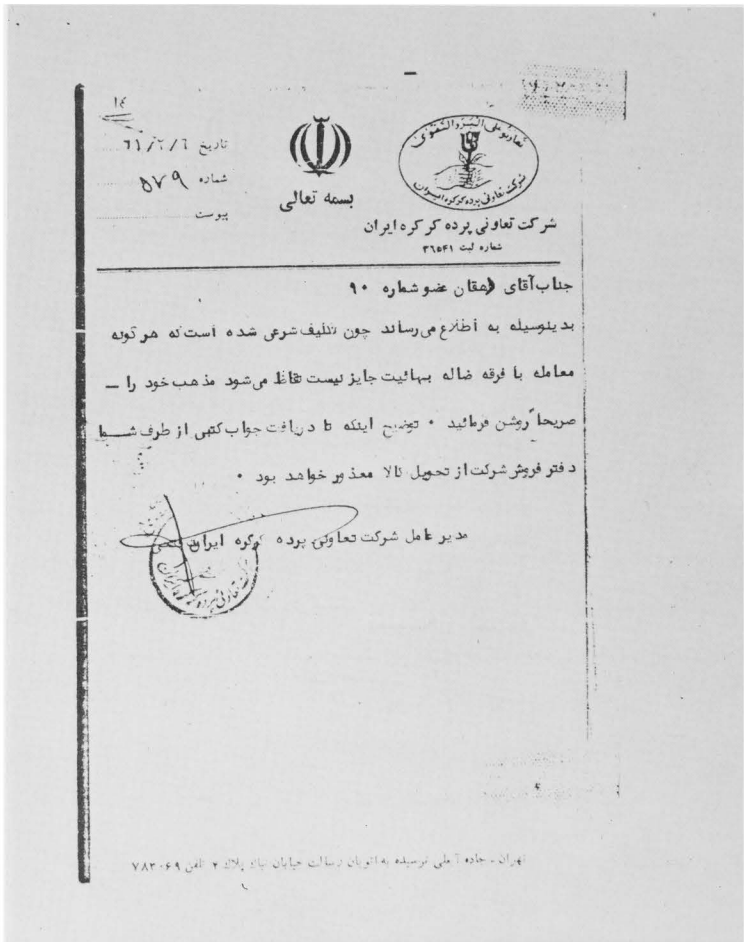
پیرو حکم شماره ۴۲۵۴ مورخ ۶۰/۲/۲۰ عطف به درخواست مورخ ۶۰/۲/۲۱ شما طبق قانون استخدام کشوری مستخدم دولت میباشید متدین به یکی از ادیان رسمی کشور یعنی (زرتشتی - کلیمی - مسیحی - اسلام) باشد نظر باینکه شما معتقد به دیانت بهائی میباشید علیهذا استخدام شما غیرقانونی تلقی وازخدمت دولت اخراج میشوید.

محمود جمالی - مدیرعامل

ارطرف

۳۰۰
۱۳۶۰/۲/۲۱

Order dated 21.2.1360 (11 April 1981) from the office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development affecting Mr. Jalál Payruví-Mílaní, stating that 'since you are a believer in the Bahá'í religion you are dismissed from the service of the Government'.



بسمه تعالی

تاریخ ۶۱/۲/۶
شماره ۵۷۹
پیوست

شرکت تعاونی پرده کرکره ایران
شماره ثبت ۳۶۵۴۱

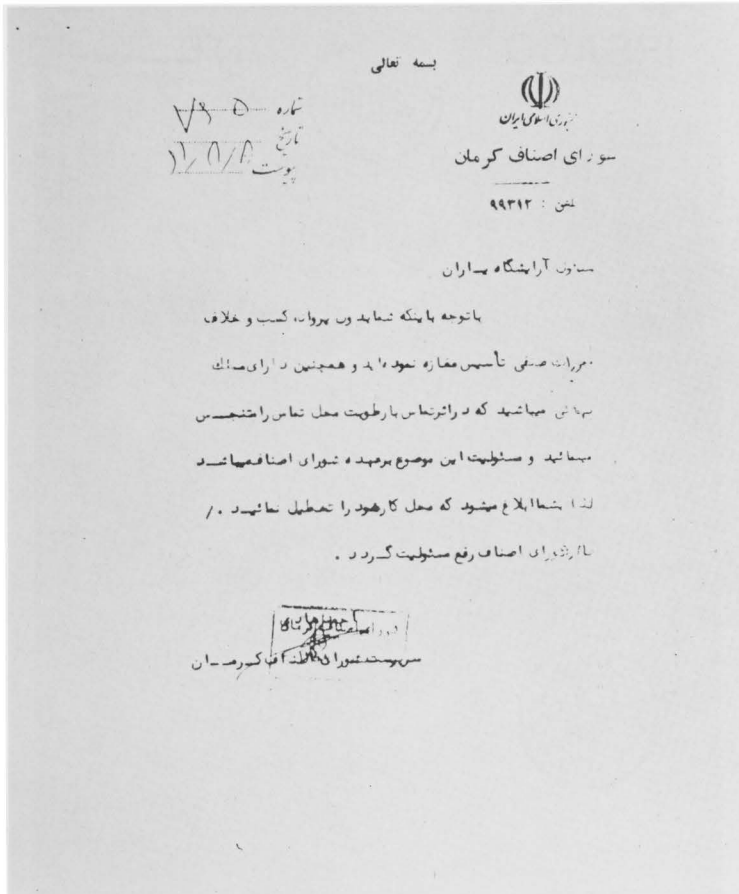
جناب آقای دهقان عضو شماره ۹۰

بدینوسیله به اطلاع می‌رساند چون تکلیف شرعی شده است که هر گونه معامله با فرقه ضاله بهائیت جایز نیست لذا مشخص می‌شود مذهب خود را صریحاً روشن فرمائید • توضیح اینکه تا دریافت جواب کتبی از طرف شما دفتر فروش شرکت از تحویل کالا معذور خواهد بود •

مدیر عامل شرکت تعاونی پرده کرکره ایران

تهران - جاده آبعلی نرسیده به اتوبان دستگرد خیابان نیاز پلاک ۲ تلفن ۷۸۳۰۶۹

Letter dated 6.2.1361 (23 April 1982) signed by the general manager of the co-operative company of window shutter manufactures, informing the recipient, Mr. Dihqán, that 'since it is a religious obligation [for Muslims] to avoid having any business transactions with members of the aberrant group of Bahaism, you are requested to clarify your religion and, pending your written reply, the sales department of the company will not be able to sell any product to you.'



بسمه تعالی

جمهوری اسلامی ایران

شورای اصناف کرمان

شماره ۷۲۵

تاریخ ۱۳۶۱/۸/۱۸

پیوست

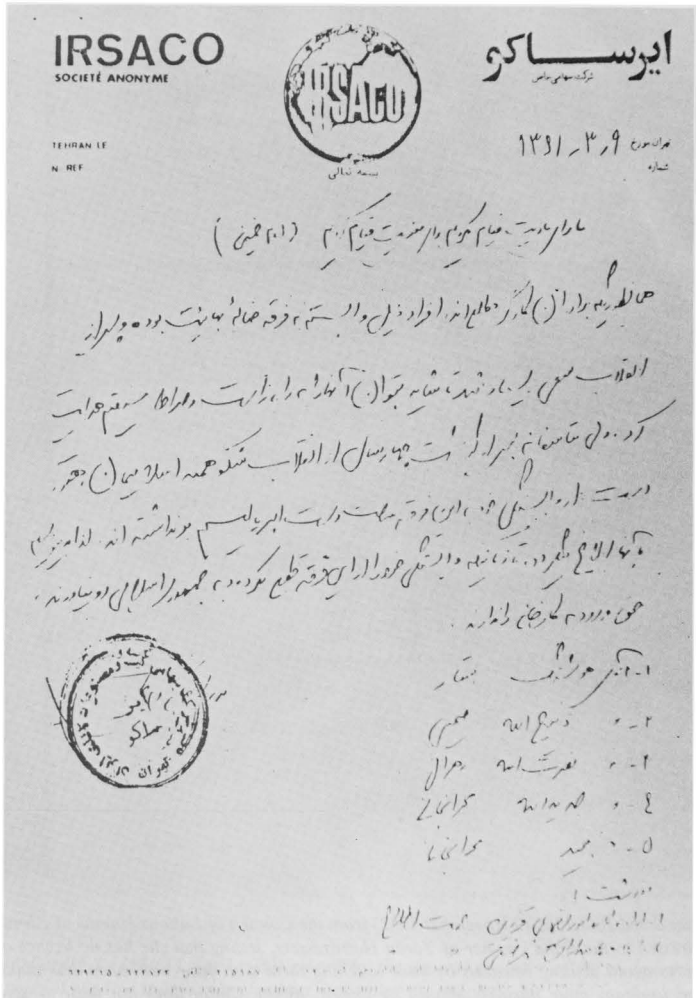
تلفن : ۹۹۳۱۲

صاحبان آرایشگاه یاران

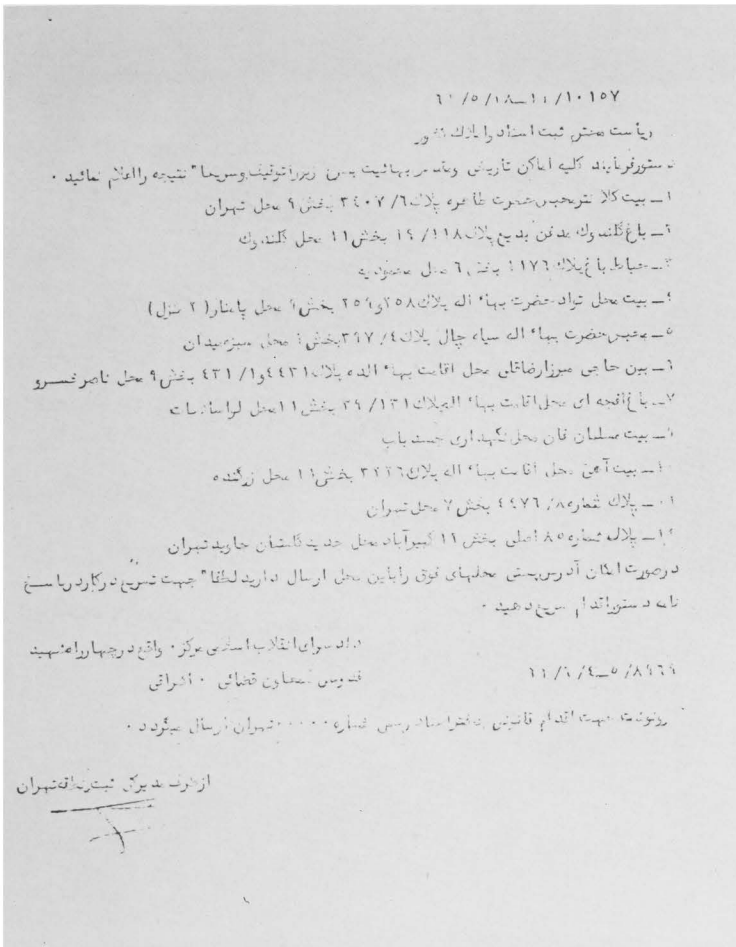
باتوجه باینکه شما بدون پروانه کسب و خلاف
مقررات صنفی تأسیس نموده اید و همچنین دارای سابقه
بهداشتی میباشید که در اثر تماس با رطوبت محل تماس را متنجس
میسازید و مسئولیت این موضوع برعهده شورای اصناف میباشد
لذا بشما ابلاغ میشود که محل کار خود را تعطیل نمائید . /
در غیر اینصورت شورای اصناف رفع مسئولیت گردد .

رئیس هیئت مدیره شورای اتحادیه اصناف کرمان

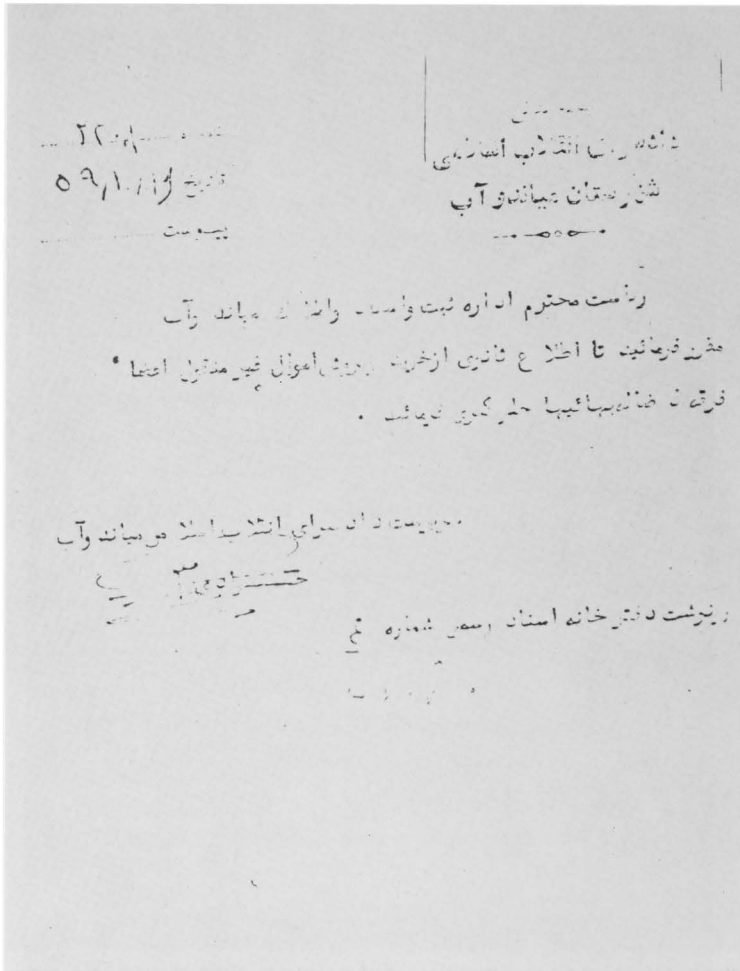
Letter dated 18.8.1361 (9 November 1982) from the Council of Labour Unions of Kirmán, addressed to the Bahá'í owner of Yárán Hairdressers, stating that she has no licence and that 'to avoid defiling Muslims by your touching them with your wet hands thus making them unclean, your business should be closed, as the Union does not wish to accept responsibility for Muslims being defiled (through their contact with you).'


IRSACO
SOCIETÉ ANONYME
ایرساکو
IRSACO
TEHRAN LE
N. REF
۱۳۶۱/۳/۹

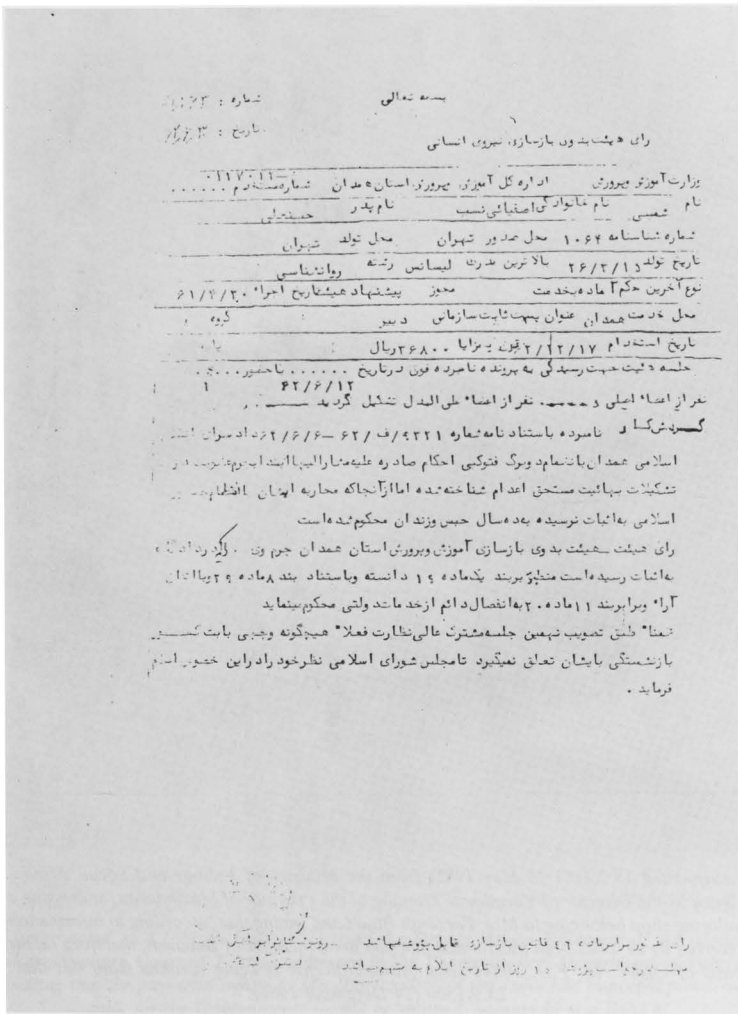
Letter dated 9.3.1361 (30 May 1982) to its employees from Irasco Company naming five Bahá'ís and stating 'after repeated persuasion during the four years since the establishment of the revolution in Írán those five labourers insist that they wish to remain Bahá'ís: therefore, because they have not cut themselves off from Bahaism, they have no right to enter the factory.'



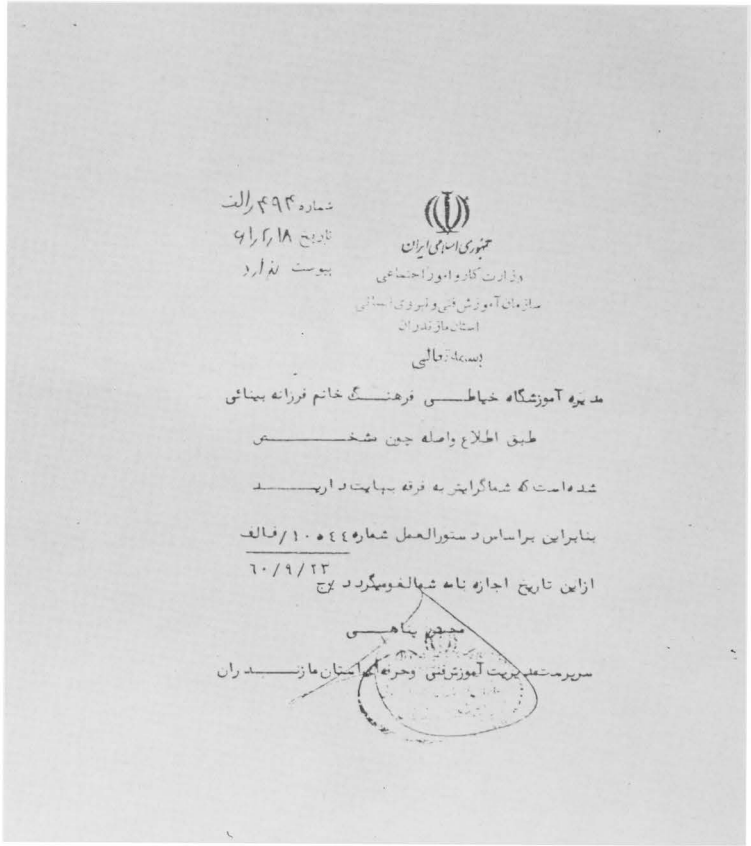
Circular letter dated 4.6.1361 (26 August 1982) from the head of the Land Registry Office in Ṭihrán, circulating an order from the central Revolutionary Court of Ṭihrán authorizing the confiscation of twelve Bahá'í historical and holy places in the city, including the Bahá'í cemetery.



Order dated 16.10.1359 (6 January 1981) from the Islamic Revolutionary Court of the District of Míyán-Du-Áb, addressed to all registry offices in the district, prohibiting business transactions relating to any property belonging to 'the aberrant group of Bahá'ís.'



Letter dated 30.6.1361 (21 September 1983) from the Reconstruction Committee dismissing a Bahá'í, Mrs. Shamsí Asfíyá-í-Nasab, from her employment as a teacher and denying her the right to a pension. The document quotes a court verdict which states that the recipient has been condemned to death by the Revolutionary Court of Hamadán because of her 'membership in the Bahá'í administration; nevertheless, since her activities against the Islamic régime could not be proved, she is condemned to imprisonment for ten years.'



جمهوری اسلامی ایران
وزارت کار و امور اجتماعی
سازمان آموزش فنی و نیروی انسانی
استان مازندران

شماره ۴۹۴ ر/الف
تاریخ ۱۸ ر ۶۱
پیوست ندارد

بسمه تعالی

مدیره آموزشگاه خیاطی فرهنگ خانم فرزانه بهائی

طبق اطلاع واصله چون مشخص

شده است که شما گرایش به فرقه بهائیت دارید

بنابراین براساس دستورالعمل شماره ۱۰۵۴۴/ف/الف

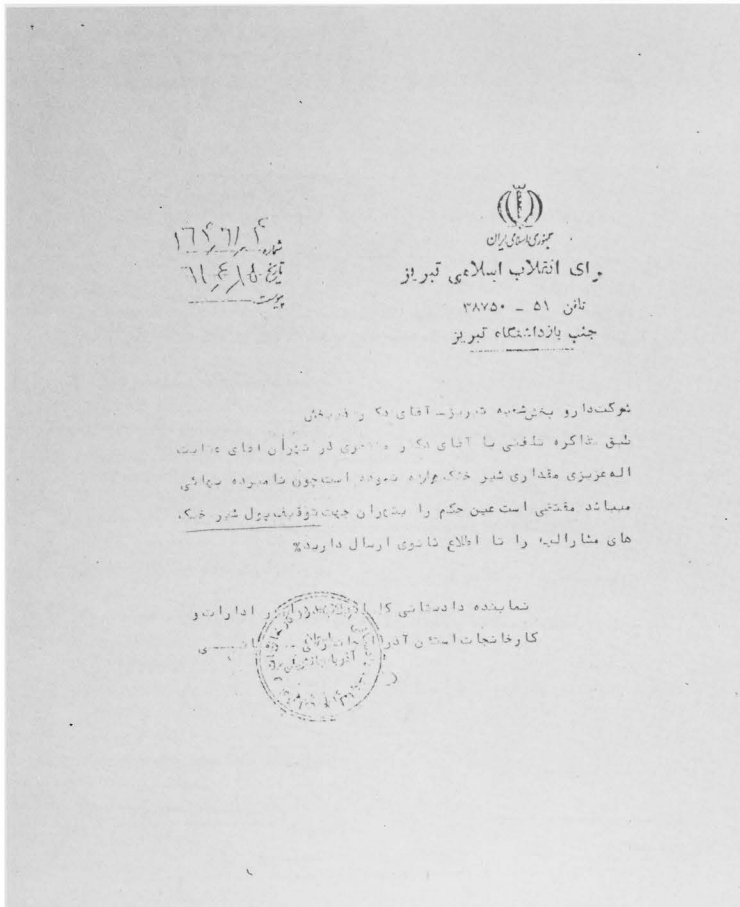
۶۰/۹/۲۳

ازاین تاریخ اجازه نامه شما لغو و پس گرفته میشود

مجتبی پاهی

سرپرست مدیریت آموزش فنی و حرفه ای استان مازندران

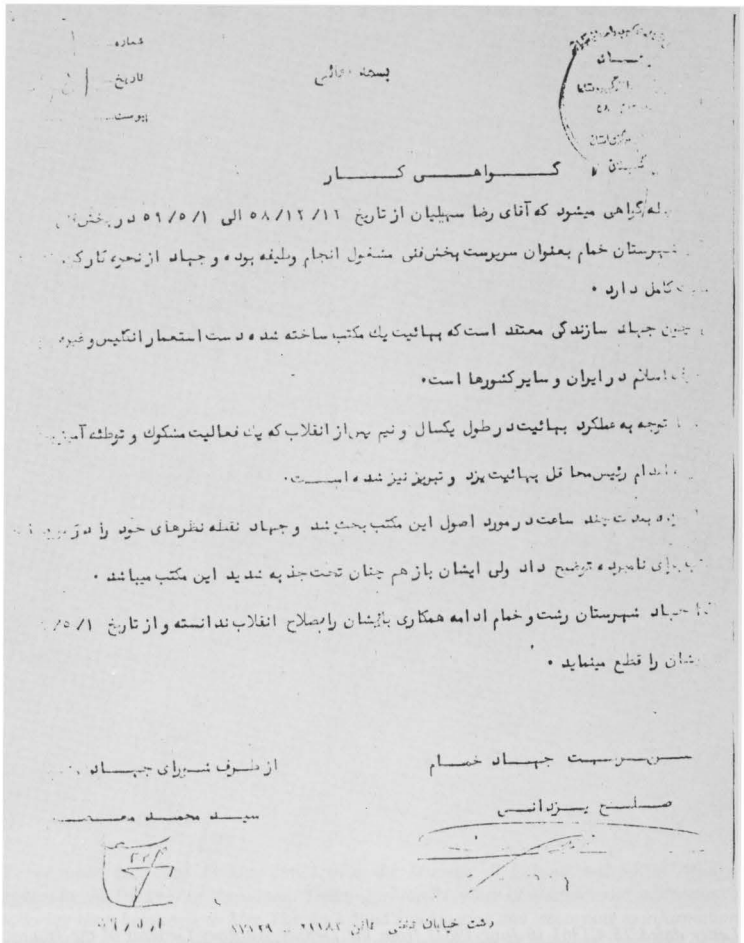
Letter dated 18.2.1361 (8 May 1982) from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, signed by the Director of Vocational Training of the Province of Mázindarán, addressing a tailoring shop belonging to Mrs. Farzánih Bíná'í and stating that 'according to information received by us it has been ascertained that you are a member of Bahaism, therefore on the basis of Order No. F.A. 10544 your business license is being revoked from this date: 23.9.1360 (14 December 1981).'



جمهوری اسلامی ایران
دادستانی انقلاب اسلامی تبریز
تلفن ۵۱ - ۳۸۷۵۰
جنب بازداشتگاه تبریز

شماره ۱۷۲۱/۲
تاریخ ۱۱/۴/۶۱
پیوست

Letter dated 15.4.1361 (6 June 1982) from the Deputy Attorney-General of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Tabríz, addressed to the Pharmaceutical Department of Tabríz, stating that the payments owing to Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh 'Azízí [who had imported powdered milk for the Government] should be stopped 'because he is a Bahá'í.'



گواهی کار

له گواهی میشود که آقای رضا سپهلیان از تاریخ ۵۸/۱۲/۱۱ الی ۵۹/۵/۱ در بخش
شهرستان خمام بعنوان سرپرست بخش فنی مشغول انجام وظیفه بود و جهاد از نحوه کار ک
کامل دارد.

چون جهاد سازندگی معتقد است که بهائیت یک مکتب ساخته شده دست استعمار انگلیس و غیره
اسلام در ایران و سایر کشورها است.

توجه به عملکرد بهائیت در طول یکسال و نیم پس از انقلاب که یک فعالیت مشکوک و توطئه آمیز
ادام رئیس محافل بهائیت بزد و تبریز نیز شده است.

پس از چند ساعت در مورد اصول این مکتب بحث شد و جهاد نقطه نظرهای خود را در مورد
برای نامبرده توضیح داد ولی ایشان باز هم چنان تحت جذبه شدید این مکتب میباشند.

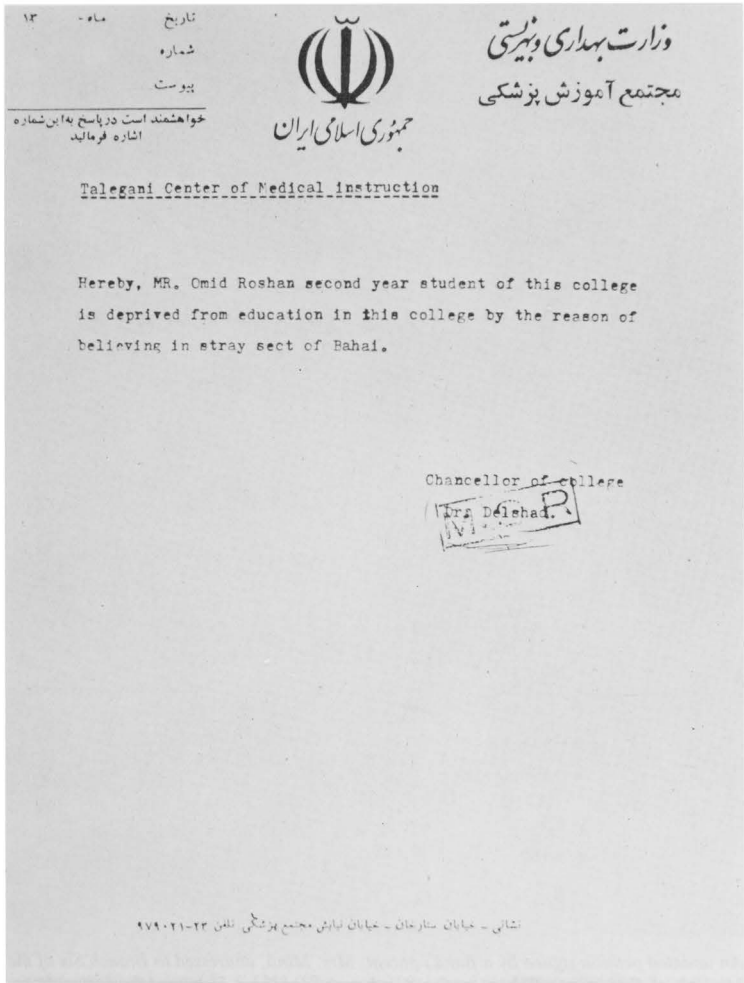
جهاد شهرستان رشت و خمام ادامه همکاری با ایشان را با صلاح انقلاب ندانسته و از تاریخ ۵۹/۵/۱
شان را قطع مینماید.

از طرف شورای جهاد
سید محمد

مسئول جهاد خمام
صالح یزدانی

رشت خیابان نوفل تلفن ۲۲۱۸۲ - ۲۲۱۲۹

Certificate issued on 1.5.1359 (23 July 1980) by the Council of the Rural Construction Movement of the Province of Gílán, certifying that Mr. Riḍá Suhayliján was a foreman in the city of Khumám who performed his professional work to the satisfaction of the Council and stating that the Council interviewed him for several hours about Bahaism and conveyed to him its views about 'this school of thought', but since he insists on continuing as a member of Bahá'í 'he cannot work with the Council from this date: 1.5.1359 (23 July 1980).'



وزارت بهداری و بهزیستی
مجتمع آموزش پزشکی

جمهوری اسلامی ایران

تاریخ ماه ۱۳
شماره
پیوست

خواهشمند است در پاسخ به این شماره اشاره فرمائید

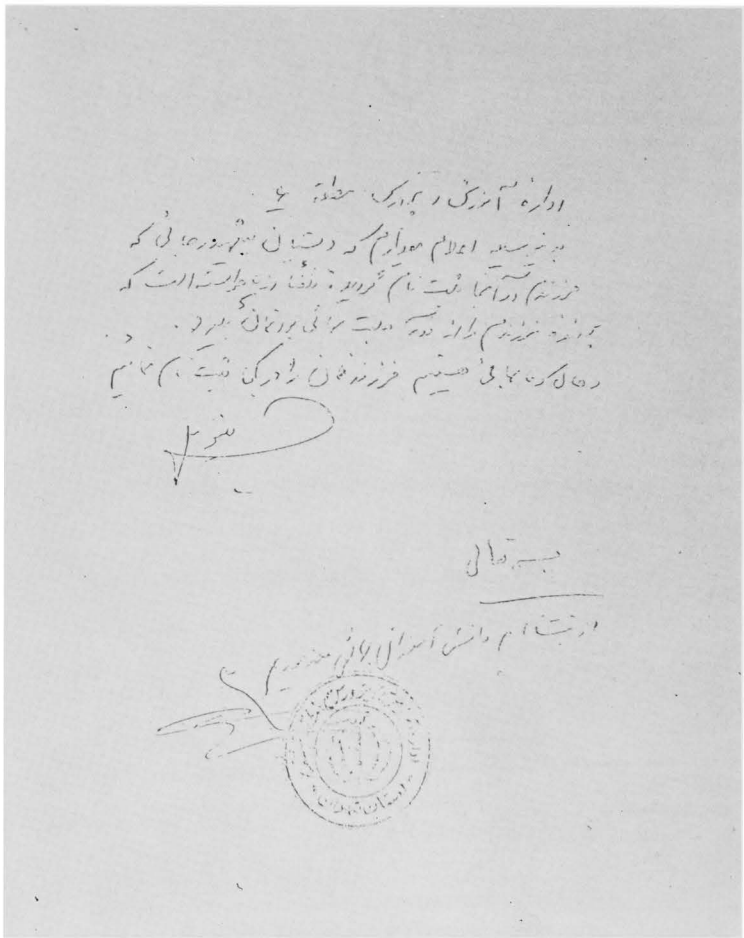
Talegani Center of Medical instruction

Hereby, MR. Omid Roshan second year student of this college is deprived from education in this college by the reason of believing in stray sect of Bahai.

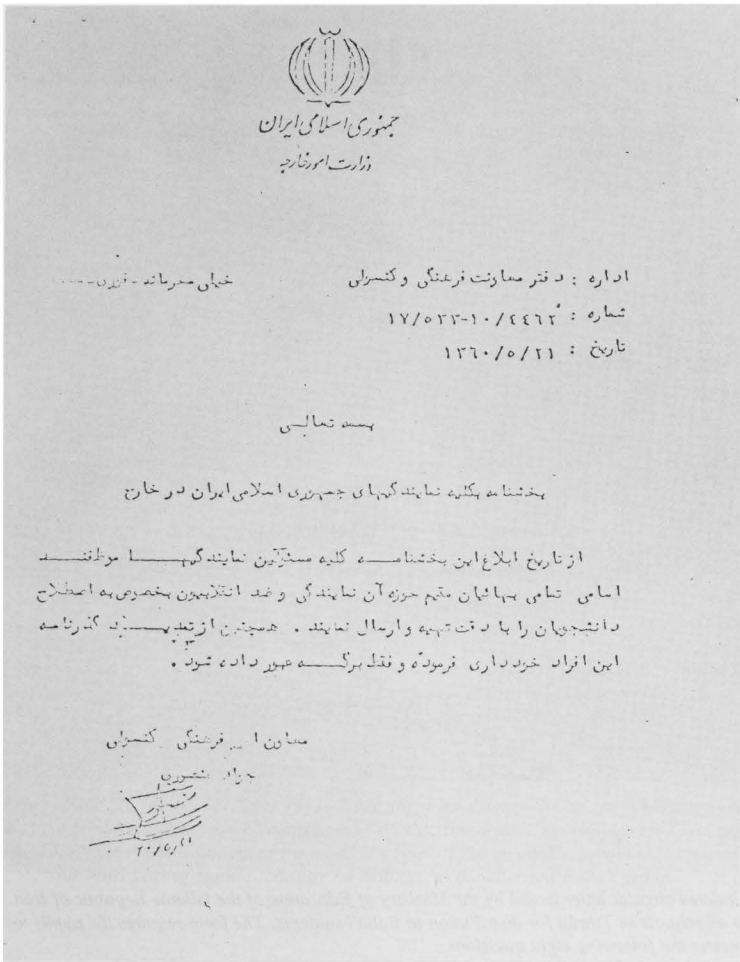
Chancellor of college
Mrs Delshad.

شمالی - خیابان ستارخان - خیابان نیایش مجتمع پزشکی تلفن ۹۷۹۰۲۱-۲۳

Undated letter in English from the Chancellor of the Talegani Centre of Medical Instruction stating that 'Mr. Omid Roshan second year student of this college is deprived from education in this college by reason of believing in stray sect of Bahá'í.'



An undated petition signed by a Bahá'í parent, Mrs. Mínú, addressed to Branch Six of the Ministry of Education, Ṭihrán, stating that her son has been dismissed from elementary school 'because of our being Bahá'ís', and requesting advice from the Ministry as to where she should send the child to ensure the continuation of his education. The reply recorded on the petition, under the seal of the Department of Education of Tihrán Province, states 'We cannot register Bahá'í pupils.'



جمهوری اسلامی ایران
وزارت امور خارجه

اداره : دفتر معاونت فرهنگی و کنسولی
شماره : ۱۷/۵۲۳-۱۰/۲۴۶۲
تاریخ : ۱۳۶۰/۵/۲۱

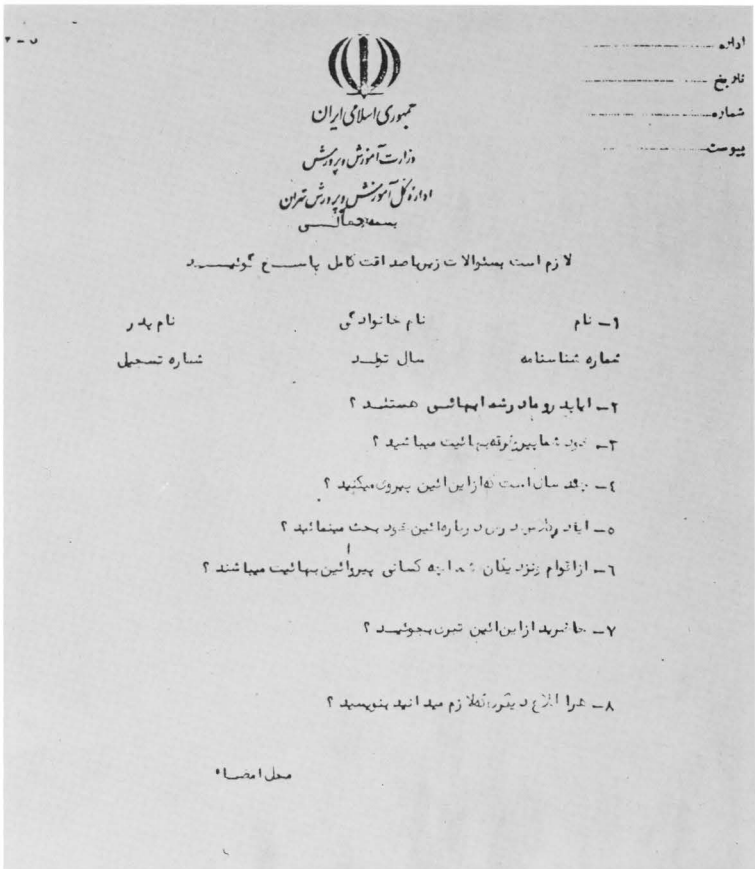
بسمه تعالی

بخشنامه بکلیه نمایندگیهای جمهوری اسلامی ایران در خارج

از تاریخ ابلاغ این بخشنامه کلیه مسئولین نمایندگیها موظفند اسامی تمامی بهائیان مقیم حوزه آن نمایندگی و ضد انقلابیون بخصوص به اصطلاح دانشجویان را با دقت تهیه و ارسال نمایند. همچنین از تمدید گذرنامه این افراد خودداری فرموده و نقل برگه عبور داده شود.

معاون امور فرهنگی کنسولی

A confidential letter dated 21.5.1360 (12 August 1981) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Írán, issued by the Deputy of the Cultural and Consular Affairs of the Ministry, Mr. Javád Manṣúrí, instructing all Iranian Consulates throughout the world not to issue or renew the passports of Bahá'ís and 'anti-revolutionaries'.



جمهوری اسلامی ایران

وزارت آموزش و پرورش

ادارهٔ کل آموزش و پرورش تهران

بسمه تعالی

لازم است بسئوالات زیر با صداقت کامل پاسخ گوئید

۱ـ نام — نام خانوادگی — نام پدر

شماره شناسنامه — سال تولد — شماره تسجیل

۲ـ آیا پدر و مادر شما بهائی هستند ؟

۳ـ خود شما پیرو این آئین بهائیت میباشید ؟

۴ـ چند سال است که از این آئین پیروی میکنید ؟

۵ـ آیا در مدرسه درس در بارهٔ این آئین بحث مینمائید ؟

۶ـ از اقوام نزدیکتان چه کسانی پیرو این بهائیت میباشند ؟

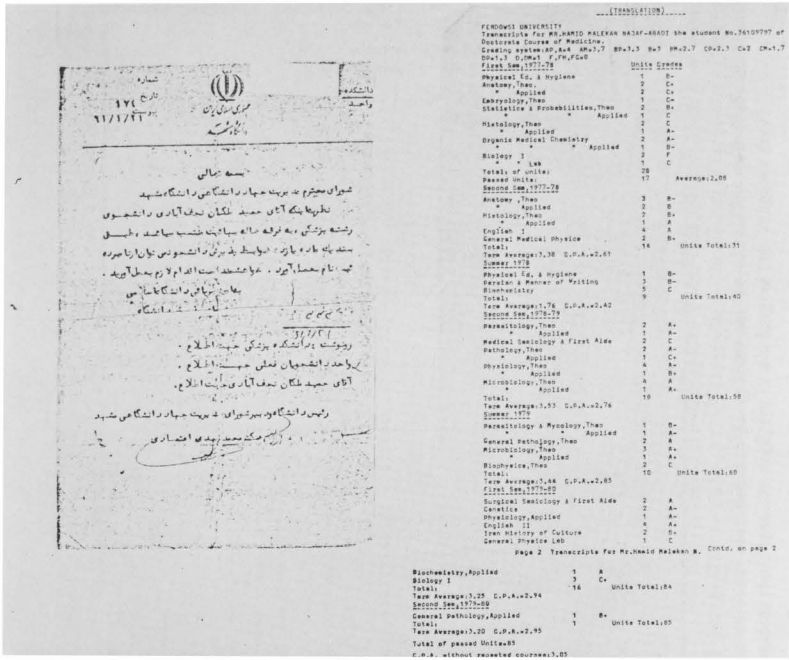
۷ـ حاضرید از این آئین برگردید ؟

۸ـ هر اطلاع دیگر که لازم میدانید بنویسید ؟

محل امضاء

Undated circular letter issued by the Ministry of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran to all schools in Ṭihrán for distribution to Bahá'í students. The form requires the pupils to answer the following eight questions:

1. *Name and other particulars.*
2. *Are your parents Bahá'ís?*
3. *Are you a follower of Bahaism?*
4. *How many years have you been following this religion?*
5. *Do you discuss Bahaism in your classes?*
6. *Which of your close relatives are followers of Bahaism?*
7. *Are you ready to recant your religion?*
8. *Write any other necessary information.*



---(TRANSLATION)---

FERDOWSI UNIVERSITY
Transcripts for MR.HAMID MALEKAN NAJAF-ABADI the student No.7610797 of
Doctorate Course of Medicine,
Grading system:AP,A+4 AM=3.7 BP=3.3 B=3 BM=2.7 CP=2.3 C=2 CM=1.7
DP=1.3 D,DM=1 F,FW,FC=0

First Sem.1977-78	Units	Grades
Physical Ed. & Hygiene	1	B-
Anatomy, Theo.	2	C+
" Applied	2	C+
Embryology,Theo	1	C+
Statistics & Probabilities,Theo	2	B+
" " Applied	1	C
Histology,Theo	2	C
" Applied	1	A-
Organic Medical Chemistry	2	A-
" " " Applied	1	B-
Biology I	2	F
" " Lab	1	C
Totals of units:	28	
Passed Units:	17	Average:2.88

Second Sem.1977-78		
Anatomy, Theo	3	B-
" Applied	2	B
Histology,Theo	2	B+
" Applied	1	A
English I	4	A
General Medical Physics	2	B+
Total:	14	Units Total:31
Term Average:3.38 C.P.A.=2.61		

Summer 1978		
Physical Ed. & Hygiene	1	B-
Persian & Manner of Writing	3	B-
Biochemistry	5	C
Total:	9	Units Total:40
Term Average:1.76 C.P.A.=2.42		

Second Sem.1978-79		
Parasitology,Theo	2	A+
" Applied	1	A-
Medical Semiology & First Aids	2	C
Pathology,Theo	2	A-
" Applied	1	C+
Physiology,Theo	4	A+
" Applied	1	B+
Microbiology,Theo	4	A
" Applied	1	A+
Total:	18	Units Total:58
Term Average:3.53 C.P.A.=2.76		

Summer 1979		
Parasitology & Mycology,Theo	1	B-
" " Applied	1	A-
General Pathology,Theo	2	A
Microbiology,Theo	3	A+
" Applied	1	A+
Biophysics,Theo	2	C
Total:	10	Units Total:60
Term Average:3.44 C.P.A.=2.85		

First Sem.1979-80		
Surgical Semiology & First Aids	2	A
Genetics	2	A-
Physiology,Applied	1	A-
English II	4	A+
Iran History of Culture	2	B+
General Physics Lab	1	C

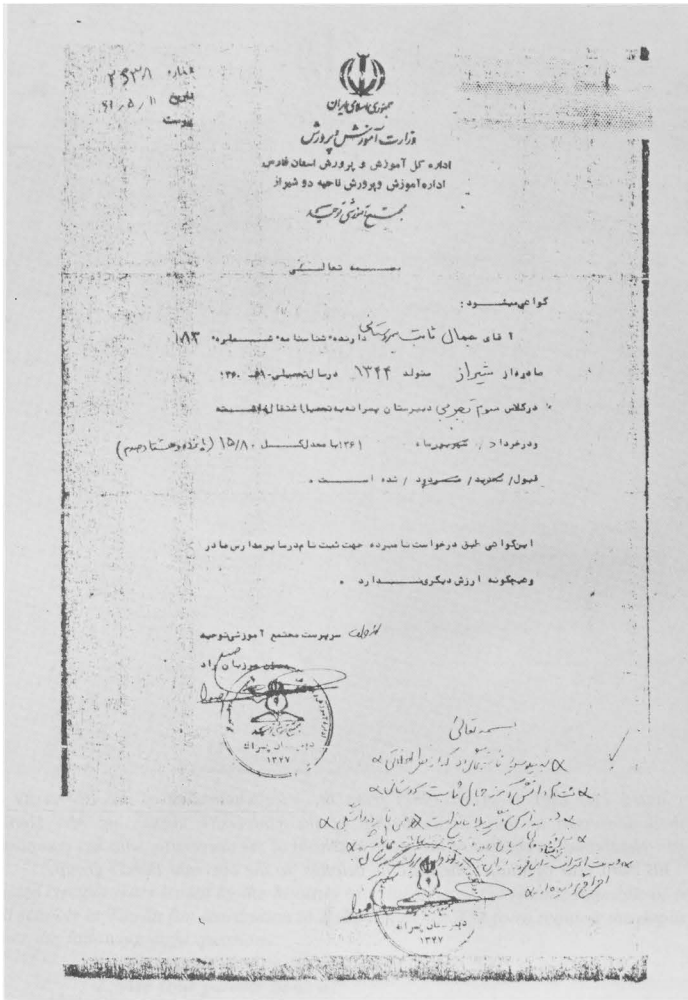
Page 2 Transcripts for Mr.Hamid Malekan N. Contd. on page 2

Biochemistry,Applied	1	A
Biology I	3	C+
Total:	16	Units Total:64
Term Average:3.25 C.P.A.=2.94		

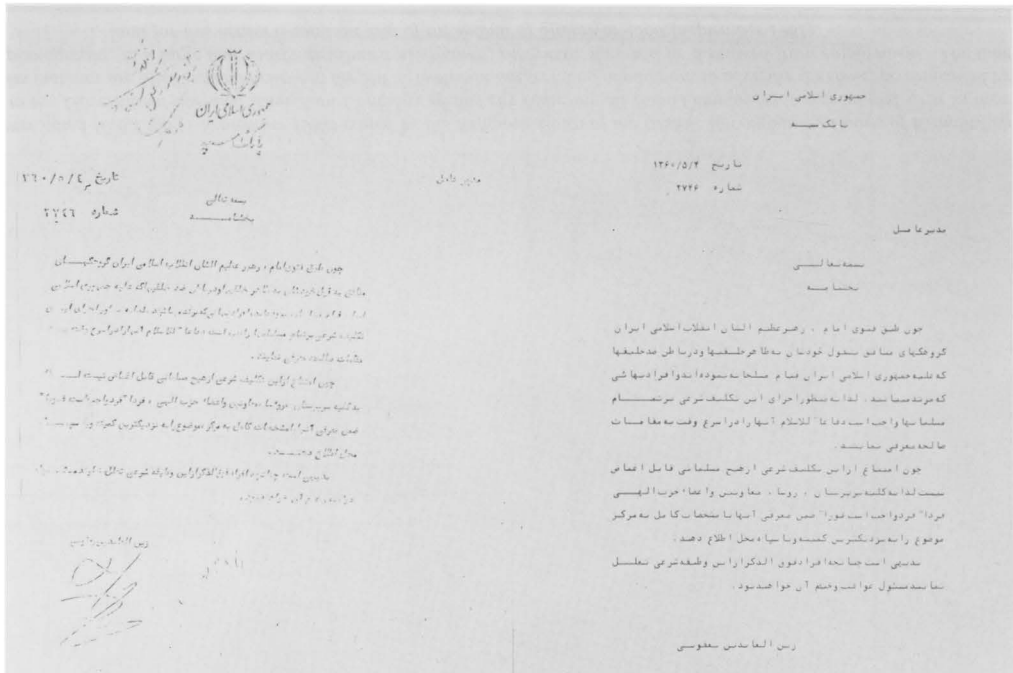
Second Sem.1979-80		
General Pathology,Applied	1	B+
Total:	1	Units Total:65
Term Average:3.20 C.P.A.=2.95		

Total of passed Units=85
C.P.A. without repeated courses:3.05

Letter dated 21.1.1361 (1 April 1982) from the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mashhad addressed to the Chancellorship of the University, dismissing Mr. Ḥamíd Malikán-Najafábádí, a student of the medical school of the university, who has completed his third year of studies, because he belongs 'to the aberrant Bahá'í group.'



Grade card dated 11.5.1361 (2 August 1982) of Jamál Thábit-Sarvistání, a student of the secondary school in the Tawḥíd Educational Complex in Shíráz, who passed the examination with high grades. In his own hand, and under the seal of the school, the Principal has written of this student, 'Although his character is satisfactory, because he is a member of the Bahá'í group and confesses being a Bahá'í he has been dismissed from the school.'



جمهوری اسلامی ایران

بانک سپه

تاریخ ۱۳۶۰/۵/۴

شماره ۲۷۲۶

مدیرعامل

بسمه تعالی

محترما

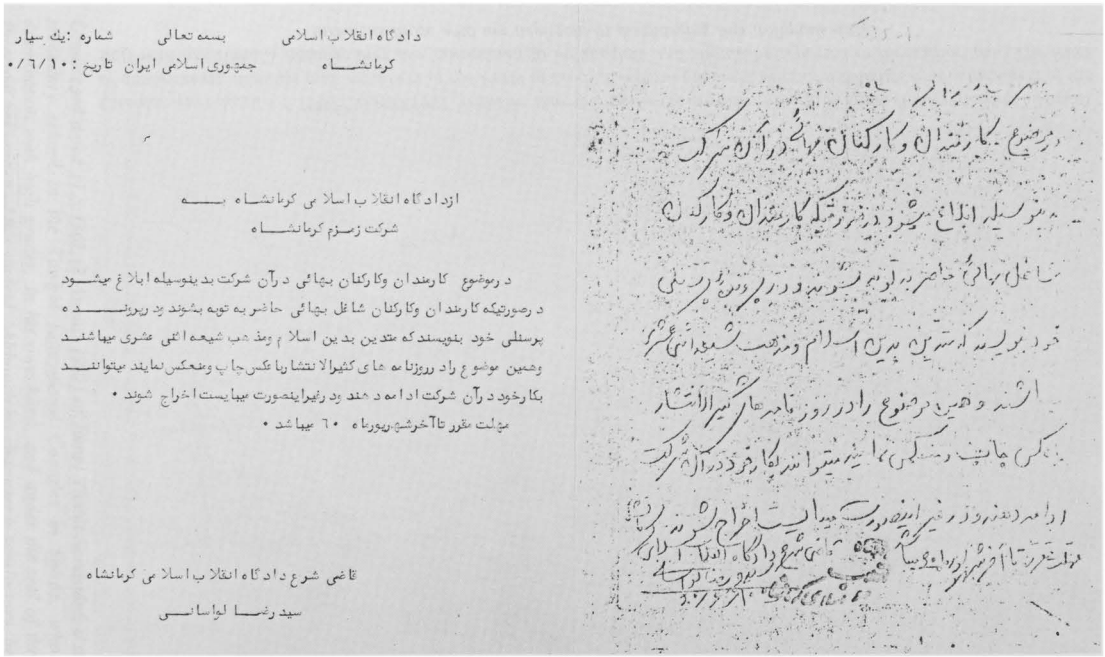
چون طبق فرمود امام ، رهبر عظیم الشان انقلاب اسلامی ایران گروهکهای مفاسد بسمول خودشان به عنوان طرفدار مکتب و در واقع ضد مکتب و ضد انقلاب اسلامی که علیه جمهوری اسلامی ایران قیام مسلحانه نموده اند و افرادشان که می توانند مسلمان باشند . لذا به منظور اجرای این تکلیف شرعی بر تمام مسلمانها واجب است دفاعا" للاسلام آنها را در اسرع وقت به مقامات صالحه معرفی نمایند .

چون امتناع از این تکلیف شرعی از طرف مسلمانی قابل اغماض نیست لذا به کلیه مدیران ، روسا ، معاونین و اعضاء حزب الهی فردا" فردا واجب است فورا" ضمن معرفی آنها با مشخصات کامل به مرکز موضوع را به دیگرس کمیته و سپاه محل اطلاع دهند .

بدیهی است چنانچه افراد فوق الذکر از این وظیفه شرعی تعلل نمایند مسئول عواقب و خیم آن خواهند بود .

رس العامه دین معدوسی

Circular letter dated 4.5.1360 (26 July 1981) from the manager of the Government-operated Sipah Bank requiring all heads of departments, deputies and 'members of the Party of God' to inform the authorities of the names of any members of the staff who are Bahá'ís because they are 'considered to be apostate and should be reported to the authorities.' The letter threatens those who are negligent in discharging this 'religious duty'.



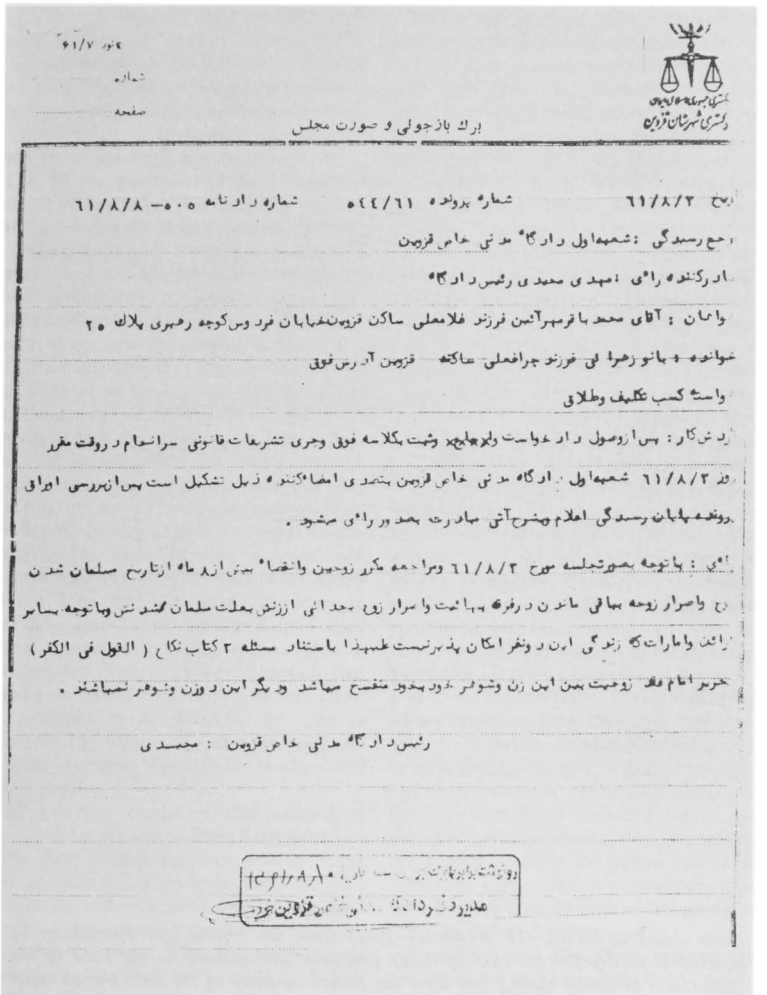
دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی بسمه تعالی شماره :یك سیار
کرمانشاه جمهوری اسلامی ایران تاریخ : ۰/۶/۱۰

ازدادگاه انقلاب اسلامی کرمانشاه به
شرکت زمزم کرمانشاه

درموضوع کارمندان وکارکنان بهائی درآن شرکت بدینوسیله ابلاغ میشود درصورتیکه کارمندان وکارکنان شاغل بهائی حاضر به توبه بشوند در روزنامه پرتیراژی که بیشترین بینندگان را مسلمین معتقد به دین اسلام ومذهب شیعه اثنی عشری تشکیل میدهند خود بنویسند که مسلمان هستند و به دین اسلام ومذهب شیعه اثنی عشری معتقدند وهمین موضوع را در روزنامه های کثیرالانتشار با عکس چاپ وضمیمه نمایند میتوانند بکار خود در آن شرکت ادامه دهند در غیراینصورت میبایست اخراج شوند .
مهلت مقرر تا آخر شهریورماه ۶۰ میباشد .

قاضی شرع دادگاه انقلاب اسلامی کرمانشاه
سید رضا لواسانی

Circular letter dated 10.6.1360 (1 September 1981) issued by the Religious Court of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts of Kirmánshah addressed to the Government-operated Zam-Zam Company of this city requiring all Bahá'í employees 'to repent and write in their personal files that they are Muslims and believe in the Shi'ite twelve-Imam sect, and in addition, to advertise the same, accompanied by their own photographs, in a large and widely distributed newspaper'; otherwise, they will be dismissed from employment. 'The time limit for this action is until the end of the month of Shahrívar 1360 (September 1981).'



برگ بازجوئی و صورت مجلس

شماره پرونده ٥٤٤/٦١ شماره دادنامه ٥٠٥ — ٦١/٨/٨ تاریخ ٦١/٨/٣

رجع رسیدگی : شعبه اول دادگاه مدنی خاص قزوین

دادرکننده رأی : مهدی محمدی رئیس دادگاه

واخواه : آقای محمد باقرمهرآئین فرزند غلامعلی ساکن قزوین خیابان فردوس کوچه رهبری پلاک ٢٥

خوانده و خانم زهرا نی فرزند چراغعلی ساکنه قزوین آدرس فوق

واسطه کسب تکلیف وطلاق

رد شکار : پس از وصول دادخواست وارجاع وثبت بکلاسه فوق وجری تشریفات قانونی سرانجام در وقت مقرر

روز ٦١/٨/٣ شعبه اول دادگاه مدنی خاص قزوین بتصدی امضاءکننده ذیل تشکیل است پس از بررسی اوراق

ووندیه پایان رسیدگی اعلام ومشروحآتی صادرت بصدور رأی میشود .

رأی : باتوجه بصورتجلسه مورخ ٦١/٨/٣ ومراجعه مکرر زوجین وانضباط بیش از ٩ ماه ازتاریخ مسلمان شدن

زوج واصرار زوجه بباقی ماندن در زوجیت با زوج بعد ائی اززنش بعلت مسلمان شدنش وباتوجه بسایر

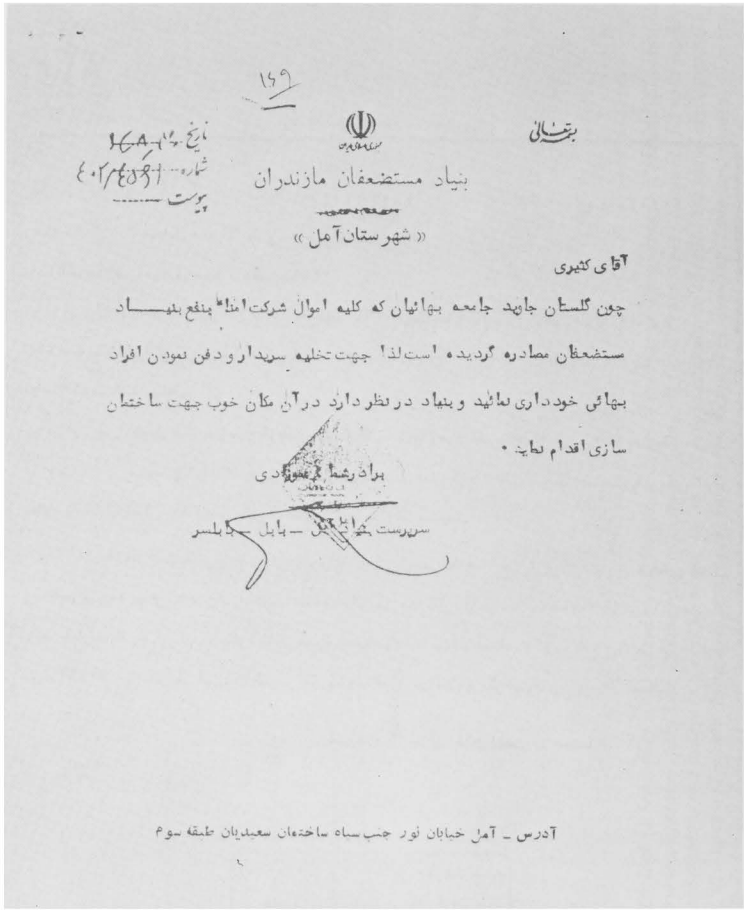
قرائن وامارات که زندگی این دو نفر امکان پذیرنیست علیهذا باستناد مسئله ٢ کتاب نکاح (القول فی الکفر)

تحریر العروه فقد زوجیت بین این زن وشوهر خود بخود منفسخ میباشد ودیگر این دو زن وشوهر نمیباشند .

رئیس دادگاه مدنی خاص قزوین : محمدی

[illegible]

Copy of an official verdict dated 10.8.1361 (1 November 1982) of the civil court of Qazvín annulling the marriage of a man who has become a Muslim and his Bahá'í wife as a result of proceedings instigated by the man.



بسمه تعالی

بنیاد مستضعفان مازندران

« شهرستان آمل »

تاریخ ۱۳۶۱/۰۸/۲۶

شماره ۰۲۲۶۳۱

پیوست ------

آقای کثیری

چون گلستان جاید جامعه بهائیان که کلیه اموال شرکت امناء بنفع بنیاد مستضعفان مصادره گردیده است لذا جهت تخلیه سپیدار و دفن نمودن افراد بهائی خودداری نمائید و بنیاد در نظر دارد در آن مکان خوب جهت ساختمان سازی اقدام نماید .

برادر رشید [illegible]

سرپرست [illegible] – بابل – بابلسر

آدرس – آمل خیابان نور جنب سیاه ساختمان سعیدیان طبقه سوم

Letter dated 26.8.1362 (14 November 1982) from the Mustaḍ'afín Foundation (a benevolent society for the care of needy families), Mázindarán, to the head of the Foundation in Ámul, stating that since the Bahá'í cemetery of the city, like all other properties of Umaná' Company, has been confiscated, the caretaker of the cemetery should be dismissed and no Bahá'í burials should be permitted hereafter, as the Foundation wishes to initiate construction projects on that land.

G. BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN IN TIME OF PERSECUTION

Excerpts from letters written by Mrs. Zhínús Maḥmúdí[1]

10 June 1981

Dear Friends,

We are extremely busy these days and it pains me to think of not being able to write to you. We have so many overwhelming stories to relate, which are so glorious that one feels guilty about not being able to write them.

One of the greatest and most important features of the present persecutions is the tests which are facing the Bahá'í children. So much is written and told about the outstanding perseverance and degree of devotion of the adult believers, but little is said about our dear children—their encounters with difficulties, their courage, and their heroic deeds.

It is unbelievable that human beings could ever think of pressuring innocent children of such tender age in the way the people in the schools of Írán are doing at this time. Thousands of Bahá'í pupils are facing such inhuman afflictions. Most of them are very studious, are more knowledgeable than other children of their age, and have special insight. Many people, including their teachers, look at them with awe. The enemies of the Cause do not deny that the Bahá'í children are generally much more advanced than their fellow classmates, but they are not pleased with this fact. Sometimes it even happens that when government authorities complain about the activities of the Bahá'ís, they cite as examples the actions of our little ones and how they confront their Muslim teachers and fellow pupils.

What do these children do that makes them deserve these pressures? Most Bahá'í children know their Islamic religious lessons better than all their fellow students. They can read the Qur'án and interpret it better than their Muslim counterparts, sometimes even better than their teachers! The highest marks in Islamic religious study are given to the Bahá'í children. Their teachers are often very surprised to note that they excel in competitions in the reading of the Qur'án and in religious instruction examinations. Yes, they are frequently surprised, but at the same time they are extremely resentful.

When the teachers become angry, they challenge the Bahá'í students unfairly. The parents of these children ask their instructors how they have the audacity to confront children of ten or eleven years, and their reply is that the Bahá'í children sometimes know more than they do. They complain that in their classes the Bahá'í children are occasionally made prayer leaders and are nicknamed by their fellow students as 'Ayatollahs' because their understanding of the Qur'án is deep and their beautiful explanations of its verses overshadow those of the teachers.

This is exactly the problem! Bahá'í children with such intelligence, understanding and knowledge are not favoured by the ideologists of the Ministry of Education. According to them, such children should be 'guided to the right path'. It is certain that this Ministry has adopted a detailed and menacing plan to brainwash the Bahá'í children. We have so much evidence of such a plan! It is surprising to note that the authorities of the present régime are spending so much time, energy and money to prepare themselves on ways to confront our young children. It is not uncommon for two or three instructors of religious classes or trained ideologists of the Ministry of Education, as well as a number of students, to join forces and suddenly attack a Bahá'í child of ten or eleven years. With all their power they try to shatter the very foundation of his beliefs. They will argue with him for hours, and even use unfair methods to 'guide' him. They are bewildered when they realize, however, that all their efforts are in vain, and they are wonder-struck at the replies they receive from these young ones, which include a number of verses from the Qur'án and quotations from the Bahá'í Writings.

Sometimes such discussions, between say a teacher in his thirties and his Bahá'í pupil of ten or eleven years of age, take place in the classroom. The teacher begins with a barrage of insults and calumnies against the Faith. The child, of course, does not passively accept these insults—he reacts! And, his protests are the beginning of a public discussion about the Faith between him and his teacher. Impressive responses are given by the Bahá'í

[1] Mrs. Zhínús Maḥmúdí was martyred in Ṭihrán on 27 December 1981.

child, which often makes the teacher speechless. This delights the other children, who applaud and sometimes cry 'Hurrah!' for the student who has overcome the mighty instructor. The teacher then becomes angrier and he leaves the classroom and consults with other teachers, who come to his rescue. They call for the Bahá'í child at an hour when he has other classes, such as gymnastics or mathematics, to discuss the Faith. Here are three of them attacking one young child! They argue and argue. What a fair encounter!

The Bahá'í children in Írán have a full share of the persecutions befalling the Bahá'ís in that country. Even the performances of tots in the kindergarten—their courage, their chanting of prayers by heart, their singing of Bahá'í songs, and their good behaviour—make some of the teachers angry, and others, while irate, are filled with awe and admiration.

We pray that these children will always be able to withstand this unjust pressure. We have hundreds of examples to relate, but here are just a few.

1. Sámí is five years old. He is preparing himself in the kindergarten to be admitted into Grade 1 next year. He knows by heart six prayers, the short Obligatory Prayer, and a number of extracts from the Bahá'í Writings. He is intelligent, well-behaved, and quick to learn, and he recites what he has learned very eloquently.

   An inspector was sent to his school by the Ministry of Education, and the teacher, in order to boast how successful he had been in teaching the children in his class, called Sámí to recite the verses he had learned. Sámí's performance astonished the inspector. At the end, the teacher instructed Sámí to recite a poem which began with the sentence, 'I am a Muslim child.' Sámí gazed silently at his teacher without uttering a word. The teacher repeated his instruction, but Sámí remained silent. The teacher was very surprised and became uneasy in front of the inspector. He could not understand why Sámí, who had always excelled in learning and reciting poetry, now remained silent, and so he asked the reason. Sámí replied, 'Because I am not a Muslim, I am a Bahá'í!'

   The inspector left the room in anger and complained to the headmaster, who called Sámí's mother to the school. She was warned that Sámí should be instructed not to teach the Faith at the school. The mother did not know what had happened, but when she found out she naturally told Sámí that he should be more careful and not behave the way he did. But little Sámí, who had learned in the Bahá'í community what it meant to be steadfast, could not accept this and replied, 'I am a Bahá'í and I will always tell people that I am, and if they bother me I will go to the nearest police station and complain!'

2. Iláhi is eight years old . . . Her father was one of the three recent martyrs in Shíráz. She is the only one of his children who was allowed to meet with her father on the day before his execution.

   The day after the funeral of her beloved father, Iláhi took to her school flowers and sweets to distribute to the teacher and her classmates. The teacher was surprised and asked if it is a Bahá'í custom to do such a thing when one's father is killed? The little girl replied, 'My father was not killed, he was martyred!'

3. Akram, the eleven-year-old daughter of one of the seven martyrs of Yazd, is another example of such heroism. After her father and the six others were martyred, she went to school and the teacher asked the students in her class to write an essay about their experiences during the summer vacation. Akram wrote a sweet and factual essay about what had happened to her family during the summer—how the Revolutionary Guards and others came to their house and took her beloved father away, how they kept him in prison for some time, how she met him in prison, and finally about his martyrdom. Her essay was so moving that it brought tears to the eyes of the teacher and the children in her class. However, since the word 'Bahá'í' was written in the essay, the teacher, even though moved, was angry. She took the essay to the headmistress, and a few days later the headmistress called Akram to her

room. She said, 'Your essay deserves to receive the highest mark, but since you mentioned the word "Bahá'í" a few times, you should withdraw it.' Akram replied, 'I was supposed to write about my experiences during the summer. Whatever I have written is the exact truth. My father was killed because he was a Bahá'í!'

The headmistress threatened Akram with dismissal because of what she had said, but told her that because her mother had lost a husband, she would be permitted to remain in school. Eventually, the headmistress demanded that Akram write an essay on some other subject, which she did, and she was given an excellent grade.

4. Ármán, eleven years old, is another hero of the Faith. Three prejudiced and cruel teachers, one of whom was violent, argued with him and threatened and abused him because of his being a Bahá'í. When they felt they had punished him adequately in this fashion, they took him to a room, gave him a booklet which was written against the Faith, and compelled him to write repeatedly from this booklet certain sentences which attacked the Faith in offensive language. This punishment became so great that Ármán developed severe headaches, which the doctors said were caused by nervous pressure.

5. Ru'yá has just become fifteen years old and is in the first year of secondary school. Her school is not in a remote village where prejudiced and uneducated people might be expected to live. It is in one of the prosperous localities north of Ṭihrán and is supposedly more civilized. When this school had been opened for a few years, an instructor of religion entered a classroom of new students, and first asked, 'Is there anyone in this class who does not belong to the true religion?' Nobody replied. The instructor then said, 'What I meant was, is there a Bahá'í in the class?' Ru'yá stood up and announced that she was a Bahá'í. The teacher then said in abusing and insulting language, 'Let it be known to all of you that Ru'yá is defiled and untouchable and none of you are to have any contact with her.' She demanded that Ru'yá sit in the back of the room at a desk by herself, and those who were sitting at that particular desk were given another place. The instructor stated that this arrangement was to be observed until the end of the year and that nobody was allowed to sit next to her.

I have asked some of these children to write about their experiences and the types of discussions they have had with their teachers and fellow students. A beautiful compilation has been made, and although it has been composed by these children in simple language, it demonstrates the depth of their understanding of the Faith and their profound love for Bahá'u'lláh.

3 November 1981

My dear Brother,

. . . I do not know where to begin, there is too much to be written about. In these days of constant struggle our children are in the vanguard. They always produce wonders. What is transpiring here is exceptional. Where were these heroes before? They must have existed but it is only now that they are able to manifest their spiritual potentialities, to reveal their precious essence, to prove the validity of the spiritual training they received from their families.

Most of our children, in different degrees, have now been given opportunities in their schools to demonstrate their heroism. In the Land of Ya [Yazd], the home of the brave, opportunities abound. So far over one hundred of our children have been expelled from their schools because they are Bahá'ís. Their dismissal, which ordinarily one would expect would be the cause of sadness, has produced in them a joy and vitality which I cannot describe. Because of their response to their dismissal, all Yazd is shaken. Our precious children have shown such courage as to have caused all Yazd to wonder. It should be said that all these children are among the very best students in the city.They attained the highest marks, were known for their exemplary conduct and were recognized as being exceptionally talented and intelligent. This has given rise to the first question among the people of Yazd: Why should the best be expelled?

The second question in the minds of those

who have expelled them arises from the courage and perseverance of these young ones. Although they were dismissed from school in an atmosphere charged with hatred and prejudice, our children have, with a sense of pride and a consciousness of being related to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, collected their books and school bags with placid joy and left the school, smiling and walking with a light step, while their non-Bahá'í school friends wept for them.

I have to interrupt this letter as the telephone is ringing.

(Later)

I have been informed that six members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán have been arrested. Never a moment of peace! What strength is required to be able to concentrate our thoughts and compose our feelings!

I was writing about our children. The believers of Yazd have told us that there are very few Bahá'í children in the city who are unhappy and cry—they are those who as yet have not been expelled from the schools.

The teachers, and even headmasters, are extremely upset by the instruction from the Ministry to dismiss Bahá'í children. One headmaster decided to resign after receiving the order to dismiss his Bahá'í students but he was firmly warned against tendering his resignation. However, on the day of the dismissal of the Bahá'í students he absented himself from school, having clearly stated that he had no wish to witness such an unjust action.

(Later)

I have been interrupted by another phone call. A husband and wife in Karaj have been executed by firing squad for their 'Zionist' activities. My thoughts immediately go out to Mr. and Mrs. —— who are imprisoned in Karaj. Is this news true? Is it about them? Until we can verify this report, what anxiety we have to endure! The air is thick with rumours these days, none of them good. God knows what consternation fills our minds until we are able to verify the truth or falsehood of these rumours.

I'm sorry—I was diverted again. This is what is happening to our children:

On the appointed day the teacher asks the class whether there are any Bahá'ís among the students. Our children—our patient, well-behaved, faithful and steadfast children—stand up and with great pride and courage introduce themselves as Bahá'ís. They are then sent to the office of the headmaster. The teachers, and sometimes the headmasters, are embarrassed and sad. In the office of the headmaster the children are first asked to deny their faith and continue their studies. These requests are in many instances expressed with love and concern because the staff in the school really like these distinguished and outstanding students and do not want to lose them. But what they hear from these children surprises them. The children announce that they are Bahá'ís, that they personally decided to be Bahá'ís, that they cannot lie and deny their faith, and that they are proud of what they believe! At this point the headmaster and teachers have no alternative but to sign the order expelling them.

These children range in age from seven to seventeen or eighteen. It is a sight to see how cheerfully the Bahá'í children leave the school with no sense of shame, while their non-Bahá'í fellow students look on thoughtfully, some even weeping. Disturbances occur in the classroom after the Bahá'í children leave, and challenging discussions take place between the remaining pupils and their teachers. The children put questions until the end of the school day and the discussion is carried out to the streets. The non-Bahá'í students invariably ask: 'Isn't it true that we are supposed to have freedom of belief? What's wrong with the Bahá'í children—don't they worship God and pray? Why are they being dismissed?' The children carry their questions home. Their queries spread to all parts of the city and are taken up in the streets and the bazaars.

The parents of the dismissed Bahá'í children—themselves the essence of patience and steadfastness—exclaim with pride: 'What we have failed to achieve, our children are now achieving!' They praise the children with candour and love. I doubt whether in the history of any society such honour has been heaped upon children of so tender an age. The parents remark: 'It is true that in the 138 years since the beginning of our Faith we have endured many hardships, but we have never

been so successful as our children in proclaiming to the masses of the people of Yazd the exalted character of the Bahá'í Revelation, nor have our actions resulted, as have our children's, in creating an atmosphere in which the Faith is being discussed so openly among the people in the streets and bazaars. Our persecuted children have succeeded in breaking through the barrier of prejudice of the hard-hearted people of this city.'

The parents go on to exclaim: 'The events of the past have made us conservative and cautious; it is our children who have changed the atmosphere.' . . . This change had its early beginnings last year when the martyrs shed their blood on the soil of Yazd. This change cannot be measured by existing standards.

A programme of study has been arranged for our children at home; they are learning with great speed and progressing in all fields of knowledge. They will surely surpass their fellow students who are still in school. More important than this, we have promised ourselves to help these children become so well versed in the Holy Writings that each will become the envy of scholars. There is no doubt that this will come to pass.

Let me tell you something about the adults. The Bahá'í men and women—particularly the women—are facing tribulations with such equanimity that no comparable example can be found even among the legendary heroines of the past. These women are in fact creating new legends through their patience, steadfastness, love and detachment. They have conquered the hearts of everyone and won the praises of all. The forces of hatred have been vanquished by the power of their faith. When they are looted of their property, furniture and belongings they part with them as they would with outworn dolls and playthings, looking on as though they were mere spectators. They shower love upon those who come to take away their belongings as might an affectionate and indulgent parent who with a smile will give a worthless toy or plaything to a naughty child. It appears that they even enjoy the naughtiness of these children.

Such behaviour has greatly influenced the hearts of the looters who are not great in number. Mr. K.— that heartless man who is the leader of those who are executing the Bahá'ís and confiscating their properties, and whose main task is to uproot the Faith in Yazd —is often seen entering the homes of the Bahá'ís, knocking upon their doors at any hour of the day or night. He has become such a familiar figure that the Bahá'ís jest with him, saying, 'You have become one of us!' He even knows the nicknames of the Bahá'í children. If he does not make an appearance for some time the Bahá'ís tell him they miss him. Although Mr. K. comes to take away their property or to send their loved ones to prison, they are pleasant to him, joke with him, enquire about his health. They even tell him that one day he should become a Bahá'í in order to understand the significance of what he is now doing.

. . . The Bahá'ís of Yazd say that this unfeeling man, Mr. K., is treated by them as a member of the family. When he comes to seize their furniture the young men of the family help him carry out the heavier pieces; when he arrives they invite him to join them at the table and give him sweets, fruits, even meals. After he has eaten he goes around the house and selects the furniture he wants to take away. If he does not have a vehicle available he gestures toward the selected articles of furniture and tells the owner, 'These are my trust with you; keep them safely until I return.' He sometimes even proposes that the family might buy back the furniture from him.The behaviour of the longsuffering Bahá'ís in these appalling circumstances is unprecedented. They recognize that they are indeed giving away worthless trinkets, as to an ignorant child.

The Bahá'ís whose homes have been confiscated do not leave the city but move to a small dwelling place, wherever they can find refuge . . . Almost all the Bahá'í men have been required to leave the city and this has provided the children, youth and women an opportunity to prove their courage and valour. How proud we are of them! What a creation has Bahá'u'lláh raised up! Such conduct has been unheard of, even in legends. When the Bahá'ís of Yazd themselves relate these events they express amazement at the change in themselves. The people of Yazd have the reputation of being economical and thrifty; it is said that two families of Yazd could fight between themselves over posses-

sion of a valueless stick of wood. But look at them now! They have given up everything to show their love for Bahá'u'lláh. When one extends sympathy to them they express surprise, remarking that what they have parted with is worthless. They do not even denounce the thieves and looters when referring to them.

I cannot overlook mentioning a mother and daughter who are in prison—they are examples. The daughter is sixty years old and the mother is over eighty. The fact of imprisoning such elderly innocent women is in itself very strange, but it has been done. These women are Bahá'ís of Zoroastrian background. All their possessions were confiscated and they are now in the women's prison with over one hundred prisoners of all kinds.

A few months ago a release order was issued for the mother, but she refused to leave unless her daughter was also released, so they remained in prison. Only ten days ago the authorities at last gave permission for them to receive occasional visitors.

Bahá'í visitors have witnessed the old woman embracing and demonstrating affection to the policewoman, before she would come forward to meet her visitors. During the course of the visit the old woman noticed a young male guard who was supposed to control the visitors. In her special Parsi–Yazdi accent she maternally addressed complimentary remarks to him with such obvious love and sincerity that the young man was visibly uncomfortable and ashamed. She remarked to her visitors, 'I always thought that mothers could really love only their own children, but I have come to feel genuine love for these young men who are on duty.' The young guard had nothing to say, but stood with bowed head.

The fire of sincere love is melting the ice of hatred. Then with remarkable candour this old woman, more than eighty years of age, said to her visitors, 'Tell everybody that Bahá'u'lláh has enabled me to perform miracles. Tell them that the Bahá'í prayers which I copy out for the sick ones in this prison cause them to become cured.' She related how one of the guards sought her out excitedly to tell her his story. 'I was searching for you,' he said. 'I wanted to tell you that the prayers you wrote out for me and my wife a year ago have been answered and our wish to have a baby is fulfilled. This has made it unnecessary for me to divorce my wife for her inability to conceive a child.'

In the evenings the women prisoners crowd together around the mother and daughter and ask them to tell them stories and speak to them. They speak most beautifully and with such a sweet accent that nobody wants to go to sleep. Even the guards do not object.

When Sarafráz, the mother, has a visitor, she begs them to bring fruit from her orchard in order to make a feast for the prisoners. The old woman does not know that her orchard and other properties have been confiscated. But the visitors know what to do. They purchase large quantities of fruit so she can provide hospitality to her fellow prisoners. When have you heard stories like this?

Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The climate of this city in the midst of the desert is changed and the perfume of the love of God has filled all corners. In my next letter I will write you more such stories—if I am still alive, or free . . .

H. DETAILED SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, NATIONAL AND LOCAL BAHÁ'Í INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS, NON-BAHÁ'Í ORGANIZATIONS AND PROMINENT PEOPLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF ÍRÁN

September 1978–April 1983

1978

September

- *United States*—The National Spiritual Assembly sent a message to the Ambassador of Írán in Washington reporting on disturbances in Írán, expressing the concern of the Bahá'ís in the United States, stressing the non-involvement of Bahá'ís in political affairs, and stating they were relying on the justice and ability of authorities in Írán to protect the lives, properties and rights of the Bahá'ís there.

November

- *The Bahá'í International Community* released a statement to the news media about the disturbances in Írán involving members of the Bahá'í community.
- *United States*—The National Assembly informed President Carter about the situation, offered to send a delegation to the White House, and asked for his intercession and requested him to convey the concern of the Bahá'ís to the Iranian Government.

December

- *Assemblies*—National Assemblies pursued a well-organized campaign of approaching the media, providing them with accurate information about the Faith.
- Most National Assemblies cabled the Prime Minister of Írán expressing their concern and appealing for assistance in safeguarding the lives of the Bahá'ís and protecting the Bahá'í Holy Places in Írán.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* shared the above information with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and appropriate UN offices, urging them to intervene on behalf of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

1979

February

- *United States*—Senator Dole issued an appeal to President Carter to help Jewish, Christian and Bahá'í communities in Írán.
- National and Local Assemblies, as well as individual Bahá'ís, offered articles to the media, letters to editors and statements to radio and television, repudiating falsehoods about the Faith and providing the true facts.

March

- *United States*—The House of Representatives of the State of Illinois adopted a resolution deploring the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán and petitioning President Carter to request Ayatollah Khomeini and the Iranian Government to recognize the Faith as a religious movement and to assure the people of Írán that all religious minorities including the Bahá'í Faith will have full political, cultural and religious rights. Copy of this document went to President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.
- 22 United States Senators wrote to the Prime Minister of Írán asking his intervention regarding the persecution of religious and ethnic minorities, including the Bahá'ís.

April

- *Alaska*—A resolution was passed by the Senate of the State of Alaska and was sent to President Carter and the Secretary of State, expressing concern regarding the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán and appealing to the United States Government to use its efforts to stop religious persecution and restriction of human rights in Írán.

May

- *Assemblies*—30 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to the Prime Minister of Írán with a copy to the Iranian Embassy or Consulate in their countries offering to send a delegation to explain the Bahá'í position and convey the deep concern of the Bahá'ís for the safety of Bahá'í Holy Places in Írán.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* sent a letter to the Iranian representative of the United Nations regarding the above and sought an interview.
- 30 National Assemblies again contacted their Iranian Embassies or Consulates, in writing, about the proposed Constitution of Írán omitting the Bahá'í Faith as a minority religion, for transmittal to the Iranian authorities. They also offered to send a delegation to the Embassy or Consulate, and meetings subsequently took place in many of these countries.
- *Bahá'í International Community*—a cable was sent to the Prime Minister of Írán outlining the Bahá'í position in respect to accusations levelled against the Bahá'ís of Írán.

June

- *Assemblies*—104 National Assemblies and over 10,000 Local Assemblies sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini regarding the expropriation of Bahá'í properties in Írán.
- National Assemblies intensified their publicity campaigns about the above.
- *Switzerland*—Swiss Parliamentarians issued a statement about the Bahá'í religious minority in Írán, expressing their concern and hope that in future the Bahá'ís would enjoy freedom and have their rights recognized. Most European National Spiritual Assemblies attempted to obtain similar statements from their Parliamentarians.
- A letter was sent from the Secretary-General of the *International Commission of Jurists* to the Prime Minister of Írán expressing the hope that the new Constitution for Írán would include provisions 'to safeguard the rights of minorities, whether ethnic, religious, or of other kinds, with effective remedies for their enforcement'. He went on to say that 'these rights should be extended to those minorities which may at times have incurred unpopularity, such as the members of the Bahá'í Faith. We would urge that, in accordance with the well-known Islamic traditions of tolerance, they should also be assured such rights and protection.'

July

- *Assemblies*—42 National Spiritual Assemblies cabled the Iranian Embassy or Consulate in their countries expressing their concern for the growing persecutions in Írán and appealing to them for the restitution of the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Írán and other properties and the recognition of the Bahá'í Faith as a minority religion.
- Many National Spiritual Assemblies offered help to Iranian students residing in their countries, since their funds had been cut off because of the Iranian Government freezing the assets of Nawnáhálán Co.
- 17 National Spiritual Assemblies sent a copy of an open letter (prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán and distributed in Írán to the press, appropriate governmental authorities, prominent people, etc., clarifying the position of the Bahá'ís in the Cradle of the Faith) to the Iranian Bahá'ís in their areas.
- *Hawaiian Islands*—The Governor wrote to President Carter expressing the concern of the National Spiritual Assembly and Local Spiritual Assemblies in Hawaii about the persecution of their fellow Bahá'ís in Írán.

August

- *Assemblies*—42 National Spiritual Assemblies continued their active proclamation of the Faith, expressing their hope that provision would be made in the new Iranian Constitution for the protection of the true civil rights of the Bahá'í community of Írán.
- 42 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini and the Prime Minister of Írán as well as to the Iranian Embassy or Consulate in their countries, regarding the imminent demolition of the House of the Báb in Shíráz, conveyed this information to Government officials of their countries and shared a press release with all media.
- 60 additional National Spiritual Assemblies later sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini regarding the above.
- 42 National Spiritual Assemblies informed Government officials and the media about

damages to the House of the Báb, urging the Iranian Government to return the House to the Bahá'ís.
- 43 National Spiritual Assemblies contacted Government officials, their respective Iranian Embassy or Consulate and the media in their countries regarding the fact that the new Iranian Constitution did not include the Bahá'ís as a religious minority.
- *United States*—Many Senators and Congressmen protested to the President and Department of State concerning the plight of the Iranian Bahá'ís.

September
- *Switzerland—The Human Rights Commission of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Switzerland* issued a declaration on the state of religious minorities in Írán specifically about the state of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

October
- *Assemblies*—43 National Spiritual Assemblies contacted officials and the press, refuting accusations made against the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Austria*—A delegation of the National Spiritual Assembly met with the authorities of the Iranian Embassy.
- *Trinidad and Tobago*—A protest was made by the Bureau on Human Rights to the UN Division of Human Rights in New York.
- *United Kingdom*—The Prime Minister expressed the concern of the Bahá'ís to the Iranian Ambassador and asked what action could be taken.
- *United States*—A letter was sent to the Prime Minister of Írán signed by 28 States Senators.
- An address was made by a Congressman in the House of Representatives of the United States.

November
- *Assemblies*—25 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with Government authorities copies of correspondence received from the Iranian Embassy in their countries, as well as replies made.
- 95 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to the Secretary of the Revolutionary Council and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Írán regarding the further demolition of the House of the Báb, despite assurances by the Government that it would be protected.
- *Canada*—A debate was held in the House of Commons.
- *United States*—A delegation of the National Assembly met with officials at the Iranian Embassy in Washington D.C.

December
- *Luxembourg*—A statement was issued from all 3 Parliamentary parties expressing their concern regarding the situation in Írán and asking that the rights of the Bahá'í community be protected through the new Iranian Constitution.
- An address was made by a Congressman in the House of Representatives of the United States.

1980

June
- *Assemblies*—43 National Spiritual Assemblies sent delegations to the Iranian Embassy or Consulate in their countries expressing their concern regarding the freedom and safety of the Bahá'ís of Írán. They also wrote letters to be transmitted to the Iranian Government by the Embassy or Consulate.
- 7 National Spiritual Assemblies contacted the highest officials of their Governments dealing with foreign affairs.
- 8 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini, the President and Head of the Revolutionary Council in Írán regarding articles in *Le Monde* and in Iranian newspapers, conveying their concern about the fate of the Iranian Bahá'ís, asking them to take measures to protect them. They also shared a copy of these cables with their Iranian Embassy and informed the news media.
- 95 National Spiritual Assemblies, on behalf of the Bahá'ís in their communities, cabled Ayatollah Khomeini, the President of Írán and the Head of the Supreme Court about the ominously increasing pressures against the Bahá'ís in Írán; 41 of these National Spiritual Assemblies sent copies of these cables to the Iranian Embassies in their

countries, and 87 of them sent copies to high officials and the media.
- 87 National Spiritual Assemblies enlisted the support of prominent leaders and contacted the media regarding the continuation of the wave of persecutions.
- 16 European Assemblies approached the Council of Europe regarding the above.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* conveyed to appropriate offices and individuals the plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Canada*—A resolution was adopted by the Parliament and forwarded to the UN Secretary-General.
- *India*—A letter was sent from a former Chief Justice to the Secretary-General of the UN, proposing to raise the question of the Bahá'í persecutions on an international level by protest of judges and jurists of the world.
- *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*—The Governor wrote to President Carter asking that appropriate action be taken to focus world attention on the plight of Bahá'ís of Írán.
- *Netherlands*—9 political factions of the Dutch Parliament, comprising 148 of the total 150 members, signed a letter to the Iranian Embassy expressing concern about the growing number of executions of members of religious minorities in Írán and specifically mentioning the Bahá'ís.
- *The Government of Western Samoa* asked its Ambassador in the UN to lodge a complaint about persecutions of all minorities in Írán.

August
- *Assemblies*—96 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to the President and Prime Minister of Írán protesting the arrest of all members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán and two Auxiliary Board members. All but 8 of these Assemblies contacted the officials in their countries, and 86 sent copies of the above cables to their respective Embassy or Consulate and requested an interview, and shared the news with the mass media. 16 of these Assemblies informed their respective representatives of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament.
- *Australia*—The Minister for Foreign Affairs asked the Iranian Chargé d'Affaires to inform the Iranian Government of the Australian Government's concern about the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Luxembourg*—A letter was sent from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs to the Ambassador of Írán in Luxembourg asking his intervention with the Iranian Government, and asking that the persecution of the Bahá'ís cease.

September
- *Assemblies*—Regarding 8 martyrs in Yazd —93 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to the President and Prime Minister in Írán; 87 of them contacted Government officials and protested to their respective Iranian Ambassador or Consul; 89 of them stepped up their publicity campaign and placed articles about the Faith in widely-read magazines and periodicals; and 3 Assemblies included the relatives of martyrs in their publicity projects.
- *Australia*—A motion (notice given) was made in the House of Representatives.
- *Europe—UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, Geneva*—A resolution was passed on 10 September.
- *European Parliament*—A resolution was adopted on 19 September.
- *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*—A resolution was tabled on 29 September.

October
- *Canada*—'Írán's Secret Pogrom' was presented on W5TV network.

November
- *Assemblies*—56 National Spiritual Assemblies informed Government authorities about the problems facing the displaced Iranian Bahá'ís and many of them appointed committees to assist the friends. The National Spiritual Assemblies of Canada and Australia have worked with the immigration authorities in their countries to expedite the processing of applications of Iranian Bahá'ís for immigration into their countries.
- 43 National Spiritual Assemblies sent letters to their respective Iranian Ambassador or Consul regarding the recrudescence of the persecutions, shared the news with the

media and enlisted the support of eminent figures in humanitarian, business and professional circles who pledged use of their influence to help. They also maintained contact with Government officials.

December

- *Assemblies*—Regarding the martyrdom of the Ma'ṣúmís—21 National Spiritual Assemblies informed officials of their Governments and attempted to induce the news media to make efforts to obtain a report from their representatives in Írán if possible. *The Bahá'í International Community* informed the Human Rights Division of the United Nations, expressing the concern of the world-wide Bahá'í community over the fate of innocent Bahá'ís.

1981

January

- *Assemblies*—44 National Spiritual Assemblies and the *Bahá'í International Community* contacted the media, medical organizations, etc. in connection with the assassination of Professor Manúchihr Ḥakím which occurred on 12 January 1981.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies stepped up their contacts with authorities, organizations and the media regarding the assassination of Professor Ḥakím and their apprehension about the Bahá'ís in Írán losing their jobs because of their Faith.

February

- *Assemblies*—44 National Spiritual Assemblies used documents from Írán (which provide evidence of the persecution of the Bahá'ís) in their approaches to the authorities.
- 45 National Spiritual Assemblies informed authorities and the media about the execution of two of the friends from Ábádih. The *Bahá'í International Community* conveyed this information to the appropriate United Nations agencies.
- 98 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini asking his intervention in the matter of the High Court of Justice in Ṭihrán upholding the verdict of the Shíráz court to execute two Bahá'ís. 16 of these Assemblies contacted appropriate officials and governmental agencies, and 54 used the information in their proclamation efforts.
- *Australia*—The Senate adopted a resolution deploring the persecution of the Bahá'ís of Írán.
- *Europe—UN Human Rights Commission, Geneva—The Bahá'í International Community* made a statement at the 37th session of the Commission on the question of missing and disappeared persons. Statements were also made at this session on the question of violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms by Viscount Colville of Culross (United Kingdom), representatives of the Netherlands, Canada and Australia, the *Bahá'í International Community* and the observer for Írán.

March

- *Amnesty International* issued a press release regarding the execution of Col. Vaḥdat reported to have occurred on 18 March but denied on 19 March.
- *Hawaiian Islands*—The director of the Bahá'í Public Relations Department gave a report on the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís as a part of the 30-minute report 'Genocide in the World' on KGMB-TV.

April

- *Europe—European Parliament*—A second resolution was passed on 10 April.

May

- *Assemblies*—Regarding the imminent obliteration of the site of the House of the Báb, 100 National Spiritual Assemblies brought the matter to the attention of their Governments and the media, and 85 of them sent a cable to the nearest Iranian Embassy asking it to convey to Írán the profound concern of the Bahá'ís over the persecutions.
- Regarding the 7 martyrs of Hamadán—100 National Spiritual Assemblies sent cables to Ayatollah Khomeini requesting his personal intervention, and sent a copy of the cable to the nearest Iranian Embassy with a letter appealing for their assistance. 118 sent cables to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, asking him to arrange to

send a special representative or a UN Commission to Írán to ascertain the facts and assist the Bahá'ís. Thousands of Local Spiritual Assemblies, groups and isolated centres sent similar cables. 43 Assemblies shared copies of the cables with their Governments, appealing to them to make their own pleas to the Iranian authorities and to urge the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take action; and shared copies with the media on national and local levels; with humanitarian organizations concerned with human rights; and prominent people of goodwill. 100 shared by letter to appropriate UN offices copy of the cable to the Secretary-General from their Assemblies and samples of cables from their Local Spiritual Assemblies.

- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies cabled the Iranian Embassy for transmittal to Írán expressing their shock over 3 more executions. They also maintained contact with their Governments, urging them to use measures open to them, and intensified their publicity campaigns.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies registered the protest of the entire Bahá'í world to their Governments, respective Iranian Embassies and the mass media regarding the execution of 4 more Bahá'ís.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* prepared a brief general statement for the Dutch representative to the United Nations for transmittal to Ambassadors in Ṭihrán.
- *Europe—Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*—A resolution was tabled on 14 May.
- *France*—A letter was sent from *Action by Christians for the Abolishment of Torture* to Ayatollah Khomeini, referring to the inhumane treatment of Bahá'ís.
- *Germany*—A resolution was adopted by the German Federal Parliament.
- *United Kingdom*—A letter was written to the UN Secretary-General by the President of Trinity College, and was signed by 12 heads of other colleges in Oxford, England.
- *United States*—A cable was sent to Alexander Haig, Department of State, from the *Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism*.
- *The Pacific Conference of Churches* sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General.
- A publication of the *Írán Committee for Democratic Action and Human Rights* urged widespread protests against violations of basic rights of the religious minorities in Írán.
- A letter was written to the UN Secretary-General by the President of the *Wilmette Rotary Club* urging intervention by the United Nations to prevent further violations to the human rights of the Bahá'ís.

June

- *United Kingdom*—A member of Parliament tabled an 'early day motion' in the House of Commons 'calling upon Her Majesty's Government to make urgent representations to the Iranian Government to give the Bahá'í community legal recognition and protection under the provisions of the UN Convention on Human Rights and put an end to the persecution of members of the Bahá'í community'.

July

- *Assemblies*—All National Spiritual Assemblies received a copy of the resolution adopted by the European Parliament and most of them used this document in their contacts with the authorities and the media.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies informed their Governments of two more executions and of the steadily deteriorating situation.
- All National Spiritual Assemblies received a copy of the resolution passed by the German Parliament deploring the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Írán and 86 of these Assemblies used this document in their approaches to the authorities.
- *Canada*—A second resolution was unanimously adopted by the House of Commons condemning the persecution of the Bahá'ís, particularly deploring the desecration of the House of the Báb.
- *Belgium*—The Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly in response to the King's request to answer question—besides supporting the action of the European Economic Community (EEC), the diplomatic representative was given instructions for the protection of members of the Bahá'í community.
- *Germany*—A letter was written to the National Assembly from the Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

- *Netherlands*—A resolution on the religious persecutions in Írán was passed by the *International Association for Religious Freedom* at its Congress in Holland.
- *United Kingdom*—A letter was written to the UN Secretary-General by the Master of *Balliol College* in Oxford, England.
- A resolution was passed in a meeting of the House of Commons.
- *United States*—A speech was made from the floor of the House of Representatives.

August

- *Assemblies*—21 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with their Governments and the media the news of the perilous situation in Yazd.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies encouraged or engaged well-known journalists to write articles about the Faith.
- 30 National Spiritual Assemblies began setting up Persian Relief Funds in their countries.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with their Governments reports on the imprisonment and summary trials of some of the martyrs.
- *Australia*—A resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives.
- *Europe—UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva*—A statement was made by the *Bahá'í International Community* on Agenda item 6.
- *France*—President Mitterrand wrote to the National Assembly.
- 16 French-speaking National Spiritual Assemblies received French President Mitterrand's letter and shared the contents with the authorities in their countries.

September

- *Assemblies*—40 National Spiritual Assemblies used, in their approaches to Government officials, documents providing evidence regarding the persecution of Bahá'í students in Írán and abroad.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with the media news about the execution in Írán of 6 more Bahá'ís.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies, especially in countries involved with the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, brought to the attention of their Governments news of the dire developments in Yazd.
- Most National Spiritual Assemblies informed the media of the above.
- *Australia*—Representation in connection with the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán was made by the National Spiritual Assembly to the heads of the Commonwealth Governments when they met in Australia in September/October.
- *Bahamas*—Information about the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán was presented to some of the 42 heads of delegations attending the *Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Conference.*
- *Central African Republic*—A letter was received from the *Minister of Missions and Religious Organizations* saying that the Government would support within all branches of the UN respect for the principle of freedom of conscience, and for protection against the violation of human rights.
- *Europe—UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva*—A resolution was adopted on 9 September.
- *Germany*—TV 'Weltspiegel'—an original BBC videotape was viewed with a commentary in German.
- *Luxembourg*—A letter was received from the *President of the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg* condemning the persecutions 'by reason of religion', and outlining steps it is taking to help the Iranian Bahá'ís.
- *United States—Newsweek* article, 22 Sept. 1981.
- An interview was held with Glenford Mitchell on WBBM TV on the persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís. *Focus Report.*

October

- *Assemblies*—21 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with Government officials information about the broadcast on 'Voice of America' regarding a new campaign to exterminate Bahá'ís in Írán.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with Government officials and the media news regarding further acts of persecution.
- *Bangladesh*—A letter was sent from the High Commissioner of Canada for Bangla-

desh expressing sympathy and 'extending a helping hand'.
- *Italy*—A letter was sent from the Undersecretary of State to member of Parliament Mr. Fiandrotti regarding steps the Italian Government has taken to assist the Bahá'ís.
- *UN General Assembly*—Reference to the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán was made by the United States alternate representative of the United Nations in the Third Committee of the 36th session of the Assembly, on the 'Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination'. Statements were also made by the representative from Fiji, and by the representative from the United Kingdom, on behalf of the member States of the European Economic Community.

November
- *Amnesty International* published a large article about the Bahá'ís of Írán written by Curt Goering of its Washington D.C. office.
- *Assemblies*—21 National Spiritual Assemblies informed their Governments about the building of the road through the site of the House of the Báb, the issuance by the Iranian Government to its Consular representatives throughout the world of an order to compile a list of Bahá'ís and refrain from extending passports of Iranian Bahá'ís, the raiding of the National Spiritual Assembly office in Írán and the arrest of 6 members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán.
- *Costa Rica*—The Minister of Justice sent a letter to the National Assembly saying he will willingly collaborate in the task of denouncing the violation of human rights of the Bahá'ís of Írán.
- *Finland*—An enquiry was made by eleven members of Parliament to the Speaker of the Parliament, requesting that the members of the Cabinet advise them what action it plans to take to condemn the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Iceland*—A Bahá'í delegation visited the President, and the friends received an unprecedented amount of publicity.
- *Írán*—The Dutch Ambassador in Ṭihrán conveyed the concern of his Government over the fate of the Bahá'í community of Írán.
- *Luxembourg*—An interview was held with attorney Robert Krieps, lawyer and deputy of the Chamber of Deputies, regarding Iranian Bahá'ís living in Luxembourg. Iranian nationals who hold Luxembourg I.D. cards can stay in the country, but may not travel abroad.
- *The Netherlands*—A letter was received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs sharing the alarm of the Bahá'ís, and mentioning the raising of the matter by the TEN European countries at the UN General Assembly.
- *Thailand*—The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone met with Ambassadors of Canada and Australia in Bangkok, Thailand, establishing friendly contacts and receiving assurances of the interest and sympathy of their respective Governments.
- *UN General Assembly*—Statements were made in the Third Committee of the 36th session of the Assembly under ECOSOC Report; Human Rights situations, by representatives of the following countries: Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Sweden.
- A resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly (Third Committee): 'the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance.'

December
- *Alaska*—The Auke Bay Local Spiritual Assembly had a 10-minute interview on KINY-TV.
- *Amnesty International* telexed most of its national sections calling for action regarding members of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán and the arrest of the 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly. The recommended action was: telegrams and airmail letters to Iranian authorities asking for clarification of the reasons for the arrest of these Bahá'ís and their present whereabouts.
- *Assemblies*—Many National Spiritual Assemblies asked their Governments for help in dealing with Bahá'ís holding Iranian passports.
- 21 National Spiritual Assemblies informed the media and Government officials that the Bahá'í cemetery in Ṭihrán had been seized and the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Tákur had

been demolished. Many other National Spiritual Assemblies later took similar action.
- Many National Spiritual Assemblies contacted Government officials and the media regarding the arrest of 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán.
- *Australia*—A letter was received from the Acting Foreign Minister saying that the Government will continue its efforts in international forums to heighten the world's awareness of the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* issued a press release about the execution of the 8 National Spiritual Assembly members, and many National Spiritual Assemblies shared the above news with their Governments and the media. The Bahá'í International Community also informed the UN Secretary-General.
- Letters were sent to selected National Assemblies in Europe from the *Bahá'í International Community* regarding the forthcoming 38th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, 1 February–12 March 1982.
- *Gambia and Senegal*–The friends contacted high officials of the Government and obtained 'positive results'.
- Bahá'í representatives had a favourable interview with the Ambassador at the Senegalese Embassy.
- *Ghana*—A half-hour radio interview was held, as well as a press conference.
- *Greece*—Announcements were made on radio and TV about the execution of 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán.
- *Liberia*—The friends distributed booklets entitled *Plight of the Bahá'í Faith in Írán* to the Head of State, Government officials and the media. As a result, letters were received from the Acting Minister of State, the Assistant Minister of Afro-Asian Affairs, Deputy Minister of Justice, Minister of Rural Development and Urban Reconstruction, Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Minister of Education, et al., all in Monrovia, Liberia.

1982

January
- *Argentina*—A proclamation folder 'Special Report on Írán' was prepared for presentation to authorities and prominent people.
- *Assemblies*—22 National Spiritual Assemblies appealed to their Governments to lend support to the request of the Bahá'í International Community to the UN Secretary-General to investigate denial by Ayatollah Ardibili of the execution of the 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán.
- 22 National Spiritual Assemblies wrote an open letter to the media for the attention and action of the Iranian Embassies in their countries regarding the above.
- At least 22 National Spiritual Assemblies informed the media and appealed to their respective Governments about the execution of 6 members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán and one other person, and asked their Governments to take steps open to them to assist.
- *Australia*—A letter was received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs about being informed by the Australian Embassy in Ṭihrán of the execution of 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán. He promised to move for a strong statement at the February 1982 meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* cabled Ayatollah Khomeini, the President of the Supreme Court and the Prime Minister of Írán regarding the execution of the 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán.
- *The Bahá'í International Community* wrote a letter to the Division of Human Rights, Geneva, with a 7-page summary of a report submitted to Mr. van Boven, Director of the Division of Human Rights.
- *Belize*—The National Spiritual Assembly received a letter from the Prime Minister stating it is a 'sad situation and is abhorred by all right and thinking people. We shall continue to do what is possible to help.'
- *Botswana*—One of the friends met with President Dr. Q. K. J. Masire updating him about the plight of the friends in Írán. If Iranian Embassies do not extend pass-

ports of the Iranian Bahá'ís, the Government will issue special residence permits.
- *Brazil*—A delegation of the National Assembly met with the Ambassador of the Department of Africa, Asia and the Far East, and with the Ambassador of the Department of International Organizations.
- *Central African Republic*—Media—20-minute interview held on Radio Bangui regarding the execution of 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán.
- Immigration—Those Iranian Bahá'ís who can obtain an entry visa do not need work permits and may stay in the country indefinitely without having a valid passport.
- *Europe*—A démarche (joint representation) was made on 31 January 1982 to the Iranian Government in Ṭihrán by the following 15 Governments: Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.
- *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*—A resolution was unanimously adopted (its third) following a 2-hour debate by 18 speakers from 10 countries, supporting the attitude of the Sub-Commission for Human Rights, expressing solidarity towards persons and communities who are unjustly treated, and calling on the Governments of the Council of Europe to use all channels and opportunities to convince the Iranian Government of the necessity to respect the law, etc. (Document #4835 of 18 Jan. 1982—resolution passed on 29 January 1982).
- *France*—The National Spiritual Assembly received a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs regarding the recent executions.
- *Gambia*—Letters were received from the office of the President and the Vice-President, both offering support and assurances that the Gambian Government would stand up to violations of human rights.
- A full 2-page article appeared in *Jeune Afrique*, which has a circulation of about 2 million and goes to *Africa* and all *Arab countries and francophone colonies.*
- *Germany*—The German member of the Council of Europe plans to speak about the Bahá'í situation in Írán at the meeting of the Council in Strasbourg.
- A live interview lasting 8 minutes was held on West German Rundfunk.
- There were more than 240 news articles about the Bahá'í situation in Írán.
- The National Assembly received copies of letters of *Amnesty International* from London and Germany giving details of the recent executions in Írán and asking its members to turn to the Iranian authorities for help for the Bahá'ís.
- *Hawaiian Islands*—Miss Haleh Ṣamímí, daughter of martyr Kámrám Ṣamímí, was interviewed on the 6 and 10 p.m. newscasts on KHON-TV and on two newsreels on KIKU-TV.
- *Italy*—There is clear evidence that the Iranian Embassy is not renewing the passports of Iranian Bahá'ís.
- A meeting of representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly was held with Dr. Lamela at the Home Office regarding the difficulties facing Iranian Bahá'ís in staying and working in Italy.
- A letter was received by the Bahá'í community of San Marino from the Secretary of State of the Republic of San Marino.
- *Kiribati*—A visit of National Assembly representatives was made to officials of immigration—the Government allows Iranians to apply for immigration into the country.
- *Luxembourg*—A press conference was held resulting in 3 news articles and one radio programme.
- A public commemoration was held on behalf of the martyrs in Írán with press and radio releases.
- The National Spiritual Assembly has established friendly relations with the local group of Amnesty International.
- *Mariana Islands*—Representatives of the National Assembly met with the head of immigration on Guam.
- *South and West Africa*—A radio news programme reported the number of telegrams and messages that have been received in Írán from all over the world, including the United Nations, requesting the Iranian Government to stop the persecution of the Bahá'ís.
- *Spain*—Letters were sent to each member

of Parliament, 350 in all, transmitting the White Paper prepared by the Bahá'í International Community. In response one member expressed his solidarity with the Bahá'ís, condemned the repression to which they are subjected and promised to make it widely known to his Parliamentary group. At least six other members acknowledged receipt of the material.
- *Switzerland*—The National Spiritual Assembly wrote to the Federal Councillor, Pierre Aubert, and informed the Federal authorities about the execution of 8 members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán and 6 members of the Local Assembly of Ṭihrán.
- *United States*—An article appeared in the *New York Times*.
- Large memorial gatherings were held in Los Angeles, Boston and New York to honour the Bahá'í martyrs in Írán.
- The Los Angeles (California) Bahá'í community, between 4 and 12 January 1982, was able to obtain time on 13 TV programmes and 1 radio programme, and 4 news articles appeared in 3 major newspapers.
- *Zambia*—Its Public Relations Committee met with the Zambian delegate to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

February
- 22 National Spiritual Assemblies shared with appropriate offices of their respective Governments the letter dated 10 January 1982 from Mr. Mansour Farhang, one-time Ambassador to the United Nations from Írán, to Professor Richard Falk of Princeton University, in which he repudiates a number of accusations made by the Iranian Government against the Bahá'ís.
- *Europe*—A démarche was made by EEC Ambassadors in New York to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 12 February 1982.
- *France*—A letter was received from the President of the Republic expressing his distress about the execution of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán, and saying they are doing all they can. He hopes that expressions of international conscience will incline the authorities to respect the rights of the Bahá'ís.
- An article appeared in *La Croix*, a Catholic newspaper.
- *Germany*—*Amnesty International* organized silent marches for those killed in Írán, including the Bahá'ís.
- *Italy*—Roland Philipp consulted Dr. Hans Benedikter, delegate of the South Tyrolian People's Party to the Roman House. He promised to present a resolution to the Italian Parliament advocating the rights of the Persian Bahá'ís, and to write an article for the German-language daily, etc.
- *Ivory Coast*—Interviews were held between 22 February and 23 March by representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly and Counsellor Thelma Khelgati with the Lord Chancellor, the President of the Supreme Court, 9 Ministers of State, and other prominent people, informing them of the Bahá'í situation prevailing in Írán.
- *Jamaica*—A letter was received from the Governor-General sympathizing with the Bahá'ís and advising them to write to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade for help.
- It appears that the Ministry of National Security and Justice will grant travel documents to replace Iranian passports of three Iranian Bahá'í families, whose passports have expired or are about to expire.
- *Malawi*—a delegation of the National Spiritual Assembly planned to meet with the Secretary to the President and Cabinet.
- *Mexico*—A letter was received from the President, Chamber of Deputies Commission on Foreign Relations, from the Director of the Department of Refugees, office of the Secretary of the Government, and from a lawyer to the Director of the Department of Refugees regarding Iranian Bahá'ís seeking asylum.
- *The Minority Rights Group* published a report (No. 51), 'The Bahá'ís of Írán', by Roger Cooper.
- *Namibia*—Iranian Bahá'ís, who have permanent residence permits, could be given travel documents from the Government if their passports are not returned from the Iranian Embassy. Those with temporary residence visas will be considered case by case.
- *Norway*—A letter was received from the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

advising that on 31 January 1982 Norway took part in a joint 'western address to the Iranian authorities'. (Démarche as cited previously.)
- *Portugal*—A meeting was held with the Secretary to the President of the Parliament, who said it was likely that the President would transmit information about the Bahá'ís of Írán to the Committees for Political Affairs and Rights and Freedom.
- *Spain*—A representative of the National Spiritual Assembly contacted the High Commissioner for Refugees, ascertaining that it is possible to provide Persian Bahá'ís with passports, in collaboration with Spanish police, if the Iranian Embassy will not renew their passports. In some cases they will even help them obtain residency and work permits and extend financial assistance.
- *Swaziland*—A letter was received from the Deputy Prime Minister's office acknowledging receipt of documents about the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán and saying that Swaziland 'supports all those institutions and organizations that work toward this objective', i.e., the promotion of national and international peace and human understanding.
- *Switzerland*—TV programme 'Visiteurs du Soir', a 25-minute interview with Mrs. Christine Hakím-Samandarí about the assassination of her father and the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *UN Press Briefing*—the Secretary-General met with representatives of Belgium, Denmark and the United Kingdom, who expressed the concern of the EEC over the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, as well as summary executions.
- *United Kingdom*—the Bahá'í situation was discussed at a meeting of the House of Lords.
- A letter was received from the Minister of State outlining the steps he has taken.
- *United States*—A Senator spoke in the Senate calling attention to the oppression of Iranian Bahá'ís and encouraging Congressional hearings on the persecution of religious minorities in Írán.

March
- *Assemblies*—Many National Spiritual Assemblies contacted Government officials and the media regarding the martyrdom of 2 more Bahá'ís in Írán and the continuing persecutions, especially in Yazd and Shíráz.
- *Australia*—A question from Representative Carlton was directed to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs regarding the plight of religious minorities in Írán, particularly the Bahá'ís, asking if the Government is able to make a special provision for people to settle in Australia. Mr. Macphee answered about the special humanitarian programme established by the Immigration authorities.
- *Belize*—A Day of Prayer held in memory of the Bahá'í martyrs in Írán was announced in the newspapers and on a 15-minute radio interview. Prayer meetings were held in 6 major towns.
- *Bolivia*—A press conference was held in La Paz resulting in a news article being printed in a major newspaper, *Ultima Hora*. Information folders were distributed to the media in that city.
- Contact was made with the Minister of the Interior by a Bahá'í delegation.
- *Denmark*—An interview was held with Mr. Gerald Knight of the Bahá'í International Community on national TV and radio news programmes.
- *Europe—UN Commission for Human Rights, Geneva*—A resolution was adopted, one of the clauses of which reads as follows:

  'Requests the Secretary-General to establish direct contacts with the Government of Írán on the human rights situation prevailing in that country and to continue his efforts to endeavour to ensure that the Bahá'ís are guaranteed full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.'
- *Europe—UN Commission for Human Rights, Geneva*—A statement was made by the *Bahá'í International Community*, on agenda item 20, 'Report of the Sub-Commission'.
- *Fiji*—The Senate passed a resolution expressing its grave concern over the continuing persecution of the Bahá'ís of Írán and commending the Fiji Government's stand at the Human Rights Commission sessions in Geneva.
- *Finland*—a press conference was held on 18

March at the Hotel Presidentti in Helsinki by Messrs. Gerald Knight and Giovanni Ballerio of the Bahá'í International Community and by representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly of Finland.

- *Hong Kong*—A TV interview was held on Radio Hong Kong, English News Department.
- *Italy*— In the city of Rimini at a preliminary meeting of *Amnesty International*, the Bahá'ís were invited to participate and report on the plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán. They drafted a resolution which will be presented at the 16–18 April meeting of *Amnesty International* in Assisi to arrange for a debate at the World Congress of Amnesty International in Rimini in September 1982.
- *New Caledonia & Loyalty Islands*—The head of the Immigration Office in New Caledonia says that special visas with the possibility of employment will be granted to Iranians holding refugee status documents.
- *New Zealand*—A Bahá'í delegation met with the Governor-General about the plight of the friends in Írán.
- *Samoa*—A letter was sent from the Prime Minister and Departments of the Government sending a message through the Samoan Ambassador to the UN to be transmitted to the Iranian Government through their Embassy, expressing concern for the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán and appealing for an immediate end to these persecutions and executions in the spirit of humanity.
- *Spain*—The Senate's Special Human Rights Commission adopted a declaration condemning the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís.
- *Sweden*—Mr. Knight of the Bahá'í International Community was interviewed on Swedish news TV-1 on 18 March.
- *Switzerland*—A 30-minute radio programme was broadcast from Lugano.
- *United Kingdom*—At a public meeting of *Amnesty International* at Guildford University on the subject of human rights the keynote speaker, Terry Waite, who was sent to Írán to release English missionaries imprisoned there, made a specific plea on behalf of the Bahá'ís of Írán.
- On the TV programme 'Newsnight', Dr. Geoffrey Nash, who wrote *Írán's Secret Pogrom*, was interviewed regarding the persecution of the Bahá'ís as portrayed in his book.
- *United States*—A television documentary was prepared on the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- An article appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* publishing a letter written by the Presbyterian President of the *Southern California Inter-religious Council*, the Executive Vice-President of the *Southern California Board of Rabbis* and the Executive Director of the *Southern California Ecumenical Council*, expressing their sympathy and condemnation over the killing and persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- Senator Sidney Yates spoke in Congress, on the floor of the House of Representatives.
- *Virgin Islands*—Interviews were held on radio and TV.

April

- *Argentina*—A meeting was held with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to update him on news from Írán. A dossier was prepared and presented to authorities and prominent people.
- *Assemblies*—Many National Spiritual Assemblies informed Government officials and the news media about the execution of 2 more Bahá'ís in Írán and the attacks against the friends in Saysán (near Tabríz) and Hiṣár, and the increased arrests that are occurring.
- National Spiritual Assemblies updated the authorities and the media about 8 more executions and a fresh outburst of persecutions against the Bahá'í community in Írán.
- Many National Spiritual Assemblies informed Government officials and the media about the execution of 2 more Bahá'ís in a village near Ṭihrán.
- *Australia*—A 15-minute programme about the Bahá'ís in Írán was aired nationwide on ABC-TV.
- The '60-Minutes' TV news team filmed the special prayer service held by the friends in memory of the Bahá'í martyrs of Írán.
- The '60-Minutes' TV show was aired, a 15-minute segment of it being devoted to the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Brazil*—A speech was made by Senator Leite Chaves to the National Congress ap-

pealing to the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs 'to use his influence with the Iranian Embassy to put a stop to this violation of human rights, expressing the concern of the Senate of Brazil'; and he asked for a motion that the Senate express to the Bahá'í National Convention of Brazil that 'such violence and so much suffering in relation to the followers of religion should cease, as it should, in the country of its birth and of the Founder, where He had received the inspiration to create it and to spread it throughout the world'. (Published in the official *Diário Do Congresso Nacional*, No. 052, 1 May 1982.)

- *Canada—The Committee on the Church and International Affairs of the United Church of Canada* sent a letter to the President of the ICRC in Geneva expressing concern about 'reported attacks on whole communities, such as the Bahá'ís', and urging the ICRC to send an investigation team to Írán to inspect the prisons.
- A letter was sent to the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada assuring its co-operation in any way possible.
- *French Antilles*—FR3 TV in Guadeloupe and Martinique presented simultaneously the interview with Mrs. Christine Hakím-Samandarí made by the French TV company.
- *Germany*—Two members of the National Spiritual Assembly met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Bonn.
- *Hawaiian Islands*—The State Senate passed a resolution urging the pursuit of all available means to put an end to the campaign of genocide against the Bahá'ís of Írán.
- *Hong Kong*—A 3–4-minute TV interview was held with Mr. Ḥabíbu'lláh 'Azízí whose two brothers were martyred in Írán.
- RTV News spot in English and Chinese regarding the execution of 3 Bahá'ís in Karaj.
- *The Netherlands*—A 15-minute programme about the Iranian Bahá'í situation was aired on 'Avro's Televiser', and concluded with a direct appeal to the Dutch Parliament to raise its voice for their protection because 'it may well be too late for the 400,000 innocent people, and we will not be able to say then that we did not know about it'.
- *Northern Ireland*—A 50-minute interview was conducted on Radio FOYLE, publicizing *Írán's Secret Pogrom* and *A Cry from the Heart*.
- *United Kingdom—The Amnesty International Newsletter* contained an article about the martyrdom of six Bahá'ís and asked its members to send cables and letters to President Khamenei and Prime Minister Mousavi expressing concern about the recent executions, stressing AI's opposition to the death penalty, but appealing against the imprisonment and execution of the Bahá'ís in particular.
- *United States*—A letter was received from Senator Bill Bradley.
- A Congressional hearing was held for 2½ hours led by two Congressmen, one of whom introduced a resolution calling for an embargo on Írán until conditions for the Bahá'ís improve. The chairman concluded that resolution 'with teeth' would be adopted to alleviate the suffering of the victims of religious persecution throughout the world.
- The Senate Foreign Relations Committee adopted a resolution a few days before the above, introduced by Senator Heinz (in March).
- *The Tallahassee Ministerial Association* (Florida) passed a resolution regarding the plight of the Iranian Bahá'ís.
- Coffee clubs distributed over 33,000 leaflets regarding the Bahá'í situation in Írán, and 3,000 letters were sent to Congressional representatives protesting the treatment of the Iranian friends.
- *Virgin Islands*—Letters were received from Senators in response to the National Spiritual Assembly's appeal, and one Senator asked for an interview. Another letter was received from a Senator expressing sympathy and hoping 'world leaders will resolve this deplorable act'.

June

- *Chile*—The Spanish edition of the White Paper was sent to all Ministers of State. All acknowledged receipt of this document.
- A letter was received from the Office of Special Affairs of the Chilean Government acknowledging receipt of the Spanish version of the White Paper and inviting the representative of the Bahá'í Public Re-

lations Department of the National Spiritual Assembly to meet with the head of this Office. A 30-minute interview was held on 5 July.

- *France*—A letter was received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Claude Cheysson, stating in part that 'with the encouragement of the French Government, meetings are being held at this moment between the ten countries of the EEC for the purpose of reviewing humanitarian steps taken in January by its members with the Iranian authorities on behalf of the Bahá'ís, as well as action taken in January by these countries to approach the UN Secretary-General'.
- *India*—*The Indian Express*, New Delhi, one of the leading newspapers in India, published a letter from Mr. V. M. Tarkunde, a leading jurist and public figure in India, doubting a claim made by the Iranian Embassy that nobody is persecuted in Írán merely because of his faith. He suggests that a delegation go to Írán to investigate the situation.
- *Kiribati*—National Spiritual Assembly representatives met with the President, who assured them his Government would send a communication to the Iranian Government through the Iranian Embassy in Australia expressing their concern about the persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís. (The communication referred to above was sent on 22 July 1982.)
- *Upper Volta*—A TV programme was aired —documentary from the French TV network about the persecution and execution of Iranian Bahá'ís, including an interview with Mrs. Christine Hakím-Samandarí.

July

- *Assemblies*—National Spiritual Assemblies informed Government officials and the media about the execution of 4 believers in Qazvín and the mounting pressures against the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Australia*—A letter was received by the National Spiritual Assembly from the Minister of Foreign Affairs informing it that Australia joined 15 other countries in making a démarche to the Iranian Government, recalling the deep concern of all countries regarding the position of the Bahá'ís in Írán, and seeking a response and assurances that the Iranian authorities would respect the human rights of the Iranian Bahá'ís.
- The *Bahá'í International Community* reported that the Minority Rights Group Ltd. submitted a report to members of the Human Rights Committee of the UN dealing with compliance by Írán with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- *France*—The National Spiritual Assembly reported that the Chargé d'Affaires of Denmark made representation on behalf of the TEN EEC countries, plus 6 other countries presenting to the Director of the Legal Department of Írán a note about the plight of the Bahá'í community.
- Replies were received from prominent people in response to their receiving the French White Paper, among whom were members of the French Government National Assembly and Senate, the Ministers of Culture and Foreign Affairs, the President, and the Consul General of Grenoble.
- A letter was received from the Technical Adviser to the Minister for European Affairs stating that 'a new step will be undertaken as soon as possible by the representative of the EEC to the Secretary-General of the United Nations'.
- A letter was received from Mr. Vincent Ansquer of the National Assembly of the Republic of France transmitting a copy of a proposal for a resolution of the European Parliament on the plight of the Bahá'í community of Írán. (Document 1-381/82.)
- *New Zealand*—Prime Minister Muldoon wrote a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly advising that the UN Permanent Representatives in New York and Geneva have placed on record New Zealand's concern regarding the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Virgin Islands*—A letter was received by the National Spiritual Assembly from Sidney Lee, Senator of the 14th Legislature, supporting the stand of the Bahá'ís.

August

- *Assemblies*—A number of National Spiritual Assemblies informed the authorities

and the media about the martyrdom of a Bahá'í in Shíráz and another in Úrúmíyyih.
- *Belgium*—A letter was received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs reiterating the concern of the Belgian Government of continuing to bring within the TEN (EEC countries) its contribution to the alleviation of the plight of the Iranian Bahá'í community.
- The European Parliament Socialist Group President sent a letter and proposition of a resolution regarding the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, calling on the Iranian authorities to grant the Bahá'ís their fundamental rights.
- *France*—A letter was received from the Prime Minister, Pierre Mauroy, who asked the partners in EEC countries to undertake new joint steps with the Iranian authorities and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. (France and the Netherlands initiated this step.)
- *The Netherlands*—A petition was presented to the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the Dutch Parliament (160 Bahá'ís took part) and a Bahá'í delegation met with 3 members of the Commission, who promised to bring the petition to the attention of the Foreign Minister.
- The above matter was discussed during a meeting of the Commission for Foreign Affairs and the Minister on 1 September 1982.
- *Virgin Islands*—The President of the 14th Legislature shared her concern and expressed her willingness to help the Bahá'ís.

September
- *Canada*—A meeting was held by National Spiritual Assembly representatives and an Auxiliary Board member with Prime Minister Trudeau, at which time he was briefed on the persecutions of the Iranian Bahá'ís.
- *Europe—UN Human Rights Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva*—A resolution was adopted on 8 September on the topic of religious intolerance.
- *France*—The Minister of Foreign Affairs of France wrote to a Deputy of the National Assembly of the Republic advising him he has asked that steps be renewed to help the Bahá'ís, i.e. to make representation to both the UN Secretary-General and the Iranian authorities.

1983

January
- *Belgium*—An article appeared in the daily newspaper *Le Soir* on 24 January. Two important reactions followed accompanied by a request for regular clarification by the Minister of Finance and a TV journalist.
- *United States*—An article appeared in *The New York Times* on 17 January about Zia Nassry and his experiences in prison in Írán. He told reporters about the torture and wanton killings in Írán prisons and praised the Bahá'í prisoners he met, stating that they 'went to their deaths rather than renounce their faith. There was Postchi, a businessman, Farid, a lawyer; Dr. Farhangi, a physician, and Mowhundal, a science teacher, all of whom were executed.'
- *Virgin Islands*—A letter was received from Ron de Lugo, Member of the U.S. Congress, expressing his concern about the treatment of the Bahá'ís in Írán and pledging his support towards the efforts being made to 'bring about a change in that Government's policies'.
- *Windward Islands*—A delegation of local Bahá'ís met with Foreign Affairs Minister Hudson K. Tannis on 13 January to brief him with details about the persecution of the Iranian believers.

February
- *Amnesty International* sent out on 14 February an Urgent Action appeal for general distribution, asking recipients to send a cable or express letter immediately to one or more of the following: Ayatollah Khomeini, Hojjatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani, President Khamenei or Prime Minister Hussein Musavi. In such communications they should refer to the 22 Bahá'ís in Shíráz who are sentenced to death, stressing Amnesty International's opposition to the use of the death penalty and appealing in particular

for a 'halt to the imprisonment and execution of Bahá'ís'.

- *Australia*—Letters were received from the following: Senator K. Sibraa advising that he would like to be informed of any new developments concerning the situation in Írán; the Commissioner for Community Relations expressing his sympathy for the situation in Írán; the Minister for Health expressing a continued interest in the situation in Írán; and the Minister for Education who said that he will continue to do all he can to encourage his Government to make our concerns known to Írán.
- *Botswana*—Radio Botswana broadcast on two consecutive days news of efforts being made by the Bahá'í International Community in Geneva on behalf of the Bahá'ís in Írán. The news was apparently picked up from an international news source and read on the 7:00 a.m. news.
- *India*—A statement was signed by some of the most prominent people in India appealing to the Iranian Government to stop the execution of the 22 Bahá'ís facing the death sentence in Shíráz. Copies of this appeal were sent to all leading newspapers throughout India.
- *Netherlands*—The Dutch branch of *Amnesty International* consulted the Bahá'í National Assembly for background information about the Faith for publication in a bulletin which also contained the above 14 February despatch.
- *Senegal*—On 3 February representatives of the National Assembly met with two Senegalese representatives to the Human Rights Commission, briefing them about the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Uganda*—A delegation of the National Assembly met with Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials on 28 February 1983. The spokesman from the Ministry said he would brief the President of Uganda before his trip to New Delhi for the non-aligned summit, stated that 'We fully support freedom of religion and are willing to join our voice with others on this issue', and 'will do everything possible to support you on this issue'.
- *United States*—The secretary of the National Assembly met with the Washington representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees about the Iranian Bahá'ís in various countries needing immigration assistance. He also met with many other officials of the Government about the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- The President of the *National Council of Churches*, Bishop James Armstrong, sent a telegram to Ayatollah Khomeini asking him to '. . . spare the lives of those sentenced to death in Írán, who have been imprisoned on the basis of matters of conscience. Reports have reached us of the impending executions of 22 such persons recently sentenced in Shiraz . . .' (22 February).
- *The Temple Beth Ami* in Reseda, California, gathered signatures on petitions denouncing the continued murder and persecution of Bahá'ís in Írán under the Khomeini régime. One set was sent to the UN Secretary-General, and the other to the Senator of their district with a copy to the Congressional Representative.
- Articles appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* (21 February) and the *New York Times* (27 February) about the Bahá'ís under death sentence in Shíráz.

March

- *Europe—Geneva*—The Bahá'í International Community made a statement to the 39th session of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva on 2 March 1983.
- The representative of the Islamic Republic of Írán also made a statement at this session on the same date.
- On 7 March 1983 the United Nations issued Press Release HR/1349 concerning the debate on Religious Intolerance at the Human Rights Commission in Geneva. It contained a statement made by Mrs. Mashid Fatio, representative of the Bahá'í International Community, welcoming the proposals made in the draft resolution before the Commission.
- *The UN Commission on Human Rights* adopted on 8 March a resolution expressing concern for the grave violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Írán, urging the Iranian Government to respect and ensure the rights of all individuals, requesting the Secretary-General or his representative to submit a report on the human rights situation in Írán to the Com-

mission on Human Rights at its 40th session, and requesting the Iranian Government to extend its co-operation to the Secretary-General. Bahá'ís are mentioned specifically in paragraphs 1 and 3. Significant statements which were of help to the Bahá'í case were made by the following Governments:

Item 12: Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Togo, United Kingdom, United States.

Item 19: Status of the International Covenants on Human Rights (which included discussion on the death penalty): the Netherlands.

Item 25: Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief: Canada, Denmark, Fiji, Ireland, the Netherlands, Peru, Switzerland, Togo, United States.

- *European Parliament*—At its meeting in Strasbourg this body unanimously adopted an excellent resolution on 10 March dealing almost exclusively with the situation of the Bahá'ís in Shíráz.
- *Geneva*—On 11 March the United Nations issued Press Release HR/1359 regarding the adoption of measures for continuing action to promote respect for human rights. The release mentioned the resolution about the continuing grave violations of human rights in Írán, specifically mentioning the Bahá'ís, as cited above (Resolution passed on 8 March by UN Human Rights Commission).
- *Ireland*—On 11 March a letter was received by the National Assembly from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that: Ireland co-sponsored a resolution on the human rights question in Írán at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva; its Permanent Representative in Geneva spoke on this item appealing to the Iranian authorities to put a stop to the summary execution of Bahá'ís and to secure for them the freedom to practise their religion without discrimination.
- *Mauritius*—On 21 March the secretary of the National Assembly was interviewed on television about the development of the Faith in that country and the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Sweden*—Two representatives of the National Assembly met with the Foreign Minister to discuss the plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán.
- *Switzerland*—The National Assembly wrote on 16 March to the President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr. Pierre Aubert, to inform him of the execution on 12 March of three Bahá'ís in Shíráz.
- *United Kingdom*—On 3 March a London Member of Parliament asked a question in the House of Commons seeking to know whether time would be made available for a full debate on the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, and pointing out '. . . the gross offence that the Iranian treatment of the Bahá'í community gives to the Bahá'í community in our own country'.
- At the same time two 'Early Day Motions' were submitted in the House of Commons, signed by a large number of members of Parliament from various parties. These motions are theoretically to be debated at some point, but in practice time is never available for them; however, they provide a useful device whereby the Government and public can be made aware that there are items about which a number of members of Parliament feel strongly and which they want publicized.
- *United Nations, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs*—In response to a briefing paper on the situation facing the Bahá'ís in Írán sent on 25 March to the Secretary-General of the United Nations from the Bahá'í International Community, the Special Assistant for Political and Humanitarian Affairs answered on 28 March: 'We of course will seek to be as helpful as circumstances permit, particularly with reference to the lives of those imprisoned.'
- *United Kingdom*—Speaking in the House of Lords in the United Kingdom on 8 March, Lord Whaddon asked her Majesty's Government to urge the Iranian Government to include the Bahá'í Faith as a legitimate independent religion in their Constitution.
- Lord McNair asked that no Iranian Bahá'í should be repatriated against his or her will from this country (United Kingdom) to Írán.

- Lord Renton referred to the United Kingdom's impeccable record of religious tolerance, while Lord Kilbracken asked whether or not the Government was equally concerned about the persecution by the Iranians of the Kurdish and other minorities. Lord Skelmersdale answered: 'Human rights are human rights wherever they occur.'
- *United Nations Daily Press Briefing*—At the briefing held on 17 March Mr. François Giuliani said, in response to questions, that the UN had received reports about the summary execution of Bahá'ís in Írán and this was a matter of long-standing concern to the UN that had been discussed with the Iranian authorities on several occasions.
- *United States*—A concurrent resolution was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the State of South Dakota, requesting the Congress of the United States to continue its efforts to halt the persecutions of the Bahá'í minority in Írán and instructing the Chief Clerk to send the document to each member of the South Dakota Congressional delegations, the President of the United States, the Bahá'í International Community and the Local Spiritual Assembly of Pierre, South Dakota. (2–4 March.)
- Letters were received from 5 Senators in response to communications from the National Assembly updating them on the persecutions.
- A letter dated 23 March was received from Senator Bob Dole transmitting a statement he made in the Senate on the same date. The statement appears in the Congressional Record of the Senate.
- The secretary of the National Assembly met with the Director of the International Rescue Committee in New York regarding possible assistance in helping Bahá'í refugees.
- Congressman John Porter of Illinois made a speech on the floor of the House of Representatives on 3 March about the 'final solution' planned by the 'Khomeini regime for the Baha'is and other oppressed minorities in Írán', and urged the State Department to do something to 'end the evil persecution of the Baha'is by the tyrannical regime . . .' until it is settled 'to our satisfaction'.
- On 3 March Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State, spoke before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Human rights and International Organizations, expressing his 'profound dismay and alarm with the recent reports that the Iranian Revolutionary Supreme Court in Tehran has upheld the death sentences of 22 Bahais . . . It is our sincere hope that the Iranian authorities will heed the voice of world public opinion and refrain from executing these individuals.'
- The following actions were taken concerning the recent execution of 3 Bahá'ís in Shíráz: Appeals were telexed to Government officials, prominent people and the media; selected Local Spiritual Assemblies were mobilized to solicit statements from influential individuals and groups who have shown an interest in humanitarian matters, and to reach local media; individual believers were called upon to write letters to the editors of their local newspapers; 600 media committees and representatives were asked to support efforts of their Local Assemblies; and press releases were sent to major wire services, selected contacts of the press, and local media committees.

April

- *Australia*—A notice of motion was made by Senator Baume on 21 April as follows: 'I give notice that, on the next day of sitting, I shall move—That the Australian Senate condemns the systematic deprivation by the Islamic Republic of Írán of the most basic rights of citizens of that country whose only crime is that they are members of the Bahá'í and other minority religious faiths.'
- *Central South Zaire*—A delegation of the Bahá'í Administrative Committee met with the President of the Republic of Zaire and Messrs. Mobutu and Ladawa, and during the meeting discussed the persecutions in Írán.
- *Panama*—The article by Bernard Weinraub about the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán, which was published in *The New York Times* and widely circulated by the N.Y. Times News Service, appeared in the Panamanian *Star & Herald* on 29 April.
- *United States*—An article appeared in *The New York Times* on 26 April about the new

persecutions against the Bahá'ís, stating that 'State Department officials are concerned over a court sentence handed down two months ago in Shiraz, in south central Írán, of execution for 22 Bahá'í men and women, for spying and for alleged links to Israel.'

- Prayers for the Bahá'ís were said in three Christian churches and a synagogue in Wichita, Kansas, on the insistence of the clergy.
- A tree was planted on 15 April in the Cortez City Park in memory of the Bahá'í martyrs in Írán, a gift to the city from several Colorado State Bahá'í communities in that area.



A procession of Bahá'ís of The Netherlands, each carrying a white rose in honour of an individual martyr, silently proceeded through The Hague to the Dutch Parliament where government officials accorded sympathetic attention to the description of the plight of the Bahá'ís of Írán; August 1982.

12. LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE TO IRANIAN BAHÁ'ÍS LIVING OUTSIDE ÍRÁN

ON 10 February 1980, the Universal House of Justice addressed a letter in Persian to the Iranian believers residing in countries outside Írán. The National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom prepared a translation into English, the text of which was sent to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 29 July 1980 with the following explanatory note: 'The message includes several quotations from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi hitherto untranslated into English. The English text of these passages, as they appear in the attached translated message, have been checked and approved at the World Centre, and may be regarded by the friends as authorized texts. Passages previously published and included in the message can be found in the following publications: *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 146 and p. 33; *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 1; and *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 35 and p. 219.'

10 February 1980

To the dear Iranian believers resident in other countries throughout the world

In these tumultuous days when the lovers of the Best Beloved are remote from their homeland, associating with their fellow-believers in other lands, and participating in the services of the loyal supporters throughout the world, we felt it necessary to convey our thoughts to those distinguished friends, with absolute sincerity and affection, and invite them to that which we believe can guarantee their tranquillity and happiness, as well as their eternal salvation and redemption; so that with firm steps and sure hearts they may, God willing, withstand the onslaughts which have and will afflict all the countries of the globe. Thus they may fix their gaze on the dawn of the fulfilment of the soul-vitalizing promises of God and remain certain that behind these dark clouds the Sun of the Will of God is shining resplendent from its height of glory and might. Before long these dark clouds of contention, negligence, fanaticism, and rebellion shall disperse, the day of victory shall dawn above the horizon, and a new age shall illumine the world. It should not be surmised that the events which have taken place in all corners of the globe, incuding the sacred land of Írán, have occurred as isolated incidents without any aim and purpose. According to the words of our beloved Guardian: 'The invisible hand is at work and the convulsions taking place on earth are a prelude to the proclamation of the Cause of God.' This is but one of the mysterious forces of this supreme Revelation which is causing the limbs of mankind to quake and those who are drunk with pride and negligence to be thunderstruck and shaken. To the truth of this testifies the sacred verse: *The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order*, and the repeated warnings of the Pen of the Most High, such as:

> *The world is encircled with calamities. Even if at times some good may be evident, it is inevitable that a great calamity followeth—and yet no one on earth hath perceived its origin . . . The world is in travail and its agitation waxeth day by day. Its face is turned towards waywardness and unbelief. Such shall be its plight that to disclose it now would not be meet and seemly. Its perversity will long continue. And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then and only then will the Divine Standard be unfurled and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody.*

Similarly, the Pen of the Centre of the Covenant has repeatedly prophesied the in-

tolerable calamities which must beset this wayward humanity ere it heeds the life-giving Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

> *Chaos and confusion are daily increasing in the world. They will attain such intensity as to render the frame of mankind unable to bear them. Then will men be awakened and become aware that religion is the impregnable stronghold and the manifest light of the world, and its laws, exhortations and teachings the source of life on earth.*

Every discerning eye clearly sees that the early stages of this chaos have daily manifestations affecting the structure of human society; its destructive forces are uprooting time-honoured institutions which were a haven and refuge for the inhabitants of the earth in bygone days and centuries, and around which revolved all human affairs. The same destructive forces are also deranging the political, economic, scientific, literary, and moral equilibrium of the world and are destroying the fairest fruits of the present civilization. Political machinations of those in authority have placed the seal of obsolescence upon the root-principles of the world's order. Greed and passion, deceit, hypocrisy, tyranny, and pride are dominating features afflicting human relations. Discoveries and inventions, which are the fruit of scientific and technological advancements, have become the means and tools of mass extermination and destruction and are in the hands of the ungodly. Even music, art, and literature, which are to represent and inspire the noblest sentiments and highest aspirations and should be a source of comfort and tranquillity for troubled souls, have strayed from the straight path and are now the mirrors of the soiled hearts of this confused, unprincipled, and disordered age. Perversions such as these shall result in the ordeals which have been prophesied by the Blessed Beauty in the following words: *Every day a new calamity will seize the earth and a fresh tormenting trial will appear . . . The day is approaching when its* [civilization's] *flame will devour the cities.*

In such an afflicted time, when mankind is bewildered and the wisest of men are perplexed as to the remedy, the people of Bahá, who have confidence in His unfailing grace and divine guidance, are assured that each of these tormenting trials has a cause, a purpose, and a definite result, and all are essential instruments for the establishment of the immutable Will of God on earth. In other words, on the one hand humanity is struck by the scourge of His chastisement which will inevitably bring together the scattered and vanquished tribes of the earth; and on the other, the weak few whom He has nurtured under the protection of His loving guidance are, in this formative age and period of transition, continuing to build amidst these tumultuous waves an impregnable stronghold which will be the sole remaining refuge for those lost multitudes. Therefore, the dear friends of God who have such a broad and clear vision before them are not perturbed by such events, nor are they panic-stricken by such thundering sounds, nor will they face such convulsions with fear and trepidation, nor will they be deterred, even for a moment, from fulfilling their sacred responsibilities.

One of their sacred responsibilities is to exemplify in their lives those attributes which are acceptable at His Sacred Threshold. Others must inhale from them the holy fragrances of the homeland of Bahá'u'lláh, the land which is the birthplace of self-sacrificing martyrs and devoted lovers of the Omnipotent Lord. They must not forget that Bahá'ís throughout the world expect much from the Iranian believers. They should hearken to the life-giving clarion call which their Peerless Beloved has given to the friends in Írán:

> *It is the wish of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and that which attracts His good-pleasure, and indeed it is His binding command that Bahá'ís, in all matters, even in small daily transactions and dealings with others, should act in accordance with the Divine Teachings. He has commanded us not to be content with lowliness, humility and meekness but rather to become manifestations of utter nothingness and selflessness. Loyalty and fidelity, compassion and love are exhortations of old. In this supreme Dispensation the people of Bahá are called upon to sacrifice their very lives. Notice the extent to which the friends have been required, in the Sacred Epistles and Tablets as well as in our Beloved's Testament, to be righteous, well-wishing, forbearing, sanctified, pure, detached from*

all else save God, severed from the trappings of this world and adorned with the mantle of a goodly character and divine attributes. Before all else they must sanctify their hearts and purify their motives, otherwise all efforts in furthering any enterprise will be fruitless. They must eschew affectation and imitation, for every man of understanding will instantly detect their loathsome odour. They must not neglect the special times they should set aside for meditation, reflection and prayer, for without the blessings and confirmations of God, success, progress and development are difficult, nay impossible. You cannot imagine what influence is exerted on the hearts of men by genuine love, sincerity and purity of motive, but such an effect can only be produced when strivings and efforts are made every day by every individual. Let not the stranger, the envious and the enemy have cause to attribute the sublimity of the Faith in the past and in its early days to the appearance of outstanding and sanctified souls and the perseverance of martyrs whose absence today implies the necessary decline, weakening, scattering and annihilation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

We beseech God to aid and assist them daily to centre their attentions on these divine admonitions and to tread the path of faithfulness so as to secure abiding happiness.

Another of the sacred responsibilities of the believers is their spiritual commitment to serve God's Sacred Threshold at all times and under all conditions so that they may dedicate the few, fleeting days of their lives—particularly in this age of transition—to the Cause of God, unmindful of the vicissitudes of fortune, trusting in Providence, and relieved of worries and anxieties. Witness what joyful tidings the Pen of the Most High has given to such blessed souls:

> *Whatsoever occurreth in the world of being is light for His loved ones and fire for the people of sedition and strife. Even if all the losses of the world were to be sustained by one of the friends of God, he would still profit thereby, whereas true loss would be borne by such as are wayward, ignorant and contemptuous. Although the author of the following saying had intended it otherwise, yet We find it pertinent to the operation of God's immutable Will: 'Even or odd, thou shalt win the wager'. The friends of God shall win and profit under all conditions, and shall attain true wealth. In fire they remain cold, and from water they emerge dry. Their affairs are at variance with the affairs of men. Gain is their lot, whatever the deal. To this testifieth every wise one with a discerning eye, and every fair-minded one with a hearing ear.*

Yet another sacred duty is that of clinging to the cord of moderation in all things, lest they who are to be the essence of detachment and moderation be deluded by the trappings of this nether world or set their hearts on its adornments and waste their lives. If they are wealthy they should make these bestowals a means of drawing nigh unto God's Threshold, rather than being so attached to them that they forget the admonitions of the Pen of the Most High. The Voice of Truth has said: *Having attained the stage of fulfilment and reached his maturity, man standeth in need of wealth, and such wealth as he acquireth through crafts or professions is commendable and praiseworthy in the estimation of men of wisdom. If wealth and prosperity become the means of service at God's Threshold it is highly meritorious, otherwise it would be better to avoid them. Turn to the Book of the Covenant, the Hidden Words, and other Tablets, lest the cord of your salvation become a rope of woe which will lead to your own destruction. How numerous are those negligent souls, particularly from among your own compatriots, who have been deprived of the blessings of faith and true understanding. Witness how, no sooner had they attained their newly-amassed wealth and status, than they became so bewitched by them as to forget the virtues and true perfections of man's station. They clung to their empty and fruitless life-style. They had naught else but their homes, their commercial success, and their ornamental trappings of which to be proud. Behold their ultimate fate. Many a triumphal arch was reduced to a ruin, many an imperial palace was converted into a barn. Many a day of deceit turned into a night of despair. Vast treasures changed hands and, at the end of their lives, they were left only with tears of loss and regret. '. . . all that perisheth*

and changeth is not, and hath never been, worthy of attention, except to a recognized measure.' Therefore the people of Bahá must not fall prey to the corruption of the ruthless but rather cling to contentment and moderation. They must make their homes havens for the believers, folds for their gatherings and centres for the promulgation of His Cause and the diffusion of His love, so that people of all strata, whether high or low, may feel at home and be able to consort in an atmosphere of love and fellowship.

Another sacred responsibility of those dear Iranian friends now living abroad is to consult with the Assemblies and Bahá'í Institutions so that their settlement in needy areas may help the establishment and consolidation of the Faith. They must serve on the pioneer front wherever they reside. They must now allow themselves to be drawn to and congregate in areas where their relatives or friends reside, unaware of the pioneering needs of the Faith. Praised be God that, through the blessings of the Greatest Name, the believers have been imbued with a love and unity which transcends the ties of kinship and friendship and overcomes the barriers of language and culture. Therefore there is no need for the Iranian friends to congregate in one place. Often such a congregation creates problems. For example, should the number of Iranians exceed the number of native believers in a community, they would inadvertently bring about such difficulties as might hamper the progress of the Cause of God, and the world-conquering religion of the Abhá Beauty might appear to others as a religion which is limited and peculiar to Iranians. This could but lead to a waste of time and the disenchantment of both Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís. Under such circumstances the dear Iranian friends would neither enjoy their stay in that place nor would they be able to serve the Faith in a befitting manner. It is our ardent hope that, wherever possible, the Iranian friends may settle in those towns or villages which are pioneering goals, so that through their stay the foundation of the Cause may be strengthened. They must encourage each other to pioneer and disperse in accordance with the teaching plans wherever they reside, and sacrifice the happiness and joy which they may otherwise obtain from companionship with each other for the sake of the vital interests of the Cause.

Another of the sacred duties incumbent upon the believers is that of avoiding participation in political discussions and intrigues which have become popular nowadays. What have the people of Bahá to do with political contention and controversy? With absolute certainty they must prove to the world that Bahá'ís, by virtue of their beliefs, are loyal citizens of whatever country they reside in and are far removed from the machinations of conspirators and the perpetrators of destruction and chaos. Their ideal is the happiness of all the peoples of the world and sincere and wholehearted service to them. In administrative positions they are obedient to their governments and carry out their duties with the utmost honesty and trustworthiness. They regard no faction as superior to another and prefer no individual above another. They oppose no one, for the Divine Pen has prohibited sedition and corruption and enjoined peace and harmony upon us. For more than a century Bahá'ís have proven by their deeds that they regard servitude and service to their fellow man as being more worthy than the privileges of power which can be gained from politics. In administering their own affairs, they rely on God rather than on the influence of those in power and authority. Particularly in these days when the enemies of the Faith have afflicted the Cause in the sacred land of Írán with the darts of calumny and slander on every side, the dear Iranian friends should be vigilant, both in their contact with other Iranians abroad and with people in general, and behave in such a way as to leave no doubt as to the independence and non-alignment of the Bahá'ís and their good will to all people, whether in Írán or elsewhere. They must not give a new excuse to cause trouble to those mischief-makers who have always sought to further their own unworthy ends by making the Bahá'í community a target for their malicious accusations.

O beloved of God, and compatriots of the Abhá Beauty! Your relationship to the Blessed Perfection merits befitting gratitude. Having appreciated the true value of so inestimable a bounty, your forefathers regarded the offering of their lives in the path of their kind Beloved as easy to make. They

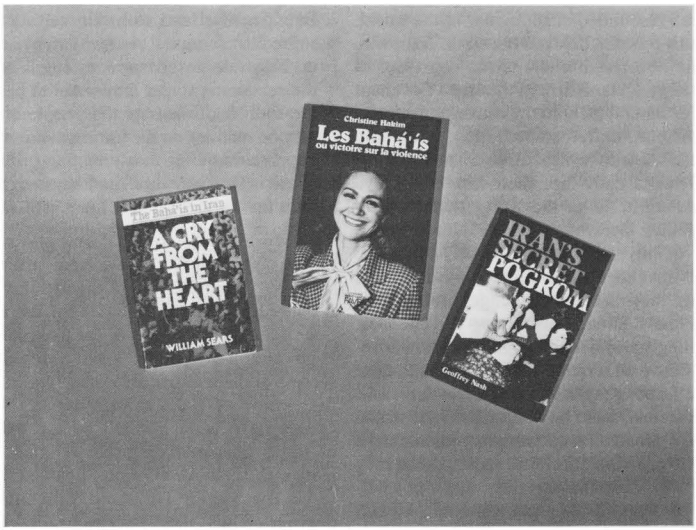
were put in chains, became captives of the sword, lost their homes and belongings, yet no sound was heard from their lacerated throats but the cry of *Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá* and *Yá 'Alíyu'l A'lá*. The vibration of the sound of that same soul-burning cry gradually noised abroad the call of this world-illuminating Great Announcement and the ringing notes of that call resounded in all regions of the world, and now too, the beloved friends in Írán, who are the devoted dwellers in the courtyard of the Beloved, stand firm in the same Covenant and Testament. Behold the courage, firmness, detachment, unity, co-operation, zeal, and enthusiasm with which these loyal lovers of the Beloved daily face their tests and prove and demonstrate to the world, with radiant and shining faces, their purity, their heritage, their quality, and their virtue. With the utmost meekness, truthfulness, wisdom, and courage they meet the challenges presented to them, the challenge of defying the enemies, dispelling misunderstandings which are a result of the proliferation of calumnies and false accusations. They have met their fate with acquiescence, have bowed their heads in the valley of submission and resignation, and have borne every tribulation with radiance, for they know with absolute certainty that the fulfilment of divine prophecies will coincide with dire events and the bearing of innumerable afflictions. The beloved Guardian says: 'If in the days to come, adversities of various kinds should encircle that land and national upheavals should further aggravate the present calamities, and intensify the repeated afflictions', the dear friends in that country should not feel 'sorrowful and grieved' and must not be deflected 'from their straight path and chosen highway'. He then continues to address the dear friends in these words:

> 'The liberation of this meek and innocent band of His followers from the fetters of its bondage and the talons of the people of tyranny and enmity must needs be preceded by the clamour and agitation of the masses. The realization of glory, of tranquillity, and of true security for the people of Bahá will necessitate opposition, aggression and commotion on the part of the people of malevolence and iniquity. Therefore, should the buffeting waves of the sea of tribulation intensify and the storms of trials and tribulations assail that meek congregation from all six sides, know of a certainty and without a moment's hesitation that the time for their deliverance has drawn nigh, that the age-old promise of their assured glory will soon be fulfilled, and that at long last the means are provided for the persecuted people of Bahá in that land to attain salvation and supreme triumph. A firm step and an unshakeable resolve are essential so that the remaining stages may come to pass and the cherished ideals of the people of Bahá may be realized on the loftiest summits, and be made manifest in astounding brilliance. "Such is God's method, and no change shalt thou find in His method." '

That is why those royal falcons who soar in the firmament of God's love have arisen with such joy, tranquillity, and dignity that their serenity has become a magnet for the attraction of the confirmations of the Concourse on High and has brought such a resounding success to them as has astonished and startled the people of Bahá throughout the world. Others have been inspired by the example of those treasured brethren to renew their pledge to their All-Glorious Beloved and to serve His Sacred Threshold with high endeavour. Thus they endeavour, as far as possible, to make good the temporary disability of the believers in Írán. Inspired by the courage, constancy, sincerity, and devotion of those enamoured friends in the path of their Beloved, they are increasing their services and renewing and strengthening their resolve so that they may arise in the arena of the love of God as it beseems true lovers. That is why in these days the followers of the Greatest Name in different parts of the world have undertaken to win new victories in remembrance and on behalf of their dear friends in Írán. They have made new plans and their efforts have been confirmed with resounding success, which they attribute to the influences of the high endeavours and the constancy of the friends in the Cradle of the Faith. What then will you do, dear friends who come from that sacred land of Írán? You are the birds of that rose-garden. You should sing such a song that the hearts of others will rejoice with gladness.

You are the candles of that Divine Sanctuary. You should shed such a light that it will illumine the eyes of the intimates of God's mysteries. Our eager hearts in these days are expectant to see the rays of loyalty and integrity from amidst these dark and threatening clouds, so that your blessed names, like those of your self-sacrificing compatriots, may be recorded in gold upon the Tablets of Honour. This is dependent upon your own high endeavour.

(Translated by 'Ináyat Rawḥání)



Three volumes on the persecutions of the Bahá'ís of Irán: A Cry from the Heart *(1982) by the Hand of the Cause William Sears,* Les Bahá'ís, ou victoire sur la violence *(1982) by Christine Hakím and* Iran's Secret Pogrom *(1982) by Geoffrey Nash.*

13. THE EMERGENCE OF A UNIVERSAL MORAL ORDER AND THE PERSECUTION OF THE IRANIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

WILL. C. VAN DEN HOONAARD

INTRODUCTION

ALL have been awe-struck by recent events in Írán which are reminiscent of the early days of the Bahá'í Faith in that country during the nineteenth century. The ordeal of the Iranian Bahá'í community leaves a powerful impression on both committed and uncommitted observers. We are well-advised to weigh the minute elements of this tragic drama, as well as its fuller implications. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Son of the Prophet-Founder of the Faith, has repeatedly reminded the Bahá'ís of these implications:

> *Therefore, O ye beloved of God, be not grieved when people stand against you, persecute you, afflict you and trouble you and say all manner of evil against you. The darkness will pass away and the light of the manifest signs will apear.*[1]

The nature of persecution, whether religious or political, has prompted scholars to consider one of four approaches.[2] Martyrology attempts to preserve and memorialize the tragic events ensuing from persecution.[3] A second approach describes individual resistance, whether active or passive, in the face of relentless oppression.[4] The study of specific policies and the mechanism of oppression and destruction provides a third avenue.[5] All these accounts help us to understand the fierce oppression and the human suffering and heroism we associate with the persecution of our religious brethren and sisters in Írán. Thus, the significance of the Iranian persecution is enshrined in the conquest of the spirit over the forces of materialism. All these accounts inspire and demonstrate that the spiritual flame can be rekindled once again. Particularly, they reveal the depth of the individual's response to persecution. Bahá'u'lláh, referring to the early companions of the Báb, spoke of the same divine attributes which such souls manifest:

> *All these stainless hearts and sanctified souls have, with absolute resignation, responded to the summons of His decree. Instead of complaining, they rendered thanks unto God, and amidst the darkness of their anguish they revealed naught but radiant acquiescence to His will . . . The persecution and pain they inflicted on these holy and spiritual beings were regarded by them as means unto salvation, prosperity, and everlasting success.*[6]

The human face of the persecuted group constitutes the fourth view. This is the collective dimension. It is a sociological fact that the real nature of social phenomena becomes more apparent at times of social conflict or stress. Might this not be equally true when we consider the collective scope of the Bahá'í response in Írán?

This social dimension is significant in that the persecutions bring to light the unique character of the Bahá'í Faith and, in particular, they have served to highlight the novel features of the Bahá'í community, whose unity and *modus operandi* are enshrined in Bahá'í scripture. The persecutions have simply shown

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1930), p. 14.

[2] This article has been considerably revised from the one that originally appeared as 'Emerging from Obscurity: The Response of the Iranian Bahá'í Community to Persecution: 1978–1982', *Conflict Quarterly*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (Fall, 1982), University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada, pp. 5–16.

[3] See, for example, Kazem Kazemzadeh, 'Varqá and Rúḥu'lláh: Deathless in Martyrdom', *World Order*, Vol. 9, no. 2 (Winter, 1974–1975), pp. 29–44.

[4] A good example can be found in Christine Hakim, *Les Bahá'ís, ou Victoire sur la Violence* (Lausanne, Switzerland: Éditions Favre, 1982). Also: William Sears, *The Bahá'ís in Írán: A Cry from the Heart* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1982).

[5] e.g Douglas Martin, 'The Bahá'ís of Írán Under the Pahlaví Régime, 1921–1979,' *Middle East Focus*, Vol. 4, no. 6 (March 1982, pp. 7–17.

[6] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán: The Book of Certitude*, transl. Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1931, rev. ed. 1974), pp. 235–236.

the specific strengths of the Bahá'í Order during such times when 'all man-made and essentially defective political institutions'[1] fail or collapse. Those who examine the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh not only become aware that its Administrative Order is 'fundamentally different from anything that any Prophet has previously established',[2] but are encouraged to critically examine it:

> *[The Faith] which the bewildered followers of bankrupt and broken creeds might well approach and critically examine, and seek, ere it is too late, the invulnerable security of its world-embracing shelter.*[3]

The recent events in Írán attract the attention of these 'followers of bankrupt and broken creeds', as the events themselves attest to the unique character of the Bahá'í community.

There is a fifth dimension which makes the persecutions of the Bahá'ís a significant phenomenon in our times. The impact of the persecutions has assumed an international scope and touches every member of the human family. This universal response to the events in Írán clearly indicates the emergence of an international conscience, pre-supposing an international moral order, linked to the emergence of the world-wide Bahá'í community.

The purpose of this essay is to concentrate on the sociological significance of the persecutions in Írán, namely the way they highlight the unique aspects of the Bahá'í community, and how they relate to a developing universal moral order.

NOVEL FEATURES OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

The social significance of the persecuted Iranian Bahá'í community leads us to ponder the cohesive force, the nature of leadership, the apolitical nature and the diversity and spread of that community. These aspects stand out in sharp contrast to other types of human communities.

Social Cohesion

Independent observers have noted the social cohesiveness of the Iranian Bahá'í community. Although suffering extensively under the burden of oppression, it shows signs of intense vigour and spiritual devotion. These signs are not only the outcome of an individualistic orientation but should be viewed as the result of a re-organization of its community life—the establishment of the distinctive nature of Bahá'í communities. The Bahá'í community is already a historical reality which is able to sustain the transformation of the human personality. Bahá'ís, therefore, link their own personal welfare with that of the Bahá'í community as a whole. For example, *Le Monde* recounts the story of a Mr. Kámrán Ṣamímí who had the opportunity of leaving Írán, but refused to do so because of his moral compulsion to stay to assist his fellow believers.[4] That same report states that 'The Bahá'ís are not deprived of spiritual direction, even now'. Another account, in the *Globe and Mail*,[5] relates the story of a Dr. Farámarz Samandarí, a practising medical doctor in Canada, who returned to Írán to 'help his countrymen', knowing that he would be arrested and possibly executed, which, indeed, happened soon after his arrival in that country. Professor Manúchihr Ḥakím, a medical practitioner and recipient of numerous awards for his discoveries in anatomy and founder of the Bahá'í Hospital in Ṭihrán, returned to Írán anticipating death (he was in fact shot in his clinic on 12 January 1981) but felt obliged to share in carrying the burdens of the Bahá'í community. Other expatriate Bahá'ís have returned to Írán, despite the warnings of Amnesty International.[6] It is in such instances that the inspired personality can touch and change human history, driven by a purpose that seeks to fulfil the purpose of human unity.

Bahá'í sources of information also indicate a general spiritual rededication of the Persian Bahá'í community. One newspaper reported

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1970), p. 62.
[2] ibid., p. 53.
[3] ibid., p. 54.
[4] *Le Monde*, 1 January 1982. Mr. Ṣamímí was executed in Ṭihrán on 27 December 1981.
[5] 31 July 1980. The story also appeared in *Newsday*, 26 September 1981, Part II, p. 2.
[6] *Maclean's*, 13 July 1981, p. 47.

that the Bahá'ís are 'largely determined to remain in the land where their Faith was founded'.[1] A telex from the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í international governing body, sent on 9 March 1982 to selected National Spiritual Assemblies and subsequently to all such bodies, stated:

> . . . thousands [of Iranian] Bahá'ís, unmindful of consequences, have courageously appealed by letter or cable to various high officials at national and local levels complaining about barbaric acts, gross injustice, [and] revealed their names and addresses . . .

Too numerous are the heroic events which speak of the 'courage, steadfastness and unity which have suffused the Bahá'í community in Írán'.[2] Such events are presently being recorded for the benefit of future generations of believers.

The spiritual elevation of such personal behaviour is also reflected by Bahá'ís who have been daily harassed by looters, as for instance the Bahá'í families in Yazd who treat the looters as children who want to be satisfied with playthings.[3] Other examples of this behaviour are found in the prisons, where Bahá'ís are known to have instituted programmes of benefit to the prison population as a whole, or have assisted prison guards with their personal or marital problems. In areas where numbers of Bahá'í refugees have gathered, they have established such cohesion that they have even refused offers of food from their persecutors.[4]

This imaginative resistance corresponds to the organized activities of the Bahá'í communities in Írán. For instance, the Bahá'í community of Yazd established a Bahá'í programme of education after the dismissal of over one hundred children from schools.[5] In other reports, Bahá'í communities are stated to have co-ordinated activities to alleviate pressures on afflicted believers by providing clothing, food, heating facilities and spiritual counselling. The elected bodies of the communities continue to meet, and their committees continue to function.[6]

The creative and cohesive response to persecution has its effects on the non-Bahá'í society of Írán. Attendance of a large number of people of all religious backgrounds is characteristic at funerals of slain Bahá'ís, and non-Bahá'í spouses of Bahá'ís have declared their faith in Bahá'u'lláh. The Bahá'í community in Írán is responding dynamically and with spiritual élan to the methodical plan of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities to entirely uproot it.

Leadership in the Bahá'í Community

One of the chief prongs of the present régime's strategy to undercut the Bahá'í community reveals a lack of comprehension by the authorities of the distinctive system of governance of that community. Their strategy involves 'cutting off the head of the Bahá'í community'. This refers, presumably, to its 'leaders'.

Leadership in the Bahá'í community is vested in elected bodies at local and national levels. Every year in April, Bahá'í communities elect from their membership nine adult believers who can serve on the governing body. The qualities required by members being considered for election are devotion, experience, loyalty and a well-trained mind. There is no electioneering or campaigning on one's own, or someone else's, behalf. Leadership is, moreover, vested in this council as a whole, not in any one specific individual, or individuals, who are serving on it. No individual serving on the body has any powers extending beyond the confines of that body. The Spiritual Assembly renders decisions only when it is in session.

[1] *Washington Post*, February 1980.

[2] A recent communication to all Canadian Bahá'ís from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

[3] 'Excerpt from a letter from Yazd,' February 1982, published in *Bahá'í News* (U.S.A.), No. 613, April 1982, pp. 4–6, recounts several stories of this nature: 'When they [the Bahá'ís of Yazd] are looted of their property, furniture and belongings, they part with them as they would with outworn dolls and playthings . . . They shower love upon those who come to take away their belongings as might an affectionate and indulgent parent who with a smile will give a worthless toy or plaything to a naughty child . . .'

[4] *The Sun* (San Bernardino, California), 19 January 1982, pp. B-5, 7.

[5] 'Excerpt from a letter from Yazd,' February 1982.

[6] In September 1983 Bahá'í administrative bodies ceased to function in obedience to the governmental order banning the Bahá'í Administrative Order. Such a ban constitutes, ironically, a formal recognition of Bahá'í institutions.

The Spiritual Assembly is a divinely created institution whose members operate it according to its laws. Bahá'u'lláh writes:

> *The Lord hath ordained that in every city a House of Justice be established wherein shall gather counsellors to the number of Bahá [nine] . . .*[1]

Membership may change, but not the Spiritual Assembly as such. This principle has become clearly demonstrated in the Iranian experience. In numerous instances arrested or executed members of the Local Assemblies or the National Assembly have been replaced by other members. This process frustrates all efforts by the authorities to do away with Bahá'í 'leadership'.

The Apolitical Nature of the Bahá'í Community

Both cursory observers and those who wish to examine more closely the workings of the Bahá'í community in Írán will be impressed with the apolitical nature of that community, as indeed of the entire world-wide Bahá'í community. One hundred and forty years of persecution, albeit in varying severity, have not moved the Bahá'í community to partisan politics. Efforts of previous régimes of Írán to involve or implicate the Bahá'í community in politics have been abysmal failures. The Bahá'í teachings are very clear on this point: the Guardian, through his secretary, has encouraged the Bahá'ís to 'shun politics like the plague'.[2] The Universal House of Justice has reiterated this principle of non-involvement in politics, drawing on the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh Himself.

It is noteworthy that despite offered opportunities of gaining some political, short-term advantage, the Bahá'í community has not seized such opportunities. The writings of the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, Shoghi Effendi, had forewarned the Bahá'ís of such enticements when they would become a large social force:

> As the number of the Bahá'í communities in various parts of the world multiplies and their power, as a social force, becomes increasingly apparent, they will no doubt find themselves increasingly subjected to the pressure which men of authority and influence, in the political domain, will exercise in the hope of obtaining the support they require for the advancement of their aims.[3]

The single individual believer who permitted himself to become involved with politics, General Asadu'lláh Ṣaní'í, was expelled from the Faith for that reason alone. To date, no charge of political involvement levelled against the Bahá'í community by either present or previous authorities has ever been substantiated.

The continued existence of the Bahá'í community in Írán cannot be explained in terms of the alleged power possessed by the Bahá'ís. In this instance, the Bahá'í community is a sociological anomaly. While most social analysts state that power, and political power in particular, is the basis of society, the continued existence of the Bahá'í community offers proof that moral power is superior to political might. The establishment and evolution of Bahá'í communities follow the operation of a divine law designed to reshape human society. According to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the *laws of God are not impositions of will, or of power or pleasure, but the resolution of truth, reason and justice.*[4] The Bahá'ís under the régime of the Sháh did not possess power or influence, although a number of believers did occupy prominent scientific and administrative posts. It is equally true to say that the Bahá'í community consists mainly of rural peoples who, as such, never enjoyed any privileges.

Diversity and Spread of the Bahá'í Community

This brings us to the diverse membership of the Bahá'í community. It is this diversity which has prevented its full-scale uprooting. Bahá'í communities are found in all civil areas in the country. By April 1983 there were 1,100 Spiritual Assemblies in Írán, incorporating all the diverse elements of the population as a

[1] Universal House of Justice, *A Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, transl. Shoghi Effendi (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1973), p. 13.

[2] Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian* (New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973), p. 57.

[3] Shoghi Effendi, 'The Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh,' *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1965), p. 65.

[4] Quoted in H. M. Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1963), p. 83.

whole, both tribal and religious. Representatives of close to two-thirds of all tribal minorities are found among the Bahá'ís. The Bahá'í community includes peoples of such diverse backgrounds as Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians and Muslims. With so many elements of Iranian society represented in the Bahá'í community there is neither one social nor ethnic background to serve as the focus of attack and the persecutors have been unable to touch a particular 'psyche' among the Bahá'ís, except that of divinely inspired sacrifice. There are no predictable human reactions to persecutions fostered by virtue of social or ethnic uniformity. The Bahá'í community is too diverse in character to result in a uniform human response.

In the Bahá'í view, the diversity of the human group acts as a stabilizing element rather than a disruptive force, particularly when such variegated personalities and cultures are under the influence of the revealed Word of God:

> *The other kind [of difference] which is a token of diversity is the essence of perfection and the cause of the appearance of the bestowals of the Most Glorious Lord.*[1]

The spread of the Bahá'í community has, by itself, frustrated the efforts of the persecutors. There are 350,000 Bahá'ís in Írán. Since, furthermore, the ratio of Bahá'í to non-Bahá'í population is about 1:70, there is at least one Bahá'í for every eleven or twelve households.[2] Many non-Bahá'í families are therefore acquainted with the manner in which Bahá'ís conduct themselves in their personal lives and in their professions and businesses. Today, as in the past, this life-style has aroused both emulation from the general population and envy from fanatical elements. 'Abdu'l-Bahá often referred to such examples drawn from the early days of the Faith. Speaking of an early believer who had espoused the teachings of the Báb as a result of witnessing an episode of persecution, He said:

> *When the clamor of the people rose high he hastened into the street, and, becoming cognizant of the offence and the offender, and the cause of his public disgrace and punishment in full detail, he fell to making search, and that very day entered the society of the Bábís, saying, 'This very ill-usage and public humiliation is a proof of truth and the very best of arguments . . .'*[3]

Envy is a characteristic of fanatical groups —and also a part of the history of the persecution of the Faith in Írán. One is reminded of Bahá'u'lláh's statement recorded in the well-known interview with Edward Granville Browne:

> *We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem Us a stirrer-up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment.*[4]

Such personal knowledge of the Bahá'ís has prevented further destruction of the community. The admiration and respect accorded by Muslims, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians —those who are personal friends of the Bahá'ís or those who have had business dealings with them—have in some cases mitigated or offset the efforts of fanatical mobs and persecutors. Muslim neighbours are known to have opened doors and offered their homes to havenless Bahá'í families, albeit furtively.[5] This undercurrent of unofficial and informal sympathy has even become evident among some officials in the administrative hierarchy. In some instances they have opposed the measures levelled against the Bahá'ís at the risk of personal deposition or demotion. One headmaster of a school in Yazd decided to resign after receiving the order to dismiss his Bahá'í pupils. He later absented himself from school.

The Bahá'í community of Írán has existed for several generations, weaving the diversity of its membership into the fabric of Iranian society.

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1978), p. 291.

[2] We assume an average household of *circa* six.

[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *A Traveler's Narrative*, transl. Edward G. Browne (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), p. 21.

[4] ibid.

[5] *Le Monde*, 1 January 1982, p. 2, states that 'No one is willing to [publicly] take up the defense of the Bahá'ís within Írán.'

EMERGENCE OF A UNIVERSAL MORAL ORDER

What are some of the other lessons to be learned from the persecutions and how can they apply to other countries? Civil, political, cultural and economic freedoms are often based on precarious sentiments and social consensus. In many of the so-called 'enlightened' countries these freedoms have been of too recent gain to occupy a secure foothold in the political and social structures of society. Fuller knowledge of the conditions of minorities who have been denied fundamental freedoms indicates the precariousness of the humanitarian attitudes of governments.

There is also an empirical fact that the persecutors have naively ignored. Never in the history of the Bahá'í world community has world opinion in favour of the aims and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith been more forcefully expressed than during the current wave of persecution in Írán. The 'no-win' situation which presents itself to the persecutors must bring little comfort to those responsible for the oppression. This condition illustrates the point made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

> *. . . they [i.e., oppressors] thought that violence and interference would cause extinction and silence and lead to suppression and oblivion; whereas interference in matters of conscience causes stability and firmness and attracts the attention of men's sight and souls; which fact has received experimental proof many times and often.*[1]

What attracts the attention of all humanity are the unique features of the Bahá'í community and its positive approach to the emergence of a new universal moral order. It is a striking fact that conditions of home and state have only in recent times become a matter of universal concern. While until recently any matter that affected the well-being of a country was considered the exclusive concern of the secular or religious authorities in that country, the welfare of every nation, community, group or family has today become of universal concern. The walls that served to both protect those who violated human rights and to hinder the development of human society have fallen away. While human policies were previously guided by limited national interests, they are today increasingly matters of international concern. The patchwork of these human policies has given way to a universal pattern of human rights and obligations. We are now witnessing the decline of inadequate human standards and the emergence of a new universal moral order.

The trials of the Bahá'í community in Írán are a major contributing factor to the creation of that moral order. In a sense, the emergence of the Iranian Bahá'í community coincides with the emergence of that moral order. The two are inseparably linked together. We should perhaps examine how this two-fold process works.

This process is a dialectical one. The emergence of the Bahá'í community from obscurity is partially possible through the existence of the growing universal consciousness. Universal declarations and covenants dealing with the dignity of the human person and social groups are steadily being established. While it is true that nations may choose to accept or ignore such international standards of human rights and obligations, according to their own political advantage, the fact remains that universal standards are being developed and established. New nations and the international media, to name but two examples, often derive their sense of justice and universal morality from the provisions in these international codes.

The persecutions of the Bahá'ís are thus an affront to every citizen of global outlook who has become immersed in this universal, moral consciousness. An attack on a Bahá'í in even the most remote place by the most ignorant of men does not go unnoticed. The Bahá'ís become yet another focus of our universal moral conscience. The more severe the persecutions, the louder will be the outcry of humanity as a whole. This outcry is also the means by which universal, moral sentiments become crystallized and clearer. This outcry also contributes to the emergence of the Bahá'í community from obscurity. The two processes are inter-linked and mutually supporting.

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *A Traveler's Narrative*, p. 6.

14. PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN ÍRÁN: A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF REFERENCES FROM BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS, JOURNALS, NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS IN SOME EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

COMPILED BY WILLIAM P. COLLINS,
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF JANET H. BEAVERS

THIS bibliography attempts to bring together a representative sampling of works published by non-Bahá'í agencies, in western languages, that make reference to the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán during the period Riḍván 1979 to Riḍván 1983. The bibliographer makes no claim that the bibliography is exhaustive, the entries being taken exclusively from the collections of materials held in the Bahá'í World Centre Library. In the case of books, pamphlets and journal articles an attempt was made to be thorough, and the entries reflect both those materials with significant references to the persecutions, and those which include passing mention in a larger context. In the case of newspaper articles, sheer volume forced the compiler to rely upon selection of the most important articles from a number of countries.

In a number of cases the Bahá'í community of Írán is treated in works which deal with political issues in Írán. It should be noted that the Bahá'í Faith is not a political movement, as clearly stated in other sections of this volume of *The Bahá'í World*. There are also sections 1.1.1. and 2.1.1. listing items in English which speak of the Bahá'ís from the point of view of the governing authorities of the Islamic Republic of Írán. The reader will understand that the Bahá'ís categorically deny the charges and accusations made against them by these authorities.

The entries are arranged in broad categories by type of publication, and sub-arranged by language. Within language categories, the entries are alphabetical by the entry—by author or, in the absence of an author, by title. Newspaper articles are arranged by country, then alphabetically by the entry. Occasionally entries have no indication of page number(s) on which the reference to the Bahá'í Faith appears. This occurs either because the bibliographical item itself has no paging, or because the compilers have seen an incomplete copy. Apologies are made for this inadequacy, which it is hoped will be remedied as time permits.

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15. A CHRONOLOGY OF SOME OF THE PERSECUTIONS OF THE BÁBÍS AND BAHÁ'ÍS IN ÍRÁN 1844–1978

COMPILED BY DR. MOOJAN MOMEN

IN many cases, the year of an event is given in the sources only as a year of the Hijrí (Muslim) calendar. The start of the Hijrí year, which is thirteen days shorter than the solar year, rotates through the solar year and thus any particular Hijrí year overlaps two solar years. In the following list, where only a Hijrí date is given in the sources the event has been listed under the first of the two Gregorian years that that Hijrí year covers unless the start of the Hijrí year falls in November or December, in which case the event is listed under the following year. Similarly, the Bahá'í year, which begins on the vernal equinox, overlaps two Gregorian years. Those events for which only the Bahá'í year is given are shown in the following list as occurring in the first of the two Gregorian years that that year overlaps. In these cases the relevant year is given in parentheses after the Gregorian year together with the following abbreviations: A.H.Q.—Lunar Hijrí year; B.E.—Badí' (Bahá'í) year.

Unfortunately, in a work of this nature, it is not possible to give a detailed note of the source of information used for each episode. In compiling this chronology of the persecutions of the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths in Írán from their inception in 1844 until the start of the current persecutions in 1978, a wide variety of sources has been used, from English works such as *Nabíl's Narrative* and volumes of *The Bahá'í World* to printed Persian works such as Ishráq-Khávarí's *Taqvím-i-Táríkh-i-Amr* and Fáḍil-i-Mázandarání's *Ẓuhúru'l-Ḥaqq*. Also manuscript materials have been used, especially a series of histories of the Bahá'í Faith in different localities in Írán that were compiled by various authors particularly in the 1920s and 1930s under the instructions of Shoghi Effendi.

This listing must be regarded as provisional since further research will undoubtedly uncover other episodes of persecution not listed here.

1845: 23 June; Shíráz: Arrest, beating and expulsion from Shíráz of Quddús, Mullá Ṣádiq-i-Khurásání, Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Ardistání and Mullá Abú-Ṭálib; this was followed by the arrest of the Báb.

1845: Yazd and Kirmán: Mullá Ṣádiq-i-Khurásání set upon and beaten after announcing the mission of the Báb in each of these two cities.

1846: 23 September; Shíráz: The Báb arrested by the Governor but released following the outbreak of a cholera epidemic.

1847: July; Beginning of the Báb's imprisonment at Máh-Kú.

1847: August; Hamadán: Mullá Ibráhím-i-Maḥallátí, the bearer of Ṭáhirih's treatise to the 'ulamá of Hamadán, severely beaten.

1847: October; Qazvín: Arrest of some thirty Bábís, including Ṭáhirih, following the murder of Ḥájí Mullá Muḥammad Taqíy-i-Baraghání.

1847: November–December; Ṭihrán and Qazvín: Qazvín Bábís brought to Ṭihrán. Shaykh Ṣáliḥ-i-Karímí publicly executed in Ṭihrán and Ḥájí Asadu'lláh-i-Farhádí secretly put to death in prison. The remaining prisoners returned to Qazvín where Mullá Ṭáhir-i-Shírází and Mullá Ibráhím-i-Maḥallátí were put to death. Bahá'u'lláh imprisoned briefly while trying to assist Bábís of Qazvín.

1848: April; Beginning of the Báb's imprisonment at Chihríq.

1848: July; Niyálá, Mázandarán: Bahá'u'lláh and His companions, returning from Badasht, attacked by villagers.

1848: July; Tabríz: Trial of the Báb, following which He was bastinadoed.

1848: Summer; Sárí: Quddús arrested and

imprisoned by Mírzá Muḥammad-Taqí, mujtahid of Sárí.

1848: September; Bandar Jaz: Arrival of decree of the Sháh ordering Bahá'u'lláh's arrest. News of the death of the Sháh cancelled the decree.

1848: 10 October; Bárfurúsh: Seven of Mullá Ḥusayn's companions killed in a clash with a crowd roused by the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá. Later another three were killed as they tried to sound the adhán in the caravanserai of the Sabzih-Maydán of Bárfurúsh.

1848: Upheaval at Shaykh Ṭabarsí; main events were:

12 October: Mullá Ḥusayn and his companions entered the Shrine of Shaykh Ṭabarsí and were attacked that night by a body of horsemen from Qádí-Kulá.

19 December: Arrival of 'Abdu'lláh Khán's forces and the start of the siege.

21 December: Major sortié led by Quddús dispersed besiegers.

early January, 1849: Arrival of Mihdí-Qulí Mírzá and 3,000 royal troops.

11 January: Night sortie led by Quddús upon the headquarters of Mihdí-Qulí Mírzá at Vaskás dispersed the camp.

27 January: Arrival of reinforcements for the besiegers under 'Abbás-Qulí Khán-i-Láríjání.

2 February: Major sortie led by Mullá Ḥusayn dispersed the camp of their enemy but resulted in martyrdom of Mullá Ḥusayn himself and some forty of his companions.

27 March: Mihdí-Qulí Mírzá built fortifications and started bombardment of the Shrine.

early April: Arrival of Sulaymán Khán-i-Afshár with more troops.

26 April: Sortie led by Mírzá Muḥammad-Báqir-i-Bushrú'í routed forces of Sulaymán Khán.

9 May: Quddús, receiving promises of safety written on the Qur'án, left the Shrine and entered the Prince's camp.

10 May: Quddús's companions tricked into leaving the Shrine; they were then set upon and killed. End of Shaykh Ṭabarsí upheaval.

1848: early December; Ámul: Bahá'u'lláh and eleven companions, trying to reach Shaykh Ṭabarsí, arrested and imprisoned; Bahá'u'lláh bastinadoed.

1849: 16 May; Bárfurúsh: Martyrdom of Quddús.

1850: 14 February; Ṭihrán: Arrest of 14 Bábís.

1850: 19 or 20 February; Ṭihrán: Martyrdom of the Seven Martyrs of Ṭihrán: Ḥájí Mírzá Sayyid 'Alí (uncle of the Báb), Mírzá Qurbán-'Alí, Ḥájí Mullá Ismá'íl-i-Qumí, Sayyid Ḥusayn-i-Turshízí, Ḥájí Muḥammad-Taqíy-i-Kirmání, Muḥammad-Ḥusayn-i-Marághi'í.

1850: Spring; Yazd: Crowd attacked house of Vaḥíd and dispersed by Mullá Muḥammad-Riḍá.

1850: First upheaval at Nayríz; the main events were:

27 May: Entry of Vaḥíd into Nayríz; his address at the Jum'ih mosque; the Governor made moves against him; Vaḥíd ordered his companions to occupy the fort of Khájih.

about 6 June: Arrival of Mihr-'Alí Khán-i-Núrí with troops from Shíráz.

about 8 June: Night sortie by Bábís routed troops.

about 9 June: Prolonged fighting on this day led to many deaths on both sides.

17 June: Vaḥíd, having received a promise of safety written on the Qur'án, left the fort for Mihr-'Alí Khán's camp.

21 June: The Bábís were, through treachery, induced to leave the fort, then set upon and killed.

24 June: The arrival in Shíráz of thirteen severed heads of Bábís which were paraded through the town.

29 June: Martyrdom of Vaḥíd.

11 July: Mihr-'Alí Khán arrived in Shíráz with Bábí prisoners and decapitated heads.

1850: 9 July; Tabríz: Martyrdom of the Báb.

1850: The upheaval at Zanján; the main events were:

19 May: Mír Ṣaláḥ dispersed a mob sent against Ḥujjat by the Governor; the Governor sent to Ṭihrán for reinforcements; the town divided into two.

1, 13 and 16 June: Arrival of troop reinforcements.

1 July: Capture of an important Bábí position.

25 July: Capture of an important Bábí position.

4 August: Fierce fighting ending in Bábí victory and recapture of lost positions.

17 August: General assault on Bábí positions repelled, but Bábís lost ground.

25 August: Arrival of 'Azíz Khán-i-Mukrí, commander-in-chief of Írán's army.

3 September: General assault ordered by 'Azíz Khán repelled.

11 September: Arrival of troop reinforcements.

early October: Bombardment and assault took several Bábí positions, leaving the Bábís confined to a small number of houses.

mid-November: Arrival of further reinforcements.

29 December: Martyrdom of Ḥujjat.

about 2 January 1851: General assault resulted in capture of remaining Bábí positions and killing of several hundred Bábí men and women. End of Zanján upheaval.

1850: 3 October; Shíráz: Execution of two of Vaḥíd's companions.

1851: 2 March; Ṭihrán: Execution of four Bábís brought from Zanján.

1851: 30 April; Yazd: Execution of Mullá Ḥasan-i-Fáḍil after he had refused to recant.

1851: 1 May; Yazd: Áqá Ḥusayn blown from a cannon.

1851: 23 July; Yazd: Áqá Muḥammad-Ṣádiq-i-Yúzdárání beaten to death after refusing to recant.

1851: 4 August; Yazd: Áqá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Ḥakkák blown from a cannon after refusing to recant.

1851: about November; Luristán: Sayyid Baṣír-i-Hindí, the blind Indian Sayyid, put to death cruelly by Ildirím Mírzá.

1852: 16–22 August; Ṭihrán: Following the attempt on the life of the Sháh (15 August), a large number of Bábís were arrested in Ṭihrán and its environs. Initially some ten were executed by the official executioners. These included Sulaymán Khán and Ṭáhirih.

22-27 August; Ṭihrán: After the initial executions, about twenty or more Bábís were distributed among the various courtiers and government departments to be tortured and put to death.

1852: August; Mílán, near Tabríz: Fifteen Bábís arrested and imprisoned.

1852: September; Núr, Mázandarán: Royal troops attacked Bábís of this area killing several.

1853: The Second upheaval at Nayríz, the main events were:

October: Mírzá Na'ím-i-Núrí, the new Governor, began to treat the Bábís harshly, arresting a large number of them and pillaging their property. In response the Bábís fled to the hills and took up defensive positions there.

mid-October: Mírzá Na'ím's troops launched major attack on the Bábí positions in the hills during the night but were thrown back in much confusion and with great loss of life.

31 October: Bábís asked to negotiate terms.

early November: Bábís tricked into leaving their positions then attacked and over a hundred killed. Some 600 women prisoners, 80–180 male prisoners and the heads of some 180 martyrs were taken to Shíráz. End of second Nayríz upheaval.

1853: 24 November; Shíráz: Arrival of Mírzá Na'ím in Shíráz with prisoners and heads of Bábís; several more Bábís executed; heads dispatched to Ṭihrán but later buried at Ábádih; many of the women were forced to marry the soldiers.

1862 (B.E. 18): Ṭihrán: Some Bahá'ís imprisoned.

1862 (B.E. 18): Ṭihrán: 'Abdu'l-'Alí Khán-i-Marághi'í killed on orders of Náṣiru'd-Dín Sháh.

1864: April; Najafábád and Iṣfahán: Shaykh Muḥammad-Báqir, 'the Wolf', ordered the arrest of several hundred Bábís and had them brought to Iṣfahán. Mírzá Ḥabíbu'lláh and Ustád Ḥusayn-'Alí-i-Khayyát were executed and a number of the prisoners were sent on to Ṭihrán where they languished in prison for several months before being set free. On their return to Iṣfahán, Ḥájí Mullá Ḥasan and Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ṣádiq were beaten and then executed in June.

1866: December; Tabríz: Following a disturbance in which a Bábí was killed, about one hundred Bahá'ís were arrested.

1867: 8 January; Tabríz: Execution of three Bahá'ís, Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Khurásání, Mírzá 'Alí-Naqí and Mírzá Muṣṭafáy-i-

Naráqí.

1867: January or February; Zanján: Execution of Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí, a physician of Hamadán.

1867: January or February; Ṭihrán: Execution of Áqá Najaf-'Alíy-i-Zanjání.

1868: August; Mihríz, Yazd: Poisoning of Mullá Muḥammad-Riḍá, Riḍá'r-Rúḥ.

1868: (A.H.Q. 1285–1286): Bushrúyyih, Khurásán: Bahá'ís attacked causing injury to several.

1869: July; Ṭihrán: Execution of Áqá Buzurg-i-Khurásání, Badí', Bahá'u'lláh's messenger to Náṣiru'd-Dín Sháh.

1869: 25 December; Fárán, Khurásán: Mob attacked Bahá'ís; two Bahá'ís severely beaten.

1871 (B.E. 27): Burújird: Muḥammad-Ḥasan Khán-i-Káshí died after being bastinadoed.

1871 (A.H.Q. 1288): Shíráz: Execution of three Bahá'ís: Áqá Mírzá Áqáy-i-Rikáb-Sáz, Mashhadí Muḥammad-Nabí, and Mashhadí Muḥammad-Ja'far-i-Khayyáṭ.

1873 (A.H.Q. 1290): Ṭihrán: Ibn-i-Abhar imprisoned for fourteen months and fifteen days.

1874: April; Iṣfahán: Twenty or more Bahá'ís arrested at instigation of Shaykh Muḥammad-Báqir, 'the Wolf'.

1875 (A.H.Q. 1292): Sidih, Iṣfahán: 'Ulamá roused rabble against Bahá'ís; several Bahá'ís imprisoned in Iṣfahán including Nayyir and Síná.

1876 (A.H.Q. 1293): Ṭihrán: Six Bahá'ís arrested and imprisoned for three months and seventeen days.

1877: September; Mashhad: Execution of Ḥájí 'Abdu'l-Majíd-i-Níshápúrí.

1877: December; Iṣfahán: Execution of Mullá Káẓim-i-Talkhunchi'í.

1879: 17 March; Iṣfahán: Execution of Ḥájí Sayyid Muḥammad-Ḥasan, the 'King of Martyrs', and Ḥájí Sayyid Muḥammad-Ḥusayn, the 'Beloved of Martyrs'.

1880 (A.H.Q. 1297): Ṣultánábád: Martyrdom of seven Bahá'ís; three Bahá'ís killed on the orders of Sayyid Muḥammad-Báqir-i-Mujtahid and a large number of Bahá'ís arrested and thrown into prison. Four more Bahá'ís were executed in prison. An old lady, Sayyidih Khánum Bíbí, was sent to Ṭihrán and strangled in prison.

1882: December; Ṭihrán: Arrest of some fifty Bahá'ís; they were eventually released after nineteen months in prison.

1882 (about A.H.Q. 1299): Yazd: Arrest of Mírzá 'Alí-Muḥammad, Varqá; he was sent to Iṣfahán where he spent a year in prison.

1883: 19 March: Rasht: Sixteen Bahá'í traders of the bazaar arrested; three others brought from Láhíján. Ḥájí Naṣír-i-Qazvíní died in prison.

1883 (A.H.Q. 1300): Yazd: Six Bahá'ís arrested and sent to Iṣfahán in chains.

1883 (A.H.Q. 1300): Sarvistán, Fárs: Four Bahá'ís arrested and sent to Shíráz where they were bastinadoed.

1884 (A.H.Q. 1302): Turshíz, Khurásán: Two Bahá'ís imprisoned.

1885: 27 March: Námiq, Turbat-i-Ḥaydarí, Khurásán: Martyrdom of Mullá 'Alíy-i-Námiqí.

1887 (A.H.Q. 1305): Sarvistán, Fárs: Karbalá'í Ḥasan Khán and Karbalá'í Ṣádiq arrested and imprisoned for two years before being killed in prison.

1888: July–August; Sarvistán, Fárs: Two Bahá'ís arrested and sent to Shíráz where one of them was imprisoned.

1888: 23 October; Iṣfahán: Execution of Mírzá Ashraf.

1889: 17 July; Iṣfahán, Sidih and Najafábád: Áqá Najafí, the 'Son of the Wolf', having initiated a campaign against the Bahá'ís in June, on this day, drove over one hundred Bahá'ís out of Sidih and Najafábád: they took sanctuary in the Telegraph Office and in the stables of the Governor in Iṣfahán.

18 July: They were persuaded to leave the Telegraph Office after being assured that they would receive protection in their villages.

August: Bahá'ís of Sidih and Najafábád, having received no help, went to Ṭihrán to petition the Sháh.

25 February 1890: On their return from Ṭihrán with the Sháh's decree permitting their return home, seven were killed as they tried to return to Sidih.

1890: August–September; Sarcháh, Bírjand: Arrest and beating of Mullá Ḥasan and his two brothers.

1890 (A.H.Q. 1308): Ṭihrán: Arrest of Ḥájí

Akhúnd and Ḥájí Amín, who remained imprisoned in Ṭihrán and Qazvín for two years, and of Ibn-i-Abhar who remained imprisoned in Ṭihrán for four years.

1890 (A.H.Q. 1308): Furúgh (Dúghábád), Khurásán: Mírzá Maḥmúd-i-Furúghí arrested and sent to Mashhad; from there he was sent to Kalát-i-Nádirí where he was imprisoned for two years.

1890 (A.H.Q. 1308): Mashhad: Mob set out to kill Mírzá Ḥusayn-i-Bajistání but failing to find him looted his shop.

1891: 19 May; Yazd: The Seven Martyrs of Yazd; executed by the Governor, Jalálu'd-Dawlih, at the instigation of the mujtahid, Shaykh Ḥasan-i-Sabzivárí; their names were: 'Alí-Asghar, Mullá Mihdí, Áqá 'Alí, Mullá 'Alíy-i-Sabzivárí, Muḥammad-Báqir, and two brothers, 'Alí-Asghar and Muḥammad-Ḥasan.

1891: 3 October; Yazd: Martyrdom of Mullá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Dihábádí.

1892: Summer; Shíráz: Áqá Murtaḍá of Sarvistán, who had been in prison for five years, executed.

1892 (A.H.Q. 1310): Ṭihrán: Poisoning of Mu'taminu's-Salṭanih on the orders of Náṣiru'd-Dín Sháh.

1893: 17 June: Áqá Muḥammad-Riḍáy-i-Muḥammadábádí killed by three men on the decree of Mírzá Sayyid 'Alí-i-Mudarris and Shaykh Muḥammad-Taqíy-i-Sabzivárí, two of the 'ulamá of Yazd.

1894 (A.H.Q. 1312): Nishápúr, Khurásán: Two Bahá'ís arrested and bastinadoed so severely that one, Mullá 'Alí-Akbar, died seven days later and the other was mentally affected and died two years later.

1894 (A.H.Q. 1312): Hamadán: Ḥájí Yárí, a Bahá'í of Jewish background, arrested and imprisoned.

1894 (A.H.Q. 1312): Dastjirdán, Bushrúyyih, Khurásán: Áqá 'Abdu'l-Vahháb Mukhtárí beaten and expelled from the village.

1894 (A.H.Q. 1312): Fárán, Khurásán: Bahá'ís of the town beaten and Bahá'í homes looted.

1896: 1 May; Ṭihrán: Martyrdom of 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and his twelve-year-old son, Rúḥ'u'lláh.

1896: May; Ábádih, Fárs: Leading Bahá'ís of the town arrested; other Bahá'ís forced to flee the town and their homes looted.

1896: June–July; Turbat-i-Ḥaydarí, Khurásán: Two mujtahids stirred up the people against the Bahá'ís causing several Bahá'ís to be beaten and four Bahá'ís imprisoned.

1896: 21 July; Turbat-i-Ḥaydarí: Ḥájí Muḥammad Ṣádiq stabbed to death.

24 July: Four Bahá'ís, previously imprisoned, executed on decree of the mujtahid, Shaykh 'Alí-Akbar-i-Yazdí; their names were: Mírzá Ghulám-'Alí, Áqá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Sabbágh, Áqá Muḥammad-Ḥasan-i-Kaffásh and his brother, Áqá Ghulám.

1896 (A.H.Q. 1314): Ḥiṣár, Khurásán: Persecution and imprisonment of Bahá'ís of this village.

1896 (A.H.Q. 1314): Tabríz: Martyrdom of Áqá Sayyid Mihdíy-i-Yazdí.

1896 (A.H.Q. 1314): Khúzistán: Mullá Ḥasan Khazá'í arrested.

1897: February; Mamaqán, Ádharbáyján: Six Bahá'ís arrested; three of them were bastinadoed and three imprisoned in Tabríz.

1897 (A.H.Q. 1315): Saysán, Ádharbáyján: Fifteen Bahá'ís arrested, taken to Tabríz, imprisoned and fined.

1897 (A.H.Q. 1315): Nayríz, Fárs: Three Bahá'ís arrested on orders of Áqá Najafí, the 'Son of the Wolf'.

1897 (A.H.Q. 1315): Hamadán: Homes of several Bahá'ís looted and ransacked after complaint by Jews of the town against Bahá'ís of Jewish background.

1898: 9 February: Mashhad: Ḥájí Muḥammad-i-Turk shot, beaten and then burned to death in one of the main streets of the town by four religious students.

1898: April; Hamadán: Nine Bahá'ís attending a Riḍván meeting arrested, beaten and imprisoned.

1898: 1 June; Yazd: Áqá Ghulám-Ḥusayn-i-Banádakí killed by a mob after being examined by Shaykh Muḥammad-Ja'far-i-Sabzivárí and refusing to deny his Faith.

1898 (A.H.Q. 1316): Qazvín: Several Bahá'ís arrested and imprisoned.

1898 (A.H.Q. 1316): Ḥiṣár, Khurásán: Ḥájí Muḥammad set upon and killed.

1899: 9 April; Najafábád: Mírzá Muḥammad-Báqir-i-Há'í arrested and several Bahá'ís

beaten; Bahá'í houses looted.

1899 (A.H.Q. 1317): Kirmánsháh: Mírzá Muḥammad-Riḍáy-i-Vá'iẓ stirred up the mob against the Bahá'ís.

1900 (A.H.Q. 1318): Kirmánsháh: Mírzá Músá Khán, Ḥakím-Iláhí, expelled from the town.

1901: May; Najafábád: Ghulám-Riḍá killed.

1901 (A.H.Q. 1319): Shahmírzád, Khurásán: Two Bahá'ís beaten, imprisoned and fined.

1901 (B.E. 57): Yazd: Sayyid Háshim-i-Urusí dúz arrested and taken before the mujtahid, Mírzá Abu'l-Ḥasan-i-Mudarris, who signed a decree for his death on account of his being a Bahá'í; but he was saved by Sihámu'l-Mulk.

1902: 18 March; Isfandábád and Abarqú, Fárs: Execution of Áqá Muḥammad-Zamán-i-Ṣabbágh and Sayyid Ja'far on the orders of Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Ghaní, mujtahid of Abarqú; expulsion of several Bahá'ís from the town. Another Bahá'í, Áqá Riḍá, also killed.

1902 (A.H.Q. 1320): Núq, Kirmán: Áqá Bakhsh-'Alí beaten by a mob until almost dead.

1902 (A.H.Q. 1320): Bandar Anzalí: Sayyid 'Alí, the Imám-Jum'ih, roused the rabble to attack the house where Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥaydar-'Alí was staying; only the intervention of the Governor saved the latter.

1902 (A.H.Q. 1320): Shíráz: Ḥájí Abu'l-Ḥasan beaten so severely on the orders of the mujtahid, Ḥájí Sayyid 'Alí-Akbar-i-Fál-Asírí, that he died a few months later from the effects.

1902: Shíráz: During most of this year there was agitation, stirred up by the 'ulamá, against Ḥájí Shaykhu'r-Ra'ís because of his being a Bahá'í; eventually he was forced to leave Shíráz in August.

1903: Upheaval at Rasht: main events were:

3 May: Agitation against Bahá'ís following publication of photograph of the Bahá'í community; several Bahá'ís beaten.

7 May: Mob disrupted a Bahá'í funeral, exhumed body and burned it.

16 May: Renewed uproar in the town following the placing of a forged placard at the door of the local mujtahid, Ḥájí Khumámí.

17 May: Two leading Bahá'ís, Ibtiháju'l-Mulk and Mudabbiru'l-Mamálik, expelled from the town.

1903: Upheaval at Iṣfahán: main events were:

23 May: Muḥammad-Javád-i-Ṣarráf seized by students of Áqá Najafí and beaten severely; this caused a large number of Bahá'ís to take sanctuary in the Russian Consulate.

28 May: Large mob gathered outside Russian Consulate and beat Bahá'ís as they left; Sayyid Abu'l-Qásim-i-Marnání, aged 90, died as a result of the injuries he received.

1903: 8 June; Maláyir, Hamadán: Attack on Bahá'ís of the town; several beaten and imprisoned; Mírzá Ismá'íl-i-Khayyáṭ killed and Áqá 'Alíy-i-Zargar died later as a result of injuries he received.

1903: Upheaval at Yazd and surrounding villages; main events were:

14 June: Yazd: Sayyid Muḥammad-Ibrahím, the new Imám-Jum'ih, preached against the Bahá'ís; rabble took to the streets; shop of Áqá Muḥammad-Ḥusayn-i-Aṭṭár and several other Bahá'ís looted.

15 June: Yazd: Ḥájí Mírzáy-i-Halabí-Sáz attacked with an axe and died later the same day.

22 June: Taft: Rabble attacked Bahá'ís' houses killing six Bahá'ís.

24 June: Ardikán: Rabble attacked Bahá'í houses killing four Bahá'ís.

26 June: Yazd: Nine Bahá'ís killed and many houses pillaged.

Faráshán: Ḥájí Sayyid Javád-i-Muḥammadábádí beaten to death.

27 June; Yazd: Rabble killed six Bahá'ís; citadel besieged in the belief that Mullá 'Abdu'l-Ghaní was there.

Manshád: Rabble killed six Bahá'ís.

Ardikán: Rabble set out for home of Ṣadru's-Sulṭán but were turned back.

28 June; Yazd: On orders of the Governor, Jalálu'd-Dawlih, two Bahá'ís brought before him; one was blown from a cannon and another had his throat cut.

Taft: Mullá Muḥammad-Ḥusayn killed.

Manshád: Three Bahá'ís killed.

Ardikán: Ṣadru's-Sulṭán, his brothers, Niẓámu'sh-Sharí'ih and Mu'tamadu'sh-Sharí'ih, his nephew, Ḍiyá'u'sh-Sharí'ih, and four others killed.

Hanzá: Fáṭimih Bígum killed.

29 June; Taft: Áqá Muḥammad shot to death on decree of Shaykh Ḥusayn-i-Daráz.

Chinár: Áqá Muḥammad-Háshim-i-Dallál killed as he fled Yazd.

'Izzábád: Ḥájí Aḥmad-i-Muqaní-Báshí killed.

Hanzá: Mírzá Aḥmad-i-Árám beaten to death.

30 June; Taft: Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ismá'íl killed.

Manshád: Sayyid Ḥusayn beaten to death.

1 July; Manshád: Three Bahá'ís killed.

2 July; Manshád: Mírzá Ḥusayn stabbed to death.

3 July; Manshád: Áqá 'Alí Muḥammad shot to death.

Banádak: Áqá Mírzá Muḥammad-i-Hudá and Áqá Muḥammad-Ḥusayn of Yazd killed.

4 July; Manshád: Áqá Muḥammad shot to death.

'Abbásábád: Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ḥusayn killed.

5 July; Manshád: Áqá 'Alí-Akbar beaten then shot to death.

'Abbásábád: Ḥájí Aḥmad-i-Kaffásh beaten to death.

6 July; Manshád: Khadíjih Sulṭán Khánum thrown from top of a building and killed.

'Abbásábád: Áqá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Qaṣṣáb beaten to death.

8 July; Manshád: Áqá Mírzá Muḥammad beaten and burned to death.

9 July: Manshád: Áqá Muḥammad-'Alí strangled to death.

10 July; Manshád: Sháṭir Ḥusayn, Khabbáz-i-Yazdí and Mírzá Muḥammad-Ibráhím, Ṭabíb-i-Khuramsháhí beaten to death.

11 July; Manshád: Áqá Ghulám-Riḍá shot and beaten to death.

12 July; Manshád: Three Bahá'ís killed.

13 July; Ibríhímábád: Áqá Asadu'lláh killed and his head taken back to Manshád.

Gávafshád: Ustád Riḍá shot to death.

Banádak: Áqá Ghulám-Riḍá shot to death.

Hanzá: Sayyid Muḥammad-'Alí and Mírzá Javád-i-Ṣabbágh shot to death.

14 July; Hadash: Áqá 'Abdu'r-Rasúl shot and his body burned.

15 July; Manshád: Áqá Mullá Bábá'í burned alive then shot.

19 July; Qavámábád: Áqá 'Alí-Riḍáy-i-Sha'r-báf killed.

1903 (A.H.Q. 1321): Zarqán, Shíráz: Akhúnd Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Zarqání incited the people to attack the Bahá'ís.

1903 (A.H.Q. 1321): Zavárih, Iṣfahán: Mob attacked Bahá'ís.

1903 (A.H.Q. 1321): Káshán: Several Bahá'ís arrested and imprisoned; Jewish leaders in the town denounced several Bahá'ís of Jewish background and these were also imprisoned.

1904 (A.H.Q. 1322): Shíráz: Mob attacked houses of Bahá'ís.

1905: March; Marághih, Ádharbáyján: Two Bahá'ís beaten and one imprisoned.

1905: about 30 March; Najafábád, Iṣfahán: Ḥájí Kalb-'Alí shot and killed.

1906: Summer; Sangsar, Khurásán: Persecutions caused Bahá'ís to flee into hills.

1906: October–November: Sangsar and Shahmírzád, Khurásán: Several Bahá'ís killed and injured by bullets; six Bahá'ís arrested.

1906 (A.H.Q. 1324): Mashhad: Agitation by the 'ulamá caused expulsion of Shaykh 'Alí-Akbar-i-Qúchání.

1907: 25 April; Tabríz: Martyrdom of Karbalá'í Ṣádiq.

1907 (A.H.Q. 1325): Nayríz: Hájar, an elderly Bahá'í lady, shot dead.

1908 (A.H.Q. 1326): Kirmán: Martyrdom of 'Alí Ádharí.

1908 (A.H.Q. 1326) Shahmírzád, Khurásán: Áqá Sayyid Ḥusayn-i-Muqaddas arrested.

1908 (A.H.Q. 1326): Shíráz: Qavámu'l-Mulk attacked the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and the Bahá'is from the pulpit of the Masjid-i-Naw.

1909: March; Nayríz: Eighteen Bahá'ís killed by Shaykh Zakariyya after he took the town in the name of the Constitutionalists.

1909: 7 April; Kirmánsháh: Attack on the Bahá'ís of Jewish background.

1909: March–April; Námiq, Khurásán: Bahá'ís of this village attacked; Kad-khudá Ismá'íl killed.

1909: 22 April; Ḥiṣár, Khurásán: Three Bahá'ís killed and their wives seriously injured.

1909: 28 July; Námiq, Khurásán: Mullá 'Alí-Akbar, his wife and two sisters killed; later in the day, Áqá Ḥasan killed.

1909: 8 November; Iṣfahán: Ḥájí Ḥaydar, leading Bahá'í of Najafábád, shot and killed.

1910: 20 September; Najafábád, Iṣfahán: Martyrdom of Muḥammad-Ja'far-i-Ṣabbágh.

1911 (A.H.Q. 1329): near Rasht: Mírzá Ibráhím Khán, Ibtiháju'l-Mulk killed.

1912: 3 January; Sárí, Mázandarán: Mob attacked houses of Bahá'ís; Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí, Mushíru't-Tujjár, shot, Mírzá Maḥmúd-i-Sá'at-sáz suffocated and Áqá Muḥammad-Ismá'íl, Amínu't-Tujjár beaten and shot to death. A few days later Mírzá Ḥabíbu'lláh also killed.

1912: January; Barfurúsh, Mázandarán: Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí, Mu'ínu't-Tujjár, and his wife killed.

1912: 4 February; Máhfurúzak, Mázandarán: Áqá Shaykh Muḥammad-Taqí and Áqá Mír Ṣafar killed.

1913 (B.E. 71): Qúzih-Kúh, Bavánát, Fárs: Áqá Abu'l-Qásim-i-Isfandábádí killed by two assailants.

1914: 27 August; Mashhad: Áqá Mírzá Yúsif-i-Qá'iní killed.

1914: (A.H.Q. 1332): Hamadán: Several Bahá'ís is arrested.

1915: 14 February; Ardistán: Arrest of Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn; general agitation against Bahá'ís; some Bahá'í houses looted.

26 February; large number of Bahá'ís arrested and imprisoned; they were eventually released on payment of large fines.

1915: 14 March; Mashhad: Shaykh 'Alí-Akbar-i-Qúchání shot to death; this was followed by considerable anti-Bahá'í agitation and several Bahá'ís had to seek sanctuary. Three hundred persons arrested.

1915 (A.H.Q. 1333): Urúmiyyih: Martyrdom of Mírzá Ḥusayn-i-Hudá.

1916: 22 February; Sulṭánábád: Mírzá 'Alí-Akbar, his wife, his wife's sister (aged 12) and their four children (aged from 46 days to 11 years) killed by having their throats cut.

1916: 28 July; Sangsar and Shahmírzád, Khurásán: Martyrdom of Mullá Naṣru'lláh-i-Shahmírzádí; general agitation against Bahá'ís.

1917: February; Najafábád: Mob disinterred bodies from two Bahá'í graves. This was followed by general agitation against the Bahá'ís in the town and boycott of Bahá'ís in the bazaar and public baths. Thirty-two Bahá'ís arrested.

1918: 15 March; Bandar Jaz: Áqá Mírzá Javád, I'timádu't-Tujjár, shot and the houses of the Bahá'ís looted causing the death of Áqá Mírzá Javád's 14-year-old nephew.

1920: May; Shíráz: Áqá Shaykh Murtaḍá incited the people against the Bahá'ís in the shrine of Sháh Chirágh. Bahá'ís threatened and insulted but firm official action averted the danger to the Bahá'ís.

1920: 21 May; Sulṭánábád: Execution of Ḥájí 'Arab by hanging.

1920: June; Kirmánsháh: Mírzá Ya'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih expelled from the town and another Bahá'í beaten.

1920: August: Sháhrúd, Khurásán: Expulsion of eight Bahá'ís.

1920: September; Iṣfahán: Destruction of Bahá'í graves.

1920: September; Gaz, Iṣfahán: Agitation against Bahá'ís.

1920: 15–21 September; Ábádih, Fárs: Agitation against Bahá'ís; plans made for general massacre and looting on 24 September (10 Muḥarram), but this was averted by the appointment of a strong Acting-Governor.

1920: October; Farúgh, Fárs: Mírzá Muṣṭafá killed and other Bahá'ís imprisoned.

1920: November; Káshán: Desecration of a Bahá'í grave.

1920 (A.H.Q. 1339): Rasht: Martyrdom of Mírzá Ibráhím Khán, Ibtiháju'l-Mulk, at the hands of the Jangalís.

1921: 23 January; Kirmánsháh: Assassination of Mírzá Ya'qúb-i-Muttaḥidih.

1921: 19 February–5 March; Káshán: 'Ulamá agitated against Bahá'ís and tried to close Bahá'í school.

1921: April; Sulṭánábád: Agitation against the Bahá'ís; attack on Bahá'ís planned for 24 April (15 Sha'bán) but averted by the Governor.

1921: 5 July; Shíráz: After two weeks of agitation against the Bahá'ís, one Bahá'í was beaten in the bazaar and the threat of a general attack on the Bahá'ís was averted only by a show of force on the part of the Governor.

16 July; Nabílzádih forced to leave town.

1921: July; Shahrúd, Khurásán: Mírzá Muḥammad-i-Shírází, a merchant, arrested and all of his goods confiscated.

1921: July; Káshán: Demonstrations against the Bahá'ís by the mullás.

1921: July; Sulṭánábád: Mírzá Ya'qúb arrested and Bahá'í shops attacked.

1921: July; Yazd: Harassment of Bahá'ís of Zoroastrian background by the Zoroastrian agent, Mr. Pestanji Tasker.

1921: July–August; Qum: 'Union of 'Ulamá' agitated against Bahá'ís.

1921: August; Iṣfahán: Agitation against Bahà'is led by Ḥájí Áqá Munír, one of the 'ulamá.

1921: September; Sangsar and Shahmírzád, Khurásán: Fifteen Bahá'ís arrested and newly-built Bahá'í Centre burned down.

1921: 10 October; Káshán: Following weeks of agitation, the Bahá'í school in this town was closed and many Bahá'ís harassed.

1921: 20 October; Sangsar: Poisoning of Áqá Siyyid Muṣṭafá Ṭabáṭabá'í; continual agitation prevented burial of the body for several days.

1921: 29 November; Yazd: Several Bahá'ís beaten; 'ulamá attempted to organize an anti-Bahá'í boycott.

1922 (A.H.Q. 1341): Shahmírzád, Khurásán: Demonstrations against Bahá'ís; two Bahá'ís beaten.

1924: 9 March; Marághih, Ádharbáyján: Two mullás stirred up the people against the Bahá'ís; one Bahá'í beaten and two imprisoned for several months.

1924: 21–28 March; Mashhad: Daily attacks on Bahá'ís and Bahá'í shops culminating in expulsion from the town of Áqá Gulkání and other leading Bahá'ís.

1924: 2 April; Turbat-i-Ḥaydarí, Khurásán: General attack on Bahá'ís; several arrested and imprisoned; some forced to leave the town permanently.

1924: 5 April; Turshíz, Khurásán: Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Majíd, Ṣádiqu'l-'Ulamá, beaten to death.

1924: April; Sarcháh, Birjand, Khurásán: Bahá'ís arrested and beaten; Bahá'í houses looted.

1924: April; Khúsif, Bírjand, Khurásán: One Bahá'í beaten; Bahá'í houses and orchards looted and destroyed.

1924: 22 June; Firúzábád, Fárs: Martyrdom of Áqá Husayn-'Alí.

1924: 18 July; Ṭihrán: Anti-Bahá'í agitation, culminating in the murder of the American Vice-Consul, Major Robert Imbrie, on the accusation of being a Bahá'í (although he was not in fact a Bahá'í).

1925: Miyán-du-áb: Bahá'ís forbidden to enter public baths; two Bahá'ís arrested.

1926: 7 April; Jahrum, Fárs: Eight Bahá'ís beaten to death: Sayyid Ḥusayn Rawḥání, Ustád 'Abbás, Muḥammad-Kázim, Muḥammad-Ḥasan, Áqá Muḥammad-Shafí', Mashhadí 'Abbás, Ustád Muḥammad-Ḥasan, Muḥammad-Riḍá. Many Bahá'í houses were looted and several other Bahá'ís beaten.

1926: 29 June; Zavárih, near Iṣfahán: Martyrdom of three Bahá'ís: Áqá Asadu'lláh, Áqá Sayyid Rafí'á and Áqá Ḥasan.

1926: July–August; Nayríz, Fárs: Shaykh Muhammad-i-Yazdí attacked Bahá'ís from the pulpit; Bahá'ís blockaded into town and an attack on them was being prepared, but they managed to obtain assistance from the military authorities.

1926: Marághih, Ádharbáyján: For most of this year, severe restrictions were placed upon the Bahá'ís of this town including: prohibition against shops serving Bahá'ís; prohibition against Bahá'ís entering the public baths; prohibition against Bahá'í burials.

1927: 25 March: Ardibíl, Ádharbáyján: Martyrdom of Áqá 'Abdu'l-'Aẓím, Amínu'l-'Ulamá, at the decree of Ḥájí Mírzá 'Alí-Akbar, mujtahid of Ardibíl.

1927: 19 June: Kirmán: Martyrdom of Karbalá'í Asadu'lláh-i-Saqaṭ-furúsh.

1932: Throughout Írán: Iranian government introduced several measures against the Bahá'ís: Restrictions placed upon the import of Bahá'í books and periodicals by post; restrictions placed upon Bahá'í publication in Írán; Bahá'í marriage certificates denied recognition.

1933 (B.E. 90): Gulpáygán: Bahá'ís refused admission to public baths; Shaykh Ja'far Hidáyat beaten and expelled from the town.

1933 (B.E. 90): Qazvín: Tavakkul Bahá'í School closed.

1934 (B.E. 91): Throughout Írán: Several measures taken against the Bahá'ís by the government: Closure of Tarbíyat Bahá'í Schools in Ṭihrán following their failure to remain open on a Bahá'í Holy Day; closure of nineteen other Bahá'í schools in Káshán, Qazvín, Yazd, Najafábád, Ábádih, etc.; Bahá'í meetings forbidden by police order in many towns: Ṭihrán, Mashhad, Sabzivár, Qazvín, Arák (Sulṭánábád), etc.; Bahá'í Centres (Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds) closed by the authorities in Káshán, Hamadán and Záhidán; police harassment of Bahá'ís over filling-in of census returns, over marriage certificates and registration of births; some Bahá'ís in the army stripped of rank and imprisoned; some Bahá'í government employees dismissed.

1935 (B.E. 92): Throughout Írán: Continuation of repressive government action: Meetings in Bahá'í Centre in Ṭihrán banned; arrest and imprisonment of a number of Bahá'ís in Bandar Sháh; Secretary of Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Arák arrested; arrest and harassment of Bahá'ís in Qazvín; arrest of a Bahá'í in Záhidán.

1936: June: Throughout Írán: Police orders sent throughout Irán prohibiting all Bahá'í meetings; several local Bahá'í Centres (Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds) attacked or closed down; Bahá'ís in Bandar Sháh interrogated by police for closing their shops on Bahá'í Holy Days.

1937: May: Yazd: Several prominent Bahá'ís arrested; they were imprisoned in Ṭihrán for four years and one died in prison.

1937: July: Sangsar, Khurásán: Nine Bahá'ís imprisoned for closing their shops on a Bahá'í Holy Day; remained in prison for two months.

1937 (B.E. 94): Cham-tang, near Hindíyán: Five Bahá'í families attacked in their homes, beaten severely and forced to leave the village.

1937 (B.E. 94): Throughout Írán: Continuation of repressive government action: Many Bahá'ís employed in police force, army and government departments dismissed; six members of Local Spiritual Assembly of Ahváz arrested; Bahá'ís in Bandar Sháh who closed their shops on Bahá'í Holy Days were arrested; all Bahá'í meetings prohibited by police order in Kirmánsháh, Bírjand, Arák and other towns.

1938 (B.E. 95): Throughout Írán: Continuation of repressive government action: Throughout the country, Bahá'ís marrying without going through the official religious procedure, which did not recognize the Bahá'í Faith, were investigated; in Ṭihrán alone several hundred Bahá'ís were investigated with a view to prosecution, most were imprisoned for a while pending bail. After trial some were imprisoned for six to eight months and fined; police harassment of Bahá'í meetings in Kirmánsháh, Záhidán, Mashhad, Sangsar, Bandar Pahlaví, Taft, etc.

1941: January; Sangsar, Khurásán: Nine Bahá'ís arrested and banished to other towns for closing their shops on Bahá'í Holy Days.

1941: 18 October; Panbih-Chúlih, near Sárí, Mázandarán: Ibráhím Maddáḥ Akbarí, his two sons, Ya'qúb and Yúsif, and his daughter, Nargis, killed and several other members of his family severely beaten during an attack on his house by an armed mob.

1941 (B.E. 98): Bunáb, Ádharbáyján: Martyrdom of Shaykh Kázim.

1942: 13 February; Nayríz, Fárs: Martyrdom of Ustád Ḥabíbu'lláh Mu'ammarí.

1942 (B.E. 99): Shíráz: Attack on the House of the Báb.

1944: 12 May: Ábádih, Fárs: Bahá'í Centre attacked by a mob of 4,000; building looted and destroyed; several Bahá'ís severely beaten.

1944: 8 August; Sháhrúd: After three weeks of anti-Bahá'í agitation, three Bahá'ís were murdered: Áqá Muḥammad Jadhbání, Áqá Asadu'lláh Nádirí and Ḥasan Muhájirzádih; numerous Bahá'í houses attacked and looted. The confessed murderers were tried and acquitted.

1944 (B.E. 101): Throughout Írán: Following the martyrdoms in Sháhrúd and the widespread publicity given to the results of the trial, there was an eruption of persecution throughout Írán:

Ábádih: Bahá'í beaten, houses sacked.

Bandar Jaz: Bahá'í Centre (Ḥaẓíra u'l-Quds) attacked.

Bandar Sháh: Two Bahá'ís knifed; attackers set free and attacked another three Bahá'ís leaving one a permanent invalid.

Bujnúrd: Bahá'í family driven from town.

Bushrúyyih: Bahá'ís, including women and children attacked and beaten, homes and shops looted and burned, Bahá'í cemetery desecrated.

Fárán (Firdaws): Bahá'í houses attacked and looted.

Gulpáygán: Two Bahá'í houses set on fire.

Gunábád: Bahá'ís driven from town.

Káshán: Bahá'í houses attacked and looted.

Maḥmúdábád, Mázandarán: Bahá'í cemetery desecrated.

Miyán-du-áb: Seven Bahá'ís beaten.

Ná'in: Bahá'í houses attacked and looted.

Qaṣr-i-Shírín: Bahá'ís stoned.

Rafsanján: Bahá'í beaten.

Sangsar: Bahá'í beaten.

Sírján, Kirmán: Five Bahá'ís beaten.

Ṭabas: Two Bahá'í families driven from town.

Zábul: Bahá'í houses looted and set on fire.

1945: Throughout Írán: National Board of Education in Írán dismissed all Bahá'ís from National Teacher Training Colleges.

1947: 4 July; Sháhí, Mázandarán: Martyrdom of 'Abbás Shahídzádih.

1948: 11 January; Sarvistán, Fárs: Martyrdom of Ḥabíbu'lláh Húshmand.

1948 (B.E. 105): Ṭihrán: Attack on Bahá'í Centre (Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds) by a mob incited by Áyatu'lláh Káshání.

1948 (B.E. 105): Yazd: Attack on Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds by a mob incited by Shaykh Khálisí-zádih.

1948: Chálih-Zamín, Mázandarán: Bahá'í killed after attack on his house.

1950: 3 February; Káshán: Martyrdom of Dr. Sulaymán Birgís.

1950: September–October: Four Bahá'ís arrested on trumped-up charge; trials lasted until 1954 when the accused were given prison sentences.

1951: 12 March: Yazd: Attack on Bahá'ís of Taft resulting in death of one Bahá'í: Bahrám Rawḥání.

1951: June; Fárán (Firdaws), Khurásán: Attack on Bahá'ís, several houses burned.

1951 (B.E. 108): Throughout Írán: Introduction by the government of repressive measures against the Bahá'ís: Dismissal of Bahá'ís from government positions; fifty employees of Public hospital in Mashhad dismissed.

1951 (B.E. 108): Árán, Káshán: Attack on Bahá'ís resulting in the death of one Bahá'í.

1952: (B.E. 109): Najafábád: Attack on Bahá'ís and Bahá'í houses; several Bahá'í houses set on fire.

1953: (B.E. 110): Bushrúyyih and Fárán (Firdaws), Khurásán: Attacks on Bahá'ís and Bahá'í houses.

1953 (B.E. 110): Durúd, west-central Írán: Martyrdom of Áqá Raḥmán Kulaynì-Mamaqání.

1954: 8 December; Ádharbáyján: Bahá'ís expelled from employment in Ministries of Health and Public Highways.

1955: 18–22 January; Ḥiṣár, Khurásán: Five Bahá'ís arrested and beaten; four of these dragged around the town; Bahá'í houses attacked, looted and set on fire.

4 February; Ḥiṣár, Khurásán: Bahá'í women assaulted.

23 April; Throughout Írán: During the month of Ramaḍán, which began on this date, Shaykh Muḥammad-Taqí Falsafí preached against the Bahá'ís in the Khu'ís Mosque in Ṭihrán. These inflammatory speeches were broadcast on the national Iranian radio and stirred up the people against the Bahá'ís.

2 May; Ṭihrán: Police locked doors of the National Bahá'í Centre in Ṭihrán, preventing the holding there of the final day of the National Bahá'í Convention.

7 May; Ṭihrán: Army occupied the National Bahá'í Centre.

8 May; Rasht: Local Bahá'í Centre attacked and taken over.

8 May; Dámghán, Khurásán: Bahá'í beaten.

9 May; Ahváz: Local Bahá'í Centre taken over.

9 May; Shíráz: Bahá'í houses attacked and looted.

16 May; Iṣfahán: Local Bahá'í Centre taken over.

17 May; Minister of Interior announced in the National Parliament that the government had issued orders for the suppression of the 'Bahá'í sect' and the liquidation of Bahá'í Centres.

22 May; Dome of the National Bahá'í Centre demolished with the personal participation of several high-ranking army officers including Major-General Bátmánqilích, the army Chief-of-Staff, and also Shaykh Muḥammad Taqí Falsafí.

24 May; Karaj, near Ṭihrán: Local Bahá'í Centre taken over.

27 May; Máhfurúzak, near Sárí: Local Bahá'í Centre demolished.

30 May; Ábádih, Fárs: Bahá'í houses attacked and Bahá'ís wounded.

31 May; Riḍá'íyyih (Urúmíyyih), Ádharbáyján: Local Bahá'í Centre taken over.

1 June; Tákur, Mázandarán: House of Bahá'u'lláh (Bahá'í Holy Place) taken over.

May–July: The publication of pictures of the destruction of the dome of the National Bahá'í Centre with official participation encouraged a widespread outburst of fanaticism throughout Írán in the course of which:

Many Bahá'ís were beaten, including women and children.

Bahá'í houses and shops were looted and burned.

Bahá'í employees in government service were dismissed.

Bodies of Bahá'í dead were disinterred from Bahá'í cemeteries and mutilated.

Young women were abducted and forced to marry Muslims.

Several women were publicly stripped and/or raped.

Crops and orchards belonging to Bahá'ís were looted and destroyed.

Bahá'í children were expelled from schools.

House of the Báb in Shíráz (Bahá'í Holy Place) damaged.

28 July; Hurmuzak, Yazd: Seven Bahá'ís stabbed and beaten to death by a mob: Ustád Firaydún, Ruqíyyih Khánum, Áqá 'Abdu'r-Razzáq, Áqá 'Alí-Akbar, Áqá Ghulám-'Alí, Áqá Amánu'lláh and Áqá Hidáyatu'lláh; several other Bahá'ís including women beaten and severely injured; Bahá'í houses looted and property damaged.

September–October; Bandar Pahlaví, Shíráz, Ṭihrán: Bahá'ís continue to be dismissed from employment; Bahá'í students expelled from Shíráz University.

1963: 5 June onwards; Throughout Írán: Advantage was taken of general anti-government disorder to launch an attack on the Bahá'ís in several localities under the cover of these disturbances:

Ṭihrán: Bahá'í cemetery attacked, buildings burnt and graves desecrated.

Árán, near Káshán: Bahá'í houses attacked and burned. Local Bahá'í Centre attacked.

Iṣfahán: Local Bahá'í Centre attacked.

Shíráz: Attack made on several Bahá'í homes and businesses.

Attack on the House of the Báb in Shíráz attempted.

Some Bahá'ís expelled from government employment.

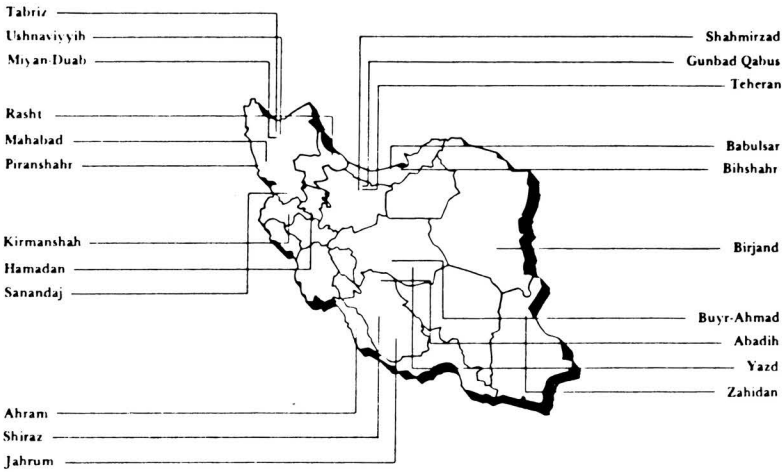
1966: December; Saysán, Ádharbáyján: Campaign against Bahá'ís of this village by Mullá Mihdí Sulṭánpúr.

1967: 1 January; Saysán, Ádharbáyján: Yadu'lláh Karímí beaten to death by a mob; Bahá'ís attacked and beaten.

1968–1969; Throughout Írán: Pressure on Bahá'ís intensified through refusal of applications for government employment; refusal to admit Bahá'ís to Colleges and Universities; closures of local Bahá'í Centres and attacks on some individual Bahá'ís.

1975: Throughout Írán: Following the setting up of the Rastákhíz political party by the Sháh and the refusal of the Bahá'ís to join it, on account of their religious principles, many Bahá'ís lost their jobs and great pressures were brought to bear on others.

1977: 14 May; Fáḍilábád, Gurgán: Attack on the house of Rúḥ'u'lláh Taymúrí-Muqaddam resulting in his being killed and his sister severely injured.



Towns and cities in Írán in which Bahá'ís were arrested or killed between 1979 and 1983.

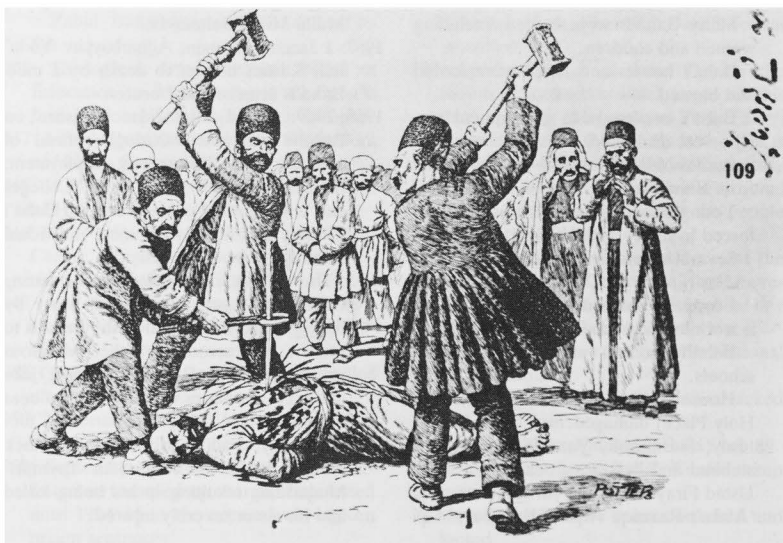


Illustration depicting the death of a Bahá'í from the magazine Ima'ma, circa *1911.*

V

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH AND THE UNITED NATIONS

1. SUMMARY OF THE YEARS 1947–1979[1]

THE relationship of the world Bahá'í community to the United Nations began in 1948, when the eight National Spiritual Assemblies then existing were recognized collectively by the U.N. Office of Public Information (OPI) as an international non-governmental organization under the name 'Bahá'í International Community.' An official Bahá'í–U.N. relationship had actually started a year before—in the spring of 1947—when OPI accredited the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada as a national non-governmental organization, qualified to be represented through an observer.

The next step in Bahá'í–U.N. cooperation —and a major one—took place in 1970, when the Bahá'í International Community was granted consultative status, category II, with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). A few years later, in 1974, as an extension of this relationship in the economic and social fields, the Bahá'í International Community established an association with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Then, in 1976—another important development—it was welcomed into consultative status with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The First Period: 1947–1970

Although limited to activities educating the public about the aims and programs of the United Nations, the first stage of Bahá'í–U.N. cooperation allowed many opportunities for sharing the Bahá'í perspective, both through participation in numerous non-governmental conferences, and through the presentation to the U.N. of several important statements.

One of the most important contributions took place in 1947, when the United Nations Special Palestine Committee addressed a letter to His Eminence Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, head of the Bahá'í Faith, resident at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, requesting an expression of the Bahá'í attitude to the future of Palestine. Explaining that 'Our aim is the establishment of universal peace in the world and our desire to see justice prevail in every domain of human society, including the domain of politics,' Shoghi Effendi enclosed with his reply a summary of the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

Other presentations of note were: A 'Bahá'í Declaration on Human Obligations and Rights' (1947); a study entitled 'Proposals for Charter Revision,' circulated at a U.N. Conference for Revision of the U.N. Charter (1955); a statement endorsing the Genocide Convention, presented to the President of the Commission on Human Rights (1959); and a comprehensive statement to a meeting of the United Nations Office of Public Information to discuss problems of cooperation 'with the United Nations family insofar as its programme affects the new nations', noting the 'vigorous assistance of Bahá'í communities' through the implementation of Bahá'í teachings and principles, to help the less developed peoples become integrated into the more developed society surrounding them (1960).

The Bahá'í International Community was also able, even in the early years of its relationship with the U.N., to assist in the protection and recognition of the Bahá'í world community. Such were the cases of Bahá'í persecutions in Írán and Morocco, in 1955 and 1962, respectively, when appeals were lodged with the United Nations, and in 1967, the presentation, on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, of a special edition of the *Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* to fifty-six Heads of States, through the good offices of their Permanent Representatives to the United Nations.

[1] For detailed information on Bahá'í International Community activities with the U.N. during this period, see earlier volumes of *The Bahá'í World*.

The Second Period: 1970–1979

These years witnessed a noticeable increase in the range and depth of Bahá'í–U.N. cooperation, as the Bahá'í International Community began the steady growth of its consultative relationship with ECOSOC and with UNICEF, and its association with UNEP; while continuing its close cooperation with the U.N. Office of Public Information (OPI)—which became the Department of Public Information (DPI) on 1 January 1979.

As it worked closely with ECOSOC, its functional commissions, committees and associated bodies, the Bahá'í International Community gradually explored new avenues of participation in United Nations social and economic programs. Not only was it represented at sessions of U.N. bodies concerned with issues of human rights, social development, status of women, environment, human settlements, world food, science and technology, population, law of the sea, crime prevention, narcotic drugs, children, youth, the family, the United Nations University, and disarmament, but it also furnished information, submitted statements and published brochures on most of these subjects. In addition the Bahá'í International Community participated in United Nations Years, in world conferences and congresses, in regional conferences and in seminars concerned with the socio-economic problems of our planet, as well as in preparation and follow-up meetings and activities.

When the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, the functional committee of ECOSOC in charge of fostering the U.N. relationship with NGO's in the social and economic field, reviewed at its 1978 session the work of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC during the years 1973–1977, the Bahá'í International Community report, showing an impressive roster of activities recording warm cooperation with the U.N., was approved without questions.

Most gratifying during this period was the increased awareness and participation of national Bahá'í communities through their National Spiritual Assemblies, U.N. representatives and committees, in fostering the ties of the Bahá'í world with the United Nations. They not only organized national and local Bahá'í–U.N. activities, but also provided knowledgeable Bahá'ís to help both in preparing statements and pamphlets examining the application of Bahá'í teachings and principles to the solution of specific world issues, and in representing the Bahá'í International Community at conferences. In addition, the involvement of National Spiritual Assemblies in countries where U.N. conferences or meetings took place, through furnishing valuable services to ensure a more effective Bahá'í participation, created an awareness of how each Bahá'í community did, in fact, share in the Bahá'í International Community's consultative relationship with ECOSOC and UNICEF.

The Bahá'í International Community also worked closely, through its U.N. representatives, with U.N. offices and officials at U.N. headquarters in New York, as well as in Geneva and Nairobi; and, through representatives from its member Bahá'í communities, with U.N. field offices around the world.

In addition, under the direction and guidance of the Universal House of Justice, contacts were made on many occasions during this period with the United Nations Missions and Secretariat. Here again a growing understanding of the non-political and constructive nature of the Bahá'í International Community in the work of the U.N., aided by its consultative status, made access to key United Nations officials easier when a clear presentation of the Bahá'í position was needed to foster the official recognition of the Faith, or to prevent discrimination against the Bahá'í community.

During these years it became clear that, as government delegates and United Nations personnel increasingly witnessed the Bahá'í presence, through extensive Bahá'í representation and a variety of Bahá'í statements (almost always circulated as U.N. documents), they were becoming aware of the existence not only of a worldwide Bahá'í community, but also of a Bahá'í view resting on a new spiritual and moral foundation essential for an effective and permanent solution to world problems and the building of a world civilization.



Bahá'í International Community representatives attending the United Nations Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva; 31 January 1983. Seen on the far left, wearing headphones, is Mr. Giovanni Ballerio of the European Branch of the Bahá'í International Community and, next to him, Mr. Gerald Knight, Alternate Representative, of the New York Office.



United Nations Day observance held at the Bahá'í Centre of Mauritius; 23 October 1980. The Chairman of the City of Quatre-Bornes addressed an audience of approximately one hundred guests.

2. THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1979–1983

VICTOR DE ARAUJO

THE period 1979–1983 witnessed considerable growth of Bahá'í International Community activities with the United Nations. Besides expanding its cooperation with the U.N. in the many areas of earlier involvement related to programs implementing the goals of the U.N. Charter—peace, human rights, and development[1]—the Bahá'í International Community was able to offer the Bahá'í perspective and cooperation in new areas of U.N. concern—disabled persons, the aging, new and renewable sources of energy—as well as to begin its contribution to an issue long considered important by the U.N.—the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. The responsibilities of the Bahá'í International Community for the protection of the Faith, prominent on a few occasions in the past, were greatly expanded during this period to allow, under instructions from the Universal House of Justice, for the coordination of worldwide activities, at international and national levels, on behalf of the beleaguered Bahá'í friends in Írán.[2]

In 1981 the Bahá'í International Community was asked to submit a report of its activities in fulfillment of its consultative relationship with the Economic and Social Council, covering the years 1977 to 1981, for examination by the U.N. Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations at its 1982 session. This second quadrennial report prepared by the Bahá'í International Community, since receiving consultative status with ECOSOC in 1970, again showed extensive cooperation and, like the previous one (1973–1977), received full approval.

The Bahá'í International Community office in New York increased gradually both its space and personnel, and by Riḍván of 1983 the office comprised some 2,000 square feet with a staff of nine full-time persons, and several volunteers. This expansion was in part the result of the escalation of the persecutions in Írán, and led soon to a logical concentration of all Bahá'í International Community human rights activities in one specific section, headed by Mr. Gerald Knight, who had joined the Bahá'í International Community office in New York in 1979 as Alternate Representative. Mr. Knight, then serving as Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Fiji Islands, replaced Dr. Will. C. van den Hoonaard, who resigned to pursue a career in university teaching. Dr. van den Hoonaard had served as Alternate Representative with much enthusiasm and dedication since 1975.

In 1981 the range of Bahá'í International Community operations in Geneva was expanded through the establishment of a European Branch Office to assist in the Bahá'í activities with the U.N. in Geneva and Vienna, as well as to establish a closer relationship with European national Bahá'í communities and with some regional bodies such as the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy, was appointed to head this office and represent the Bahá'í International Community with the U.N. in Geneva. Dr. Marco Kappenberger who had served in that capacity since 1972, but whose present professional responsibilities prevented him from devoting the time and energy which he had so generously given in the past, continued to assist as Alternate Representative until the end of 1981, along with Mme. Machid Fatio, then Alternate Representative. Mme. Fatio is now working full-time as Alternate Representative for the European Branch Office and the U.N. in Geneva.

When in September 1979 the United Nations moved its Centre for Social and Humanitarian Affairs to Vienna, it became necessary for the

[1] See Summary of Bahá'í International Community activities for 1947–1979. Also, for full details, see *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 229.

[2] A full report on the activities of the Bahá'í International Community in assisting the friends in Írán can be found on p. 337.

Bahá'í International Community to appoint representatives to the Vienna International Centre (VIC)—the new U.N. branch headquarters—since important areas of social and humanitarian activity, such as the advancement of women, crime prevention, curbing of drug abuse, as well as issues related to the aging, youth, disabled persons, were now centered in Vienna. Accordingly, Mr. Gerhard Schweter and Mr. Kent Beveridge, members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Austria, were appointed Bahá'í International Community representatives, and served most ably and enthusiastically in that capacity from early 1980 to early 1982, when both had to resign because of demanding professional and elected Bahá'í responsibilities. Since then, Mr. Roland Philipp and Mrs. Otti Käfer have been responsible, as Representative and Alternate respectively, for the Bahá'í International Community participation in activities taking place at the Vienna International Centre.

Rich opportunities for the Bahá'í International Community to contribute towards the constructive work of the United Nations in building a world in which justice and peace will prevail continued to surface during this period, in almost all areas of human needs and concerns, and the Bahá'í cooperation was increasingly welcomed by the United Nations.

NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION

Aging

As it began considering issues affecting the well-being of the 'aging'—persons over sixty years old—the United Nations decided to convene, in 1982, a World Assembly on the Aging, to explore the problem fully, and created an Advisory Committee to plan for the conference and to draft a Plan of Action for approval and implementation by all governments. The Bahá'í International Community showed warm interest in the issue by taking part in these preparatory U.N. activities, and later in the World Assembly itself.

The Bahá'í International Community also joined in the efforts of the NGO Committee on the Aging to encourage the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the World Assembly deliberations, and served during 1981 and 1982 on the Committee's Executive Board. In addition, it sent representatives to a NGO Forum on Aging, which met in Vienna a few months before the Assembly, to exchange the views and knowledge of NGO's, so that these might be channeled through a comprehensive report to the World Assembly. Two Bahá'í recommendations, offered to the organizers of the Forum when the agenda of the meeting was being planned, were repeated during the Forum: (1) that there must be full integration of the aging in the human community, since the community should be an extended family in which everyone, of any age, is an essential part, and not only allowed, but encouraged, to make the fullest possible contribution to the well-being of the whole; and (2) that in considering the needs of the aging in the process of development we must take into account the wholeness of the human being—moral and spiritual dimension, besides his emotional, intellectual, and physical nature—when discussing the special contributions of older persons to development and their sharing in the resulting benefits.

At the World Assembly, an oral statement by the Bahá'í International Community representative also stressed the Bahá'í view. It expressed the hope that the Assembly would in its concern for the aging 'create a momentum for a better understanding of the reality of the human being in its various aspects.' The Bahá'í perspective was conveyed even more fully in one of the parallel NGO meetings addressed specifically to the 'Spiritual Needs of the Aging.'

Disabled Persons

In its growing concern with the plight of persons suffering from a wide range of disabilities, the United Nations proclaimed 1981, International Year of Disabled Persons. The Bahá'í International Community expressed its cooperation through participation in a U.N. Advisory Committee whose main task was to prepare a program of action to improve the conditions of the disabled, for implementation by world governments with the assistance of non-governmental institutions and organizations. A number of Bahá'í communities around the world also undertook programs for the disabled during IYDP. At present, a Decade of Disabled Persons (1983–1992), proclaimed by the U.N. General Assembly, provides the Bahá'í International

Community and its member communities world-wide with further opportunities for cooperation.

The Bahá'í International Community also contributed during this period to the drafting of a brochure on 'The Disabled Child,' published by the NGO Committee on UNICEF, outlining UNICEF's approach to disability and the role that NGO's could play in preventing and treating disabilities in children. It also worked closely with other NGO's in a UNICEF/NGO Committee on the Disabled Child, which co-sponsored a symposium on 'Childhood Disabilities: Inevitable or Preventable,' as a contribution to IYDP.

Energy—New and Renewable Sources

In August 1981 the United Nations called a Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, in Nairobi, Kenya, to identify broad guidelines for short and long-term solutions to the divers needs and problems of energy and to develop an appropriate plan of action. This U.N. Conference had been preceded in March of that year by a conference of non-governmental organizations—'Energy 2000'—held in Tunis, Tunisia. The Bahá'í International Community participated in both Conferences.

In Nairobi, the Bahá'í International Community delegation took part both in the Conference and in a parallel NGO Forum. A brief statement circulated to the Conference, remarked that 'the integration of life on the planet requires unified action on a scale we have not yet achieved,' since until 'there is unity at the most fundamental level—that of human values—social problems, simple or complex, will remain unresolved.' The statement further stressed that 'the world-wide nature of the problem in energy and in similar environmental issues requires a universal spiritual solution,' and concluded by observing that we must be cognizant 'of the tremendous power of spiritual energy which will be released when the oneness of mankind is realized and the limitless potential that will be available to us for effecting lasting change for the betterment of all mankind.' This is a goal for which Bahá'ís are striving and towards which humanity itself is moving.

Participation by the Bahá'í International Community delegation in the Conference and in the parallel NGO Forum also included assistance in preparing a Kenya NGO exhibit and giving interviews on behalf of the Kenya NGO group; keynoting a panel for the NGO Forum on education, training and awareness in relation to energy issues, as well as participation in other NGO workshops; newspaper, radio and TV interviews featuring the Bahá'í International Community participation in the Conference; and wide distribution of the brochure, 'The Environment and Human Values—A Bahá'í View.'

The following year the Bahá'í International Community was represented at a meeting of an Interim Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, in Rome, called to launch the implementation of the Programme of Action, approved at the Nairobi Conference, for the development and utilization of new and renewable sources of energy. In 1983, the Bahá'í International Community continued its involvement in this issue, by attending the first session of the Intergovernmental Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, meeting in New York; and it will continue to seek opportunities for cooperation on this issue.

Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

For many years the United Nations has been aware of the potential of outer space exploration in the social and economic development of the planet, but has been concerned at the same time with the grave danger of the use of outer space by technologically advanced nations for military purposes. To discuss these issues at the highest level the U.N. held the UNISPACE '82 Conference in Vienna, in August of 1982. In participating for the first time in discussions on this subject, the Bahá'í International Community submitted to the Conference a written statement, officially circulated, and further called attention to its views in an oral presentation. The key point made in those statements was that, if we are to prepare ourselves to utilize the promising new technology that has permitted travel and exploration in outer space, we must recognize the truth stated by Bahá'u'lláh more than a century ago that 'the earth is but one country and mankind its citizens,' and must work together 'to foster and promote world mindedness like never before in the planet's history.'

Ultimately, the unity of the human race, the statement concluded, quoting from the Bahá'í Writings, implied 'the establishment of a world commonwealth,' a stage of international development requiring 'no less than the reconstruction and demilitarization of the whole civilized world—a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life.'

CONTINUING AREAS OF CO-OPERATION

Children—(UNICEF)

The International Year of the Child (IYC) was enthusiastically supported by the Bahá'í International Community—ninety-four national communities participated—as evidenced by a widely distributed report on Bahá'í activities around the world. This report included information on a series of Bahá'í ongoing programs in child education, teacher training, preparation of child education materials, publications for and concerning children, and women's activities; besides describing the specific Bahá'í promotion of IYC through organizing and planning programs, publicity campaigns, exhibitions and displays, parades and festivals, radio, television and press publicity, and public events. There was much publicity also through Bahá'í media. In contrast to those activities generally aimed at and involving the adult public, many programs were specifically child directed: children's festivals, parties, entertainment; children's conferences; and children's art and music.

This IYC report—included in a special IYC edition of *Bahá'í News* (U.S.A.), July 1980—was sent to Mrs. Estefania Aldaba Lim, U.N. Special Representative, Assistant Secretary General for IYC, and shared with a number of U.N. and UNICEF officials and personnel. In a letter of thanks, Mrs. Lim wrote that reading this issue of *Bahá'í News* cover to cover had given her 'such a great feeling of comfort, elation and towering sense of pride' in the achievements of the Bahá'í International Community during IYC. She continued: 'I cannot express my feelings of gratitude in more adequate ways to your organization for the all-out cooperation and support which you as an NGO extended to our IYC Secretariat and above all to the children of the world for the promotion of their welfare and development.' Mrs. Lim concluded her letter by saying: 'I pray and hope that the Year 1979 (IYC) was just a beginning of Bahá'ís' deep commitment for the child's causes and that your widespread advocacy will now begin to bear fruit on behalf of the child.'

The Bahá'í International Community continued to take part in the annual sessions of the UNICEF Executive Board—in 1979 in Mexico City, preceded by a special meeting on the situation and development of children in Latin America and the Caribbean; and in 1980, 1981 and 1982 in New York. The Spanish and English versions of the May 1979 NGO/UNICEF Newsletter, containing a report on the efforts of Bahá'í communities in Latin America and the Caribbean to increase awareness of UNICEF programs in those areas, were circulated at the Mexico City meetings.

During this entire period the Bahá'í International Community was represented on the Steering Committee of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF. Mrs. Mary Sawicki served as Secretary from 1979 to 1981; later Dr. Victor de Araujo was elected Chairman of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, and has been serving in that capacity since October 1981. Mrs. Sawicki served also for several years as Assistant Editor of the NGO/UNICEF Newsletter, and Dr. de Araujo is presently on the Editorial Board of the NGO Forum, the official NGO publication that has succeeded the Newsletter. Their contribution has been welcomed by NGO's and the UNICEF Secretariat, and has further strengthened the Bahá'í International Community relationship with UNICEF.

In addition, besides serving during IYC on the IYC/NGO Committee, and participating in numerous committees and special meetings in observance of that Year, the Bahá'í International Community took part in activities concerning the disabled child, breast feeding and infant feeding—Bahá'í representatives helped to organize and chair the 1981 NGO/UNICEF symposia on 'The Disabled Child' and on 'Breast Feeding'—as well as NGO/UNICEF field level relations, and assistance to children in emergency situations.

As UNICEF became increasingly aware of the extent of Bahá'í activities on behalf of

children and women—such as the work of Dr. Jane Faily, Bahá'í International Community IYC consultant for Africa, in West Africa (reported in the NGO/UNICEF Newsletter), as well as the operations of the Bahá'í schools in India and the radio stations in Ecuador and Peru—it became clear that there would be opportunities, in the near future, for field level cooperation with UNICEF.

Crime Prevention

During this period, the Bahá'í International Community took part in the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in 1980 in Caracas, Venezuela. A Bahá'í statement bearing on the issue of 'Crime Trends and Crime Prevention Strategies,' circulated as a Congress document, offered the view that 'both the causes of crime and the means of its prevention are inextricably linked to the question of personal moral values'; and that although punishment for crime is one of the means 'by which society can and must, if necessary protect itself against oppressors, it is nevertheless possible to educate human beings so effectively in moral virtues that "crime itself will appear to them as the greatest chastisement, the utmost condemnation and torment".' The statement further quoted from the Bahá'í Writings that religion is a 'mighty bulwark' preventing 'both the manifest and the concealed crime . . . and is the all-inclusive power which guarantees the felicity of the world of mankind.'

The Bahá'í International Community also continued to cooperate with the Branch on Crime prevention and Criminal Justice, in the U.N. Centre for Social and Humanitarian Affairs, in Vienna, and to attend the biennial sessions of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control. At the 1982 session of the Committee, the Bahá'í International Community representative made a statement on 'Summary or Arbitrary Executions,' providing documentation from the recent Bahá'í experience in Írán—without identifying the country—as an objective contribution to the discussion on the issue.

Development—Social and Economic

Besides continuing its participation in the two main yearly sessions of the Economic and Social Council, in New York and Geneva respectively, as well as in the biennial sessions of the Commission for Social Development, the Bahá'í International Community found several other opportunities during this period to indicate its deep interest in promoting the social and economic development of all peoples, by attending the 1981 United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in Paris, as well as by participating in meetings of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries held in Geneva and New York. It also followed closely the 11th Special Session of the General Assembly on the New International Economic Order, and participated in the NGO Forum, 'Agenda for the Eighties.'

The Bahá'í International Community also frequently took part in discussions of U.N. bodies seeking avenues of closer cooperation with non-governmental organizations, in rural and urban development programs—such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)—for the time when the growth of Bahá'í communities would make it possible to begin field projects in cooperation with the United Nations.

Disarmament

In addressing the U.N. General Assembly, as a non-governmental organization invited to make a contribution to the deliberations of the 1982 Second Special Session on Disarmament (SSD2), the Bahá'í International Community took a further step in its cooperation with the U.N. in the work of that world organization to achieve general and complete disarmament. In observing that the 'inability of human power alone to solve the affairs of humanity,' had been amply demonstrated by the history of this century, and that a 're-awakened realization of our connection with God' had become, therefore, essential, the statement offered two main recommendations: (1) establishment of a program of education for all peoples in the vital principle and truth of the organic oneness of humanity, drawing on all knowledge, whether from science or religion; and (2) achievement of collective security, based on trust and justice, through the efforts of governments and peoples—a

security that would provide for lasting world peace, 'and make obsolete once and for all the arms arsenals and the reasoning behind them.'

The Bahá'í International Community also circulated during SSD2 a cover-updated version of 'The Promise of Disarmament and Peace,' a statement prepared for the 1978 General Assembly session on Disarmament. This brochure was mailed with the oral statement later that year, during Disarmament Week—a yearly event beginning on U.N. Day, 24 October—to U.N. delegations and to important members of the U.N. Secretariat. Copies were also sent to Bahá'í communities around the world, with a letter encouraging Bahá'í participation in Disarmament Week and in a World Disarmament Campaign launched by the United Nations.

Both before and after SSD2, the Bahá'í International Community continued its cooperation with the U.N. Department for Disarmament Affairs, as well as its participation in the work of the NGO Committees on Disarmament in New York and Geneva, and in NGO conferences and meetings organized by those Committees.

Environment

The cooperation of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations in the area of the environment, dating from the 1972 World Conference on the Human Environment, in Stockholm, Sweden, continued steadily during this period through attendance at the yearly sessions of the Governing Council of the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP), in Nairobi, and through membership and participation in the activities of the Environment Liaison Centre, a non-governmental group concerned with environmental issues. The Bahá'í International Community also took part in the Special Session of UNEP commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Stockholm Conference.

Further, Bahá'í communities expressed their concern for a better quality of life on this planet through activities in observance of World Environment Day, 5 June. In Kenya, for instance, educational programs and special projects for the occasion, to assist UNEP and government programs in the environment field, such as in tree-planting, water and sanitation, and soil erosion, involving village chiefs, school principals, and other local officials and prominent persons, were most successful.

Food

The Bahá'í International Community continued to follow with much interest United Nations efforts to resolve the serious world food problem. In this regard it worked closely with the NGO Working Group on Food and Rural Development, most recently in the preparations being made for participation of non-governmental organizations in the Ninth Annual Ministerial Session of the World Food Council, to take place in New York, in June 1983, and in the parallel NGO Food Policy Forum planned for that occasion.

Health

The Bahá'í International Community pursued its concern for primary health care by keeping in touch with the offices of UNICEF and WHO in New York, and, towards the end of this period, foresaw rich opportunities for cooperation when UNICEF launched a four-pronged children's health revolution—oral rehydration therapy, immunization, breast feeding and proper weaning, and home growth charts—intended to speed up the goal of 'Health for All by the Year 2000,' set up by the WHO/UNICEF Alma Ata Conference in 1978. It also expressed its interest in the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981–1990), a decade to achieve clean water and sanitation for all by the year 1990, and sought ways to gradually inform Bahá'í communities about this area of U.N. activity, for possible cooperation.

In the field of mental health, the Bahá'í International Community was most capably represented at the 1979 and 1981 World Congresses on Mental Health, held respectively in Salzburg, Austria and Manila, Philippines, prestigious meetings sponsored by a non-governmental organization, the World Federation for Mental Health. The Salzburg Congress, especially, offered an excellent opportunity to disseminate the Bahá'í point of view, when almost 600 copies of 'The Violence Free Society: A Gift for Our Children,' a monograph published by the Association for Bahá'í Studies (ABS), were distributed to participating professionals.

The work of WHO and UNICEF in the field of health was also brought to the attention of Bahá'í health professionals at the 1980 Conference on 'Health and Healing,' sponsored by the Association for Bahá'í Studies in Ottawa, Canada, when the Bahá'í International Community representative delivered a paper entitled 'Health: A Global Perspective.' After the Ottawa Conference led to the establishment in 1982 of a Bahá'í International Health Agency,[1] the Bahá'í International Community sought to develop a close relationship with that institution, with the aim of broadening and deepening Bahá'í participation in U.N. health programs and activities.

Human Rights

Besides its extensive role in seeking assistance from the United Nations to redress the flagrant violation of human rights experienced by the Bahá'í community in Írán—a human rights activity documented fully in another section of the present edition of *Baḥá'í World*[2]—the Bahá'í International Community widened the scope of its cooperation in implementing the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as elaborated and codified in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Not only did it continue its long-time assistance to U.N. efforts in combatting racism and racial discrimination, but contributed the Bahá'í views on the drafting of a Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (and after the adoption of this Declaration in 1981, on implementing the principles of the Declaration); on the drafting of a Convention on the Rights of the Child; on the elaboration of a Declaration on the Right to Development; and on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous populations. A number of written and oral statements submitted to the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, at their yearly sessions, as well as information provided to the Division of Human Rights—now Centre for Human Rights—in reply to requests for Bahá'í views and assistance, conveyed the Bahá'í principles and teachings, and offered specific suggestions for action in those human rights areas.

For the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Bahá'í International Community was able to offer the text of two articles, one on the role of the mass media in disseminating information of benefit to the health and welfare and the social and cultural development of the child, and the other on the appropriate guidance, training and education to which the child should be entitled for his social, spiritual, and moral development and well-being. These proposals were submitted to the January 1983 session of the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with the drafting process. In addition a statement was circulated to the 1983 session of the Commission on Human Rights stressing the importance of the acquisition and exercise of spiritual qualities, which 'must be taught, fostered and developed,' and will best take root 'if they are taught from earliest childhood.' It was essential in the Bahá'í view, that every child receive spiritual education, and that the Convention contain provisions specifically designed to promote this purpose. Such provisions would not only enable the child to realize his full human potential but would also 'make a contribution of vital significance to the advancement of humanity as a whole towards its goal of universal justice, peace and order.'

To the 1980 session of the Commission on Human Rights, deliberating on a 'Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,' The Bahá'í International Community presented a written statement containing numerous observations on the true freedom of religion and belief, pertinent to the drafting of this human rights instrument; and, in addition, made available to all participants a detailed explanation of the Bahá'í views, along with a draft Declaration incorporating the changes suggested. Following the welcome adoption of this important Declaration by the U.N. General Assembly at its 1981 session, the Bahá'í International Community made two oral statements to the Commission on Human Rights, early in 1983, elaborat-

[1] See p. 201.
[2] See p. 414.

ing its views. It pointed to education as the essential factor in eradicating prejudice and in securing implementation of the Declaration, and outlined the Bahá'í view on the role of religion, the essential oneness and unity of all religion, and the position of Bahá'u'lláh as the Divine Educator for our age. The statement concluded by welcoming the proposals, later approved by the Commission, for a comprehensive and thorough study on the current dimensions of the problems of intolerance and of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, using as terms of reference the Declaration, and for holding a seminar, some time during 1984–1985, to encourage understanding, tolerance and respect 'in matters relating to freedom of religion or belief.'

Having followed with great interest the evolution within the United Nations system of the concept of the right to development,[1] and the elaboration of a Declaration on this right, the Bahá'í International Community presented a number of pertinent observations on the subject at the 1983 session of the Commission on Human Rights. It suggested that the right to development was unique in its universality—the universality of participation—since it could be 'achieved only through global efforts, and only through the involvement of all sectors of human society'; and that in acknowledging the rights to which all men and women are entitled, and the obligations which they owe to their fellow human beings throughout the world, a significant step was taking place in the advancement of humanity towards true world unity. Further, because of the organic oneness of the human race the development of the individual could not be seen in isolation, but had to be seen as 'an essential prerequisite for the harmonious development of the society of which he is a part.'

The Bahá'í International Community was also able to express during these years its concern for the rights of indigenous peoples. In comments made to the 1983 session of the Commission on Human Rights, for instance, on the activities of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, it pointed out that over 1,900 tribes and ethnic groups were represented in the Bahá'í world community, an evidence of the basic Bahá'í teaching of the oneness of mankind. Earlier, observations regarding the Bahá'í view of the importance of indigenous populations had been offered in a statement delivered at the 1981 U.N. Seminar on Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination, in Managua, Nicaragua. The participation of indigenous populations in the mainstream of Bahá'í world-wide activity, the Bahá'í International Community representative explained, had provided an understanding of the 'value of these people who are so often looked down upon from a material standpoint, but are in reality to be appreciated in their possession of certain spiritual, human qualities that are evident to those who have had time to live with them during years of close association. These spiritual qualities of compassion, justice and harmony with nature are precisely what the world needs.'

In continuing its cooperation with the United Nations, in programs and activities for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1974–1983), the Bahá'í International Community kept the U.N. informed of the efforts of Bahá'í communities around the world to achieve racial unity and harmony and work towards the elimination of all forms of racial prejudice, by reporting from time to time on Bahá'í activities in the field of education, on active participation and cooperation with United Nations programs and activities, and on implementation of the principles of racial equality and unity in the day to day social life of Bahá'í communities in every part of the world.

In 1981, the Bahá'í International Community was asked to provide the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities with information on measures taken to eliminate racism and racial discrimination in public and private employment, and with respect to voting and election to public office. This request allowed an opportunity to explain the Bahá'í view on minorities—that it is a violation of the spirit of the Bahá'í Faith to 'discriminate against any race, on the ground of its being socially backward, politically immature, and numerically in a minority,' and that 'if any discrimina-

[1] A statement on 'The Right to Development: Exploring its Social and Cultural Dimensions' had, for instance, been submitted to a NGO Forum—'Agenda for the Eighties'—held during the 1980 Special Session of the General Assembly on the New International Economic Order.

tion is at all to be tolerated, it should be a discrimination not against, but rather in favor of the minority, be it racial or otherwise.' This principle, the reply pointed out, guided Bahá'í employment practices and the process of Bahá'í elections, and influenced the actions of Bahá'ís beyond the confines of the Bahá'í community.

In a statement to the 1982 session of the Commission on Human Rights, the Bahá'í International Community pointed out that the solution to eradicating racism and racial discrimination 'lies in the recognition of the fact that we are all members of one human family and that we are all the citizens of one country, this planet earth, which is home to us all.' In 1983, on the same subject, it reiterated to the Commission this point, stressing that 'all beings are created equal in the sight of God, and all should have equal opportunity to develop their potentialities in the service of mankind'; and further suggested that the Second World Conference on Racism and Racial Discrimination, in 1983, might wish to take the important step of adopting an 'in-depth educational programme of all peoples in the vital principle of the organic oneness of humanity.' (This proposal had been made earlier in an oral statement to the 1981 'Seminar on the Relationship that Must Exist Between Human Rights, Development and Peace.')

At a regional level, besides the Managua Conference mentioned earlier, the Bahá'í International Community participated in a 'Seminar on Protection to Victims of Racial Discrimination Specifically in the Areas of Asia and the Pacific,' held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1982. Again, both in an oral and a written statement, the Bahá'í representative explained, in considerable detail, the Bahá'í concern for human rights and the Bahá'í community's long-time action in abolishing racial discrimination and racism; and outlined the achievements within the Bahá'í world community, as well as worldwide Bahá'í participation in U.N. activities.

During these years the Bahá'í International Community also worked closely with other non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights, both in New York and in Geneva. As an evidence of awareness of the Bahá'í concern for human rights issues, Mr. Gerald Knight was elected in 1982 to serve as Chairman of the NGO Committee on Human Rights at U.N. headquarters in New York. This responsibility, an expression of service to the NGO community, further contributed to the recognition of the Bahá'í International Community as a non-governmental organization deeply committed to the establishment of universal human rights.

Human Settlements

The Bahá'í interest and involvement in the U.N. issue of human settlements/habitat, dating from Bahá'í International Community participation in the 1976 Vancouver Conference on Human Settlements, continued during the period 1979–1983 through attendance at the yearly sessions of the U.N. Commission on Human Settlements and through close contact with the U.N. Habitat Centre in Nairobi. In 1980 and 1981, when the Commission sessions were not held, as usual, in Nairobi, the Bahá'í communities of Mexico and the Philippines helped in providing representation at the Commission sessions held respectively in Mexico City and Manila. The Bahá'í International Community continued to bring to the attention of the Commission, at these meetings, the importance of satisfying both the physical and spiritual needs of human beings in urban and rural areas, if settlements are to allow for the full expression of the potentialities of people.

Law of the Sea

A Bahá'í International Community delegation witnessed the successful conclusion of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, when, after ten years of negotiations, a Convention was signed by 119 U.N. member states in Kingston, Jamaica, December 1982. The Bahá'í presence at numerous sessions of the Conference during those years showed clearly our appreciation for the importance of this milestone in establishing international rule over the sea-bed and the ocean floor—a considerable portion of the planet, and a vast resource for the well-being of humanity.

Narcotic Drugs

The Bahá'í International Community continued its cooperation with U.N. efforts to

combat drug abuse, working closely with the Division of Narcotic Drugs, and participating in the yearly sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. A report to the 1980 session of that Commission, regarding the activities of Bahá'í communities in combatting drug abuse, circulated in an official document, expressed the Bahá'í view that although national and international programs of education and medical care are of prime importance, 'essentially what is required is a spiritual impetus'; and further, that if each individual develops a consciousness 'of his innate nobility, he becomes endowed with a strength and high ideals which make him uninterested in the use of toxic and addictive substances which inflict heavy injury on his health and that of his society.'

In 1982, at the request of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the Bahá'í International Community offered 'Comments and Proposals on an Effective International Campaign against Traffic in Drugs.' The suggestions included action that might be taken by the government, society, schools, the media, parents, and important social figures.

Peace

When the United Nations proclaimed 1986 as International Year of Peace (IYP), as an occasion for rededication by member states to the goals of the U.N. Charter, the Bahá'í International Community reiterated its expression of interest dating to the beginnings of the U.N. in San Francisco. It provided the Executive Secretary of IYP with detailed information on the Bahá'í teachings and principles regarding peace, as well as evidence of the work of the Bahá'í world community for over one hundred years to achieve this goal, and assured him of wholehearted Bahá'í participation in that Year.

The decision of the U.N. in November 1981 to declare the third Tuesday in September, the opening day of the regular yearly session of the U.N. General Assembly, as International Day of Peace, was also most welcome. Bahá'í communities world-wide will in the forthcoming years undoubtedly organize programs for this occasion, in the same spirit of cooperation they have shown for a long time in celebrating U.N. Day, Human Rights Day, and other special U.N. events.

A third development of significant interest to the Bahá'í International Community was the establishment in San José, Costa Rica, with the approval of the United Nations, of a University for Peace. Although not financed or operated by the U.N., this University, which will function as an institution to foster peace education, has on its Council representatives from the U.N. and UNESCO. Both the Bahá'í International Community and the Bahá'ís of Costa Rica are establishing a close relationship with the University President and with members of the University Council, and look forward to contributing to that institution, as it begins its operations, both the perspective of the Bahá'í Writings and the experience of the Bahá'í world community.

Population

Involvement of the Bahá'í International Community in the issue of population—a problem considered a part of the overall social and economic development of the peoples of the planet—began in 1974 through Bahá'í participation in the World Population Year as well as in the World Population Conference in Bucharest, Romania. It has continued through attendance at the biennial sessions of the Population Commission. Recently, as preparations started for an International Conference on Population in 1984, to evaluate progress made in implementing the World Plan of Action approved in Bucharest and to deliberate on future action needed, the Bahá'í International Community joined with other non-governmental organizations in preliminary consultations and activities relating to the Conference itself and to NGO parallel programs that will take place at the same time.

Science and Technology for Development

The Bahá'í International Community was represented at the 1979 United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD), in Vienna, Austria, and also took part in the programs of a parallel Non-Governmental Forum. Its statement on 'Science and Technology for Human Advancement,' was distributed as an official document to Conference delegates. While expressing the Bahá'í view that science and technology are 'essential to the full development of the individual and society,' the

statement noted that 'much of the difficulty in applying science to development today has come from the failure to link science with the basic spiritual and moral values upon which each society is built;' that such values are derived from religion; and that 'if lasting development is to occur, religion and science, "the most potent forces in human life," must be brought into unity.'

At present, the Bahá'í International Community is in contact with the Centre for Science and Technology for Development, and participates in the yearly sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee of Science and Technology for Development, a body which has welcomed cooperation by non-governmental organizations concerned with this vital issue.

Women

From the time that the Bahá'í International Community was granted consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1970, it has taken a very active part in U.N. activities to promote the advancement of women. It has presented statements explaining the Bahá'í view on issues related to women to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, to two world conferences on women, and to meetings held by U.N. Regional Economic Commissions in preparation for those Conferences. It has also replied to questionnaires received from the U.N. Branch for the Advancement of Women and submitted in the form of reports the Bahá'í view in specific areas such as employment and education. More information has probably been submitted to the United Nations on the status of women than on any other issue.

One of the earliest reports shared with the United Nations based on replies to a questionnaire prepared by the Bahá'í International Community was on the status of women in Bahá'í communities. Although the findings were preliminary in nature, they provided evidence of the deep concern in the world Bahá'í community for the condition of women, of the educational process in which Bahá'ís are involved to attain equality, and of the expectations for future expanded social and economic activities to promote the development of women.

In 1980, to survey progress made during the first half of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976–1985), a Second World Conference on Women was held in Copenhagen, Denmark. Again there was Bahá'í representation at four regional preparatory conferences held respectively in Paris, New Delhi, Macuto (Venezuela), and Lusaka. A delegation of women represented the Bahá'í International Community at the Copenhagen Conference, and with the cooperation of the Danish Bahá'í Community, the Bahá'í International Community was able to make a contribution to parallel NGO activities.

In its statement to the Copenhagen Conference, the Bahá'í International Community stressed two important principles which it felt would guide men and women 'to a dedication to the best interests of humanity, in a spirit of service rather than of competition and confrontation.' The first principle was that 'the most effective motivation for change' was 'a declaration of equality of the sexes based on a universally ackowledged authority and having influence on the hearts and minds of people.' Further, 'recognition of this authority' had to be freely given, and 'attract all nationalities, races, and classes to its validity' instilling 'the desire to abandon prejudice in favor of loving cooperation.'

The second principle was that 'an authoritative statement of equality must be binding on men as well as women, since it is essential that men recognize the equal status of women for women to be free from the struggle for their rights, and for each sex to complement and help the other.'

A special booklet containing excerpts from the numerous Bahá'í International Community submissions to the United Nations on the equality of men and women, entitled 'Universal Values for the Advancement of Women,' was also prepared for the Conference, and widely distributed.

In addition the Bahá'í International Community attended sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, and was active in meetings of the NGO Committee on the U.N. Decade for Women in New York—where Mrs. Mary Sawicki, for many years a Bahá'í International Community Alternate Representative for special meetings, served as Vice-Chairperson—and in Geneva.



Bahá'í representatives who attended the Second World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Copenhagen; July 1980. Left to right: Mrs. Machid Fatio, Mrs. Annette Riis-Zahra'i, Mrs. Mary Sawicki.



Bahá'í literature display on view during the Second World Conference on Women held in Copenhagen; July 1980.

The enthusiastic participation of the Bahá'í International Community in United Nations activities related to women has led to widespread appreciation of the Bahá'í views on the significance of equality in establishing universal peace and social and economic development. The Bahá'í International Community is increasingly identified, as a result, with the worldwide network of people and organizations working in a spirit of friendly cooperation to remove traditional barriers to women's advancement and to encourage and promote the positive attitudes vital to the achievement of full equality for men and women.

Youth

When, in December 1979, the U.N. General Assembly proclaimed 1985 as International Youth Year (IYY)—with the themes of Participation, Development and Peace—and decided to establish an Advisory Committee for IYY to formulate a specific program of measures and activities to be undertaken prior to and during IYY, the Bahá'í International Community, whose involvement for many years in youth issues at the U.N. had included participation in the 1970 World Youth Assembly in New York and the 1973 U.N. Seminar on Youth and Human Rights in San Remo, Italy, warmly welcomed this decision, since it would permit an even more substantive Bahá'í expression of the vital role that youth can play in bringing about world peace and in building a world civilization.

Accordingly the Bahá'í International Community took part in the first and second sessions of the IYY Advisory Committee and established a close relationship with the U.N. Secretariat for IYY at the Vienna International Centre. Further, when the NGO Youth Caucus—which, responding to an invitation, sent two representatives to the 1981 Bahá'í Youth Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, U.S.A.—became formally constituted as a NGO Committee on Youth, under the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with ECOSOC (CONGO), the Bahá'í International Community was elected to the Executive Board. It has continued to play an active role in the work of the Committee as well as its two Sub-Committees on IYY and Tree Planting, and the Bahá'í International Community representative has, in addition, helped plan the September 1983 Annual DPI/NGO Conference on the theme of 'The Challenge of Youth in Our Changing Society.'

The Bahá'í International Community will continue to serve as liaison with Bahá'í national communities, providing information, materials, and suggestions to assist Bahá'í youth to undertake activities and projects that will make a contribution to the valuable goals of IYY.

Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations

The Bahá'í International Community relationship with non-governmental organizations continued with the same spirit of harmony and cooperation expressed in the past, through participation during this period in activities of the Conference of NGO's in Consultative Status with ECOSOC and its various committees on development, U.N. Women's Decade, environment, disarmament, human rights, and the aging, in New York, Geneva, and now Vienna. It also worked closely with the NGO Committee on UNICEF and its sub-committees on issues such as the disabled child and infant feeding. In its relationship with the Department of Public Information the Bahá'í International Community attended regular briefings on U.N. issues and participated in the Annual DPI/NGO Conferences.

Bahá'í International Community representatives helped to plan and run a number of activities, such as seminars, symposia, and luncheons. These representatives contributed their time and expertise to several NGO executive committees and boards, and now serve as Chairmen of the NGO Committee on UNICEF (Dr. Victor de Araujo) and of the NGO Committee on Human Rights (New York) (Mr. Gerald Knight), and as Vice-Chairmen of the DPI/NGO Executive Committee (Mr. Gerald Knight) and of the Committee on the U.N. Decade for Women (Mrs. Mary Sawicki).

From time to time the Bahá'í International Community co-sponsored statements with other non-governmental organizations, as it had in the past, when these were constructive and non-political in nature. It also continued occasionally to take part in conferences organ-

ized by non-governmental organizations on subjects of special Bahá'í interest. Such were the 10th Conference on the Law of the World, São Paulo, Brazil, 1981, and the United Towns Conference, Casablanca, Morocco, November, 1981—and the previously mentioned World Congresses on Mental Health.

Relationship of the Bahá'í International Community to the South Pacific Commission

The Bahá'í International Community began its participation in the work of the South Pacific Commission in 1978 when it was invited to attend the 18th South Pacific Conference—one of the yearly meetings of the Commission—in Noumea, New Caledonia. Since then, because of the strong interest of the Bahá'í community of the Pacific in the work of the Commission, and with the assistance and recommendations of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia, it has pursued its involvement in the activities of this important intergovernmental body, whose aim is to promote the economic and social well-being and advancement of the peoples of the Pacific Island countries and territories.

Accordingly the Bahá'í International Community attended the South Pacific Conferences in Papeete, Tahiti (1979), Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (1980), Port Vila, Vanuatu (1981), and Pago Pago, American Samoa (1982). An oral statement on the issue of children—'Meeting the Needs of Island Children'—was made to the Tahiti Conference; and written statements were circulated to the three other conferences, respectively on 'Spiritual and Social Values for Rural Development,' 'The Preservation of the High Qualities of Life in the Pacific,' and 'Rural Development: The Bases for Progress in the Pacific.' Mrs. Tinai Hancock, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia, most ably represented the Bahá'í International Community at these conferences with the assistance of alternate representatives from different Bahá'í communities in the Pacific.

Having made the South Pacific Commission aware of the intense Bahá'í concern for the well-being of the peoples of the Pacific area, in their spiritual as well as physical development, a new stage of cooperation was beginning to unfold, as it became evident that the Commission would like to work closely with Bahá'í communities in rural development programs—through Bahá'í community projects or participation in SPC projects—to improve the quality of life of the Island peoples.



Bahá'í International Community representatives to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva; 15 February 1982. Left, Mrs. Machid Fatio; right, Mr. Gerald Knight.

ANNEX I

SPECIAL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES, CONGRESSES AND SEMINARS IN WHICH THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATED 1979–1983

1. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Special Meeting on Children in Latin America and the Caribbean; Mexico City, Mexico; 16–18 May 1979.
   Reps.: Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mr. Sydney Adler, Mrs. Cheryl Martinez, Mr. Francisco Chiu.
2. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Regional Preparatory Conference for World Conference of the Decade for Women; Paris, France; 9–12 July 1979.
   Reps.: Mrs. Annette Riis-Zahra'i, Mrs. Françoise Teclemariam.
3. United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development; Vienna, Austria; 20–31 August 1979.
   Reps.: Dr. Marco Kappenberger, Dr. Gerhard Schweter, Dr. Kent Beveridge, Mr. Gunther Haug, Mrs. Otti Kaefer, Ms. Ingrid Missaghi, Dr. Leo Niederreiter, Mr. Roland Philipp.
4. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Preparatory Conference for World Conference of the Decade for Women; New Delhi, India; 5–9 November 1979.
   Reps.: Mrs. Zena Sorabjee, Dr. Tahera Vajdi, Mrs. Bharti Gandhi.
5. Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) Regional Preparatory Conference for World Conference of the Decade for Women; Macuto, Venezuela; 12–16 November 1979.
   Reps.: Miss Arecelis Tapia, Mrs. Helena Neri.
6. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Regional Preparatory Conference for World Conference of the Decade for Women; Lusaka, Zambia; 3–7 December 1979.
   Reps.: Mrs. Ruth Vuyiya, Mrs. Kathleen Higgs, Mrs. Linda Kendel.
7. World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; Copenhagen, Denmark; 14–30 July 1980.
   Reps.: Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mrs. Machid Fatio, Mrs. Annette Riis-Zahra'i.
8. Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders; Caracas, Venezuela; 25 August–5 September 1980.
   Rep.: Mr. Wallace Baldwin.
9. Eleventh Special Session of the General Assembly on the New International Economic Order; New York, U.S.A.; 25 August–15 September 1980.
   Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mr. Gerald Knight.
10. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Sub-Regional Follow-Up Meeting to 1980 World Conference of United Nations Decade for Women; Suva, Fiji; 29 October–3 November 1980.
    Rep.: Mrs. Irene Williams.
11. Seminar on the Relations that Exist between Human Rights, Peace and Development; New York, U.S.A.; 3–14 August 1981.
    Reps.: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mr. Gerald Knight, Mr. Giovanni Ballerio.
12. United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy; Nairobi, Kenya; 10–21 August 1981.
    Reps.: Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mr. Richard St. Barbe Baker, Mrs. Falairiva Taafaki, Mrs. Irma Allen, Mrs. Catherine Mboya, Mr. Bernard Muyendo, Mrs. Deborah Christensen.
13. United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries; Paris, France; 1–14 September 1981.
    Rep.: Mrs. Annette Riis-Zahra'i.
14. Seminar on Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination; Managua, Nicaragua, 14–22 December 1981.
    Rep.: Mr. Richard Mirkovich.
15. Special Session of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council; Nairobi, Kenya; 10–18 May 1982.
    Reps.: Mr. Hassan Sabri, Mrs. Catherine Mboya, Mr. George Okullo, Dr. Donald Peded, Mr. Tim Rost, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mr. Bonaventure Wafula.
16. Twelfth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament; New York, U.S.A.; 7 June–9 July 1982.
    Rep.: Dr. Victor de Araujo.
17. Seminar on National, Local and Regional Arrangements for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asian Region; Colombo, Sri Lanka, 21 June through 2 July 1982.
    Rep.: Mr. Jamshed K. Fozdar.
18. World Assembly on Aging; Vienna, Austria, 26 July through 6 August 1982.
    Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Dr. Leo Niederreiter, Mr. Roland Philipp, Mrs. Otti Kaefer.
19. Seminar on Recourse Procedures and Other forms of Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination and Activities to be Undertaken at the National and Regional Levels, with Special Reference to Asia and the Pacific; Bangkok, Thailand, 2–13 August 1982.
    Rep.: Mr. Mark Starrs.
20. Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE '82); Vienna, Austria; 9–21 August 1982.
    Reps.: Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, Mrs. Otti Kaefer, Mr. Roland Philipp, Dr. Leo Niederreiter.

ANNEX II

STATEMENTS, REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS PRESENTED BY THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO THE UNITED NATIONS 1979–1983

1. 'Observations Concerning Ways and Means for the Improvement in the Status and Role of Women in Education and in the Economic and Social Fields' submitted to the Branch for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in reply to their questionnaire; 22 June 1979.
2. 'The Impact of the Mass Communication Media on the

Changing Roles of Men and Women,' reply to a questionnaire from Special Rapporteur of the Economic and Social Council, Mrs. Esmeralda Arboleda Cuevas; 20 July 1979.

3. 'Science and Technology for Human Advancement,' written statement submitted to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, U.N. document A/CONF/81/BP/NGO/19; Vienna, Austria, 20–31 August 1979.
4. Written statement to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; New Delhi, India, 5–9 November 1979.
5. Written statement presented to the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America; Macuto, Venezuela, 12–16 November 1979.
6. Written statement to the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Second Regional Conference for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women on the Integration of Women in Development; Lusaka, Zambia, 3–7 December 1979.
7. Report of participation of the Bahá'í International Community in the 'Implementation of the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination' presented to the United Nations Division of Human Rights; December 1979.
8. Report on the Draft Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief presented to the U.N. Division of Human Rights; 31 December 1979.
9. Written statement submitted to the 36th Session of the Commission on Human Rights on the Draft Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, U.N. document E/CN.4/NGO/263; 1 February 1980. (A fuller treatment of Bahá'í International Community views, along with a draft Declaration incorporating the changes suggested, was made available to participants at the Commission Session.)
10. Report of activities of Bahá'í communities during 1979 in combatting drug abuse, circulated to the 6th special session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as U.N. document E/CN.7/647/Add.3; Vienna, Austria, 6 February 1980.
11. 'The Moral Imperatives of Opposing the Arms Race: A Bahá'í Perspective,' oral statement presented at the Annual Conference of the Non-Governmental Organizations Organized by the United Nations Department of Public Information; New York, U.S.A., 19 June 1980.
12. 'Summary Report of Activities During International Year of the Child,' submitted to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the U.N. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, and the U.N. Department of Public Information; March 1980. (Published as a special issue of *Bahá'í News*, July 1980.)
13. Written statement presented to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, U.N. document A/CONF.94/NGO/11; Copenhagen, Denmark, 14–30 July 1980.
14. 'Universal Values for the Advancement of Women,' report prepared for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women and NGO Forum; Copenhagen, Denmark, 14–30 July 1980.
15. 'Crime Trends and Crime Prevention Strategies,' written statement to the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, circulated as A/CONF.87/NGO/BIC; Caracas, Venezuela, 25 August to 5 September 1980.
16. 'The Right to Development: Exploring its Social and Cultural Dimensions,' written statement submitted to the NGO Workgroup on Social and Cultural Dimensions of Development, Agenda for the Eighties; New York, U.S.A., 26 August 1980.
17. Oral statement to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Sub-Regional Follow-Up Meeting for Pacific Women to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; Suva, Fiji, 29 October to 3 November 1980.
18. 'Implementation of the Programme for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination,' oral statement presented to the Commission on Human Rights at its 37th session; Geneva, Switzerland, 13 February 1981.
19. 'Comments on Sub-Commission Resolution 3 (XXXIII),' information submitted to the United Nations Division of Human Rights; 1 July 1981.
20. Oral statement to the Seminar on the Relations that Exist between Human Rights, Peace and Development; New York, U.S.A., 3–14 August 1981.
21. Information submitted to the United Nations Branch for the Advancement of Women at the request of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in preparing reports for the 29th session of the Commission on the Status of Women; 14 August 1981.
22. Written statement to the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy; Nairobi, Kenya, 10–21 August 1981.
23. 'Measures to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the Role of the Sub-Commission,' oral statement to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, 34th session; 20 August 1981.
24. Oral statement to the United Nations Seminar on Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination; Managua, Nicaragua, 14–22 December 1981.
25. 'Implementation of the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination,' oral statement presented to the 38th session of the Commission on Human Rights; Geneva, Switzerland, 15 February 1982.
26. Oral statement, delivered in French, on summary or arbitrary executions, to the seventh session of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control; Vienna, Austria, 22 March 1982.
27. 'Activities of the Bahá'í International Community Related to the Work of the United Nations During the Period October 1977 through September 1981'; report submitted to the United Nations Economic and Social Council for its quadrennial review of non-governmental organizations in consultative status; circulated in U.N. document E/C.2/1982/Add.3; 14–16 April 1982.
28. Oral statement presented to the United Nations Seminar on National, Local and Regional Arrangements for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asian Region; Colombo, Sri Lanka, 21 June through 2 July 1982.
29. Oral statement presented to the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly (Second Special Session on Disarmament), U.N. document A/S-12/AC.1/PV.5; New York, U.S.A., 24 June 1982.
30. Oral statement presented to the World Assembly on Aging; Vienna, Austria, 26 July through 6 August 1982.
31. Oral statement presented to the United Nations Seminar on Recourse Procedures and Other Forms of Protection Available to Victims of Racial Discrimination and Activities to be Undertaken at the National and Regional Levels, with Special Reference to Asia and the Pacific; Bangkok, Thailand, 2–13 August 1982.

32. 'Co-operation at the international, regional and sub-regional levels to combat racial discrimination,' working paper circulated as U.N. document HR/THAILAND/1982/WP.12; Bangkok, Thailand, 2–13 August 1982.
33. 'Déclaration de la Communauté International Baha'ie Groupe de travail sur les populations autochtones,' oral statement to the first session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; 9–13 August 1982.
34. Oral statement presented to the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; Vienna, Austria, 13 August 1982.
35. Background paper circulated in English at the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as document A/CONF. 101/BP/NGO/6; Vienna, Austria, 9–21 August 1982.
36. 'Comments and Proposals on an Effective International Campaign Against Traffic in Drugs,' written statement submitted to the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs; 1 September 1982.
37. Written statement on the Convention on the Rights of the Child submitted to the 39th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, U.N. document E/CN.4/NGO/3; Geneva, Switzerland, 13 January 1983.
38. Written proposals on the Convention on the Rights of the Child submitted to the 39th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, U.N. document E/CN.4/1983/WG.2; Geneva, Switzerland, 21 January 1983.
39. Oral statement on the Implementation of the Programme for the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination presented to the 14th meeting of the Commission on Human Rights; Geneva, Switzerland, 9 February 1983.
40. Oral statement on Social Integration presented to the Commission on Social Development, 28th session; Vienna, Austria, 10 February 1983.
41. Oral statement on the Declaration on the Right to Development presented to the 17th meeting of the Commission on Human Rights; Geneva, Switzerland, 11 February 1983.
42. Oral statement on the Rights of Indigenous Populations presented to the 28th meeting of the Commission on Human Rights; Geneva, Switzerland, 18 February 1983.
43. Oral statement on Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief presented to the 28th meeting of the Commission on Human Rights; Geneva, Switzerland, 18 February 1983.
44. Oral statement on Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief presented to the 50th meeting of the Commission on Human Rights; Geneva, Switzerland, 7 March 1983.

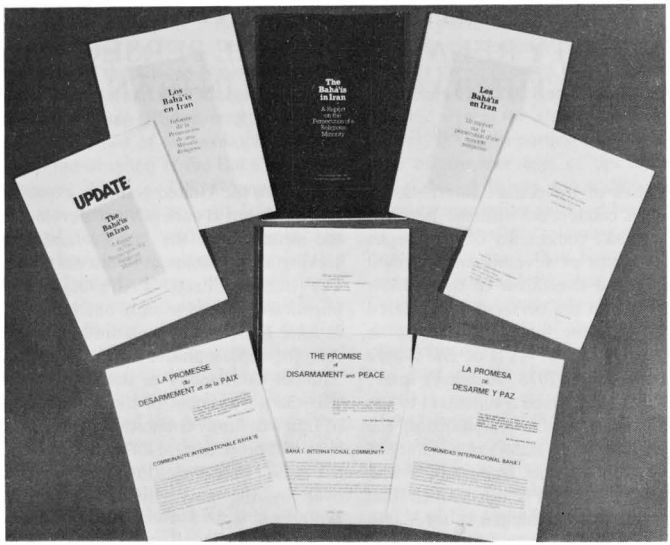
ANNEX III

RELATIONSHIP OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION
(Conferences Attended)

1. The 19th Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Papeete, Tahiti; 6–12 October 1979.
   Reps.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mrs. Lilian Ala'i.
2. The 20th Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; 18–24 October 1980.
   Reps.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mr. Aminio Bale.
3. The 21st Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Port Vila, Vanuatu; 24–30 October 1981.
   Reps.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Mr. Kalman Kiri.
4. The 22nd Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Pago Pago, American Samoa; 28–29 October 1982.
   Rep.: Mrs. Tinai Hancock.

STATEMENTS PRESENTED TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION AT CONFERENCES

1. 'Meeting the Needs of Island Children,' oral statement presented to the 19th Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Papeete, Tahiti, 6–12 October 1979.
2. 'Spiritual and Social Values for Rural Development,' written statement presented to the 20th Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 18–24 October 1980.
3. 'The Preservation of the High Qualities of Life in the Pacific,' written statement presented to the 21st Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Port Vila, Vanuatu, 24–30 October 1981.
4. 'Rural Development: The Basis for Progress in the Pacific,' written statement presented to the 22nd Conference of the South Pacific Commission; Pago Pago, American Samoa, 23–29 October 1982.



A selection of the major publications of the Bahá'í International Community, including the 'white paper' entitled The Bahá'ís in Iran *(in English, French and Spanish), two other documents on the persecutions, and a statement on* The Promise of Disarmament and Peace.



United Nations Day observance sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; 24 October 1980.

3. ACTIVITIES OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RELATING TO THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN ÍRÁN

Riḍván 1979–Riḍván 1983

THE activities of the Bahá'í International Community in connection with the persecution of the Bahá'í community of Írán began during the months of revolutionary turmoil that preceded the overthrow of the Pahlavi régime. (Details of the persecutions suffered by the Bahá'ís during that period are to be found on page 79 of vol. XVII of *The Bahá'í World*.) In November 1978 the Bahá'í International Community issued a statement to the international news media, emphasizing the perilous situation of the Bahá'í community of Írán and explaining the true nature and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith (which had frequently been misrepresented in media reports on the disturbances in Írán). Detailed information concerning the persecutions was sent to the Secretary-General and senior human rights officials of the United Nations. The following month, the Bahá'í International Community addressed a direct appeal to UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, urging him to intervene to protect the lives and properties of the Bahá'ís in Írán.

Following the accession to power of Írán's revolutionary government early in 1979, the Bahá'í International Community, on behalf of the Bahá'ís of the world, cabled Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan to request that the Bahá'í religious minority be granted full recognition and protection under the new Iranian Constitution, which was at that time being drafted. Two months later, in May 1979, the Bahá'í International Community again cabled Prime Minister Bazargan, expressing the dismay of the Bahá'í world at the continuing attacks on the Bahá'ís and the seizure of their holy places, refuting in detail the many false allegations being propagated in Írán against the Bahá'í Faith and its followers, and requesting once again that the Bahá'í minority be granted constitutional recognition and protection.

Throughout 1979 the Bahá'í International Community wrote repeatedly to the Iranian Mission to the United Nations, expressing its grave concern at each adverse development in the situation of the Bahá'ís and urgently seeking an appointment to discuss the matter. The Iranian Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Jamal Shemirani, agreed to only one meeting, held in June 1979, when he assured Dr. Victor de Araujo, representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, that the government of the Islamic Republic of Írán was firmly committed to protecting the lives and properties of all its citizens, and that the Bahá'í holy places in Írán had been taken over by the government solely for their protection.

Despite these assurances, the situation continued to deteriorate and, in September 1979, the Bahá'í International Community found it necessary to cable Prime Minister Bazargan as follows:

> HAVE RECEIVED DISTRESSING NEWS THAT IRRESPONSIBLE PERSONS HAVE ASSEMBLED TO DEMOLISH THE HOUSE OF THE BAB IN SHIRAZ THE HOLIEST PLACE FOR BAHAIS IN IRAN STRONGLY REQUEST YOUR EXCELLENCY INTERCEDE TO PREVENT THIS RASH AND UNBEFITTING ACTION WHICH WILL CAUSE CONSTERNATION TO BAHAIS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

This message, like those before it, failed to elicit any response from the Iranian government, and it was at this point that the Bahá'í International Community first took steps to bring the plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán formally to the attention of government representatives to the United Nations. A letter was sent to the UN Ambassadors of almost one hundred nations, conveying the shock and dismay of the Bahá'í world at the wanton destruction of the House of the Báb. The Ambassadors were not requested to intervene at this stage, since it was still hoped that, as the situation in Írán stabilized, the Iranian government would take steps to control the fanatical elements within the country and to

provide relief and protection for the Bahá'ís.

For similar reasons no action was taken to raise the issue for debate by the human rights organs of the United Nations. The UN Secretary-General and the Director of the UN Centre for Human Rights were, however, kept fully informed of all developments pertaining to the situation of the Bahá'ís. When, in February 1980, a UN Commission of Inquiry was appointed to visit Írán for the purpose of receiving testimony concerning alleged violations of human rights perpetrated during the Pahlavi régime, the Bahá'í International Community was able to submit to the five expert members of that body a detailed account of the acts of discrimination and persecution suffered by the Bahá'í community between the years 1921 and 1978, evidence which clearly refuted the false allegation that the Bahá'ís had been closely affiliated with and had consequently benefited from the former régime.

In June 1980 Mr. Gerald Knight, alternate representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, met Írán's new Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Mansour Farhang, and conveyed to him the Bahá'í International Community's grave concern at the ever-increasing scale of the persecutions against the Bahá'í community in Írán. Ambassador Farhang stated that the Iranian government was not itself opposed to the Bahá'ís, that there was no organized movement in Írán against the Bahá'ís, and that the attacks upon them were the work of fanatical elements which the government was not yet able to control.

As the persecutions intensified the Bahá'í International Community appealed once again to UN Secretary-General Waldheim to intervene with the Iranian authorities on behalf of the Bahá'ís. The UN correspondents of the international media were kept closely informed of developments and the Bahá'í International Community sought the assistance of appropriate non-governmental organizations—notably Amnesty International, the International League for Human Rights and the International Commission of Jurists—in increasing international awareness of the plight of the Bahá'ís of Írán. Urgent appeals were addressed to Ambassador Farhang, and later to President Bani-sadr and Prime Minister Rajai of Írán, strongly protesting the arbitrary arrests of Bahá'ís on manifestly false charges and urging them to intervene to protect the oppressed Bahá'í minority.

In July 1980 the Bahá'í International Community wrote for the second time to UN Ambassadors, reporting the summary execution of two members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tabríz, recounting the manifold persecutions being suffered by the friends in Írán, and briefly explaining the nature and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. The following month a further letter was sent to the same Ambassadors, reporting the arrest of the entire membership of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán and rebutting the false charge of espionage that had been levelled against them. In both letters, the Bahá'í International Community appealed to the Ambassadors and their governments to use their good offices to persuade the Iranian government to take steps to alleviate the plight of the Bahá'ís.

When it became apparent that all appeals to the Iranian government were going unheeded, the Universal House of Justice directed the Bahá'í International Community to appeal to international bodies to take action on behalf of the beleaguered friends in Írán.

The first body to which an appeal was made was the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, a body composed of twenty-six independent experts from all parts of the world. In its statement to the Sub-Commission, the Bahá'í International Community described the many violations of human rights suffered by the Bahá'í community since the start of the Iranian Revolution and emphasized the escalating nature of the persecution. On 10 September 1980 the Sub-Commission adopted a resolution in which it expressed its profound concern for the safety of the recently-arrested members of the National Spiritual Assembly and invited the government of Írán to protect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Bahá'í minority.[1]

The Bahá'í International Community coordinated the efforts of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Europe to bring the plight of

[1] Sub-Commission resolution 10 (XXXIII).



Bahá'í delegation to the meetings of the European Parliament held in September 1980.



Bahá'í delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe which met in Strasbourg, France; 29 January 1981.

the Bahá'ís in Írán to the attention of European parliamentarians prior to the September 1980 meetings of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Appropriate documentation was prepared by the Bahá'í International Community for circulation to European parliamentarians and government officials. On 19 September 1980 the Bahá'í delegation, which included a representative from each of the nine member states of the European Community, had the satisfaction of witnessing the adoption by the 410-member European Parliament of a unanimous resolution condemning the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán and calling upon the government of Írán to grant recognition to the Bahá'í community.[1]

A smaller Bahá'í International Community delegation remained in Strasbourg to cover the meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Numerous interviews were arranged at which the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán was discussed in detail with Ambassadors and human rights officials at the Council of Europe. On 29 September 1980 the Parliamentary Assembly published a Written Declaration calling upon the Committee of Ministers of the twenty-one member states of the Council of Europe to make urgent representations to the Iranian authorities to put an end to the persecution of the Bahá'ís.[2]

Following the resolution of the European Parliament, the foreign ministers of several member governments of the European Community informed the Bahá'ís in their own countries that the nine member states of the European Community shared the concern of the European parliamentarians for the plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán. Since efforts to improve the treatment of the Bahá'ís had produced no positive results, the Bahá'í International Community took the matter to the human rights organs of the United Nations.

Acting on this recommendation, the Bahá'í International Community made two statements at the 37th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights at its February/March 1981 meeting in Geneva. This step represented a milestone in efforts to alleviate the sufferings of the Bahá'ís in Írán, since it was the first occasion on which the Bahá'í case had been officially presented to a truly international body of governments—in this case, a body composed of forty-three member states of the United Nations from every continent of the world.

In its first statement the Bahá'í International Community drew the attention of the Commission to the kidnapping and subsequent disappearance of fourteen prominent Bahá'ís in Írán. In its second statement, the Bahá'í International Community described the persecutions in Írán, emphasized their systematic nature, and explained the significance of the deliberate omission of the Bahá'í minority from the Iranian Constitution.

Many delegations from the one hundred or so governments represented at the Commission, either as members or observers, were extremely sympathetic to the Bahá'í case and four governments—Australia, Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom—made specific references to the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán in general statements on the violation of human rights. In response, the representative of Írán categorically denied that Bahá'ís were being arrested, executed and abducted in Írán and affirmed that the Bahá'í minority enjoyed full rights and protection under the Iranian Constitution.

Concerned at the Iranian government's failure to respond to any of the appeals so far addressed to it, the Bahá'í International Community again worked closely with the National Spiritual Assemblies of Europe to launch a further appeal to European parliamentarians. The response was immediate. On 10 April 1981 the European Parliament adopted its second unanimous resolution on the Bahá'í case, calling on the foreign ministers of the ten member states of the European Community (Greece had joined the nine in January 1981) to make urgent representations to the Iranian government 'to secure the release of members of the Bahá'í community currently in detention merely on account of their religious beliefs, and to prevent any persecution of and discrimination against the Bahá'í minority in Írán'.[3] The following

[1] Resolution not numbered. Text appears in the Official Journal of the European Communities, Volume 23, reference C 265.

[2] For text see Parliamentary Assembly document no. 4622—Written Declaration No. 88 (3rd edition) of 11 May 1981 (originally tabled on 29 September 1980).

[3] Resolution not numbered. Text appears in the Official Journal of the European Communities, Volume 24, reference C 101.

month the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe tabled a resolution in which it voiced its grave concern at the 'escalation in the systematic campaign of persecution being waged against the Bahá'ís in Írán' and recommended that the matter be brought to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly.[1]

In a statement to the European Parliament on 6 May 1981, the foreign minister of the Netherlands (the then chairman of the Council of Ministers of the European Community) stated that the situation of the Bahá'ís had been discussed by the Council of Ministers on various occasions and would continue to receive the full attention of the ten member states. Later in the same month the Bahá'í International Community was invited by the government of the Netherlands to prepare a brief general statement concerning the Iranian Bahá'í community for transmittal to the Ambassadors of the ten in Tehran. The concern of these governments was further manifested at the spring 1981 meeting in New York of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) where, in a joint statement dealing with religious intolerance, the ten member states of the European Community drew the attention of ECOSOC's fifty-four member governments to the perilous situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán. The representative of Canada also referred to the Bahá'ís in his remarks on the same subject.

The Bahá'í International Community meanwhile continued its efforts to win some relief for the suffering friends in Írán. Details of the circumstances surrounding the kidnapping and subsequent disappearance of fourteen prominent Bahá'ís were documented and submitted to the five-member UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances—a subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Rights—which met in closed session in New York early in May 1981. By poignant coincidence, the wife of one of the disappeared members of the National Assembly of Írán was visiting New York at that time and the Bahá'í International Community took steps to ensure that the members of the Working Group received her first-hand account of her husband's arrest and of her subsequent attempts to trace him. Arrangements were also made for this courageous lady to share her experiences with diplomats and senior human rights officials at the United Nations, including the Director of the UN Division for Human Rights, Mr. Theo van Boven. The Working Group subsequently raised the question of the disappearances with the Iranian authorities, who disclaimed responsibility and denied all knowledge of the whereabouts or fate of the missing Bahá'ís.

It had by this time become apparent that the persecutions in Írán were not only continuing but were increasing both in severity and scale, and the Bahá'í International Community accordingly intensified its efforts to publicize the plight of the Bahá'ís and to win further international support for their case. Although it appeared unlikely that the government of Írán would respond favourably to international appeals on behalf of the Bahá'ís, it was clearly important to ensure that the campaign of persecution was not allowed to proceed in a semi-clandestine manner and that the Iranian authorities were made fully aware of the fact that any acts of persecution against the Bahá'í community would inevitably attract widespread international publicity and condemnation.

The Bahá'í International Community accordingly initiated a policy, which it has continued, of reporting immediately not only to the UN Secretary-General (as it had always done) but also to governments (through their UN Ambassadors) each time a major new incident of persecution occurred. In response to the appeals which accompanied these reports, the Secretary-General and a number of individual governments repeatedly made their concern for the Bahá'ís known to the Iranian authorities through appropriate diplomatic channels. Media correspondents at the United Nations were likewise informed of each new development in Írán. There was a consequent renewal of interest in the Bahá'í case, resulting in increased press coverage of the persecutions, as well as radio and television interviews in which representatives of the Bahá'í International Community were able to increase public awareness of the sufferings of their fellow believers in Írán.

Additional steps were taken by the Bahá'í International Community to ensure that the

[1] Parliamentary Assembly document no. 4733 of 14 May 1981.

plight of the Bahá'ís became not only more widely known but also more fully understood. A major step was the publication, in June 1981, of a report entitled *The Bahá'ís in Iran: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious Minority*, which documented the persecutions, examined their historical background and motivation, discussed and refuted the false charges customarily levelled against the Bahá'ís by the Iranian authorities, charted the course of international efforts to halt the persecutions, and briefly explained the major principles of the Bahá'í Faith. Published in English, French and Spanish, this 86-page illustrated brochure was made available to National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world for use in their contacts with parliamentarians, civil servants, prominent persons and the media in their own countries. Copies were circulated by the Bahá'í International Community to UN Ambassadors, the Secretary-General, human rights officials in New York and Geneva, non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights and UN correspondents of the international media. The report was subsequently distributed by the Bahá'í International Community at every UN meeting at which human rights violations in Írán were discussed and quickly became the standard reference document on the Bahá'í case. The information it contained was updated by a supplementary report published in November 1981. A revised and fully updated edition was published in July 1982.

Two further documents were prepared by the Bahá'í International Community specifically for the information of government representatives and human rights officials: the first, a chronological summary of individual acts of persecution against Bahá'ís in Írán during the period August 1978 to September 1981; the second, a compilation of official documentation from Írán testifying to religious discrimination against the members of the Bahá'í community.

By the time the United Nations General Assembly met for its 36th session from September to December 1981, the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán was generally recognized as being the foremost example of religious intolerance in the contemporary world, and was frequently cited as such. The sufferings endured by the Bahá'ís served to focus the attention of governments on the need to establish international standards for the protection of the right to freedom of religion and the plight of the Bahá'ís was much in the mind of delegates when, on 25 November 1981, the General Assembly voted in plenary session to adopt the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. The adoption of this major new international human rights instrument was widely considered to be one of the most important achievements of the 36th General Assembly, and certainly the most important recent achievement of the Commission on Human Rights (which drafted it) and of its parent body, the Economic and Social Council (which passed it to the General Assembly for adoption). Following the adoption of this historic Declaration, the delegation of Írán took the floor to indicate that it could support the Declaration 'insofar as it is in total conformity with Islamic jurisprudence'.

Many delegations at the 36th General Assembly expressed their anxiety over the human rights situation in Írán and the governments of Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom (on behalf of the ten member states of the European Community) and the United States referred specifically to the persecution of the Bahá'ís. The delegation of Írán responded by denying that Bahá'ís were persecuted for their religion and by alleging that the Bahá'í Faith was not a religion but a political tool of western colonialism.

A large number of delegations expressed their concern at the growing incidence of summary and arbitrary executions in various parts of the world, and the United Kingdom (on behalf of the ten member states of the European Community) made specific reference to the executions in Írán. The General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning these practices and requesting the UN Committee on Crime Prevention and Control to examine the problem at its 7th session in March 1982. The Bahá'í International Community sent a representative to the meeting of that Committee in Vienna, to provide information about the summary and arbitrary executions of Bahá'ís in Írán during the previous two years.

In a statement at the 34th session of

the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the Bahá'í International Community drew attention to the fact that the persecutions in Írán were not only intensifying but were becoming increasingly official in nature and that mere membership in the Bahá'í community and participation in Bahá'í activities was now being treated by the courts as a capital offence. On 19 September 1981 the Sub-Commission adopted its second resolution on the Bahá'í case. This resolution—cosponsored by members from Africa, Latin America, Europe and Asia—drew the attention of the Commission on Human Rights (the parent body of the Sub-Commission) to the 'perilous situation faced by the Bahá'í community in Iran' and requested the UN Secretary-General to 'submit all relevant information about the treatment of the Bahá'ís in Iran to the Commission on Human Rights at its thirty-eighth session'.[1]

While in Europe for the Sub-Commission, Gerald Knight met with foreign ministry officials in Paris and Stockholm, spoke in Bonn at a reception for parliamentarians hosted by the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany and, at a Bahá'í conference in London, briefed the Continental Board of Counsellors and members of the National Assemblies of Europe on the work being carried out by the Bahá'í International Community in connection with the situation in Írán.

In a statement issued on 25 November 1981, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe expressed its deep concern over reports of the continuing persecution of the Bahá'ís, called for an intensification of the endeavours of the United Nations to improve the lot of the Bahá'í community in Írán, and indicated that it would closely follow developments at the forthcoming 38th session of the Commission on Human Rights.

Early in January 1982 the Bahá'í International Community, on behalf of the Bahá'ís of the world, cabled Ayatollah Khomeini, Prime Minister Mir Husayn Musavi and the President of the Supreme Court of Írán, Ayatollah Musavi Ardibili, protesting the recent secret executions of eight members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán and seven other Bahá'ís, including six members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán who had been condemned to death on false charges of espionage. The cable called upon the Iranian leaders to take steps to halt the summary arrest and execution of Bahá'ís, to require those responsible for formulating charges against the Bahá'ís to produce documentary evidence in support of those charges and to extend to the members of the Bahá'í community the right—which had been rigidly denied to them—to defend themselves and disprove publicly the false and malicious charges brought against them.

A nineteen-member Bahá'í delegation attended the January 1982 meeting in Strasbourg of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The delegation was composed of representatives of the National Assemblies of sixteen of the twenty-one member states of the Council of Europe, together with representatives of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations in New York and Geneva. On the agenda of the parliamentary Assembly for Friday 29 January 1982 was the item: 'Persecutions in Írán: Rapporteur M. Dejardin.' Monsieur Dejardin's report dealt with the overall human rights situation in Írán and contained extensive references to the persecution of the Bahá'ís. During the two-hour debate that followed the presentation of this report, eighteen speakers from ten different countries expressed their horror at the massive violations of human rights taking place in Írán and focused especially on the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís. Some speakers strongly urged the Commission on Human Rights to take action on the Bahá'í case. At the conclusion of the debate the Parliamentary Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution in which it expressed its wholehearted support for the attitudes taken by the Sub-Commission and called upon the government of Írán to extend constitutional guarantees to the Bahá'í community.[2]

A major diplomatic initiative was jointly launched by fifteen governments—the ten member states of the European Community, together with Australia, Norway, Portugal,

[1] Sub-Commission resolution 8 (XXXIV).

[2] Parliamentary Assembly resolution 768 (1982).

Sweden and Switzerland—which, on 31 January 1982, made a *démarche* (formal representation) to the Iranian government in Ṭihrán. The text of the *démarche* expressed profound concern at the recent executions of prominent Bahá'ís, drew the attention of the Iranian government to the relevant provisions of the major international human rights instruments (to which Írán had subscribed) and stated that the fifteen governments wished to receive assurances that those provisions would be respected in the case of members of the Bahá'í community in Írán.

As requested by the Sub-Commission in its resolution of 19 September 1981, a report on the treatment of the Bahá'ís in Írán was prepared by the UN Secretary-General and circulated to delegates at the 38th session of the Commission on Human Rights.[1] The report included a summary of the information contained in the Bahá'í International Community publication *The Bahá'ís in Írán: A Report on the Persecution of a Religious Minority* and its November 1981 update.

Extensive references were made at the Commission to the human rights situation in Írán and thirteen of the Commission's forty-three member governments referred specifically to the plight of the Bahá'ís. The representative of Írán responded to these expressions of concern by attacking the *bona fides* of the human rights organs of the United Nations in taking up the case of the Bahá'ís and by claiming that historical links existed between the Bahá'í Faith and western colonialism, that the Bahá'ís were opponents of Islám and political supporters of the late Shah, that no Bahá'í was persecuted in Írán because of his religion and that those who had been executed or imprisoned had been involved in espionage 'and other activities contrary to the higher interests of the Islamic Republic of Írán'.

In the first of its two statements at the Commission, the Bahá'í International Community quoted numerous examples of recent actions taken by the Iranian authorities against the Bahá'ís, both individually and as a community, which clearly demonstrated the purely religious nature of the persecution. In its second statement, the Bahá'í International Community comprehensively rebutted the false allegations made by the representative of Írán, explaining that these charges had been fabricated by the Iranian authorities in order to justify their anti-Bahá'í activities and to conceal the fact that the persecution was motivated solely by primitive religious prejudice. In both its statements the Bahá'í International Community emphasized that the goal of the campaign of persecution was to eradicate the Bahá'í community and obliterate all traces of the Bahá'í Faith in the land of its birth.

A resolution, sponsored by nine governments and supported by delegations from Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Europe, Australia and the Pacific, was adopted by the Commission on 11 March 1982. This resolution, which firmly established Írán on the human rights agenda of the United Nations, called upon UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar to establish direct contacts with the Iranian government on the human rights situation prevailing in Írán, to 'continue his efforts to endeavour to ensure that the Bahá'ís are guaranteed full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms' and to submit a report to the Commission at its 39th session.[2]

Following the Commission, Gerald Knight, alternate representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations in New York, and Giovanni Ballerio, representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations in Geneva, visited Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland. In each country they met with government officials, spoke at public meetings and participated in press conferences which resulted in unprecedented coverage by the Scandinavian press, radio and television services not only of the persecutions in Írán but also of the Bahá'í Faith itself. Mr. Knight was subsequently interviewed by the press and radio in Iceland and by BBC television in the United Kingdom.

The genocidal nature of the campaign against the Bahá'í community in Írán was by now widely recognized and Gerald Knight was one of the three speakers invited to address a Symposium on Genocide held in London on 20 March 1982. The symposium was organized

[1] UN document E/CN.4/1517 of 31 December 1981.

[2] Commission on Human Rights resolution 1982/27.

by an *ad hoc* coalition of non-governmental organizations under the leadership of Professor Leo Kuyper, an international expert on genocide. In his presentation, Mr. Knight highlighted the genocidal features of the Iranian government's campaign against the Bahá'ís and, at the request of the organizers of the symposium, put forward his views and recommendations on the proposed establishment of a new international human rights agency dealing specifically with cases of genocide.

At the spring 1982 session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, a number of governments expressed their continuing concern at the deteriorating situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán. On 17 July 1982, seventeen governments—the ten member states of the European Community, together with Australia, Austria, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland—made a joint *démarche* to the Iranian government in Ṭihrán, protesting its treatment of the Bahá'ís. Later in the same year, on 27 December 1982, all the above governments save Finland made a further joint *démarche* to the Iranian government, once again calling for justice and fair treatment for the Bahá'í community.

Concern for the Bahá'ís was also voiced by members of the United Nations Human Rights Committee—a body of eighteen independent experts—when, at its 16th session in Geneva in July 1982, it reviewed with representatives of the government of Írán the progress being made in Írán in implementing the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Committee had at its disposal a copy of the Iranian Constitution and also documentation from the Bahá'í International Community concerning the persecution of the Bahá'í minority. It was evident to the members of the Committee that both the constitutional law of Írán and the day-to-day practices of the Iranian authorities fell far short of the standards set out in the Covenant and many members expressed their unease at the ambivalence of those provisions of the Constitution which purported to protect fundamental human rights, particularly those which concerned the rights of non-Muslim citizens. Responding to the Committee's comments, the leader of the Iranian delegation, Ayatollah Siyyid Hadi Khosroshahi, decried the fact that many Committee members had raised specific questions concerning the Bahá'ís. He gave no direct answers to the searching questions posed by the Committee but simply asserted that a relatively small number of Bahá'ís had been executed in Írán and that their executions had nothing to do with their religious beliefs.

At the 37th session of the United Nations General Assembly, from September to December 1982, many governments expressed their grave anxiety over the human rights situation in Írán and referred specifically to the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís. The Iranian delegation responded with anger, charging that these governments were motivated by political rather than humanitarian considerations and declaring that the government of Írán had no intention of changing its domestic policies.

On 23 November 1982 the Iranian delegation circulated to representatives to the Third Committee (the Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Affairs Committee) of the 37th General Assembly a document entitled *Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran—A Review of the Facts*. Section 2 of the document, headed 'Religious Persecution?', was devoted exclusively to an attack on the Bahá'í Faith and its followers. The document denied that Bahá'ís were being persecuted in Írán because of their religious beliefs, charged that the Bahá'í Faith was a political entity 'created and nourished by anti-Islamic and colonial powers', claimed that the Bahá'ís had established 'a very sophisticated and systematic espionage network' and alleged that the followers of the Bahá'í Faith worldwide were engaged in spying for various governments and in financially supporting Zionism.

The Bahá'í International Community immediately prepared and circulated to representatives to the Third Committee a written statement rebutting the false charges contained in the Iranian document and calling for the appointment of an impartial body of enquiry to investigate the entire situation. Copies of the rebuttal statement, together with relevant extracts from the Iranian document, were also sent to the Ambassadors of all 157 member governments of the United Nations. This was the first occasion on which the Bahá'í International Community had felt

it appropriate to communicate with every UN Ambassador concerning the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán, and this unprecedented step was taken solely as a result of the Iranian government's action in propagating its outrageous charges at the highest international forum.

The Bahá'í International Community's rebuttal statement was subsequently circulated as an official document of the United Nations at the 39th session of the Commission on Human Rights at its January/March 1983 meeting in Geneva. It was contained in a comprehensive report prepared by the Secretary-General on the human rights situation in Írán. This lengthy report—prepared pursuant to the Commission's resolution of 11 March 1982—contained extensive references to the persecution of the Bahá'ís, based on information provided by the Bahá'í International Community and a number of concerned non-governmental organizations, such as Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists. The report also contained information submitted to the Secretary-General by the Iranian government, including the text of the document circulated by Írán at the 37th General Assembly.[1]

In a separate document circulated at the Commission, the Secretary-General reported on the direct contacts he had established with the Iranian government concerning the general human rights situation prevailing in Írán. Paragraph 3 of that report read as follows:

'During the past year, the Secretary-General discussed reports of human rights violations with the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Among the related topics, the Secretary-General referred to reports of the persecution and, in some cases, summary execution of members of the Bahá'í religious community. In this connection, Ambassador Rajai Khorassani said that nobody was persecuted in Iran because of his religious beliefs and that, in his Government's view, the Bahá'ís were not a religious group but, rather, a political movement aimed at creating division among the people of Iran.'[2]

The Bahá'í International Community made three statements at the Commission concerning the situation of the Bahá'ís in Írán. The first statement, under the agenda item dealing with enforced or involuntary disappearances, drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that fourteen prominent Bahá'ís, and also two abducted Bahá'í schoolgirls, were still missing in Írán. The statement included an urgent request to the Commission to appeal to the Iranian government to commute the death sentences recently passed on twenty-two Bahá'ís by the revolutionary court of Shíráz. This request was repeated in the Bahá'í International Community's second statement, which also emphasized the fact that Bahá'ís were being condemned to death solely on the grounds of their religion.

Responding to the second statement, the delegation of Írán denied any religious persecution of Bahá'ís and charged that the Bahá'í International Community's sole purpose in attending the Commission was to launch 'baseless propaganda' against the Islamic Republic of Írán. The Iranian representative also claimed (inaccurately) that the Bahá'í International Community had made no contribution whatsoever to the work of the Commission.

The human rights situation in Írán was a major focus of attention at the Commission and the governments of Australia, Canada, Dènmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Togo, the United Kingdom and the United States specifically expressed their concern for the Bahá'ís. A number of delegations included in their statements appeals to the Iranian government to spare the lives of the Bahá'ís condemned to death in Shíráz.

In its third and major statement at the Commission, the Bahá'í International Community pointed out that the government of Írán was no longer attempting to deny its harsh treatment of the Bahá'ís but was, instead, seeking to justify it and also to deprive it of any religious significance. The barrage of false charges levelled against the Bahá'ís by the government of Írán was nothing more than a smokescreen designed to conceal the true reason for the persecution of the Bahá'í community—the true reason being that the fundamentalist religious leaders in Írán were not prepared to tolerate the existence of any religion that appeared after Islám. The Bahá'í International Community statement

[1] UN document E/CN.4/1983/19 of 22 February 1983.
[2] UN document E/CN.4/1983/52 of 22 February 1983.

went on to cite various compelling proofs that the persecution was motivated solely by religious prejudice and to rebut the baseless allegations made by the Iranian government against the Bahá'ís. It concluded by pointing out that the Iranian representative's claim that the Bahá'í International Community made no contribution to the work of the Commission was yet one more instance of an Iranian spokesman making baseless allegations against the Bahá'ís. The Bahá'í International Community had already made statements at the current session of the Commission concerning the Elimination of Racism, the Right to Development, and the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples. It had presented a written statement on the Rights of the Child and had submitted two sets of draft articles to the Working Group responsible for drawing up a Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Bahá'í International Community had been contributing actively and positively to the work of the United Nations in the social, cultural, economic and humanitarian fields for over thirty years. The presence of Bahá'í representatives at the Commission on Human Rights was therefore neither unprecedented nor sinister.

Disregarding these comments, the representative of Írán once again attempted to convince delegates that the Bahá'í International Community had never contributed to the work of the Commission and was using it solely as a forum for launching 'groundless allegations' against the government of Írán. He claimed that those governments who had expressed their concern for the Bahá'ís in Írán were motivated by purely political considerations.

Shortly before the Commission, the Iranian government had indicated that it would be willing for a representative of the UN Secretary-General to visit Írán for the purpose of investigating the human rights situation there. This offer was confirmed on 31 January 1983 (the date on which the Commission began its 39th session) and the visit was scheduled to take place during the latter half of March (shortly after the Commission ended). The offer was widely regarded as a device whereby the government of Írán hoped to persuade the Commission on Human Rights that it was not necessary for it to take action at its 39th session on the human rights situation in Írán. If the Commission failed to adopt a resolution on Írán, the Secretary-General would no longer have a mandate to act on human rights violations in Írán and would be totally dependent on the goodwill of the Iranian authorities. The Commission, however, failed to react as the Iranian government had hoped and a resolution was duly drafted. During the debate on the resolution, the representative of Írán threatened that its adoption would lead to the cancellation of the offer for a representative of the Secretary-General to visit Írán. This threat made no impression on the Commission and the resolution was adopted on 8 March 1983.

The resolution, supported by delegations from Africa, Asia, Central and North America and Europe, expressed the Commission's 'profound concern' at the continuing grave violations of human rights in Írán, including the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís, urged the government of Írán to guarantee to all its citizens the rights recognized in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and requested the Secretary-General to 'continue direct contacts with the government of the Islamic Republic of Írán on the grave human rights situation prevailing in that country, including the situation of the Bahá'ís'.[1]

Responding to appeals on behalf of the Bahá'ís in Shíráz, the European Parliament, on 10 March 1983, adopted a resolution which called upon the government of Írán to suspend the death sentences of the twenty-two condemned Bahá'ís and requested the foreign ministers of the ten member states of the European Community to make urgent representations to the Iranian government 'in order to secure the release of these members of the Bahá'í religious community and a halt to all manner of persecution and discrimination to which the Bahá'í minority in Írán is subject'.[2]

The plight of the Bahá'ís in Írán was next considered by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), a body of eighteen independent

[1] Commission on Human Rights resolution 1983/34.

[2] Resolution not numbered. Text appears in the Official Journal of the European Communities, Volume 26, reference C 96.

experts charged with monitoring the progress made by States parties in complying with the provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The involvement of CERD in the Bahá'í case arose from the fact that the Iranian government, in its periodic report to the Committee, had claimed that the only minorities in Írán were religious rather than racial and were all fully protected under the Constitution, and that the Bahá'í International Community—aware of this misstatement—had submitted to CERD a written report describing the true situation of the Bahá'í minority in Írán. In the course of their 18 March 1983 dialogue with representatives of the government of Írán, the members of the Committee posed repeated questions concerning the treatment of the Bahá'ís. After unsuccessfully challenging the Committee's competence to consider questions related to religion, the Iranian spokesman flatly denied that Bahá'ís were being persecuted in Írán because of their religious beliefs and asserted that the Bahá'í Faith was a subversive political organization. These and other misstatements by the Iranian representative were duly corrected in a memorandum subsequently circulated by the Bahá'í International Community to the members of CERD.

By Riḍván 1983, then, the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán was firmly established on the human rights agenda of the United Nations. The Secretary-General and his senior human rights officials were actively involved in efforts to persuade the Iranian government to halt the persecution. Governments in every continent of the world had made the Iranian government aware of their abhorrence of its policies and of their profound concern for the Bahá'ís. The false and malicious charges made by the government of Írán against the Bahá'í Faith and its followers had been rejected out of hand by every human rights organ that had examined them. The persecution of the Bahá'í Faith in the land of its birth was by now recognized throughout the globe as constituting the most blatant example of religious intolerance in the contemporary world.



Senior Iranian military officers are seen attacking the Bahá'í National Centre, Ṭihrán; 1955.

VI

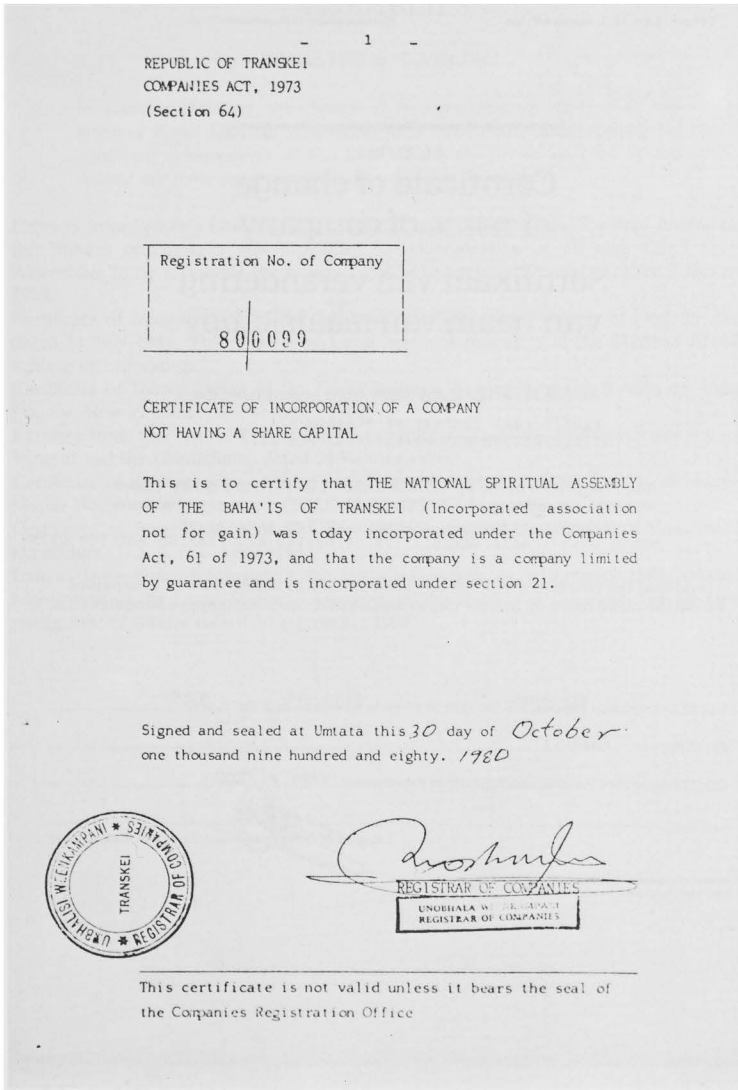
RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

1. INCORPORATION OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Riḍván 1979 to Riḍván 1983

In previous volumes, many certificates of incorporation or other documents attesting recognition of various National Spiritual Assemblies have been reproduced. The following are representative of the forms of recognition obtained by National Spiritual Assemblies during the period covered by this volume.

1. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Transkei; 30 October 1980.
2. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South West Africa/Namibia dated 25 August 1982. This was achieved by a change of name from the Bahá'í Land Company to the National Spiritual Assembly.



- 1 -

REPUBLIC OF TRANSKEI
COMPANIES ACT, 1973
(Section 64)

Registration No. of Company

80/0099

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION OF A COMPANY
NOT HAVING A SHARE CAPITAL

This is to certify that THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF TRANSKEI (Incorporated association not for gain) was today incorporated under the Companies Act, 61 of 1973, and that the company is a company limited by guarantee and is incorporated under section 21.

Signed and sealed at Umtata this 30 day of October one thousand nine hundred and eighty. 1980

UMHLISI WEENKAMPANI * COMPANIES REGISTRAR OF * TRANSKEI

REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES
UNOBHALA WEENKAMPANI
REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES

This certificate is not valid unless it bears the seal of the Companies Registration Office

1. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Transkei; 30 October 1980.



Companies Act, 1973, Section 44(1)(b) Maatskappywet, 1973, Artikel 44(1)(b)

Registration No. of company/Registrasienommer van maatskappy

21/81/063

Certificate of change of name of company

Sertifikaat van verandering van naam van maatskappy

This is to certify that/Hierby word gesertifiseer dat

BAHA'I LAND COMPANY OF SWA/NAMIBIA
(INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION NOT FOR GAIN)

has changed its name by SPECIAL RESOLUTION and is now called
sy naam verander het by SPESIALE BESLUIT en nou genoem word

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF
SOUTH WEST AFRICA/NAMIBIA (INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION NOT FOR GAIN)

and that the new name has this day been entered in the Register of Companies.
en dat die nuwe naam op hierdie dag in die Register van Maatskappye aangeteken is.

Signed and sealed at ~~Pretoria~~ Windhoek this/Geteken en geseël te ~~Pretoria~~ Windhoek op hede die 25th

day of/dag van AUGUST

One Thousand Nine Hundred and/Eenduisend Negehonderd EIGHTY TWO

Registrar of Companies/Registrateur van Maatskappye

Seal of Companies Registration Office
Seël van Registrateur van Maatskappye

2. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South West Africa/Namibia dated 25 August 1982. This was achieved by a change of name from the Bahá'í Land Company to the National Spiritual Assembly.

2. INCORPORATION OF LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Riḍván 1979 to Riḍván 1983

In previous volumes, certificates of incorporation of more than two hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies have been reproduced. Among the significant achievements of this kind during the period covered by this volume are those represented by the following documents:

1. Extracts from People's Law No. 82 incorporating all present Local Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of Grenada and providing for incorporation of all such Local Spiritual Assemblies to be formed in the future; signed 31 October 1979 and gazetted 2 November 1979.
2. Certificate of Incorporation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dededo, Guam, dated 14 July 1981. This is the first Local Spiritual Assembly in the Mariana Islands to achieve incorporation.
3. Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Waimairi County, New Zealand; 22 December 1980.
4. Extracts from the Act of Parliament incorporating the Local Spiritual Assembly of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, dated 19 February 1981.
5. Certificate of incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Macau; 13 March 1982.
6. Certificate of Incorporation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Concord, New Hampshire, U.S.A.; 20 April 1982.
7. Extract from *Official Journal* of the French Republic of 18 January 1983, relating to registration of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cayenne, French Guiana, giving date of receipt issued 24 December 1982.

PEOPLE'S LAW NO. 82 OF 1979

PROCLAMATION

BY THE

PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT

A LAW to provide for the Incorporation of certain Local Spiritual Assemblies of the Baha'is of Grenada.

[*Gazetted 2nd November, 1979*].

WHEREAS the religious body in Grenada known as the Baha'is is an integral part of the Baha'i World Faith with its International Headquarters at Mount Carmel, Haifa, Israel.

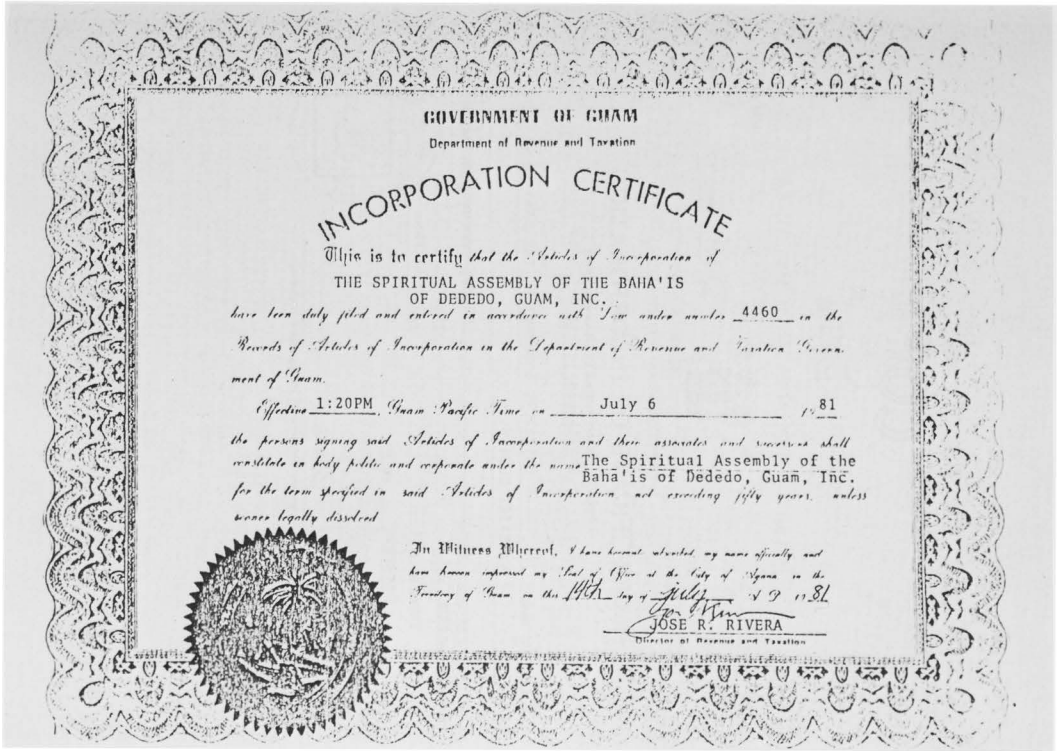
AND WHEREAS the Baha'is have been administering the Faith through Local Spiritual Assemblies in the parishes of Saint George, Saint Andrew, and Saint David respectively with the expectation of establishing further Local Spiritual Assemblies in the parishes of Saint Patrick, Saint John, Saint Mark and Carriacou.

AND WHEREAS a Local Spiritual Assembly is a body consisting of nine persons duly elected each year to administer the affairs of the local community in accordance with the principles of Baha'i Administration.

AND WHEREAS the persons mentioned in the Schedules to this Law have been duly elected and are willing to serve on the Local Spiritual Assembly for their respective parishes and to hold property for any of the uses or purposes of the local Community.

AND WHEREAS it is expedient that the several Local Spiritual Assemblies for the parishes of Saint George,

1. Extracts from People's Law No. 82 incorporating all present Local Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of Grenada and providing for incorporation of all such Local Spiritual Assemblies to be formed in the future; signed 31 October 1979 and gazetted 2 November 1979.



GOVERNMENT OF GUAM

Department of Revenue and Taxation

INCORPORATION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Articles of Incorporation of

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS
OF DEDEDO, GUAM, INC.

have been duly filed and entered in accordance with law under number 4460 in the Records of Articles of Incorporation in the Department of Revenue and Taxation Government of Guam.

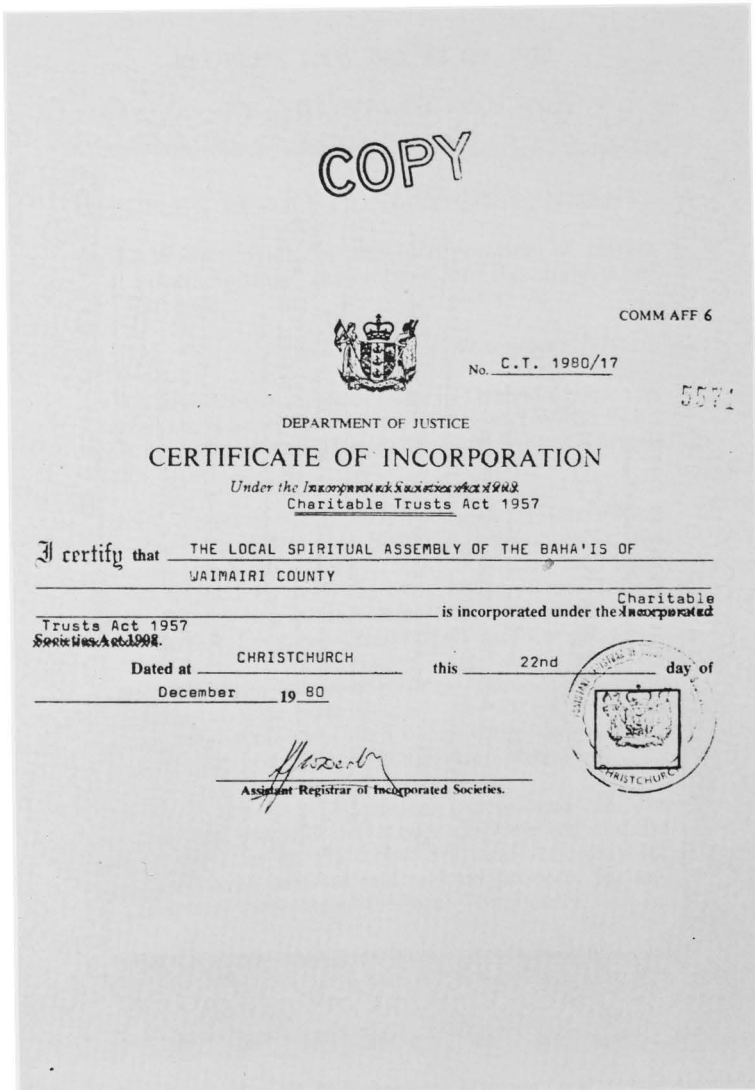
Effective 1:20PM Guam Pacific Time on July 6 1981

the persons signing said Articles of Incorporation and their associates and successors shall constitute a body politic and corporate under the name The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dededo, Guam, Inc. for the term specified in said Articles of Incorporation not exceeding fifty years, unless sooner legally dissolved

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name officially and have hereon impressed my Seal of Office at the City of Agana in the Territory of Guam on this 14th day of July A D 1981

JOSE R. RIVERA
Director of Revenue and Taxation

2. *Certificate of Incorporation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dededo, Guam, dated 14 July 1981. This is the first Local Spiritual Assembly in the Mariana Islands to achieve incorporation.*



COPY

COMM AFF 6

No. C.T. 1980/17

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

Under the ~~Incorporated Societies Act 1908~~
Charitable Trusts Act 1957

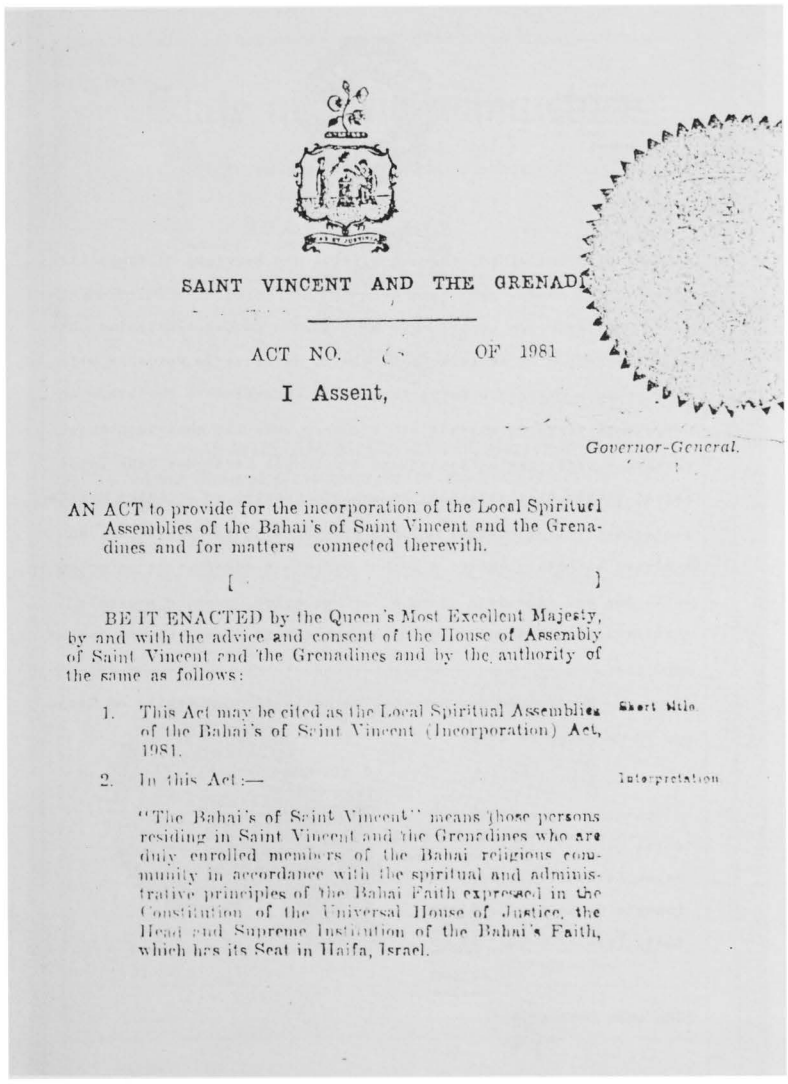
I certify that THE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF WAIMAIRI COUNTY is incorporated under the ~~Incorporated~~ Charitable Trusts Act 1957 ~~Societies Act 1908~~.

Dated at CHRISTCHURCH this 22nd day of December 19 80

Assistant Registrar of ~~Incorporated~~ Societies.

CHRISTCHURCH

3. Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Waimairi County, New Zealand; 22 December 1980.



SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADI

ACT NO. OF 1981

I Assent,

Governor-General.

AN ACT to provide for the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahai's of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and for matters connected therewith.

[ ]

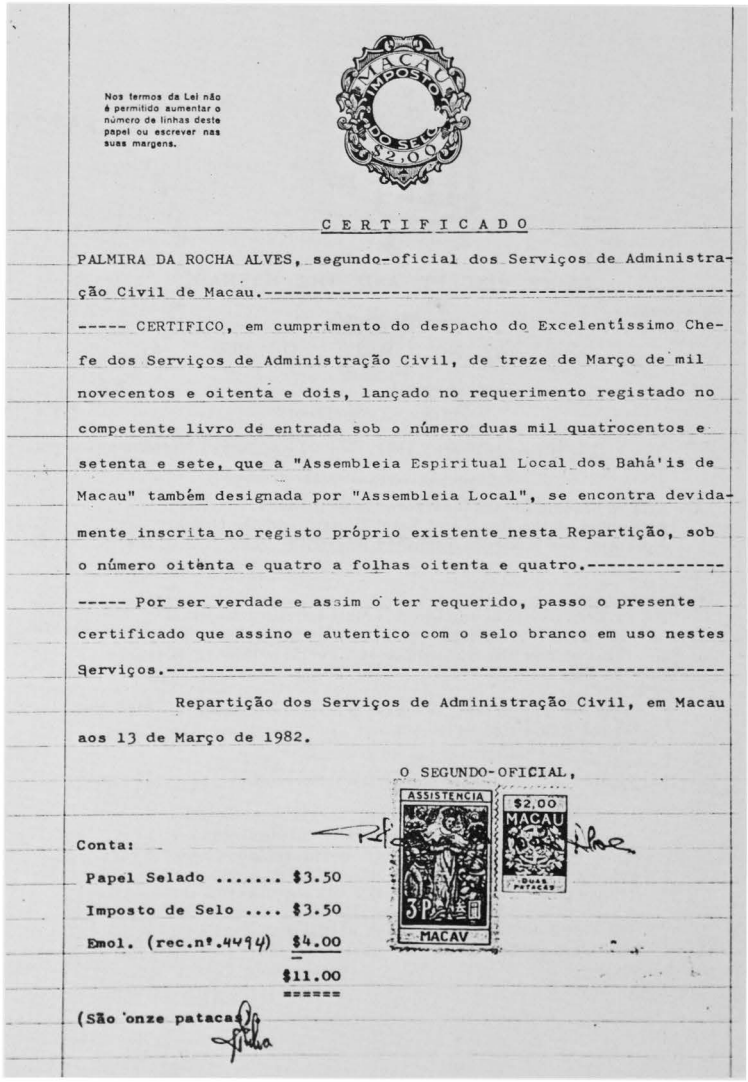
BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Assembly of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and by the authority of the same as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the Local Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahai's of Saint Vincent (Incorporation) Act, 1981. Short title

2. In this Act:— Interpretation

"The Bahai's of Saint Vincent" means those persons residing in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines who are duly enrolled members of the Bahai religious community in accordance with the spiritual and administrative principles of the Bahai Faith expressed in the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice, the Head and Supreme Institution of the Bahai's Faith, which has its Seat in Haifa, Israel.

4. Extracts from the Act of Parliament incorporating the Local Spiritual Assembly of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, dated 19 February 1981.



Nos termos da Lei não é permitido aumentar o número de linhas deste papel ou escrever nas suas margens.

MACAU IMPOSTO DO SELO $2,00

CERTIFICADO

PALMIRA DA ROCHA ALVES, segundo-oficial dos Serviços de Administração Civil de Macau.----------

----- CERTIFICO, em cumprimento do despacho do Excelentíssimo Chefe dos Serviços de Administração Civil, de treze de Março de mil novecentos e oitenta e dois, lançado no requerimento registado no competente livro de entrada sob o número duas mil quatrocentos e setenta e sete, que a "Assembleia Espiritual Local dos Bahá'is de Macau" também designada por "Assembleia Local", se encontra devidamente inscrita no registo próprio existente nesta Repartição, sob o número oitenta e quatro a folhas oitenta e quatro.----------

----- Por ser verdade e assim o ter requerido, passo o presente certificado que assino e autentico com o selo branco em uso nestes Serviços.----------

Repartição dos Serviços de Administração Civil, em Macau aos 13 de Março de 1982.

O SEGUNDO-OFICIAL,

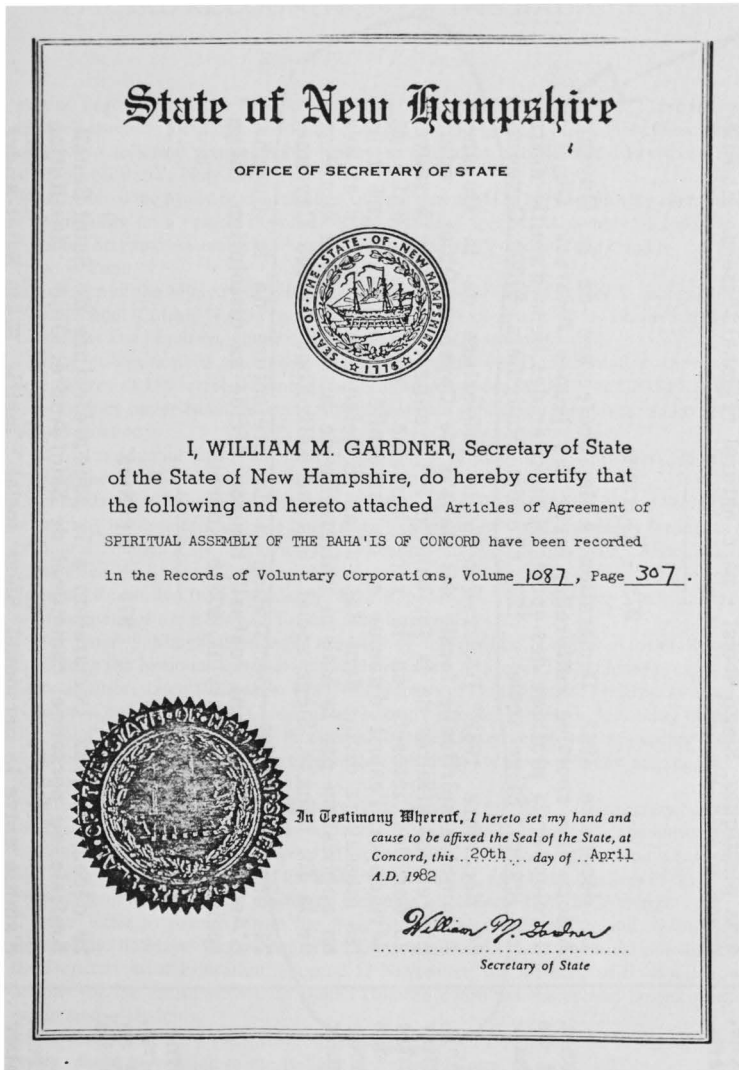
ASSISTENCIA $2,00 MACAU 3P MACAU DUAS PATACAS

Conta:

Papel Selado $3.50
Imposto de Selo $3.50
Emol. (rec.nº.4494) $4.00
$11.00

(São onze patacas)

5. Certificate of incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Macau; 13 March 1982.



State of New Hampshire

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

I, WILLIAM M. GARDNER, Secretary of State of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby certify that the following and hereto attached Articles of Agreement of SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHA'IS OF CONCORD have been recorded in the Records of Voluntary Corporations, Volume 1087, Page 307.

In Testimony Whereof, *I hereto set my hand and cause to be affixed the Seal of the State, at Concord, this* 20th *day of* April *A.D.* 1982

William M. Gardner

Secretary of State

6. Certificate of Incorporation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Concord, New Hampshire, U.S.A.; 20 April 1982.

une animation éducative avec le théâtre, la danse, le cinéma, les arts plastiques. Siège social : parc naturel régional, caserne Bouille, 97200 Fort-de-France.

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973 - GUYANE

22 décembre 1982. Déclaration à la préfecture de la Guyane. **Association sportive culturelle, foyer des jeunes Awarack.** Objet : développer la pratique des sports et susciter des liens d'amitié entre les jeunes. Siège social : 120, cité des Manguiers, 97300 Cayenne.

24 décembre 1982. Déclaration à la préfecture de la Guyane. **Assemblée spirituelle locale des Baha'is de Cayenne.** Objet : administrer les affaires de la foi baha'ie à Cayenne qui aspire à sauvegarder les intérêts de la race humaine ; établir son unité et développer l'esprit d'amour et de fraternité qu'ont enseigné tous les messagers divins dont Baha'u'llah. Enseignements élargis et mis en application par la Maison universelle de justice, organe suprême de la foi baha'ie. Siège social : 36, rue Félix-Eboué, 97300 Cayenne.

24 décembre 1982. Déclaration à la préfecture de la Guyane. **L'Association vétérans football, Kourou** décide sa dissolution. Siège social : 19, cité Amaryllis, 97310 Kourou.

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974 - RÉUNION

29 décembre 1982. Déclaration à la sous-préfecture de Saint-Benoît. **Amicale du personnel communal de Saint-André.** Objet : institution de toute action sociale tendant à créer et à développer des liens d'amitié entre le personnel. Siège social : mairie, 97440 Saint-André.

7. Extract from Official Journal *of the French Republic of 18 January 1983, relating to registration of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Cayenne, French Guiana, giving date of receipt issued 24 December 1982.*

3. A SELECTION OF OTHER DOCUMENTS RECORDING OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Riḍván 1979 to Riḍván 1983

1. Act of Legislature of the State of Hawaii, U.S.A., enacted 23 June 1981, providing for excused absences for all non-Christian students for observance of their Holy Days. Passage of this act followed general public outcry at refusal by School Board to excuse Bahá'í students on Bahá'í Holy Days.
2. Resolution of the Ministry of Education of Peru dated 2 May 1979, approving exemption of customs duty on a vehicle donated by the National Spiritual Assembly of Japan to the National Spiritual Assembly of Peru for use in the Bahá'í teaching work and by the Bahá'í radio in Puno.
3. Resolution of the Ministry of Education, Chile, dated 18 December 1979, recognizing the Bahá'í school 'Colegio Nur' in La Cisterna, for the school year 1979, 'as long as it fulfills the conditions and requirements demanded by the law and the regulations'.
4. Official publication of the International Federation for Documentation showing the amendment of Universal Decimal Classification removing the Babí and Bahá'í Faiths as sub-divisions under Islám, assigning them their own classification number, and correcting the designation.
5. Text of Presidential Order amending Constitution of Pakistan, 7 April 1981, specifically naming the Bahá'ís among non-Muslim minorities of Pakistan.
6. Circular dated 16 November 1981 from Director of Public Instruction, Orissa State, India, instructing headmasters and headmistresses to allocate two periods weekly for instruction on moral education to be carried out by representatives of the Bahá'í State Teaching Committee.
7. Supreme Resolution from Presidency of the Republic, Bolivia, 6 January 1983, authorizing establishment of the Bahá'í radio station at Caracollo.
8. Letter dated 9 March 1983 from Ministry of Information, Central African Republic, permitting the National Spiritual Assembly to insert articles in the national press.
9. Circular letter, dated 10 October 1980, to Directors of Departmental Federations from the National Confederation of 'Campesinos' (country people) of Bolivia informing them that the Bahá'í Faith is a religion recognized by the Government and requesting that all confidence and consideration be extended to the Bahá'í teachers who are helping with the social and spiritual education of the country people.
10. Excerpt from a speech given by Deputy Átila Nunes in the 46th Extraordinary Session of the Legislature of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 24 June 1981. The entire speech was published in the *Official Record* of 26 June 1981 and covered three and a half pages. Mr. Nunes tells of the history of the Faith, its Teachings, its spread, the lives of the Central Figures, its laws and ethical teachings, including quotations from the Writings.
11. Circular letter to parents, from the Bray School Project, Bray, Ireland, listing school closings and holidays; 16 October 1981. The school, a recognized national one funded by the Department of Education, adopted 12 November, the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh, as a holiday for the entire school, as Bahá'í children constitute the second largest religious group among students.
12. Letter dated 5 January 1982, from Ministry of National Education and Religion, Greece, giving official permission to the Bahá'ís of Iraklion, Crete, to meet.

(To be made one and seven copies)

THE SENATE
ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE, 1981
STATE OF HAWAII

ACT 232

S.B. NO. 1662 S.D. 2 C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. Chapter 298, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§298- Religious holy days. The board of education shall release any public school student from school attendance for the purpose of observing religious holy days that fall on regularly scheduled school days, when such release is requested in writing by a parent, guardian or other person having custody or control of such pupil. Actual attendance at observances shall count as an excused absence at the public schools for all purposes where attendance forms the basis of computation."

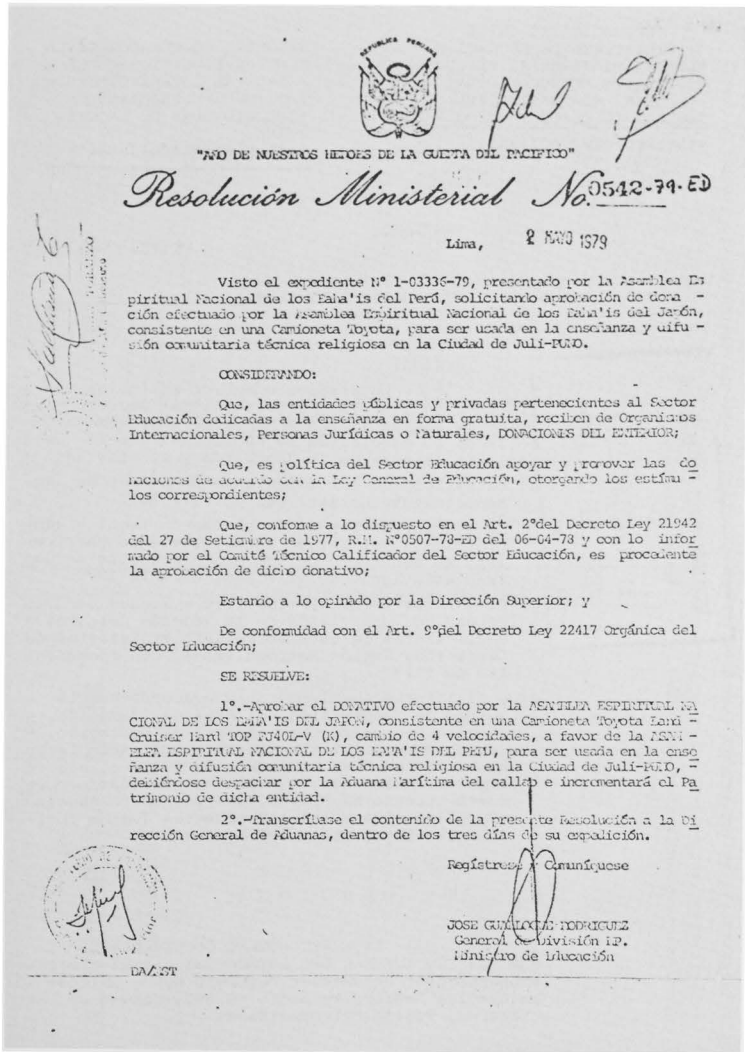
SECTION 2. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

APPROVED this 23rd day of June ,1981.

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII.

1. Act of Legislature of the State of Hawaii, U.S.A., enacted 23 June 1981, providing for excused absences for all non-Christian students for observance of their Holy Days. Passage of this act followed general public outcry at refusal by School Board to excuse Bahá'í students on Bahá'í Holy Days.



"AÑO DE NUESTROS HEROES DE LA CUENTA DEL PACIFICO"

Resolución Ministerial No. 0542-79-ED

Lima, 2 MAYO 1979

Visto el expediente N° 1-03336-79, presentado por la Asamblea Espiritual Nacional de los Baha'is del Perú, solicitando aprobación de donación efectuado por la Asamblea Espiritual Nacional de los Baha'is del Japón, consistente en una Camioneta Toyota, para ser usada en la enseñanza y difusión comunitaria técnica religiosa en la Ciudad de Juli-PUNO.

CONSIDERANDO:

Que, las entidades públicas y privadas pertenecientes al Sector Educación dedicadas a la enseñanza en forma gratuita, reciben de Organismos Internacionales, Personas Jurídicas o Naturales, DONACIONES DEL EXTERIOR;

Que, es política del Sector Educación apoyar y promover las donaciones de acuerdo con la Ley General de Educación, otorgando los estímulos correspondientes;

Que, conforme a lo dispuesto en el Art. 2°del Decreto Ley 21942 del 27 de Setiembre de 1977, R.M. N°0507-78-ED del 06-04-78 y con lo informado por el Comité Técnico Calificador del Sector Educación, es procedente la aprobación de dicho donativo;

Estando a lo opinado por la Dirección Superior; y

De conformidad con el Art. 9°del Decreto Ley 22417 Orgánica del Sector Educación;

SE RESUELVE:

1°.-Aprobar el DONATIVO efectuado por la ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHA'IS DEL JAPON, consistente en una Camioneta Toyota Land Cruiser Hard TOP FJ40L-V (K), cambio de 4 velocidades, a favor de la ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHA'IS DEL PERU, para ser usada en la enseñanza y difusión comunitaria técnica religiosa en la Ciudad de Juli-PUNO, debiéndose despachar por la Aduana Marítima del callao e incrementará el Patrimonio de dicha entidad.

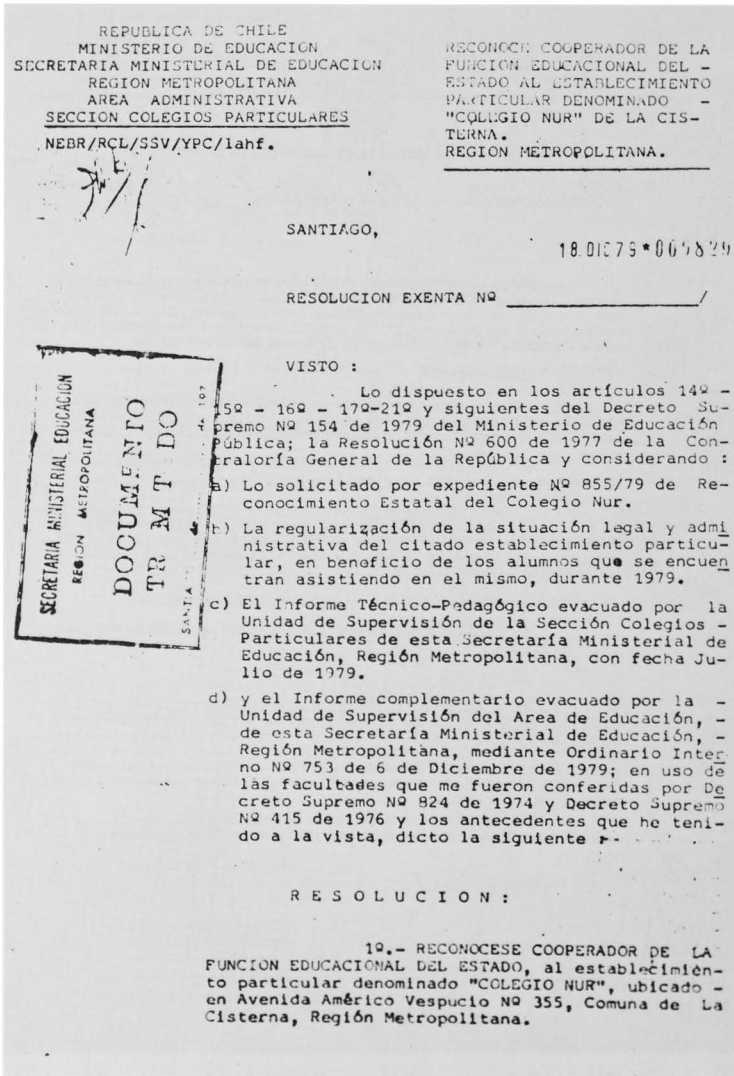
2°.-Transcríbase el contenido de la presente Resolución a la Dirección General de Aduanas, dentro de los tres días de su expedición.

Regístrese y Comuníquese

JOSE GUILLOCHE RODRIGUEZ
General de División EP.
Ministro de Educación

BA/ST

2. Resolution of the Ministry of Education of Peru dated 2 May 1979, approving exemption of customs duty on a vehicle donated by the National Spiritual Assembly of Japan to the National Spiritual Assembly of Peru for use in the Bahá'í teaching work and by the Bahá'í radio in Puno.



REPUBLICA DE CHILE
MINISTERIO DE EDUCACION
SECRETARIA MINISTERIAL DE EDUCACION
REGION METROPOLITANA
AREA ADMINISTRATIVA
SECCION COLEGIOS PARTICULARES

NEBR/RCL/SSV/YPC/lahf.

RECONOCE COOPERADOR DE LA FUNCION EDUCACIONAL DEL ESTADO AL ESTABLECIMIENTO PARTICULAR DENOMINADO "COLEGIO NUR" DE LA CISTERNA.
REGION METROPOLITANA.

SANTIAGO,

18 DIC 79 * 069829

RESOLUCION EXENTA Nº _____/

SECRETARIA MINISTERIAL EDUCACION REGION METROPOLITANA DOCUMENTO TRAMITADO SANTIAGO

VISTO :

Lo dispuesto en los artículos 14º - 15º - 16º - 17º-21º y siguientes del Decreto Supremo Nº 154 de 1979 del Ministerio de Educación Pública; la Resolución Nº 600 de 1977 de la Contraloría General de la República y considerando :

a) Lo solicitado por expediente Nº 855/79 de Reconocimiento Estatal del Colegio Nur.

b) La regularización de la situación legal y administrativa del citado establecimiento particular, en beneficio de los alumnos que se encuentran asistiendo en el mismo, durante 1979.

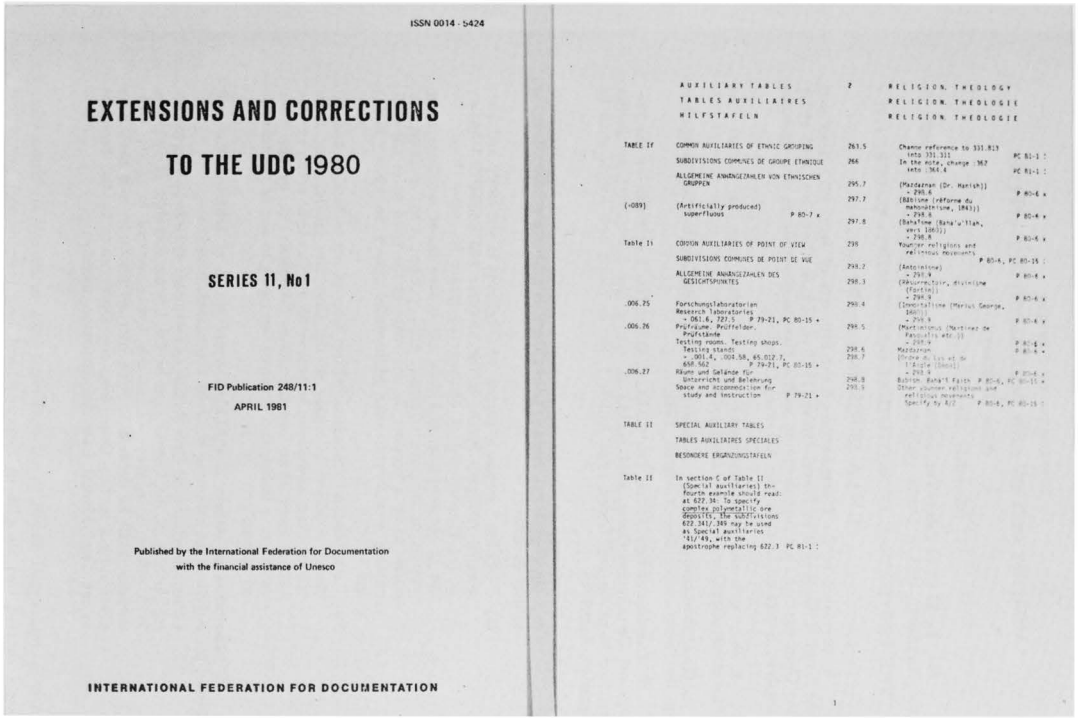
c) El Informe Técnico-Pedagógico evacuado por la Unidad de Supervisión de la Sección Colegios - Particulares de esta Secretaría Ministerial de Educación, Región Metropolitana, con fecha Julio de 1979.

d) y el Informe complementario evacuado por la - Unidad de Supervisión del Area de Educación, - de esta Secretaría Ministerial de Educación, - Región Metropolitana, mediante Ordinario Interno Nº 753 de 6 de Diciembre de 1979; en uso de las facultades que me fueron conferidas por Decreto Supremo Nº 824 de 1974 y Decreto Supremo Nº 415 de 1976 y los antecedentes que he tenido a la vista, dicto la siguiente R-

R E S O L U C I O N :

1º.- RECONOCESE COOPERADOR DE LA FUNCION EDUCACIONAL DEL ESTADO, al establecimiento particular denominado "COLEGIO NUR", ubicado - en Avenida Américo Vespucio Nº 355, Comuna de La Cisterna, Región Metropolitana.

3. Resolution of the Ministry of Education, Chile, dated 18 December 1979, recognizing the Bahá'í school 'Colegio Nur' in La Cisterna, for the school year 1979, 'as long as it fulfills the conditions and requirements demanded by the law and the regulations'.



ISSN 0014 - 5424

EXTENSIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE UDC 1980

SERIES 11, No 1

FID Publication 248/11:1
APRIL 1981

Published by the International Federation for Documentation
with the financial assistance of Unesco

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR DOCUMENTATION

AUXILIARY TABLES
TABLES AUXILIAIRES
HILFSTAFELN

TABLE If — COMMON AUXILIARIES OF ETHNIC GROUPING
SUBDIVISIONS COMMUNES DE GROUPE ETHNIQUE
ALLGEMEINE ANHÄNGEZAHLEN VON ETHNISCHEN GRUPPEN

(-089) (Artificially produced) superfluous P 80-7 x

Table 1i — COMMON AUXILIARIES OF POINT OF VIEW
SUBDIVISIONS COMMUNES DE POINT DE VUE
ALLGEMEINE ANHÄNGEZAHLEN DES GESICHTSPUNKTES

.006.25 Forschungslaboratorien
Research laboratories
= 061.6, 727.5 P 79-21, PC 80-15 +

.006.26 Prüfräume. Prüffelder. Prüfstände
Testing rooms. Testing shops. Testing stands
= 001.4, .008.58, 65.012.7, 658.562 P 79-21, PC 80-15 +

.006.27 Räume und Gelände für Unterricht und Belehrung
Space and accommodation for study and instruction P 79-21 +

TABLE II — SPECIAL AUXILIARY TABLES
TABLES AUXILIAIRES SPECIALES
BESONDERE ERGÄNZUNGSTAFELN

Table II — In section C of Table II (Special auxiliaries) the fourth example should read: at 622.34: To specify complex polymetallic ore deposits, the subdivisions 622.341/.349 may be used as Special auxiliaries '01/'49, with the apostrophe replacing 622.3 PC 81-1 :

2 RELIGION. THEOLOGY
RELIGION. THEOLOGIE
RELIGION. THEOLOGIE

261.5
266
295.7
297.7
297.8
298
298.2
298.3
298.4
298.5
298.6
298.7
298.8
298.9

Change reference to 331.819 into 331.311 PC 81-1 :
In the note, change :367 into :364.4 PC 81-1 :
(Mazdaznan (Dr. Hanish)) = 299.6 P 80-6 x
(Bâbîsme (réforme du mahométisme, 1843)) = 298.6 P 80-4 x
(Bahaïsme (Bahá'u'lláh, envt 1863)) = 298.8 P 80-4 x
Younger religions and religious movements P 80-4, PC 80-15 :
(Antoinisme) = 299.9 P 80-4 x
(Résurrection, divinisme (Fontin)) = 299.9 P 80-4 x
(Innocentisme (Marius Georges, 1601)) = 299.9 P 80-4 x
(Martinisme (Martinez de Pasqually, etc.)) = 299.9 P 80-4 x
Mazdaznan P 80-4 x
(Ordre du Lys et de l'Aigle (Saint)) = 299.9 P 80-4 x
Bâbîsm. Bahá'í Faiths P 80-6, PC 80-15 x
Other younger religions and religious movements. Specify by 8/2 P 80-6, PC 80-15 :

4. Official publication of the International Federation for Documentation showing the amendment of Universal Decimal Classification removing the Babí and Bahá'í Faiths as sub-divisions under Islám, assigning them their own classification number, and correcting the designation.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

MINISTRY OF LAW AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(Law Division)

Islamabad, the 8th April, 1981

No. F. 17 (4)/81-Pub.—The following Order made by the President on the 7th April, 1981 is hereby published for general information :—

THE PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) ORDER, 1981

C.M.L.A. ORDER No. 2 OF 1981

In pursuance of the Proclamation of the fifth day of July, 1977, read with the Laws (Continuance in Force) Order, 1977 (C.M.L.A. Order No. 1 of 1977), the Chief Martial Law Administrator, with a view to consolidating and declaring the law, is pleased to make the following Order :—

1. **Short title and commencement.**—(1) This Order may be called the Provisional Constitution (Amendment) Order, 1981.

(2) It shall come into force at once and shall be deemed to have taken effect on the twenty-fourth day of March, 1981.

2. **Insertion of new Article 1A, C.M.L.A. Order No. 1 of 1981.**—In the Provisional Constitution Order, 1981 (C.M.L.A. Order No. 1 of 1981), hereinafter referred to as the said Order, after Article 1, the following new Article shall be inserted, namely :—

"1A. *Definitions.*—In the Constitution and this Order and all enactments and other legal instruments, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,—

(a) "Muslim" means a person who believes in the unity and oneness of Almighty Allah, in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the last of the prophets, and does not believe in, or recognize as, a prophet or religious reformer, any person who claimed or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (peace be upon him); and

(b) "non-Muslim" means a person who is not a Muslim and includes a person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Parsi community, a person of the Quadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name), or a Bahai, and a person belonging to any of the scheduled castes.".

3. **Substitution of Article 2, C.M.L.A. Order No. 1 of 1981.**—In the said Order, for Article 2 the following shall be substituted, namely :—

"2. *Certain provisions of Constitution to form part of Order.*—The following Articles of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, which is in abeyance, in this Order referred to as the Constitution, shall be deemed to form part of this Order and shall have effect subject to this Order and any Order made by the President or the Chief Martial Law Administrator, namely :—

5. Text of Presidential Order amending Constitution of Pakistan, 7 April 1981, specifically naming the Bahá'ís among non-Muslim minorities of Pakistan.

37551 16-11-81

From

The Director of Public Instruction(Schools)Orissa.

To

The Headmasters & Headmistresses of a ll High Schools located at Bhubaneswar.

You are hereby directed to allow the representative of Bahai State Teaching Committee who will deliver lectures on moral education in your Institution. You are, therefore, requested to spare two periods of S.U.P.W.of your School in a week to the said organisation who will take the classes on moral education. Some teachers of your School may also be requested to attend the said classes which will be beneficial for them to take up classes on the moral education in your School.

16/11/81

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION(SCHOOLS)
ORISSA.

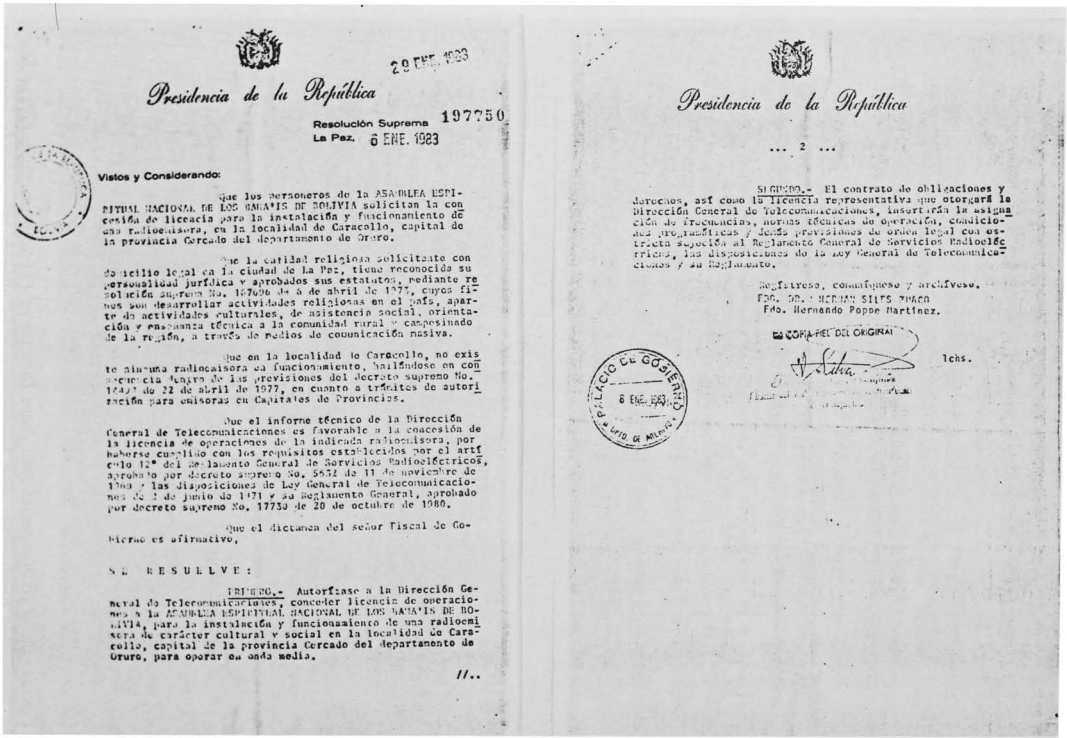
Memo No..37552/Dated.... 16-11-81

Copy forwarded to the Inspector of Schools, Puri Circle/ Secretary, Bahái State Teaching Committee, Plot No.8, Unit-VIII, Bhubaneswar for information and necessary action.

16/11/81

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION(SCHOOLS)
ORISSA.

6. Circular dated 16 November 1981 from Director of Public Instruction, Orissa State, India, instructing headmasters and headmistresses to allocate two periods weekly for instruction on moral education to be carried out by representatives of the Bahá'í State Teaching Committee.



Presidencia de la República

28 ENE. 1983

Resolución Suprema 197750

La Paz, 6 ENE. 1983

Vistos y Considerando:

Que los personeros de la ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHA'IS DE BOLIVIA solicitan la concesión de licencia para la instalación y funcionamiento de una radioemisora, en la localidad de Caracollo, capital de la provincia Cercado del departamento de Oruro.

Que la entidad religiosa solicitante con domicilio legal en la ciudad de la Paz, tiene reconocida su personalidad jurídica y aprobados sus estatutos, mediante resolución suprema No. 167696 de 6 de abril de 1977, cuyos fines son desarrollar actividades religiosas en el país, aparte de actividades culturales, de asistencia social, orientación y enseñanza técnica a la comunidad rural y campesinado de la región, a través de medios de comunicación masiva.

Que en la localidad de Caracollo, no existe ninguna radioemisora en funcionamiento, hallándose en concurrencia dentro de las previsiones del decreto supremo No. 14401 de 22 de abril de 1977, en cuanto a trámites de autorización para emisoras en Capitales de Provincias.

Que el informe técnico de la Dirección General de Telecomunicaciones es favorable a la concesión de la licencia de operaciones de la indicada radioemisora, por haberse cumplido con los requisitos establecidos por el artículo 12º del Reglamento General de Servicios Radioeléctricos, aprobado por decreto supremo No. 5632 de 11 de noviembre de 1960 y las disposiciones de Ley General de Telecomunicaciones de 2 de junio de 1971 y su Reglamento General, aprobado por decreto supremo No. 17730 de 20 de octubre de 1980.

Que el dictamen del señor Fiscal de Gobierno es afirmativo,

SE RESUELVE:

PRIMERO.- Autorízase a la Dirección General de Telecomunicaciones, conceder licencia de operaciones a la ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHA'IS DE BOLIVIA, para la instalación y funcionamiento de una radioemisora de carácter cultural y social en la localidad de Caracollo, capital de la provincia Cercado del departamento de Oruro, para operar en onda media.

//..

Presidencia de la República

... 2 ...

SEGUNDO.- El contrato de obligaciones y derechos, así como la licencia representativa que otorgará la Dirección General de Telecomunicaciones, insertará la asignación de frecuencias, normas técnicas de operación, condiciones protocolares y demás previsiones de orden legal con estricta sujeción al Reglamento General de Servicios Radioeléctricos, las disposiciones de la Ley General de Telecomunicaciones y su Reglamento.

Regístrese, comuníquese y archívese.

Fdo. Dr. HERNAN SILES ZUAZO

Fdo. Hernando Poppe Martínez.

COPIA FIEL DEL ORIGINAL

lchs.

PALACIO DE GOBIERNO 6 ENE. 1983 LA PAZ - BOLIVIA

7. Supreme Resolution from Presidency of the Republic, Bolivia, 6 January 1983, authorizing establishment of the Bahá'í radio station at Caracollo.

/)/)INISTERE DE L'INFORMATION
SECRETARIAT GENERAL
DIRECTION GENERALE DE LA PRESSE
N° 0037/83/M.INFO/SG/DGP.-

REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE
Unité - Dignité - Travail

BANGUI, LE - 9 MARS 1983

Reçu le ... MAR 1983

Le Ministre, Chargé du Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement et de l'Information à Bangui

Monsieur M'BOTTO, Secrétaire de l'Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale des BAHA'IS en République Centrafricaine
B.P. 1.411
BANGUI.

( ) B J E T :
Votre lettre du 17 Février 1983 demandant l'insertion d'articles dans la Presse Ecrite.

Monsieur,

Nous accusons bonne reception de votre lettre du 17 Février 1983 par laquelle vous demandez l'autorisation de faire inserrer des articles dans la Presse Ecrite Nationale.

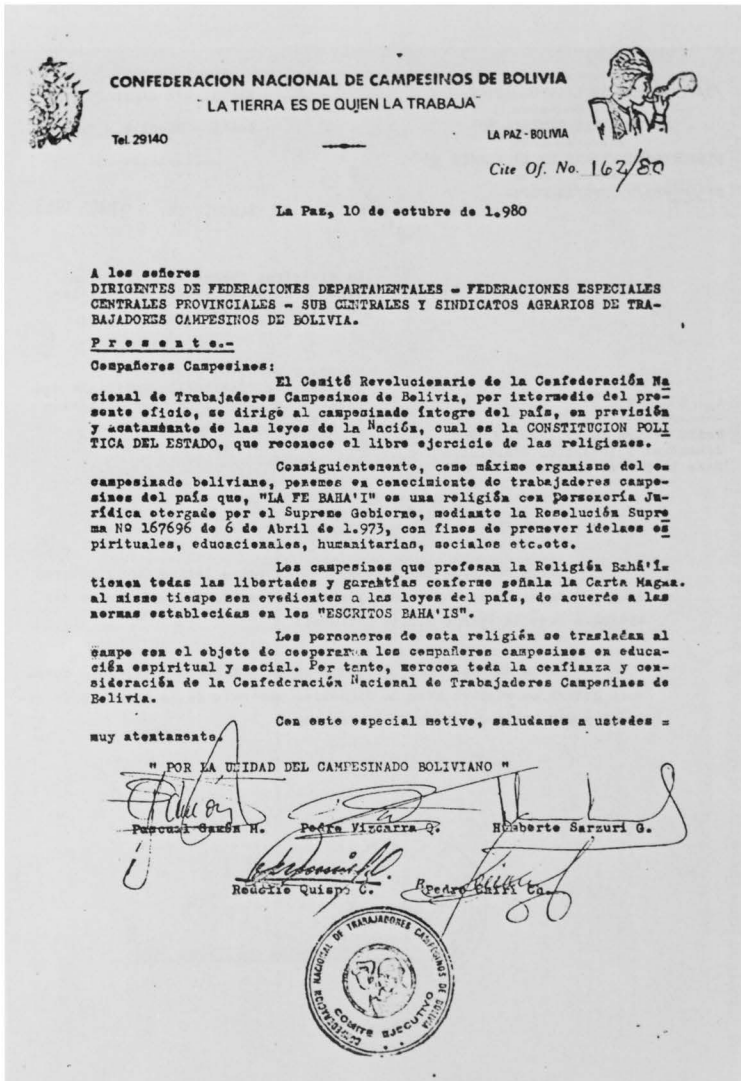
Nous donnons notre accord à cette demande. Ainsi, vous devez vous mettre en rapport avec la Direction Générale de la Presse pour fixer les modalités de cette collaboration.

R. C. A. Le Ministre MINISTERE DE L'INFORMATION

Capitaine Guillaume LAPO

MAR 29 1983

8. Letter dated 9 March 1983 from Ministry of Information, Central African Republic, permitting the National Spiritual Assembly to insert articles in the national press.



CONFEDERACION NACIONAL DE CAMPESINOS DE BOLIVIA
"LA TIERRA ES DE QUIEN LA TRABAJA"

Tel. 29140 — LA PAZ - BOLIVIA

Cite Of. No. 162/80

La Paz, 10 de octubre de 1.980

A los señores
DIRIGENTES DE FEDERACIONES DEPARTAMENTALES - FEDERACIONES ESPECIALES CENTRALES PROVINCIALES - SUB CENTRALES Y SINDICATOS AGRARIOS DE TRABAJADORES CAMPESINOS DE BOLIVIA.

P r e s e n t e.-

Compañeros Campesinos:

El Comité Revolucionario de la Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, por intermedio del presente oficio, se dirige al campesinado íntegro del país, en previsión y acatamiento de las leyes de la Nación, cual es la CONSTITUCION POLITICA DEL ESTADO, que reconoce el libre ejercicio de las religiones.

Consiguientemente, como máxime organismo del campesinado boliviano, ponemos en conocimiento de trabajadores campesinos del país que, "LA FE BAHA'I" es una religión con Personería Jurídica otorgada por el Supremo Gobierno, mediante la Resolución Suprema Nº 167696 de 6 de Abril de 1.973, con fines de promover ideales espirituales, educacionales, humanitarios, sociales etc.etc.

Los campesinos que profesan la Religión Bahá'í tienen todas las libertades y garantías conforme señala la Carta Magna. al mismo tiempo son ovedientes a las leyes del país, de acuerdo a las normas establecidas en los "ESCRITOS BAHA'IS".

Los personeros de esta religión se trasladan al campo con el objeto de cooperar a los compañeros campesinos en educación espiritual y social. Por tanto, merecen toda la confianza y consideración de la Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia.

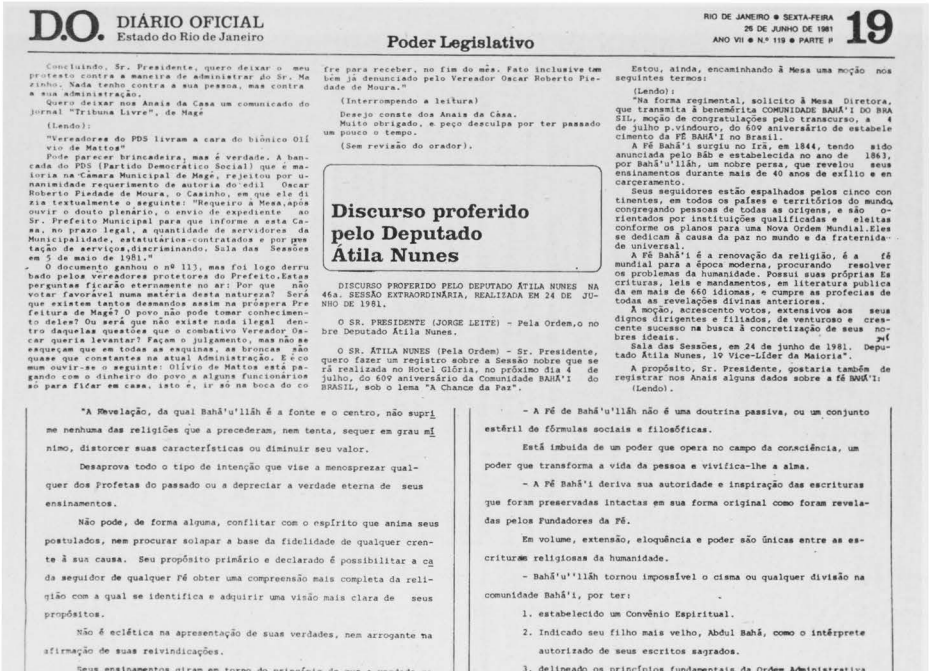
Con este especial motivo, saludamos a ustedes muy atentamente.

" POR LA UNIDAD DEL CAMPESINADO BOLIVIANO "

Pascual Garza H. — Pedro Vizcarra Q. — Humberto Sarzuri G.

Rodolfo Quispe C. — Pedro Chiri Co.

9. Circular letter, dated 10 October 1980, to Directors of Departmental Federations from the National Confederation of 'Campesinos' (country people) of Bolivia informing them that the Bahá'í Faith is a religion recognized by the Government and requesting that all confidence and consideration be extended to the Bahá'í teachers who are helping with the social and spiritual education of the country people.



D.O. DIÁRIO OFICIAL
Estado do Rio de Janeiro

Poder Legislativo

RIO DE JANEIRO • SEXTA-FEIRA
26 DE JUNHO DE 1981
ANO VII • N.º 119 • PARTE I

19

Concluindo, Sr. Presidente, quero deixar o meu protesto contra a maneira de administrar do Sr. Mazinho. Nada tenho contra a sua pessoa, mas contra a sua administração.

Quero deixar nos Anais da Casa um comunicado do jornal "Tribuna Livre", de Magé

(Lendo):

"Vereadores do PDS livram a cara do biônico Olívio de Mattos"

Pode parecer brincadeira, mas é verdade. A bancada do PDS (Partido Democrático Social) que é maioria na Câmara Municipal de Magé, rejeitou por unanimidade requerimento de autoria do edil Oscar Roberto Piedade de Moura, o Casinho, em que ele dizia textualmente o seguinte: "Requeiro à Mesa,após ouvir o douto plenário, o envio de expediente ao Sr. Prefeito Municipal para que informe a esta Casa, no prazo legal, a quantidade de servidores da Municipalidade, estatutários-contratados e por prestação de serviços,discriminando. Sala das Sessões em 5 de maio de 1981."

O documento ganhou o nº 113, mas foi logo derrubado pelos vereadores protetores do Prefeito.Estas perguntas ficarão eternamente no ar: Por que não votar favorável numa matéria desse natureza? Será que existem tantos desmandos assim na próspera Prefeitura de Magé? O povo não pode tomar conhecimento dele? Ou será que não existe nada ilegal dentro daquelas questões que o combativo Vereador Oscar queria levantar? Façam o julgamento, mas não se esqueçam que em todas as esquinas, as broncas não quase que constantes na atual Administração. É o comum ouvir-se o seguinte: Olívio de Mattos está pagando com o dinheiro do povo a alguns funcionários só para ficar em casa, isto é, ir só na boca do cofre para receber, no fim do mês. Fato inclusive também já denunciado pelo Vereador Oscar Roberto Piedade de Moura."

(Interrompendo a leitura)

Desejo conste dos Anais da Casa.

Muito obrigado, e peço desculpa por ter passado um pouco o tempo.

(Sem revisão do orador).

Discurso proferido pelo Deputado Átila Nunes

DISCURSO PROFERIDO PELO DEPUTADO ÁTILA NUNES NA 46a. SESSÃO EXTRAORDINÁRIA, REALIZADA EM 24 DE JUNHO DE 1981.

O SR. PRESIDENTE (JORGE LEITE) - Pela Ordem,o nobre Deputado Átila Nunes.

O SR. ÁTILA NUNES (Pela Ordem) - Sr. Presidente, quero fazer um registro sobre a Sessão nobre que será realizada no Hotel Glória, no próximo dia 4 de julho, do 609 aniversário da Comunidade BAHÁ'Í do BRASIL, sob o lema "A Chance da Paz".

Estou, ainda, encaminhando à Mesa uma moção nos seguintes termos:

(Lendo):

"Na forma regimental, solicito à Mesa Diretora, que transmita à benemérita COMUNIDADE BAHÁ'I DO BRASIL, moção de congratulações pelo transcurso, a 4 de julho p.vindouro, do 609 aniversário de estabelecimento da FÉ BAHÁ'I no Brasil.

A Fé Bahá'i surgiu no Irã, em 1844, tendo sido anunciada pelo Báb e estabelecida no ano de 1863, por Bahá'u'lláh, um nobre persa, que revelou seus ensinamentos durante mais de 40 anos de exílio e encarceramento.

Seus seguidores estão espalhados pelos cinco continentes, em todos os países e territórios do mundo, congregando pessoas de todas as origens, e são orientados por instituições qualificadas e eleitas conforme os planos para uma Nova Ordem Mundial.Eles se dedicam à causa da paz no mundo e da fraternidade universal.

A Fé Bahá'i é a renovação da religião, é a fé mundial para a época moderna, procurando resolver os problemas da humanidade. Possui suas próprias Escrituras, leis e mandamentos, em literatura publica da em mais de 660 idiomas, e cumpre as profecias de todas as revelações divinas anteriores.

A moção, acrescento votos, extensivos aos seus dignos dirigentes e filiados, de venturoso e crescente sucesso na busca à concretização de seus nobres ideais.

Sala das Sessões, em 24 de junho de 1981. Deputado Átila Nunes, 1º Vice-Líder da Maioria".

A propósito, Sr. Presidente, gostaria também de registrar nos Anais alguns dados sobre a fé BAHÁ'I:

(Lendo).

"A Revelação, da qual Bahá'u'lláh é a fonte e o centro, não suprime nenhuma das religiões que a precederam, nem tenta, sequer em grau mínimo, distorcer suas características ou diminuir seu valor.

Desaprova todo o tipo de intenção que vise a menosprezar qualquer dos Profetas do passado ou a depreciar a verdade eterna de seus ensinamentos.

Não pode, de forma alguma, conflitar com o espírito que anima seus postulados, nem procurar solapar a base da fidelidade de qualquer crente à sua causa. Seu propósito primário e declarado é possibilitar a cada seguidor de qualquer Fé obter uma compreensão mais completa da religião com a qual se identifica e adquirir uma visão mais clara de seus propósitos.

Não é eclética na apresentação de suas verdades, nem arrogante na afirmação de suas reivindicações.

Seus ensinamentos giram em torno do princípio de que a verdade religiosa não é absoluta, mas relativa; que a Revelação Divina é progressiva, e que as religiões mundiais são essencialmente uma só em sua origem e propósito básico, diferindo apenas em seus aspectos secundários, de acordo com as necessidades da época em que foram reveladas.

- A Fé de Bahá'u'lláh não é uma doutrina passiva, ou um conjunto estéril de fórmulas sociais e filosóficas.

Está imbuída de um poder que opera no campo da consciência, um poder que transforma a vida da pessoa e vivifica-lhe a alma.

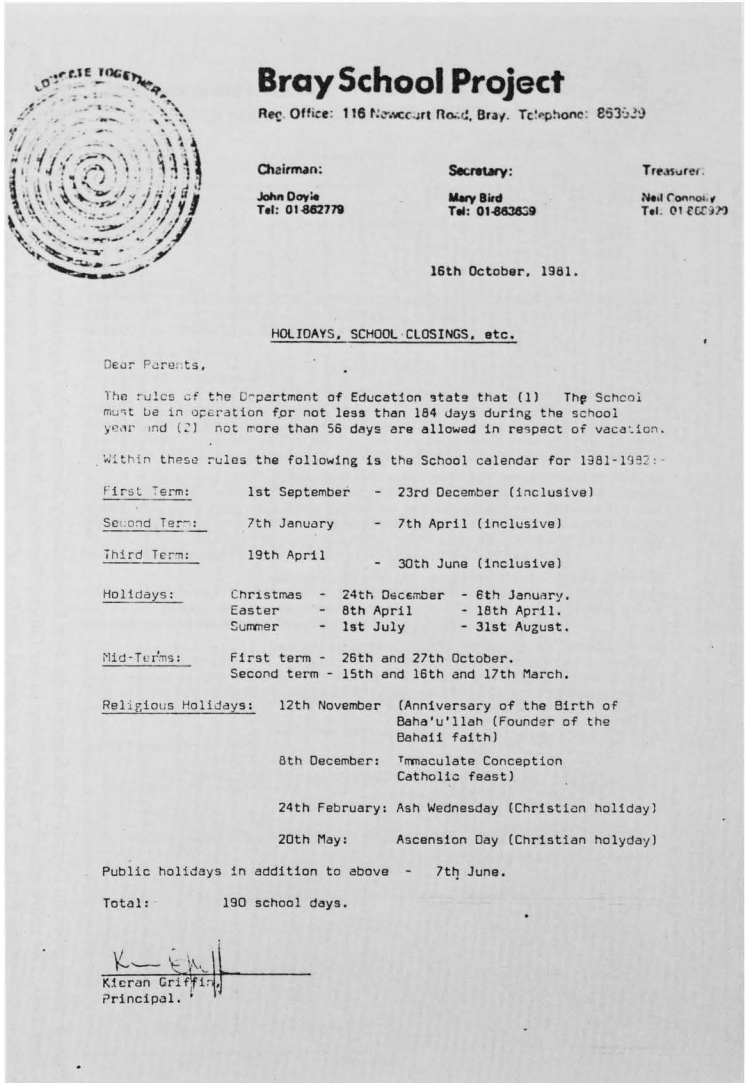
- A Fé Bahá'i deriva sua autoridade e inspiração das escrituras que foram preservadas intactas em sua forma original como foram reveladas pelos Fundadores da Fé.

Em volume, extensão, eloquência e poder são únicas entre as escrituras religiosas da humanidade.

- Bahá'u''lláh tornou impossível o cisma ou qualquer divisão na comunidade Bahá'i, por ter:

1. estabelecido um Convênio Espiritual.
2. Indicado seu filho mais velho, Abdul Bahá, como o intérprete autorizado de seus escritos sagrados.
3. delineado os princípios fundamentais da Ordem Administrativa Bahá'i.

10. Excerpt from a speech given by Deputy Átila Nunes in the 46th Extraordinary Session of the Legislature of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 24 June 1981. The entire speech was published in the Official Record *of 26 June 1981 and covered three and a half pages. Mr. Nunes tells of the history of the Faith, its Teachings, its spread, the lives of the Central Figures, its laws and ethical teachings, including quotations from the Writings.*



Bray School Project

Reg. Office: 116 Newcourt Road, Bray. Telephone: 863639

Chairman:	Secretary:	Treasurer:
John Doyle Tel: 01-862779	Mary Bird Tel: 01-863639	Neil Connolly Tel: 01-863929

16th October, 1981.

HOLIDAYS, SCHOOL CLOSINGS, etc.

Dear Parents,

The rules of the Department of Education state that (1) The School must be in operation for not less than 184 days during the school year and (2) not more than 56 days are allowed in respect of vacation.

Within these rules the following is the School calendar for 1981-1982:-

First Term: 1st September - 23rd December (inclusive)

Second Term: 7th January - 7th April (inclusive)

Third Term: 19th April - 30th June (inclusive)

Holidays:
Christmas - 24th December - 6th January.
Easter - 8th April - 18th April.
Summer - 1st July - 31st August.

Mid-Terms:
First term - 26th and 27th October.
Second term - 15th and 16th and 17th March.

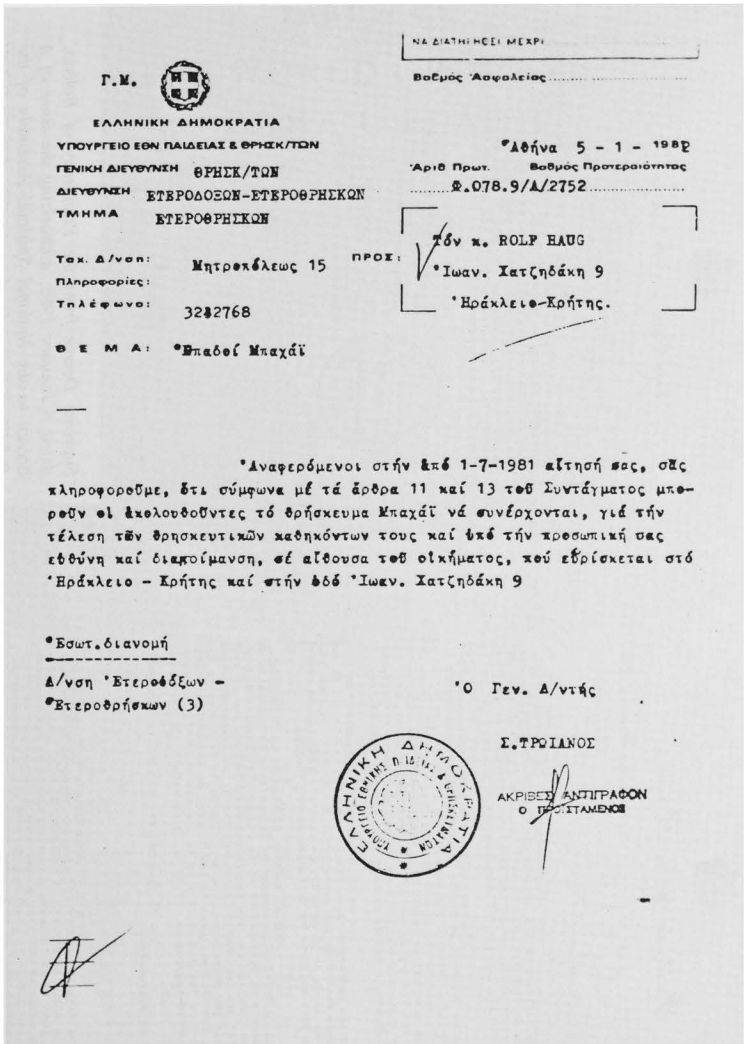
Religious Holidays:
12th November (Anniversary of the Birth of Baha'u'llah (Founder of the Bahaii faith)
8th December: Immaculate Conception Catholic feast)
24th February: Ash Wednesday (Christian holiday)
20th May: Ascension Day (Christian holyday)

Public holidays in addition to above - 7th June.

Total: 190 school days.

Kieran Griffin,
Principal.

11. Circular letter to parents, from the Bray School Project, Bray, Ireland, listing school closings and holidays; 16 October 1981. The school, a recognized national one funded by the Department of Education, adopted 12 November, the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh, as a holiday for the entire school, as Bahá'í children constitute the second largest religious group among students.



ΝΑ ΔΙΑΤΗΡΗΘΕΙ ΜΕΧΡΙ .....

Βαθμός Ἀσφαλείας .....

Γ.Μ.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΕΘΝ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ & ΘΡΗΣΚ/ΤΩΝ

ΓΕΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΘΡΗΣΚ/ΤΩΝ

ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΕΤΕΡΟΔΟΞΩΝ-ΕΤΕΡΟΘΡΗΣΚΩΝ

ΤΜΗΜΑ ΕΤΕΡΟΘΡΗΣΚΩΝ

Ἀθήνα 5 - 1 - 1982

Ἀριθ Πρωτ. ..Φ.078.9/Α/2752.....

Βαθμός Προτεραιότητος .....

Ταχ. Δ/νση: Μητροπόλεως 15

Πληροφορίες:

Τηλέφωνο: 32&2768

ΠΡΟΣ: Τὸν κ. ROLF HAUG
Ἰωαν. Χατζηδάκη 9
Ἡράκλειο-Κρήτης.

ΘΕΜΑ: Ἐπαφοί Μπαχάϊ

Ἀναφερόμενοι στήν ἀπό 1-7-1981 αἴτησή σας, σᾶς πληροφορεῦμε, ὅτι σύμφωνα μέ τά ἄρθρα 11 καί 13 τοῦ Συντάγματος μποροῦν οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες τό θρήσκευμα Μπαχάϊ νά συνέρχονται, γιά τήν τέλεση τῶν θρησκευτικῶν καθηκόντων τους καί ὑπό τήν προσωπική σας εὐθύνη καί διαπίστωση, σέ αἴθουσα τοῦ οἰκήματος, πού εὑρίσκεται στό Ἡράκλειο - Κρήτης καί στήν ὁδό Ἰωαν. Χατζηδάκη 9

Ἐσωτ. διανομή

Δ/νση Ἑτεροδόξων - Ἑτεροθρήσκων (3)

Ὁ Γεν. Δ/ντής

Σ.ΤΡΩΙΑΝΟΣ

ΑΚΡΙΒΕΣ ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΦΟΝ
Ο ΠΡΟΪΣΤΑΜΕΝΟΣ

12. Letter dated 5 January 1982, from Ministry of National Education and Religion, Greece, giving official permission to the Bahá'ís of Iraklion, Crete, to meet.

COPIA LEGALIZADA

Presidencia de la República

Resolución Suprema 197750

La Paz, $ [illegible] 1983

Vistos y Considerando:

Que los personeros de la ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHA'IS DE BOLIVIA solicitan la concesión de licencia para la instalación y funcionamiento de una radioemisora, en la localidad de Caracollo, capital de la provincia Cercado del departamento de Oruro.

Que la entidad religiosa solicitante con domicilio legal en la ciudad de La Paz, tiene reconocida su personalidad jurídica y aprobados sus estatutos, mediante resolución suprema No. 167696 de 6 de abril de 1977, cuyos fines son desarrollar actividades religiosas en el país, aparte de actividades culturales, de asistencia social, orientación y enseñanza técnica a la comunidad rural y campesinado de la región, a través de medios de comunicación masiva.

Que en la localidad de Caracollo, no existe ninguna radioemisora en funcionamiento, hallándose en consecuencia dentro de las previsiones del decreto supremo No. 14498 de 22 de abril de 1977, en cuanto a trámites de autorización para emisoras en Capitales de Provincias.

Que el informe técnico de la Dirección General de Telecomunicaciones es favorable a la concesión de la licencia de operaciones de la indicada radioemisora, por haberse cumplido con los requisitos establecidos por el artículo 12° del Reglamento General de Servicios Radioeléctricos, aprobado por decreto supremo No. 5632 de 11 de noviembre de 1960 y las disposiciones de Ley General de Telecomunicaciones de 2 de junio de 1971 y su Reglamento General, aprobado por decreto supremo No. 17750 de 20 de octubre de 1980.

Que el dictamen del señor Fiscal de Gobierno es afirmativo,

EL RESUELVE:

PRIMERO.- Autorízase a la Dirección General de Telecomunicaciones, conceder licencia de operaciones a la ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHA'IS DE BOLIVIA, para la instalación y funcionamiento de una radioemisora de carácter cultural y social en la localidad de Caracollo, capital de la provincia Cercado del departamento de Oruro, para operar en onda media.

//..

Presidencia de la República

... 2 ...

SEGUNDO.- El contrato de obligaciones y derechos, así como la licencia representativa que otorgará la Dirección General de Telecomunicaciones, insertarán la asignación de frecuencias, normas técnicas de operación, condiciones programáticas y demás previsiones de orden legal con estricta sujeción al Reglamento General de Servicios Radioeléctricos, las disposiciones de la Ley General de Telecomunicaciones y su Reglamento.

Regístrese, comuníquese y archívese.

FDO. DR. HERNAN SILES ZUAZO
Fdo. Hernando Poppe Martínez.

PALACIO DE GOBIERNO
2 AGO. 1983
DIRECCION DE ARCHIVO

Director del Archivo General de la Presidencia de la República

JMF/vby.

Supreme Decree from the Presidency of Bolivia, dated 8 January 1983, authorizing the issue of a licence to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bolivia for the operation of Radio Bahá'í in Caracollo.

PART FOUR

THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

I

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

1. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Declaration of Trust

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE ONE, THE INCOMPARABLE, THE ALL-POWERFUL, THE ALL-KNOWING, THE ALL-WISE.

The light that is shed from the heaven of bounty, and the benediction that shineth from the dawning-place of the will of God, the Lord of the Kingdom of Names, rest upon Him Who is the Supreme Mediator, the Most Exalted Pen, Him Whom God hath made the dawning-place of His most excellent names and the day-spring of His most exalted attributes. Through Him the light of unity hath shone forth above the horizon of the world, and the law of oneness hath been revealed amidst the nations, who, with radiant faces, have turned towards the Supreme Horizon, and acknowledged that which the Tongue of Utterance hath spoken in the kingdom of His knowledge: 'Earth and heaven, glory and dominion, are God's, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the Lord of grace abounding!'

WITH joyous and thankful hearts we testify to the abundance of God's Mercy, to the perfection of His Justice and to the fulfilment of His Ancient Promise.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Revealer of God's Word in this Day, the Source of Authority, the Fountainhead of Justice, the Creator of a new World Order, the Establisher of the Most Great Peace, the Inspirer and Founder of a world civilization, the Judge, the Lawgiver, the Unifier and Redeemer of all mankind, has proclaimed the advent of God's Kingdom on earth, has formulated its laws and ordinances, enunciated its principles, and ordained its institutions. To direct and canalize the forces released by His Revelation, He instituted His Covenant, whose power has preserved the integrity of His Faith, maintained its unity and stimulated its world-wide expansion throughout the successive ministries of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. It continues to fulfil its life-giving purpose through the agency of the Universal House of Justice whose fundamental object, as one of the twin successors of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is to ensure the continuity of that divinely appointed authority which flows from the Source of the Faith, to safeguard the unity of its followers, and to maintain the integrity and flexibility of its teachings.

The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion, declares Bahá'u'lláh, *is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship amongst men. Suffer it not to become a source of dissension and discord, of hate and enmity. This is the straight Path, the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength, nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure.*

Unto the Most Holy Book, 'Abdu'l-Bahá declares in His Will and Testament, *every one must turn, and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice.*

The provenance, the authority, the duties, the sphere of action of the Universal House of Justice all derive from the revealed Word of Bahá'u'lláh which, together with the interpretations and expositions of the Centre of the

Covenant and of the Guardian of the Cause—who, after 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is the sole authority in the interpretation of Bahá'í Scripture—constitute the binding terms of reference of the Universal House of Justice and are its bedrock foundation. The authority of these Texts is absolute and immutable until such time as Almighty God shall reveal His new Manifestation to Whom will belong all authority and power.

There being no successor to Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Cause of God, the Universal House of Justice is the Head of the Faith and its supreme institution, to which all must turn, and on it rests the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the unity and progress of the Cause of God. Further, there devolve upon it the duties of directing and co-ordinating the work of the Hands of the Cause, of ensuring the continuing discharge of the functions of protection and propagation vested in that institution, and of providing for the receipt and disbursement of the Ḥuqúqu'lláh.

Among the powers and duties with which the Universal House of Justice has been invested are:

To ensure the preservation of the Sacred Texts and to safeguard their inviolability; to analyse, classify, and co-ordinate the Writings; and to defend and protect the Cause of God and emancipate it from the fetters of repression and persecution;

To advance the interests of the Faith of God: to proclaim, propagate and teach its Message; to expand and consolidate the institutions of its Administrative Order; to usher in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh; to promote the attainment of those spiritual qualities which should characterize Bahá'í life individually and collectively; to do its utmost for the realization of greater cordiality and comity amongst the nations and for the attainment of universal peace; and to foster that which is conducive to the enlightenment and illumination of the souls of men and the advancement and betterment of the world;

To enact laws and ordinances not expressly recorded in the Sacred Texts; to abrogate, according to the changes and requirements of the time, its own enactments; to deliberate and decide upon all problems which have caused difference; to elucidate questions that are obscure; to safeguard the personal rights, freedom and initiative of individuals; and to give attention to the preservation of human honour, to the development of countries and the stability of states;

To promulgate and apply the laws and principles of the Faith; to safeguard and enforce that rectitude of conduct which the Law of God enjoins; to preserve and develop the Spiritual and Administrative Centre of the Bábá'í Faith, permanently fixed in the twin cities of 'Akká and Haifa; to administer the affairs of the Bahá'í community throughout the world; to guide, organize, co-ordinate and unify its activities; to found institutions; to be responsible for ensuring that no body or institution within the Cause abuse its privileges or decline in the exercise of its rights and prerogatives; and to provide for the receipt, disposition, administration and safeguarding of the funds, endowments and other properties that are entrusted to its care;

To adjudicate disputes falling within its purview; to give judgement in cases of violation of the laws of the Faith and to pronounce sanctions for such violations; to provide for the enforcement of its decisions; to provide for the arbitration and settlement of disputes arising between peoples; and to be the exponent and guardian of that Divine Justice which can alone ensure the security of, and establish the reign of law and order in, the world.

The members of the Universal House of Justice, designated by Bahá'u'lláh 'the Men of Justice', 'the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names', 'the Trustees of God amongst His servants and the daysprings of authority in His countries', shall in the discharge of their responsibilities ever bear in mind the following standards set forth by Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Cause of God:

'In the conduct of the administrative affairs of the Faith, in the enactment of the legislation necessary to supplement the laws of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, the members of the Universal House of Justice, it should be borne in mind, are not, as Bahá'u'lláh's utterances clearly imply, responsible to

those whom they represent, nor are they allowed to be governed by the feelings, the general opinion, and even the convictions of the mass of the faithful, or of those who directly elect them. They are to follow, in a prayerful attitude, the dictates and promptings of their conscience. They may, indeed they must, acquaint themselves with the conditions prevailing among the community, must weigh dispassionately in their minds the merits of any case presented for their consideration, but must reserve for themselves the right of an unfettered decision. *God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth*, is Bahá'u'lláh's incontrovertible assurance. They, and not the body of those who either directly or indirectly elect them, have thus been made the recipients of the divine guidance which is at once the life-blood and ultimate safeguard of this Revelation.'

The Universal House of Justice was first elected on the first day of the Festival of Riḍván in the one hundred and twentieth year of the Bahá'í Era,[1] when the members of the National Spiritual Assemblies, in accordance with the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and in response to the summons of the Hands of the Cause of God, the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, brought into being this 'crowning glory' of the administrative institutions of Bahá'u'lláh, the very 'nucleus and forerunner' of His World Order. Now, therefore, in obedience to the Command of God and with entire reliance upon Him, we, the members of the Universal House of Justice, set our hands and its seal to this Declaration of Trust which, together with the By-Laws hereto appended, form the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice.

[1] 21 April 1963 A.D.

Hugh E. Chance

Hushmand Fatheazam

Amoz E. Gibson

David Hofman

H. Borrah Kavelin

Ali Nakhjavani

David S. Ruhe

Ian C. Semple

Charles Wolcott

Signed in the City of Haifa on the fourth day of the month of Qawl in the one hundred and twenty-ninth year of the Bahá'í Era, corresponding to the twenty-sixth day of the month of November in the year 1972 according to the Gregorian calendar.

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Facsimile of signatures on the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice; 26 November 1972.

By-Laws

PREAMBLE

THE Universal House of Justice is the supreme institution of an Administrative Order whose salient features, whose authority and whose principles of operation are clearly enunciated in the Sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith and their authorized interpretations. This Administrative Order consists, on the one hand, of a series of elected councils, universal, secondary and local, in which are vested legislative, executive and judicial powers over the Bahá'í community and, on the other, of eminent and devoted believers appointed for the specific purposes of protecting and propagating the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh under the guidance of the Head of that Faith.

This Administrative Order is the nucleus and pattern of the World Order adumbrated by Bahá'u'lláh. In the course of its divinely propelled organic growth its institutions will expand, putting forth auxiliary branches and developing subordinate agencies, multiplying their activities and diversifying their functions, in consonance with the principles and purposes revealed by Bahá'u'lláh for the progress of the human race.

I. MEMBERSHIP IN THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

The Bahá'í Community shall consist of all persons recognized by the Universal House of Justice as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice.

1. In order to be eligible to vote and hold elective office, a Bahá'í must have attained the age of twenty-one years.
2. The rights, privileges and duties of individual Bahá'ís are as set forth in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.

II. LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Whenever in any locality the number of Bahá'ís resident therein who have attained the age of twenty-one exceeds nine, these shall on the First Day of Riḍván convene and elect a local administrative body of nine members to be known as the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that locality. Every such Spiritual Assembly shall be elected annually thereafter upon each successive First Day of Riḍván. The members shall hold office for the term of one year or until their successors are elected. When, however, the number of Bahá'ís as aforesaid in any locality is exactly nine, these shall on the First Day of Riḍván constitute themselves the Local Spiritual Assembly by joint declaration.

1. The general powers and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly are as set forth in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.
2. A Local Spiritual Assembly shall exercise full jurisdiction over all Bahá'í activities and affairs within its locality, subject to the provisions of the Local Bahá'í Constitution.[1]
3. The area of jurisdiction of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be decided by the National Spiritual Assembly in accordance with the principle laid down for each country by the Universal House of Justice.

III. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Whenever it is decided by the Universal House of Justice to form in any country or region a National Spiritual Assembly, the voting members of the Bahá'í community of that country or region shall, in a manner and at a time to be decided by the Universal House of Justice, elect their delegates to their National Convention. These delegates shall, in turn, elect in the manner provided in the National Bahá'í Constitution[2] a body of nine members to be known as the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that country or region. The members shall continue in office for a period of one year or until their successors shall be elected.

1. The general powers and duties of a National Spiritual Assembly are as set forth in the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.

[1] By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly. See p. 564.
[2] Declaration of Trust and By-Laws for a National Spiritual Assembly. See pp. 538, 541.

2. The National Spiritual Assembly shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Faith throughout its area. It shall endeavour to stimulate, unify and co-ordinate the manifold activities of the Local Spiritual Assemblies and of individual Bahá'ís in its area and by all possible means assist them to promote the oneness of mankind. It shall furthermore represent its national Bahá'í community in relation to other national Bahá'í communities and to the Universal House of Justice.
3. The area of jurisdiction of a National Spiritual Assembly shall be as defined by the Universal House of Justice.
4. The principal business of the National Convention shall be consultation on Bahá'í activities, plans and policies and the election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, as set forth in the National Bahá'í Constitution.
   (a) If in any year the National Spiritual Assembly shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to hold the National Convention, the said Assembly shall provide ways and means by which the annual election and the other essential business of the Convention may be conducted.
   (b) Vacancies in the membership of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by a vote of the delegates composing the Convention which elected the Assembly, the ballot to be taken by correspondence or in any other manner decided by the National Spiritual Assembly.

IV. OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS OF SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Among the most outstanding and sacred duties incumbent upon those who have been called upon to initiate, direct and co-ordinate the affairs of the Cause of God as members of its Spiritual Assemblies are: to win by every means in their power the confidence and affection of those whom it is their privilege to serve; to investigate and acquaint themselves with the considered views, the prevailing sentiments and the personal convictions of those whose welfare it is their solemn obligation to promote; to purge their deliberations and the general conduct of their affairs of self-contained aloofness, the suspicion of secrecy, the stifling atmosphere of dictatorial assertiveness and of every word and deed that may savour of partiality, self-centredness and prejudice; and while retaining the sacred right of final decision in their hands, to invite discussion, ventilate grievances, welcome advice and foster the sense of interdependence and co-partnership, of understanding and mutual confidence between themselves and all other Bahá'ís.

V. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

The Universal House of Justice shall consist of nine men who have been elected from the Bahá'í community in the manner hereinafter provided.

1. ELECTION

The members of the Universal House of Justice shall be elected by secret ballot by the members of all National Spiritual Assemblies at a meeting to be known as the International Bahá'í Convention.

(a) An election of the Universal House of Justice shall be held once every five years unless otherwise decided by the Universal House of Justice, and those elected shall continue in office until such time as their successors shall be elected and the first meeting of these successors is duly held.
(b) Upon receiving the call to Convention each National Spiritual Assembly shall submit to the Universal House of Justice a list of the names of its members. The recognition and seating of the delegates to the International Convention shall be vested in the Universal House of Justice.
(c) The principle business of the International Convention shall be to elect the members of the Universal House of Justice, to deliberate on the affairs of the Bahá'í Cause throughout the world, and to make recommendations and suggestions for the consideration of the Universal House of Justice.
(d) The sessions of the International Convention shall be conducted in such manner as the Universal House of Justice shall from time to time decide.
(e) The Universal House of Justice shall

provide a procedure whereby those delegates who are unable to be present in person at the International Convention shall cast their ballots for the election of the members of the Universal House of Justice.

(f) If at the time of an election the Universal House of Justice shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to hold the International Convention it shall determine how the election shall take place.

(g) On the day of the election the ballots of all voters shall be scrutinized and counted and the result certified by tellers appointed in accordance with the instructions of the Universal House of Justice.

(h) If a member of a National Spiritual Assembly who has voted by mail ceases to be a member of that National Spiritual Assembly between the time of casting his ballot and the date of the counting of the ballots, his ballot shall nevertheless remain valid unless in the interval his successor shall have been elected and the ballot of such successor shall have been received by the tellers.

(i) In case by reason of a tie vote or votes the full membership of the Universal House of Justice is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be held on the persons tied until all members are elected. The electors in the case of additional ballots shall be the members of National Spiritual Assemblies in office at the time each subsequent vote is taken.

2. VACANCIES IN MEMBERSHIP

A vacancy in the membership of the Universal House of Justice will occur upon the death of a member or in the following cases:

(a) Should any member of the Universal House of Justice commit a sin injurious to the common weal, he may be dismissed from membership by the Universal House of Justice.

(b) The Universal House of Justice may at its discretion declare a vacancy with respect to any member who in its judgement is unable to fulfil the functions of membership.

(c) A member may relinquish his membership on the Universal House of Justice only with the approval of the Universal House of Justice.

3. BY-ELECTION

If a vacancy in the membership of the Universal House of Justice occurs, the Universal House of Justice shall call a by-election at the earliest possible date unless such date, in the judgement of the Universal House of Justice, falls too close to the date of a regular election of the entire membership, in which case the Universal House of Justice may, at its discretion, defer the filling of the vacancy to the time of the regular election. If a by-election is held, the voters shall be the members of the National Spiritual Assemblies in office at the time of the by-election.

4. MEETINGS

(a) After the election of the Universal House of Justices the first meeting shall be called by the member elected by the highest number of votes or, in his absence or other incapacity, by the member elected by the next highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members. Subsequent meetings shall be called in the manner decided by the Universal House of Justice.

(b) The Universal House of Justice has no officers. It shall provide for the conduct of its meetings and shall organize its activities in such manner as it shall from time to time decide.

(c) The business of the Universal House of Justice shall be conducted by the full membership in consultation, except that the Universal House of Justice may from time to time provide for quorums of less than the full membership for specified classes of business.

5. SIGNATURE

The signature of the Universal House of Justice shall be the words 'The Universal House of Justice' or in Persian 'Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam' written by hand by any one of its members upon authority of the Universal House of Justice, to which shall be affixed in each case the Seal of the Universal House of Justice.

6. RECORDS

The Universal House of Justice shall provide for the recording and verification of its decisions in such manner as it shall, from time to time, judge necessary.

VI. BAHÁ'Í ELECTIONS

In order to preserve the spiritual character and purpose of Bahá'í elections the practices of nomination or electioneering, or any other procedure or activity detrimental to that character and purpose shall be eschewed. A silent and prayerful atmosphere shall prevail during the election so that each elector may vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection inspire him to uphold.

1. All Bahá'í elections, except elections of officers of Local and National Spiritual Assemblies and committees, shall be by plurality vote taken by secret ballot.
2. Election of the officers of a Spiritual Assembly or committee shall be by majority vote of the Assembly or committee taken by secret ballot.
3. In case by reason of a tie vote or votes the full membership of an elected body is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be taken on the persons tied until all members are elected.
4. The duties and rights of a Bahá'í elector may not be assigned nor may they be exercised by proxy.

VII. THE RIGHT OF REVIEW

The Universal House of Justice has the right to review any decision or action of any Spiritual Assembly, National or Local, and to approve, modify or reverse such decision or action. The Universal House of Justice also has the right to intervene in any matter in which a Spiritual Assembly is failing to take action or to reach a decision and, at its discretion, to require that action be taken, or itself to take action directly in the matter.

VIII. APPEALS

The right of appeal exists in the circumstances, and shall be exercised according to the procedures outlined below:

1. (a) Any member of a local Bahá'í community may appeal from a decision of his Local Spiritual Assembly to the National Spiritual Assembly which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or refer it back to the Local Spiritual Assembly for reconsideration. If such an appeal concerns the membership of a person in the Bahá'í communtiy, the National Spiritual Assembly is obliged to take jurisdiction of and decide the case.

   (b) Any Bahá'í may appeal from a decision of his National Spiritual Assembly to the Universal House of Justice which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it within the final jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

   (c) If any differences arise between two or more Local Spiritual Assemblies and if these Assemblies are unable to resolve them, any one such Assembly may bring the matter to the National Spiritual Assembly which shall thereupon take jurisdiction of the case. If the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly thereon is unsatisfactory to any of the Assemblies concerned, or if a Local Spiritual Assembly at any time has reason to believe that actions of its National Spiritual Assembly are affecting adversely the welfare and unity of that Local Assembly's community, it shall, in either case, after seeking to compose its difference of opinion with the National Spiritual Assembly, have the right to appeal to the Universal House of Justice, which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it within the final jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

2. An appellant, whether institution or individual, shall in the first instance make appeal to the Assembly whose decision is questioned, either for reconsideration of the case by that Assembly or for submission to a higher body. In the latter case the Assembly is in duty bound to submit the appeal together with full particulars of the matter. If an Assembly refuses to submit the appeal, or fails to do so within a reasonable time, the appellant may take the case directly to the higher authority.

IX. THE BOARD OF COUNSELLORS

The institution of the Boards of Counsellors was brought into being by the Universal House of Justice to extend into the future the specific functions of protection and propagation conferred upon the Hands of the Cause of God. The members of these boards are appointed by the Universal House of Justice.

1. The term of office of a Counsellor, the number of Counsellors on each Board, and the boundaries of the zone in which each Board of Counsellors shall operate, shall be decided by the Universal House of Justice.
2. A Counsellor functions as such only within his zone and should he move his residence out of the zone for which he is appointed he automatically relinquishes his appointment.
3. The rank and specific duties of a Counsellor render him ineligble for service on local or national administrative bodies. If elected to the Universal House of Justice he ceases to be a Counsellor.

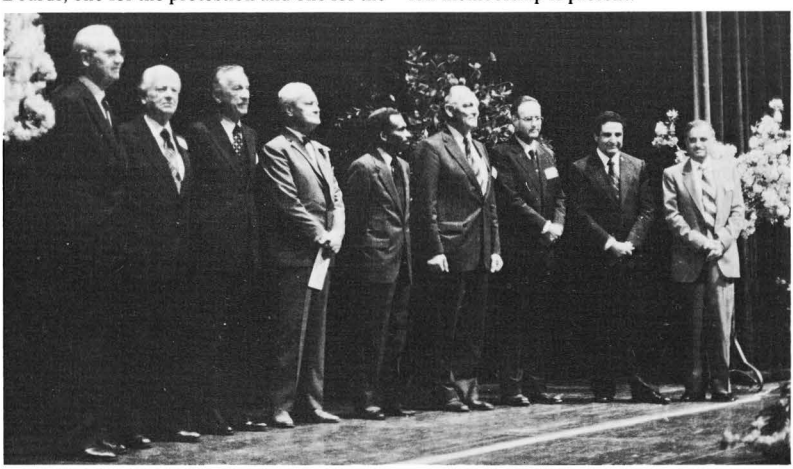
X. THE AUXILIARY BOARDS

In each zone there shall be two Auxiliary Boards, one for the protection and one for the propagation of the Faith, the numbers of whose members shall be set by the Universal House of Justice. The members of these Auxiliary Boards shall serve under the direction of the Continental Board of Counsellors and shall act as their deputies, assistants and advisers.

1. The members of the Auxiliary Boards shall be appointed from among the believers of that zone by the Continental Board of Counsellors.
2. Each Auxiliary Board member shall be alloted a specific area in which to serve and, unless specifically deputized by the Counsellors, shall not function as a member of the Auxiliary Board outside that area.
3. An Auxiliary Board member is eligible for any elective office but if elected to an administrative post on a national or local level must decide whether to retain membership on the Board or accept the administrative post, since he may not serve in both capacities at the same time. If elected to the Universal House of Justice he ceases to be a member of the Auxiliary Board.

XI. AMENDMENT

This Constitution may be amended by decision of the Universal House of Justice when the full membership is present.



The members of the Universal House of Justice elected at Riḍván 1983. Left to right: Mr. Hugh Chance, Mr. Charles Wolcott, Mr. Borrah Kavelin, Mr. David Hofman, Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Dr. David S. Ruhe, Mr. Ian Semple, Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam, Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání.

2. THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE ELECTION OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Riḍván 1983

It is a time for rejoicing. The Sun of Bahá'u'lláh is mounting the heavens, bringing into ever clearer light the contrast between the gloom, the despair, the frustrations and bewilderment of the world, and the radiance, confidence, joy and certitude of His lovers. Lift up your hearts. The Day of God is here.

THESE concluding words of the Riḍván message of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world were read by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum when she opened the first consultative session of the fifth International Bahá'í Convention on Saturday, 30 April 1983. Simultaneously translated into Spanish and French through headphones which had been made available to the delegates, the message infused the deliberations with an observable tone of optimism.

The initial session was held the previous day at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, 29 April, in the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The reception concourse was filled to capacity with five hundred and ninety delegates from one hundred and nineteen National Spiritual Assemblies. Also present were eight Hands of the Cause of God—Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Dr. Ugo Giachery, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Dhikru'lláh Khádem, Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, William Sears, John Robarts and Collis Featherstone—the members of the Universal House of Justice, and fifty-seven Counsellors including the four Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre. A temporary dais had been constructed at the base of the lower steps of the main staircase to accommodate the balloting procedure. An enormous urn filled with hundreds of red and white spring flowers graced the dais. The programme for the day provided for the election of the Universal House of Justice, the taking of the official Convention photograph and the celebration of the Ninth Day of Riḍván. In the evening there was screened an audio-visual presentation on the progress of the Seven Year Plan.

The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum presided, opening the session with a newly-translated prayer of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's which had been distributed throughout the Bahá'í world in order that it might be recited on 28 April on behalf of the Iranian believers in special gatherings held in all communities.[1]

After additional prayers in French, Spanish and Persian had been read or chanted, delegates representing one hundred and thirty-three National Spiritual Assemblies participated, either in person or by mail, in electing the nine members of the Universal House of Justice who will serve for the next five years. The members elected were: Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání, Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam, Mr. Ian Semple, Dr. David S. Ruhe, Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Mr. David Hofman, Mr. Borrah Kavelin, Mr. Charles Wolcott and Mr. Hugh E. Chance.

Powerful emotions stirred the believers when the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán was announced. The entire assemblage arose as one body and stood with dignity and reverence while the first Chief Teller, Judge Dorothy Nelson, called out the names of the members of the Spiritual Assembly of Írán and the ballots which they had mailed were cast. All remained standing for a further minute of silent tribute. The National Spiritual Assembly of Írán had sent one hundred and thirty-three red roses as its gift to its sister National Assemblies, and one rose was presented to each delegation as they left the dais.

Of the one thousand one hundred and

[1] The text of this prayer appears on p. 290.



Delegates to the International Convention from Benin.



Delegates to the International Convention from New Caledonia.



Delegates to the International Convention from Bophuthatswana and Gambia.



Delegates to the International Convention from Thailand.

twenty-nine ballots cast, only three were invalid. The nine members of the Universal House of Justice were elected by over seven thousand out of the ten thousand one hundred and thirty-four individual votes cast.

For three days—from 30 April to 2 May—plenary sessions of the Convention were held at the Haifa Auditorium. Each session was presided over by a Hand of the Cause of God and was marked by the obvious joy of the delegates in being present at this significant event in the history of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The Hands of the Cause suffused the proceedings with humour, fervour and spiritual vitality. The subjects discussed during these general meetings included ways and means to acquaint governments, media, leaders of thought and the general public with the aims and purposes of the Faith; the need to assist and stimulate the Bahá'ís to attain new and higher levels of spiritual understanding and devotion; the growing importance of expansion, consolidation and proclamation of the Faith through a greater variety and a larger volume of Bahá'í literature, and a wider and more effective use of the media, particularly of radio, in broadcasting the divine message; what the institutions of the Cause can do to assist and encourage the development of the economic and social life of the countries of the third world despite the limited resources of the Bahá'í community; and identifying the challenging needs and opportunities of the Faith during the remaining and concluding years of the century.

In addition to the plenary sessions more than one hundred consultative sessions were held in the evening hours between and among delegations that share common problems and interests. These gatherings sometimes lasted until past 11:00 p.m. and involved as many as six or seven national delegations. One evening was devoted to continental meetings, each of the five separate sessions being chaired by a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

The opening days of the delegates' stay in Haifa, 26–28 April, were devoted to visits to the Holy Places in 'Akká and Haifa and included the first-ever visits to the restored house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá where the first pilgrims from the West were received by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The delegates displayed respect and appreciation for the meticulous work of restoration and admiration for the scrupulously faithful furnishing which had been accomplished under the careful supervision of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. A highlight of the three days was a tour of the magnificent new Seat of the Universal House of Justice which stood in the full splendour of the spring gardens covering the Bahá'í properties on Mount Carmel. The Shrine of the Báb, the Seat of the House of Justice, the International Archives building and the Monuments of the Holy Family were each illuminated by night and stood in beautiful contrast against the dark mountain.

Two Holy Days were observed during the Convention period. The Ninth Day of Riḍván was celebrated in the courtyard and gardens of the Pilgrim House in the vicinity of the Shrine of the Báb, and the Twelfth Day of Riḍván in the Ḥaram-i-Aqdas at Bahjí where Bahá'u'lláh is entombed. Prayers and chants uttered in nine languages included heartfelt supplications on behalf of the suffering Bahá'ís of Írán. On each of the two Holy Days more than nine hundred Bahá'ís circumambulated the Holy Tombs after the respective Tablets of Visitation had been read.

A moving moment occurred at the opening of the observance of the Ninth Day of Riḍván when a special message from His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, dated 6 April 1983, was read by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum:

> 'Precious Members of the Universal House of Justice, Beloved Hands of the Cause, Respected Counsellors, Esteemed Delegates attending the 5th International Bahá'í Convention—
>
> 'My dear spiritual Brothers and Sisters,
>
> 'While our hearts turn with sorrow and grief to the events engulfing our fellow believers in the cradle of the Faith and witness with profound admiration their exemplary steadfastness and spiritual strength, our grateful hearts turn to Bahá'u'lláh in thanksgiving for the many victories that have come to the Baha'i World.
>
> 'The completion of the magnificent permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice, the simultaneous rising of the two Houses of Worship in Asia and the Pacific,

the unprecedented support and recognition of the Cause by many distinguished leaders of Governments, are but a few historic milestones our generation has been fortunate to witness.

'A new momentum, a new spirit is felt in this part of the world. In Samoa we witness a new surge of enthusiasm, activity and devotion by the believers and recognition and respect by the friends of our precious Faith. Our grateful appreciation goes to the Universal House of Justice who chose this small nation to be the recipient of that wonderful gift—the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific. We are equally gratified by the support of the friends of God all over the world, even the smallest and remotest villages in all continents, that are giving for the completion of this enterprise.

'May this historic convention be a source of joy and solace to your hearts. Our most sincere prayers and good wishes are with you during the course of your deliberations.'

Through the spontaneous and devoted efforts of two members of the World Centre staff, the Hands of the Cause and the Counsellors received the gift of a cassette recording of the address of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum which opened, and that of William Sears which closed, the plenary sessions, and were thus able to share with the National Conventions they were scheduled to attend a remembrance from the Holy Land. The address of Mr. Sears was also made available to all National Assemblies in Africa.

The Hands of the Cause, with the exception of Mr. Sears who returned to Canada after addressing the closing session of the Convention, remained in Haifa for another five days to consult with the fifty-three visiting members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors and the International Teaching Centre. The members of the House of Justice participated in the consultations. On the final day the House of Justice entertained the visitors at a farewell luncheon at Mazra'ih.



Friends gathered at Pilgrim House, Haifa, for the observance during the International Convention, 1983, of the Ninth Day of Riḍván. Seen seated is Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum; standing, the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem.

3. THE COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE BUILDING FOR THE SEAT OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Call out to Zion, O Carmel, and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come! His all-conquering sovereignty is manifest; His all-encompassing splendour is revealed. Beware lest thou hesitate or halt . . . Verily this is the Day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the Day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablet of Carmel*

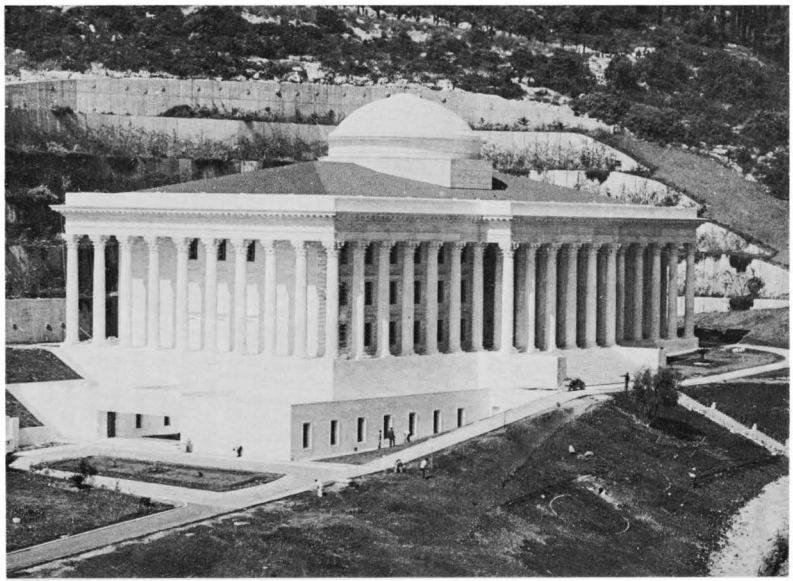
ON 5 June 1975 the Universal House of Justice announced to all National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í world that 'it is now both necessary and possible to initiate construction of a building that will not only serve the practical needs of a steadily consolidating administrative centre but will, for centuries to come, stand as a visible expression of the majesty of the divinely ordained institutions of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh'. The building, the House of Justice explained, would be faced 'with stone from Italy, and surrounded by a stately colonnade of . . . Corinthian columns'. It would contain, in addition to the council chamber of the House of Justice, 'a library, a concourse for the reception of pilgrims and dignitaries, storage vaults with air-purification for the preservation of original Tablets and other precious documents, accommodation for the secretariat and the many ancillary services that will be required'. The design, classically beautiful and majestic, was that of Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat whose appointment as architect was announced on 18 September 1973.

On 10 January 1977 the House of Justice announced that an agreement had been signed with a general contractor for the erection of the building. 'The erection of this building which, comprising five and a half storeys,' the House of Justice wrote, 'far surpasses in size and complexity any building at present in existence at the World Centre, presents a major challenge to the Bahá'í community, whose resources are already too meagre in relation to the great tasks that lie before it. But the spirit of sacrifice has been the hallmark of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh of every race and clime and as they unite to raise this second[1] of the great edifices of the Administrative Centre of their Faith they will rejoice at having the inestimable privilege of taking part in a "vast and irresistible process" which Shoghi Effendi stated is "unexampled in the spiritual history of mankind" and which will "attain its final consummation, in the Golden Age of the Faith, through the raising of the standard of the Most Great Peace, and the emergence, in the plenitude of its power and glory, of the focal Centre of the agencies constituting the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh".'

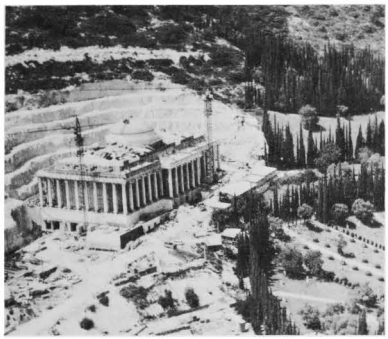
Excavation of the site on the slopes of Mount Carmel began on 17 June 1975 and construction proceeded without interruption. On 29 April 1978, assisted by the architect and Mr. 'Azíz Khabípúr, the resident construction engineer, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, during the fourth International Convention, placed a casket containing Dust from the Holy Shrines of the Faith in a niche above the front entrance of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, in the outer wall of the council chamber.

Despite the outbreak of the persecution of the Bahá'í community in the cradle of the Faith and the instigation of repressive measures which resulted in virtually crippling the capacity of the believers in Írán to make financial contributions, heroic compensatory sacrifices were made by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in every land which enabled the construction of the edifice—the greatest single undertaking of the Five Year Plan—to proceed without halt, and by Riḍván 1983 all was in readiness for the fifth International Convention.

[1] The first of the majestic edifices constituting this mighty Centre, was the building for the International Archives of the Faith which was completed in the summer of 1957 . . .' (Universal House of Justice).



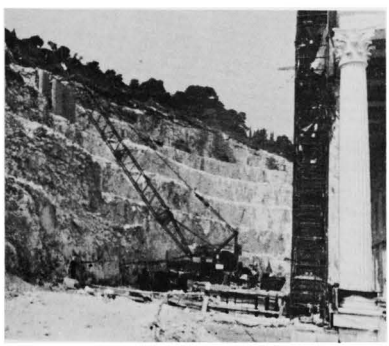
The Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice being landscaped in April 1983 for the fifth International Bahá'í Convention.



Aerial photograph taken in April 1979.

Completing entablature; July 1979.



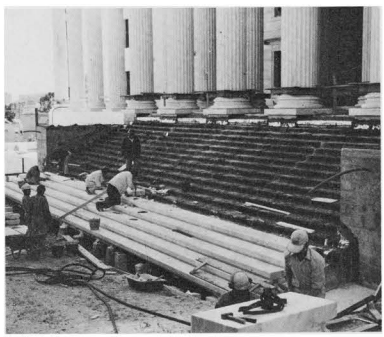


Placing first pre-cast sections of terrace walls; 16 October 1979.



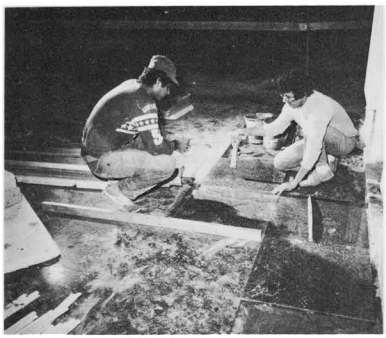
Placing marble sections on dome; 6 December 1979.

Placing marble steps leading to the front entrance; 13 December 1979.





Completion of exterior marble; June 1980.



Laying of granite tiles in reception concourse; 25 November 1980.

Commencement of roof tiling; 2 February 1981.

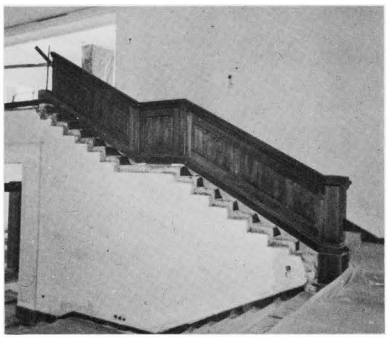




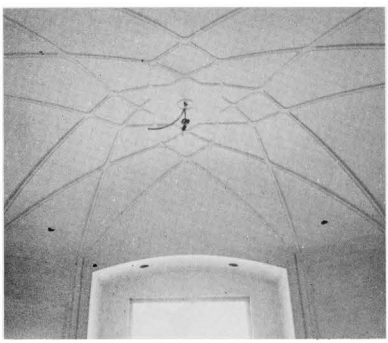
View of roof from Mount Carmel, showing tiling in process; 3 February 1981.



The Seat of the House of Justice viewed from the air; 9 May 1981.



Erection of rubbed walnut balustrades at eastern end of reception concourse; 15 July 1981.



Completed decorative, domed ceiling of the Council Chamber; 15 July 1981.



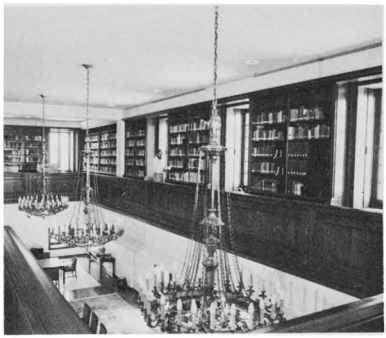
The World Centre observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf, during which a seminar on her life was held in the reception concourse, served as a fitting inauguration of the building; 17 July 1982.

Erection of main gates; December 1982.





World Centre staff are seen assisting in moving office equipment and files from the temporary seat of the House of Justice, 10 Haparsim Street, Haifa, into the new building; 28 January 1983.



Reference library with view of banquet hall below; April 1983.



Seating area off reception concourse with furniture in place; April 1983.



Smiling delegates to the fifth International Bahá'í Convention are seen leaving the Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice after casting their ballots; April 1983.

II

THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

1. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD AND THE EXTENSION OF THEIR FUNCTIONS INTO THE FUTURE

A. THE RULERS AND THE LEARNED

IN every society and community of human beings there are those who are revered for their learning and wisdom, and there are those who are invested with authority to govern. In religious communities it has been usual for the legislative and governing authority to be held by the learned who have thus, as priests or as doctors of religious law, combined both capacities in the same persons. Other communities have, only too often, been riven by the conflict between church and state, between priests and kings, or, in more modern terms, between intellectuals and the establishment. In the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh these two extremes, of the over-concentration of authority on the one hand and of division and conflict on the other, are eliminated. The way this is achieved is one of the unique features of that Order and confers unimagined benefits upon the Bahá'í community.

In the *Kitáb-i-'Ahd* (The Book of the Covenant) Bahá'u'lláh wrote, *Blessed are the rulers and the learned in Bahá.* The Guardian, interpreting this passage, stated on 4 November 1931:

> In this holy cycle the 'learned' are, on the one hand the Hands of the Cause of God, and, on the other, the teachers and diffusers of His teachings who do not rank as Hands, but who have attained an eminent position in the teaching work. As to the 'rulers' they refer to the members of the Local, National and International Houses of Justice. The duties of each of these souls will be determined in the future. (Translated from the Persian.)

Since those words were written the Bahá'í Administrative Order has developed rapidly and is now functioning throughout the world. Under the supreme authority of the revealed Law of God the Bahá'í community is governed by its elected institutions: Local and National Spiritual Assemblies and the Universal House of Justice, while the institutions of the 'learned', which exercise no governing authority over the believers, are accorded an exalted rank which enables them to exert their beneficent influence over all parts of the community. Commenting on this feature of the Bahá'í Administrative Order, the Universal House of Justice wrote in its message of 24 April 1972:

> The existence of institutions of such exalted rank, comprising individuals who play such a vital role, who yet have no legislative, administrative or judicial authority, and are entirely devoid of priestly functions or the right to make authoritative interpretations, is a feature of Bahá'í administration unparalleled in the religions of the past . . .

Developing this theme, the Universal House of Justice referred in that same message to a letter written on behalf of the Guardian on 14 March 1927, to the Spiritual Assembly of Istanbul, in which he expounded the Bahá'í principle of action by majority vote. In this letter Shoghi Effendi points out how, in the past, it was certain individuals who 'accounted themselves as superior in knowledge and elevated in position' who caused division, and that it was those 'who pretended to be the most distinguished of all' who 'always proved themselves to be the source of contention'. He praises God that Bahá'u'lláh had withdrawn authority from 'the unyielding and dictatorial views of the learned and the wise', rejected the assertions of individuals, even though recognized as the most accomplished and learned among men, as authoritative criteria, and 'ordained that all matters be referred to authorized centres and assemblies'. Thus the institutions of the learned in the Bahá'í Faith, while invested with high rank and exercising invaluable moral authority and influence, have no executive

power other than in the direction of their own institutions.

The difficulty of establishing a clear understanding of this administrative concept, new in the history of religion, is reflected in the concluding passage of the message of the Universal House of Justice, of 24 April 1972, quoted above:

> . . . The newness and uniqueness of this concept make it difficult to grasp; only as the Bahá'í community grows and the believers are increasingly able to contemplate its administrative structure uninfluenced by concepts from past ages, will the vital interdependence of the 'rulers' and 'learned' in the Faith be properly understood, and the inestimable value of their interaction be fully recognised.

Only now, as these two arms of the world-embracing system of Bahá'u'lláh begin to function in their separate but complementary roles towards a common achievement, are intimations caught of the divine beneficence of that system.

B. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

Bahá'u'lláh Himself created the institution of the Hands of the Cause and appointed a few of His followers to serve Him as Hands in His own lifetime. In the *Tablet of the World* He refers to the Hands of the Cause in words descriptive of the station of service to which they are called:

> *Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon the Hands of His Cause through whom the light of fortitude hath shone forth and the truth hath been established that the authority to choose rests with God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Unconstrained, through whom the ocean of bounty hath surged and the fragrance of the gracious favours of God, the Lord of mankind, hath been diffused. We beseech Him–Exalted is He–to shield them through the power of His hosts, to protect them through the potency of His dominion and to aid them through His indomitable strength which prevaileth over all created things. Sovereignty is God's, the Creator of the heavens and the Lord of the Kingdom of Names.*

The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá contains many references to the Hands of the Cause, including explicit definitions of their station and functions, as well as various admonitions addressed to them:

> *Salutation and praise, blessing and glory rest . . . upon the Hands of the Cause of God that have diffused widely the Divine Fragrances, declared His Proofs, proclaimed His Faith, published abroad His Law, detached themselves from all things but Him, stood for righteousness in this world, and kindled the Fire of the Love of God in the very hearts and souls of His servants; . . . the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him . . .*
>
> *. . . The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the Guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these, whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the Guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor . . .*
>
> *O friends! The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the Guardian of the Cause of God. All must be under his shadow and obey his command. . . .*
>
> *The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words. This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the Guardian of the Cause of God. He must continually urge them to strive and endeavour to the utmost of their ability to diffuse the sweet savours of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world, for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined. To disregard, though it be for a moment, this absolute command which is binding upon everyone, is in no wise permitted, that the surface of the earth may become heavenly, that contention and conflict amidst peoples, kindreds, nations and governments may disappear, that all the dwellers on earth may become one people and one race, that the world may become even as one home.*

'Abdu'l-Bahá did not Himself appoint any additional Hands of the Cause. He did, however, refer to certain outstanding teachers of the Faith as Hands.

During the first three decades of his ministry as Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi

designated certain outstanding Bahá'ís as Hands posthumously. Then, in December 1951, he raised twelve living believers to this exalted rank, a development of the Administrative Order which thrilled the entire Bahá'í world. In February 1952 he appointed a further seven, and in 1957 eight more, bringing the total number to twenty-seven.[1] In these brief six years the Guardian not only established this institution on a firm foundation throughout the world, with a body of four Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land to act as the liaison between himself and the Hands in each continent, but he brought into being in each continent two Auxiliary Boards, one for the protection and one for the propagation of the Faith, to act as the 'assistants, deputies and advisers' of the Hands of that continent.

The epic story of how in November 1957, the Hands of the Cause of God, called by the Guardian the 'Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth', rallied the grief-stricken and stunned Bahá'ís of the world, guided them to the victorious accomplishment of the Ten Year Crusade which he had launched, and convened the members of the National Spiritual Assemblies for the first election of the Universal House of Justice in April 1963, has been told in befitting detail in Volume XIII of this publication.

C. THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

The establishment of the Universal House of Justice in 1963 ushered in a new phase in the evolution of the institution of the Hands of the Cause. In October 1963 the House of Justice decided 'that there is no way to appoint or legislate to make it possible to appoint a second Guardian to succeed Shoghi Effendi'. Therefore, among the first questions which it was necessary for it then to consider were the manner in which the institution of the Hands of the Cause was to continue to perform its appointed functions, the relationship which should exist between the House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause, and how the indispensable functions of the Hands of the Cause could be extended into the future, since, according to the text of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the Guardian of the Cause of God.*

Following consultation with a conclave of the Hands in October–November 1964, the Universal House of Justice announced to the believers in its message of November 1964 the following decisions:

> There is no way to appoint, or to legislate to make it possible to appoint, Hands of the Cause of God.
>
> Responsibility for decisions on matters of general policy affecting the institution of the Hands of the Cause, which was formerly exercised by the beloved Guardian, now devolves upon the Universal House of Justice as the supreme and central institution of the Faith to which all must turn.

That same message announced increases in the number of the members of the Auxiliary Boards for propagation in every continent, and the Hands were requested to appoint one or more members of each Auxiliary Board to act in an executive capacity on their behalf and in the name of each Hand, for the direction of the work of the Boards. The message continued:

> The exalted rank and specific functions of the Hands of the Cause of God make it inappropriate for them to be elected or appointed to administrative institutions, or to be elected as delegates to national conventions. Furthermore, it is their desire and the desire of the House of Justice that they be free to devote their entire energies to the vitally important duties conferred upon them in the Holy Writings.

At the same time the House of Justice confirmed the request of the Hands of the Cause that, henceforth, members of the Auxiliary Boards should be freed from administrative responsibilities, including service on committees and as delegates to conventions.

On 21 June 1968 the House of Justice announced by cable to the Bahá'í world the decision to establish eleven Continental Boards of Counsellors for the protection and propagation of the Faith and, in a written message issued on 24 June, outlined in detail the nature and scope of this action. Because of its great significance to the evolution of the Administrative Order, the entire text of this message is quoted:

[1] See 'The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 334.

The majestic unfoldment of Bahá'u'lláh's world-redeeming administrative system has been marked by the successive establishment of the various institutions and agencies which constitute the framework of that divinely-created Order. Thus, more than a quarter-of-a-century after the emergence of the first National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world the institution of the Hands of the Cause of God was formally established, with the appointment by the beloved Guardian, in conformity with the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, of the first contingent of these high-ranking officers of the Faith. Following the passing of the Guardian of the Cause of God, it fell to the House of Justice to devise a way, within the Administrative Order, of developing 'the institution of the Hands of the Cause with a view to extension into the future of its appointed functions of protection and propagation', and this was made a goal of the Nine Year Plan. Much thought and study has been given to the question over the past four years, and the texts have been collected and reviewed. During the last two months, this goal, as announced in our cable to the National Conventions, has been the object of prolonged and prayerful consultation between the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause of God. All this made evident the framework within which this goal was to be achieved, namely:

> The Universal House of Justice sees no way in which additional Hands of the Cause of God can be appointed.
>
> The absence of the Guardian of the Faith brought about an entirely new relationship between the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause and called for the progressive unfoldment by the Universal House of Justice of the manner in which the Hands of the Cause would carry out their divinely-conferred functions of protection and propagation.
>
> Whatever new development or institution is initiated should come into operation as soon as possible in order to reinforce and supplement the work of the Hands of the Cause while at the same time taking full advantage of the opportunity of having the Hands themselves assist in launching and guiding the new procedures.
>
> Any such institution must grow and operate in harmony with the principles governing the functioning of the institution of the Hands of the Cause of God.

In the light of these considerations the Universal House of Justice decided, as announced in its recent cable, to establish Continental Boards of Counsellors for the protection and propagation of the Faith. Their duties will include directing the Auxiliary Boards in their respective areas, consulting and collaborating with National Spiritual Assemblies, and keeping the Hands of the Cause and the Universal House of Justice informed concerning the conditions of the Cause in their areas.

Initially eleven Boards of Counsellors have been appointed, one for each of the following areas: Northwestern Africa, Central and East Africa, Southern Africa, North America, Central America, South America, Western Asia, Southeastern Asia, Northeastern Asia, Australasia and Europe.

The members of these Boards of Counsellors will serve for a term, or terms, the length of which will be determined and announced at a later date, and while serving in this capacity, will not be eligible for membership on national or local administrative bodies. One member of each Continental Board of Counsellors has been designated as Trustee of the Continental Fund for its area.

The Auxiliary Boards for protection and propagation will henceforth report to the Continental Boards of Counsellors who will appoint or replace members of the Auxiliary Boards as circumstances may require. Such appointments and replacements as may be necessary in the initial stages will take place after consultation with the Hand or Hands previously assigned to the continent or zone.

The Hands of the Cause of God have the prerogative and obligation to consult with the Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies on any subject which, in their view, affects the interests of the Cause. The Hands residing in the Holy Land will act as liaison between the Universal House of Justice and the Continental Boards of Counsellors, and will also assist the Universal House of Justice in setting up, at a propitious time, an international teaching centre in the Holy Land, as anticipated in the Guardian's writings.

The Hands of the Cause of God are one of the most precious assets the Bahá'í world possesses. Released from administration of the Auxiliary Boards, they will be able to concentrate their energies on the more primary responsibilities of general protection and propagation, 'preservation of the spiritual health of the Bahá'í communities' and 'the vitality of the faith' of the Bahá'ís throughout the world. The House of Justice will call upon them to undertake special missions on its behalf, to represent it on both Bahá'í and other occasions and to keep it informed of the welfare of the Cause. While the Hands of the Cause will, naturally, have special concern for the affairs of the Cause in the areas in which they reside, they will operate increasingly on an intercontinental level, a factor which will lend tremendous impetus to the diffusion throughout the Bahá'í world of the spiritual inspiration channelled through them—the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth.

With joyful hearts we proclaim this further

unfoldment of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh and join our prayers to those of the friends throughout the East and the West that Bahá'u'lláh may continue to shower his confirmations upon the efforts of His servants in the safeguarding and promotion of His Faith.

A clarification of the status of Counsellors and their relationship to National Spiritual Assemblies was made by the House of Justice in a letter to a National Spiritual Assembly in May 1975:

> . . . (it) must be one of warm and active collaboration, a full sharing in the excitement and the challenge of the teaching work and the establishment of living and growing Bahá'í communities . . . While the role of the Counsellors is normally to advise, encourage and reinforce, and they have no legislative or administrative authority, they nevertheless occupy a rank superior to that of the National Assembly or its members and each individual Counsellor is a high officer of the Faith entitled to the respect, honour and courtesy due to his rank. Each country which is privileged to have a resident Counsellor should prize that privilege. Each National Assembly which has a Counsellor at hand for frequent consultations should, without relinquishing any portion of its divinely assigned authority, call upon him often for his views and accord great weight to his advice.

On 8 June 1973 a further directive was sent to the Continental Boards of Counsellors which answered the need discussed by the Counsellors during their sessions in the Holy Land, at the time of the International Convention of that year, for some method to enable their institution to reach more deeply into the fabric of the Bahá'í world community. The House of Justice authorized each Board of Counsellors, at its discretion, to permit Auxiliary Board members to appoint assistants, whose duties would be to activate and encourage Local Spiritual Assemblies, to call the attention of Local Spiritual Assembly members to the importance of regular meetings, to encourage local communities to gather for Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Days, to help deepen their fellow-believers' understanding of the teachings, and generally to assist the Auxiliary Board members in the discharge of their duties. The advice, at that time, was to proceed gradually with this new step so that experience could indicate the most effective manner of its operation. Since then, as a result of the proven value of this expanded service, appointments of assistants in each zone have been steadily and rapidly augmented. The letter of 8 June 1973 stated that 'believers can serve at the same time both as assistants to Auxiliary Board members and on administrative institutions'.

Adjustments to the number of Continental Boards of Counsellors are made as the Universal House of Justice deems necessary, entailing adjustments to zones assigned to the Boards, to the number of Counsellors and to the numbers of Auxiliary Boards and Auxiliary Board members.[1] Thus the institution operates at all levels throughout the world, reaching into the basic structure of local community life and exerting its encouraging and uplifting influence upon the lives of individuals and the deliberations of institutions, constantly watching over the security of the Faith, pointing the way to the promotion of its best interests, and to the ever wider dissemination of its healing message.

D. THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE

Assurance of the extension into the future of the appointed functions of protection and propagation conferred upon the Hands of the Cause was accomplished by the establishment of the Continental Boards of Counsellors. However, that vital goal having been accomplished, the problem remained of ordering the work of the new institution so that it would grow organically with the Faith itself.

In a letter addressed to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 24 June 1968 the Universal House of Justice confirmed that 'the relationship of Continental Boards of Counsellors to National Spiritual Assemblies will follow the pattern of the relationship between the Hands of the Cause and National Spiritual Assemblies, outlined by the beloved Guardian in various communications'.

The cablegram addressed by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual

[1] In November 1980 the thirteen Boards of Counsellors were consolidated into five, each Continental Board having two Auxiliary Boards, one for protection and one for propagation; and each Auxiliary Board member having assistants as needed and authorized.

Assemblies on 21 June 1968 announcing the establishment of Continental Boards of Counsellors had contained a reference to the 'future establishment international teaching centre Holy Land foreshadowed writings beloved Guardian.'

In October 1971 the Hands of the Cause were notified that after the International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice during Riḍván 1973, their presence in the Holy Land for a period of time in order to consult on a number of important subjects would be most welcome. The foremost topic would be the establishment of the international teaching centre about which the Hands had previously been requested to submit their written views. The Universal House of Justice, in its letter to the Hands of the Cause in October 1971, cited, amongst others, the following three quotations from the Guardian which anticipated the evolution of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith on Mount Carmel and the establishment there of an international teaching centre as the seat of the Hands of the Cause of God:

. . . it must be clearly understood, nor can it be sufficiently emphasized, that the conjunction of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot which, under the wings of the Báb's overshadowing Sepulchre, and in the vicinity of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which will be reared on its flank, is destined to evolve into the focal centre of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and which are to function in consonance with the principles that govern the twin institutions of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. Then, and then only, will this momentous prophecy which illuminates the concluding passages of the *Tablet of Carmel* be fulfilled: *Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee* (Carmel) *and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.*[1]

In this great Tablet which unveils divine mysteries and heralds the establishment of two mighty, majestic and momentous undertakings—one of which is spiritual and the other administrative, both at the World Centre of the Faith—Bahá'u'lláh refers to an 'Ark', whose dwellers are the men of the Supreme House of Justice, which, in conformity with the exact provisions of the Will and Testament of the Centre of the Mighty Covenant is the body which should lay down laws not explicitly revealed in the Text. In this Dispensation, these laws are destined to flow from this holy mountain, even as in the Mosaic Dispensation the law of God was promulgated from Zion. The 'sailing of the Ark' of His laws is a reference to the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, which is indeed the Seat of Legislation, one of the branches of the World Administrative Centre of the Bahá'ís on this holy mountain. It will be housed in a separate building near the International Archives building, now under construction, on a site in the neighbourhood of the Shrine of the Báb, and overlooking the sacred and illumined Monuments. In the neighbourhood of these two stately edifices and two mighty Institutions (i.e. the Archives Building and the edifice for the House of Justice), another edifice will gradually be erected which will be the Seat of the Guardianship, the Centre which will interpret, expound and prepare commentaries on explicitly revealed laws, and will reinforce and supplement the legislative body. Yet another edifice to supplement these three edifices will be the Centre for the propagation and teaching of the Faith, the Seat for the Hands of the Cause, who, in accordance with the explicit text of the Will and Testament are charged with the security, the preservation and protection of the Cause, the safeguarding of the unity of the community, the promotion of God's religion and the spread of His Word. These majestic and mighty edifices, which will be constructed gradually in accordance with a beautiful and unique style of architecture around the sacred Monuments, are all considered as branches of this highly-exalted, firmly-grounded and broadly-based World Administrative Centre of the followers of the Cause of Him Who is the Lord of this Age and the Ruler of Creation.[2]

The raising of this edifice (International Bahá'í Archives) will in turn herald the construction, in the course of successive epochs of the Formative Age of the Faith, of several other structures, which will serve as the administrative seats of such divinely appointed institutions as the Guardianship, the Hands of the Cause, and the Universal House of Justice. These edifices will, in the shape of a far-flung arc, and following a harmonizing style of architecture, surround the resting places of the Greatest Holy Leaf, ranking as foremost among the members of her sex in the Bahá'í Dispensation, of her brother, offered up as a ransom by Bahá'u'lláh for the quickening of the world and its unification, and of their mother, proclaimed by Him to be His chosen *'consort in all the worlds of God'*. The ultimate completion of this stupendous undertaking will mark the culmination of

[1] Shoghi Effendi, letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, 21 December 1939; see *Messages to America*, pp. 32–33.

[2] Shoghi Effendi, letter in Persian to the Bahá'ís of the East, Naw-Rúz 111 (1954).

the development of a world-wide divinely-appointed Administrative Order whose beginnings may be traced as far back as the concluding years of the heroic Age of the Faith.[1]

On 5 June 1973, following the International Convention and the consultations with the Hands of the Cause, and less than a month after the Counsellors had left the Holy Land to resume their services within their zones, the following announcement was cabled by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHMENT HOLY LAND LONG ANTICIPATED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE DESTINED EVOLVE INTO ONE THOSE WORLD SHAKING WORLD EMBRACING WORLD DIRECTING ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS ORDAINED BY BAHA'U'LLAH ANTICIPATED BY 'ABDU'L-BAHA ELUCIDATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI STOP MEMBERSHIP THIS NASCENT INSTITUTION COMPRISES ALL HANDS CAUSE GOD AND INITIALLY THREE COUNSELLORS WHO WITH HANDS PRESENT HOLY LAND WILL CONSTITUTE NUCLEUS ITS VITAL OPERATIONS STOP CALLING UPON HOOPER DUNBAR FLORENCE MAYBERRY AZIZ YAZDI PROCEED HOLY LAND ASSUME THIS HIGHLY MERITORIOUS SERVICE STOP OFFERING PRAYERS HEARTFELT GRATITUDE SACRED THRESHOLD THIS FURTHER EVIDENCE ORGANIC EVOLUTION ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER BAHA'U'LLAH.

It was followed three days later by this expanded announcement to the Bahá'ís of the world:

The centennial year of the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* has already witnessed events of such capital significance in the annals of the Bahá'í Dispensation as to cause us to contemplate with awe the rapidity with which Divine Providence is advancing the Cause of the Most Great Name. The time is indeed propitious for the establishment of the International Teaching Centre, a development which, at one and the same time, brings to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land and provides for its extension into the future, links the institution of the Boards of Counsellors even more intimately with that of the Hands of the Cause of God, and powerfully reinforces the discharge of the rapidly growing responsibilities of the Universal House of Justice.

This International Teaching Centre now established will, in due course, operate from that building designated by the Guardian as the Seat for the Hands of the Cause, which must be raised on the arc on Mount Carmel in close proximity to the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

The duties now assigned to this nascent institution are:

> To co-ordinate, stimulate and direct the activities of the Continental Boards of Counsellors and to act as liaison between them and the Universal House of Justice.
>
> To be fully informed of the situation of the Cause in all parts of the world and to be able, from the background of this knowledge, to make reports and recommendations to the Universal House of Justice and give advice to the Continental Boards of Counsellors.
>
> To be alert to possibilities, both within and without the Bahá'í community, for the extension of the teaching work into receptive or needy areas, and to draw the attention of the Universal House of Justice and the Continental Boards of Counsellors to such possibilities, making recommendations for action.
>
> To determine and anticipate needs for literature, pioneers and travelling teachers and to work out teaching plans, both regional and global, for the approval of the Universal House of Justice.

All the Hands of the Cause of God will be members of the International Teaching Centre. Each Hand will be kept regularly informed of the activities of the Centre through reports or copies of its minutes, and will be able, wherever he may be residing or travelling, to convey suggestions, recommendations and information to the Centre and, whenever he is in the Holy Land, to take part in the consultations and other activities of the Centre.

In addition, we now appoint Mr. Hooper Dunbar, Mrs. Florence Mayberry and Mr. 'Azíz Yazdí to membership of the International Teaching Centre, with the rank of Counsellor. These believers, who have been serving with distinction on the Continental Boards of Counsellors in South America, North America and Central and East Africa respectively, will henceforth reside in Haifa and will, together with the Hands present in the Holy Land, constitute the nucleus of the operations of the Centre.

Authority for the expulsion and reinstatement of Covenant-breakers remains with the Hands of the Cause of God. All such matters will be investigated locally by the relative Continental Board of Counsellors in consultation with any Hand or Hands who may be in the area. The Continental Board of Counsellors and the Hands concerned will then make their reports to the International Teaching Centre where they will be considered. The decision whether or not to expel or reinstate will be made by the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land who will, as at

[1] Shoghi Effendi, letter to the Bahá'ís of the world, 27 November 1954; see *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 74.

present, submit their decision to the Universal House of Justice for approval. . . .

The decisions now announced are the outcome of deliberation extending over a number of years, reinforced by consultations with the Hands of the Cause of God, and especially with the Hands residing in the Holy Land who were requested in 1968 to assist the Universal House of Justice in the establishment of the International Teaching Centre, a task that now increases in magnitude as that Centre begins its work.

One of the first tasks assigned by the Universal House of Justice to the International Teaching Centre was to devise the broad outlines of the global teaching plan to begin at Riḍván 1974 and conclude five years later at Riḍván 1979. This comprehensive and detailed survey of the entire Bahá'í world community provided an opportunity for the Teaching Centre to become thoroughly acquainted with the conditions, needs and potentialities of the one hundred and thirteen national Bahá'í communities which made up the Bahá'í international community at Riḍván 1973. A greatly increased flow of vital information from the Continental Boards of Counsellors was called for by the International Teaching Centre, which promised, in turn, the development of an increasingly close relationship between itself and the Boards through a similarly increased flow of materials from the Teaching Centre. At the request of the House of Justice the Teaching Centre also evolved a plan for international collaboration on travelling teaching projects.

The divinely ordained institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, having been brought into active reality by the Guardian of the Faith according to the directives of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, was confronted in its infancy with an appalling crisis in the life of that Faith whose protection was its prime duty. During the interregnum between the passing of the Guardian and the election of the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause as its Chief Stewards, maintained the integrity and unity of the Faith. The functions of protection and propagation appointed to this great institution have now been extended into the future in a manner consonant with the principles of the Faith. The Continental Boards of Counsellors with their attendant Auxiliary Boards for protection and propagation, the assistants to the Auxiliary Board members, all co-ordinated and kept in relationship to the Universal House of Justice by the International Teaching Centre, form the fabric of the appointive arm of the Administrative Order of the Faith, which will in increasing measure exert its spiritualizing influence upon the development of the Bahá'í community and of all mankind.



The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan with delegates to the Fifth International Convention from Taiwan.

2. THE WORK AND TRAVELS OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE

THE Hands of the Cause of God, freed in 1968 of administrative duties, were able increasingly to devote their efforts to serving as standard-bearers for the Bahá'ís of the world in support of the teaching activities launched by National Spiritual Assemblies and other institutions of the Bahá'í Faith.

In the opening phases of the Seven Year Plan, no less than in the teaching plans that preceded it, these remarkable individuals have been fonts of inspiration, encouragement and reinforcement. Their contribution to the achievement of the goals and the influence of their example upon the Bahá'í friends takes effect on numerous levels, both manifest and intangible. Their universal services in protecting the Cause of God; in proclaiming its truths; in deepening the knowledge of its adherents; in galvanizing the rank and file to greater heights of accomplishment; in awakening to an appreciation of the Bahá'í Cause a large segment of the public, often uninformed of its true nature and its relevance to the spiritual and social perils confronting society; and in presenting Bahá'í literature to Heads of State and others in authority, have continued unabated.

Not alone through their travels, but also through their consultation, their presence at gatherings large and small, their correspondence, their writings and addresses, their association with Bahá'í pilgrims and their interaction with Bahá'ís in the field, often in farflung and remote areas, they have . . . *diffused widely the Divine Fragrances, declared His proofs, proclaimed His Faith, published abroad His Law, detached themselves from all things but Him, stood for righteousness in this world, and kindled the Fire of the Love of God in the very hearts and souls of His servants* . . .

The years covered by this volume of the international record, Riḍván 1979–1983, have witnessed a regrettable thinning of the ranks of the Chief Stewards of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, leaving the community of the Greatest Name, at Riḍván 1983, with ten. Set out below is a record, ordered chronologically, of the tragic loss sustained in this period by the entire Bahá'í world through the passing of six beloved Hands of the Cause of God: Enoch Olinga (September 1979), Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir (December 1979), Ḥasan M. Balyúzí (February 1980), Dr. Adelbert Mühlschlegel (July 1980), Abu'l-Qasim Faizí (November 1980) and Paul E. Haney (December 1982). Although these pages lack scope to chronicle the full range of the services of the Hands—some frail or in ill health but of undiminished spiritual power—let the following excerpts culled from *Bahá'í International News Service* bulletins, and other sources, suggest in brief outline some of their major travels as well as a few of their other activities which are less amenable to documentation. Unfortunately, circumstances obtaining in Írán prevent the reporting of the services rendered by the Hand of the Cause Jalál Kházeh.

1979

April

Austria: HUNDRED FRIENDS ASSEMBLED STEYR CLOSE FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR TWENTY-FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION PRESENCE HAND CAUSE ALAI COUNSELLOR BETTY REED TWO AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS. INSPIRED MESSAGE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE FRIENDS PLEDGE GO FAITHFULLY WHOLEHEARTEDLY FORWARD INTO FIRST PHASE SEVEN YEAR PLAN . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1979)

Australia: LARGEST ASSEMBLAGE AUSTRALIAN CONVENTION JOYOUSLY AFFIRMS DEDICATION SEVEN YEAR PLAN. EIGHTY-ONE ASSEMBLED DELEGATES NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED FRIENDS DEEPLY GRATEFUL GUIDANCE SPIRITUAL STIMULATION MESSAGE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF

JUSTICE. OVERJOYED TREMENDOUS GAIN FIVE YEAR PLAN INSPIRED EXTEND EFFORTS FULFILLMENT NEW CHALLENGES . . . FRIENDS INSPIRED PRESENCE HAND CAUSE FEATHERSTONE COUNSELLOR KHAN TEN AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS. PERVASIVE SPIRIT OPTIMISM TWO INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TEACHERS ALREADY RAISED . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1979)

Papua New Guinea: HAPPY INFORM ELEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION HELD GREAT SUCCESS. THIRTY-TWO DELEGATES ATTENDED. MESSAGES UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE HAND OF CAUSE FEATHERSTONE OPENED CONVENTION. COUNSELLOR HOEHNKE GREETED DELEGATES VISITORS. GOALS FIVE YEAR PLAN ACHIEVED . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1979)

Philippines: JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL CONVENTION . . . GRATEFUL PRESENCE HAND CAUSE RAHMATULLAH MUHAJIR COUNSELLOR PAYMAN THIRTEEN AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS THREE HUNDRED AND ONE PARTICIPANTS SEVENTEEN CITIES . . . REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS PRODUCED INCREASED INTEGRATION AND COOPERATION TRIPLE NUMBER AREA TEACHING COMMITTEES FIFTEEN TEACHING PROJECTS STARTING IMMEDIATELY ALSO SPECIFIC PLANS OPENING MANY ISLANDS DOUBLING ASSEMBLIES NEXT TWO YEARS SELF-ORGANIZING SELF-SUPPORTING BASIS . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1979)

United States: OVER 1,800 DELEGATES AND FRIENDS GATHERED AT THE SEVENTIETH NATIONAL BAHAI CONVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES EXPRESS JOY AND GRATITUDE FOR THE BLESSED PRESENCE AND INSPIRATION OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD WILLIAM SEARS DHIKRULLAH KHADEM AND JOHN ROBARTS AND COUNSELLORS EDNA TRUE SARAH PEREIRA AND VELMA SHERRILL. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE RAHMATULLAH MUHAJIR AND ALI AKBAR FURUTAN AND COUNSELLOR HEDI AHMADIYYIH WHOSE DEDICATED EFFORTS CONTRIBUTED VITALLY TO THE ACCELERATION OF TEACHING EFFORTS. WITH THEIR ASSISTANCE THE MANIFOLD SACRIFICES OF THE AMERICAN BAHAI COMMUNITY AND THE BOUNTIES SHOWERED UPON US BY THE DIVINE CONCOURSE THE FIVE YEAR PLAN OF GOD WAS BROUGHT TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION WITH AN UNPRECEDENTED EXPLOSION OF VICTORIES . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1979)

August

Austria: GREETINGS SUMMER SCHOOL UPPER AUSTRIA GREATLY BLESSED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND CAUSE AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM . . . COUNSELLOR ANNELIESE BOPP. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FRIENDS PRESENT EIGHT NATIONS. IMPLORING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES FRUITFUL COMPLETION SEVEN YEAR PLAN. (Cablegram received 29 August 1979)

September

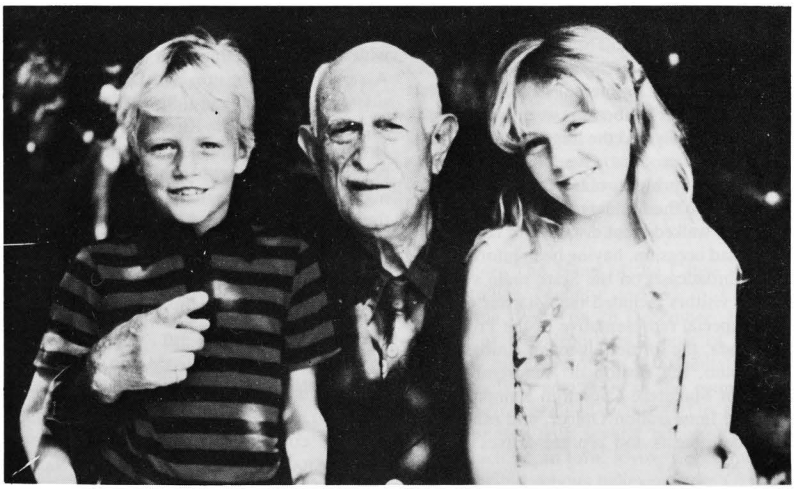
United States: More than six hundred and fifty Bahá'ís and their guests gathered from 31 August to 3 September at the Massanetta Springs Center in Harrisonburg, Virginia, for a conference on the theme of 'Spiritual Enrichment and Self-dedication'—a topic derived from the Seven Year Plan message of the Universal House of Justice. The Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem inspired those present with memorable stories and counsel. He pointed out that the Faith is spread and established through the sacrifice and devotion of the believers rather than through wealth or worldly power. Mrs. Javidukht Khadem, a member of the Auxiliary Board, also addressed the group . . . Participants from nineteen States, from the Bahamas, Canada, Írán, Italy, Spain and from pioneering posts in many other countries, came to more than double the number expected by the sponsoring Assembly of Staunton, Virginia . . . The Local Spiritual Assembly of Staunton plans to make the conference an annual event. (From a report received 10 December 1979)

Italy: JOYOUS GREETINGS PARTICIPANTS GATHERED TWO CONSECUTIVE SUMMER SCHOOLS ITALY TOTALLING OVER FOUR HUNDRED FRIENDS FOURTEEN COUNTRIES. TRULY UPLIFTED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND CAUSE JOHN ROBARTS WIFE AUDREY WHOSE INSPIRATION HAS PRODUCED TREMENDOUS SPIRITUAL AWARENESS PRAYER. SEVEN NEW BELIEVERS ENROLLED DURING SUMMER SCHOOL NUMEROUS OFFERS TRAVEL TEACHING . . . (From a cablegram received 14 September 1979)

World Centre: WITH GRIEF-STRICKEN HEARTS ANNOUNCE TRAGIC NEWS BRUTAL MURDER DEARLY LOVED GREATLY ADMIRED HAND CAUSE GOD ENOCH OLINGA BY UNKNOWN GUNMEN



The Hands of the Cause (left to right) William Sears, Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, John Robarts and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, guest speakers at 'The Gathering', near Port Hope, Ontario, Canada; August 1980.



The Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery with two young friends in Norway.

COURTYARD HIS KAMPALA HOME. HIS WIFE ELIZABETH AND THREE OF HIS CHILDREN BADI LENNIE AND TAHIRIH HAVE ALSO FALLEN INNOCENT VICTIMS THIS CRUEL ACT. MOTIVE ATTACK NOT YET ASCERTAINED. HIS RADIANT SPIRIT HIS UNWAVERING FAITH HIS ALL-EMBRACING LOVE HIS LEONINE AUDACITY IN THE TEACHING FIELD HIS TITLES KNIGHT BAHAULLAH FATHER VICTORIES CONFERRED BELOVED GUARDIAN ALL COMBINE DISTINGUISH HIM AS PREEMINENT MEMBER HIS RACE IN ANNALS FAITH AFRICAN CONTINENT. URGE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING TRIBUTE HIS IMPERISHABLE MEMORY. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL AND SOULS FOUR MEMBERS HIS PRECIOUS FAMILY. (Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies 16 September 1979)

Uganda: The Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga, together with his wife and three children, was buried on 24 September 1979 in the Bahá'í Cemetery on Kikaaya Hill, in the precincts of the Mother Temple of Africa near Kampala, Uganda . . . The funeral service took place at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference Hall of the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds adjacent to the House of Worship and the Bahá'í Cemetery. As the gathered mourners sang 'Alláh-u-Abhá', the coffins were carried reverently into the hall and placed at the head of the room. The coffin of the Hand of the Cause was in the special care of the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors; the other pallbearers were members of the Olinga family and the large Bahá'í 'family' in East Africa . . . Over three hundred persons were present, many of whom had to stand outside the building during the service. Some had walked great distances to be present for the sad occasion, having been informed by special broadcasts on the State radio system. Official visitors included the Minister of Justice as special representative of the President of Uganda, the former Ugandan Ambassador to Lesotho, the Bishop of Namirembe, the Canon of Makerere Church in Kampala, the Principal Immigration Officer, and other distinguished guests and representatives of the press.

The message of the Universal House of Justice was read during the service, recalling that the Guardian of the Faith had conferred upon Mr. Olinga the titles 'Knight of Bahá'u'lláh' and 'Father of Victories' before appointing him, in 1957, the first native African Hand of the Cause of God. Other messages of condolence were read, and a brief summary of Mr. Olinga's life was given. Prayers and other passages from the Bahá'í Writings preceded and followed the messages, read in the Ateso, Luganda, Swahili, Persian and English languages . . .

Mr. Olinga's grave adjoins that of the Hand of the Cause Músá Banání. Just below are the tombs of his wife Elizabeth and daughter Ṭáhirih, and those of his two sons, Badí' and Lennie. (From reports received through 31 December 1979)

November

United States: Texas believers enjoyed a nine-day visit from the Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem from 3 to 11 November when eight hundred Bahá'ís from six surrounding States attended a day-long meeting in Houston. Mr. Khádem shared memories of the Guardian, thrilling the believers with his reminiscences, his presence and his perceptions of the Guardian's legacy. The youth he urged to study *The Advent of Divine Justice*, and all were urged to study the writings of Shoghi Effendi. Joyous gatherings throughout the State marked the nine days, with special meetings for Local Spiritual Assemblies of Houston and Dallas, and firesides in La Porte and Fort Worth and at the Bahá'í Club at Rice University. Mrs. Javidukht Khádem, an Auxiliary Board member, participated with zeal and humour in many of the events that were sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members Mr. Hormoz Bastani and Mrs. Eunice Braun. (From a report received February 1980)

December

Argentina: JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE INAUGURATION OUR LOCAL HAZIRATULQUDS WITH PRESENCE BELOVED HAND CAUSE RAHMATULLAH MUHAJIR COUNSELLOR ATHOS COSTAS ABOUT FORTY BAHAIS AND NONBAHAIS. HAVE NAMED AND DEDICATED IT MEMORY BELOVED HAND CAUSE HERMANN GROSSMANN . . . (From a

cablegram received from the Local Spiritual Assembly of Rosario 21 December 1979)

Australia: On the last day of 1979, the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone arrived home in Rockhampton, Australia, from a ten-nation tour of the western Pacific and the Far East which lasted seventy-six days and took him to scores of Bahá'í centres in cities, towns and villages.

A principal aim of Mr. Featherstone's trip, on which he was accompanied by his wife, Madge, was to participate in the National Teaching Conference of the Mariana Islands in Inarajan, Guam, on 20–21 October . . .

Excellent publicity included a prominently-placed interview in the *Pacific Daily Mail* . . . and a television spot on the evening news. The Governor of Guam, Mr. Paul Calva, received the Featherstones and three local believers for a fifteen-minute interview, during which the Governor was given a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, on behalf of the National Assembly. Following the conference, Mr. Featherstone visited village communities in Yap and Palau during a two-week period.

In Japan from 10 to 20 November, public meetings and firesides were held in major cities including Hiroshima where Mr. Featherstone gave a fireside talk to university students. At Amagasaki, Mrs. Featherstone addressed a gathering of eleven women. A public meeting in the goal city of Hirakata resulted in an enrolment.

Four days in Korea included gatherings with Auxiliary Board members and assistants, meetings with believers of Pusan and a Seoul public meeting with one hundred and four present, more than half of them enquirers.

In Taiwan the Featherstones were met on 24 November by a colourful international group of Chinese, Malaysian, Persian, Korean and American Bahá'ís bearing a large welcoming banner. The cities of Taipei, Tainan, Hsintien and Kaohsiung held meetings for believers as well as firesides.

In Hong Kong Mr. Featherstone met with the Bahá'í 'footballers' at the National Centre, spoke at a gathering for believers and met with an Auxiliary Board member and assistants.

A Bangkok newspaper reported the arrival of Mr. Featherstone in Thailand by calling him an 'international peace lecturer', reporting that he would be meeting 'VIPs and business leaders'. Leaving Thailand on 10 December, the Featherstones divided the next twenty-one days among four countries, making teaching stops in Malaysia, where they attended a Winter School at Cameron Highlands, and in Singapore, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, returning home on 31 December . . . (From reports received through 31 December 1979)

World Centre: PROFOUNDLY LAMENT UNTIMELY PASSING IN QUITO ECUADOR BELOVED HAND CAUSE RAHMATULLAH MUHAJIR FOLLOWING HEART ATTACK COURSE HIS LATEST SOUTH AMERICAN TOUR. UNSTINTED UNRESTRAINED OUTPOURING OF PHYSICAL SPIRITUAL ENERGIES BY ONE WHO OFFERED HIS ALL PATH SERVICE HAS NOW CEASED. POSTERITY WILL RECORD HIS DEVOTED SERVICES YOUTHFUL YEARS CRADLE FAITH HIS SUBSEQUENT UNIQUE EXPLOITS PIONEERING FIELD SOUTHEAST ASIA WHERE HE WON ACCOLADE KNIGHTHOOD BAHAULLAH HIS CEASELESS EFFORTS OVER TWO DECADES SINCE HIS APPOINTMENT HAND CAUSE STIMULATING IN MANY LANDS EAST WEST PROCESS ENTRY BY TROOPS. FRIENDS ALL CONTINENTS WHO MOURN THIS TRAGIC LOSS NOW SUDDENLY DEPRIVED COLLABORATION ONE WHO ENDEARED HIMSELF TO THEM THROUGH HIS GENTLENESS HIS LUMINOUS PERSONALITY HIS EXEMPLARY UNFLAGGING ZEAL HIS CREATIVE ENTHUSIASTIC APPROACH TO FULFILMENT ASSIGNED GOALS. URGE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING HIS HIGH STATION UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENTS. MAY HIS RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM REAP RICH HARVEST HIS DEDICATED SELFSACRIFICING SERVICES CAUSE GOD. (Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies 30 December 1979)

Ecuador: The Hand of the Cause of God Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir arrived in Ecuador from Lima, Peru, on 26 December. He was greeted at the airport by a host of friends including members of the Continental Board of Counsellors who were in the country for one of their scheduled meetings. Dr. Muhájir was presented with several bouquets of red roses which he, in turn, lovingly presented to two of the indigenous believers from Otavalo as a token of his love and esteem. He shook hands and embraced all the friends, saying

'Allah-u-Abhá' . . . Everyone showed such happiness at being with Dr. Muhájir that passers-by paused to look on, some of them asking 'Who is he?' and giving the Bahá'ís an opportunity to mention the name of the Faith.

Dr. Muhájir's schedule was hectic. He did not pause to rest after arriving at the airport, as he usually did in this altitude, but was driven directly to appointments including a radio interview and a meeting of the Counsellors. Later that evening he spoke to the Bahá'í community in Quito, and afterwards had a brief interview with members of the National Spiritual Assembly. The following day he went to Esmeraldas accompanied by Auxiliary Board member Charles Hornby and Keikavous Vahdat to visit the new Bahá'í institute that is being built and named in honour of the Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga. After lunch Dr. Muhájir made three radio broadcasts followed by a fireside and a television interview . . .

On 26 December he returned to Quito and resumed his busy schedule, conferring that afternoon with the Counsellors and then presiding over a joint meeting with the Counsellors, Auxiliary Board members and the National Spiritual Assembly.

A conference for pioneers had been called by the National Spiritual Assembly on behalf of the Continental Board of Counsellors . . . *Mount your steeds, O heroes of God!* was always Dr. Muhájir's motto and it was embodied in the eagerness of those who were waiting to see how many far-reaching projects he would envisage and substantiated by the prompt movement of pioneers and teachers responding to the call. Whenever a new teaching plan was received from the Universal House of Justice, everyone knew it would not be long before a visit from Dr. Muhájir was forthcoming to place in perspective any perplexities that might be engendered by the vastness of the plan. He would always open up new avenues and approaches to teaching . . . after each session he would leave heads swirling by his edifying presence, his high spirits, his clarity of vision and, of course, by the amount of work he outlined to be accomplished while, at the same time, giving the group the feeling that they had really planned it themselves . . .

On 29 December, after a full day's schedule, Dr. Muhájir fell ill and was taken to a nearby emergency clinic for medical attention. During this time he was repeating the Greatest Name with those who were caring for him and he smiled and talked with the doctor and nurse when his pain was not so acute. Counsellor Mas'úd Khamsí never left his side. About half an hour after his arrival at the clinic, Dr. Muhájir lost consciousness and soon passed away . . . (Adapted from a report by Mrs. Helen Hornby)

Ecuador: The Hand of the Cause of God Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was buried on 31 December 1979 in a beautiful cemetery high in the Andes mountains near Quito, Ecuador, where he died suddenly on 29 December following a heart attack. Appointed by the Guardian in October 1957, he was the youngest of the remaining Hands of the Cause . . . The funeral services were planned by the National Spiritual Assembly in consultation with the Continental Board of Counsellors. Mrs. Írán Muhájir and daughter, Gisu, arrived from the United States in time to choose a burial plot in the cemetery called 'Park of Memories' which Mrs. Muhájir selected for its simple beauty and tranquillity. Dr. Muhájir's casket was surrounded by a profusion of floral tributes. Attending were five of the six members of the Board of Counsellors, Auxiliary Board members from four countries, and representatives of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Peru. Believers from all parts of Ecuador increased the attendance to over one hundred persons . . . At the cemetery, prayers were offered in several languages, the cabled tribute from the Universal House of Justice was read as a fitting eulogy for the Hand of the Cause, and one of the Counsellors chanted in Arabic the Prayer for the Dead. Mrs. Muhájir had selected three plots in the cemetery to allow the grave to be oriented eastward, towards Bahjí . . . On the same day the friends attended a conference to launch Dr. Muhájir's audacious plan—now consecrated to his name—which calls for a vast expansion among the black and Indian population. The Counsellors cabled that REPRESENTATIVES NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES AGREE DEDICATE 1980 YEAR MASS CONVERSION SOUTH AMERICAN CONTINENT ACCORDING HIS DESIRE. NATIONAL COM-

MUNITY ECUADOR WORKING WHOLEHEARTEDLY COMPLETE ARRANGEMENTS. BESEECH PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES ACHIEVE UNPRECEDENTED VICTORIES DEDICATED HIS MEMORY . . . (From various reports received through February 1980)

Belize: Friends around the world are lamenting the great loss of the Hand of the Cause of God Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, for he lived and travelled in Southeast Asia, India, Europe, the Americas, the Pacific, Africa and the Caribbean. He devoted eleven months out of the year to travel for the Faith . . . Each country received him as their own because of his unique ability to be so completely attuned with the people of each place he visited . . . The great love he showered on us all will always be a part of each one of us, awakening in us our own love for each other. Posterity will record his exploits in the teaching field, but at this time let us remember most of all his example. Were we but to emulate to a small extent his great outpouring of physical and spiritual energies and his genuine kindness and love, and arise with sacrificial efforts to teach our brothers and sisters about this great all-encompassing Faith, then we would ensure that the spiritual heart of this great man—Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir—shall continue to pulsate throughout these lands . . . (From *Bahá'í Newsletter* of Belize, January 1980)

Malaysia: REJOICE INFORM SUPREME BODY WINTER SCHOOL CAMERON HIGHLAND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL. GRATEFUL PRESENCE BELOVED HAND FEATHERSTONE COUNSELLORS YAN KEE LEONG CHINNIAH OVER FOUR HUNDRED PARTICIPANTS. ABUNDANT FRUITS SEVENTY-SIX PIONEERS TRAVEL TEACHERS FORTY HOME FRONT . . . (From a cablegram received 30 December 1979)

1980

February

World Centre: WITH BROKEN HEARTS ANNOUNCE PASSING DEARLY LOVED HAND CAUSE HASAN BALYUZI. ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD ROBBED ONE OF ITS MOST POWERFUL DEFENDERS MOST RESOURCEFUL HISTORIANS. HIS ILLUSTRIOUS LINEAGE HIS DEVOTED LABOURS DIVINE VINEYARD HIS OUTSTANDING LITERARY WORKS COMBINE IN IMMORTALIZING HIS HONOURED NAME IN ANNALS BELOVED FAITH. CALL ON FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS. PRAYING SHRINES HIS EXEMPLARY ACHIEVEMENTS HIS STEADFASTNESS PATIENCE HUMILITY HIS OUTSTANDING SCHOLARLY PURSUITS WILL INSPIRE MANY DEVOTED WORKERS AMONG RISING GENERATIONS FOLLOW HIS GLORIOUS FOOTSTEPS. (Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies 12 February 1980)

United Kingdom: The funeral service for the Hand of the Cause of God Ḥasan M. Balyúzí was held on 15 February 1980 at the New Southgate Cemetery in London. Mr. Balyúzí, who passed away peacefully on the morning of 12 February in London following a heart attack, was appointed a Hand of the Cause in October 1957. He also bore the title Afnán, indicating that he was a lineal descendant of the Báb.

Three hundred believers and friends gathered at 3:45 p.m. for a dignified and moving ceremony conducted by Mr. Philip Hainsworth on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly. The service began with a tribute on behalf of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Europe by Mr. Adib Taherzadeh. Mrs. Marion Hofman followed with a tribute that included reading of a cabled message from the Universal House of Justice . . . A reading in English of a passage from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh about the Hands of the Cause, by the son of the deceased, Mr. Robert Balyúzí, was included in the programme prepared by the National Assembly. Eight members of the National Assembly attended, some of whom—together with members of the family—acted as pallbearers.

Mr. Balyúzí is buried in close proximity to the grave of Shoghi Effendi in a cemetery in the outskirts of London formerly known as the Great Northern Cemetery . . .

In 1963, disabled by ill health which prevented his travelling, Mr. Balyúzí took up his pen, devoting his remaining years to producing important literary works which are perhaps his most significant legacy to the Bahá'í world. Among the books that streamed forth until the very last months of his life are: *Bahá'u'lláh* (a brief Life, accompanied by an essay 'The

Word made Flesh' published in 1963); *'Abdu'l-Bahá* (1971); *The Báb* (1973); *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá'í Faith* (1970); *Muḥammad and the Course of Islám* (1976). His *magnum opus*, a major Life of Bahá'u'lláh, was completed just before his passing in London on 12 February 1980 . . . (From reports received during February 1980)

United States: The Bahá'í children's long-playing record album, 'Happy Ayyám-i-Há!', produced by Joyce and Danny Deardorff and released through Prism Productions, won a 1979 Angel Award from RIM (Religion in Media). The album features as host the Hand of the Cause William Sears and utilizes music arranged and conducted by Russ Garcia. Referring to Mr. Sears, the album jacket states, 'His special love for children is so beautifully expressed in this recording as he portrays a loving grandfather answering their questions and sharing their joy and laughter.' The award was presented during a ceremony on 14 February 1980 at the Hollywood Palladium to Joyce and Danny Deardorff, producers of the album, and Marcia Day, executive producer of Prism Productions. This was the fifth annual awards programme sponsored by Religion in Media, a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of religious values in the media and the album was one of only two non-Christian enterprises to win an award. Marcia Day ended her brief acceptance remarks by saying, 'We hope we accomplished what we set out to do—express for children the principles of the oneness of God, the oneness of religion and the oneness of mankind.' The Bahá'ís had two large tables near the front of the assemblage, and stood out as the most lively and diversified group at the ceremony. (From a report received April 1980)

United States: THREE HUNDRED PERSIAN BELIEVERS GATHERED TOGETHER IN THE SHADOW MOTHER TEMPLE WEST IN PRESENCE OF HAND CAUSE DHIKRULLAH KHADEM COUNSELLORS EDNA TRUE IRAJ AYMAN AND MANUCHIHR SALMANPUR THREE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TWO AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS OFFER DEEPEST LOVE SERVITUDE SUPREME BODY. DETERMINED DISPERSE FULFILL GOALS CONSOLIDATE WEAK CENTERS. OVER FIFTY SOULS OFFER PIONEER. REQUEST PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES BESEECHING CELESTIAL CONFIRMATIONS . . . (From a cablegram received 19 February 1980)

United States: OVER ONE HUNDRED PERSIAN BELIEVERS LOUISIANA OKLAHOMA MISSISSIPPI ALABAMA TEXAS GATHERED REGIONAL CONFERENCE BATON ROUGE HUMBLY RENEW DEVOTION SUPREME INSTITUTION. TWENTY-TWO VOLUNTEERED HOMEFRONT INTERNATIONAL PIONEERING. SUPPLICATE PRAYERS THEIR EFFORTS SERVICE CAUSE . . . (From a cablegram received 21 February 1980)

United States: TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY PERSIAN FRIENDS GATHERED SAN DIEGO CENTER 24 FEBRUARY PRESENCE HAND CAUSE VARQA DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEAR HAND CAUSE BALYUZI. OFFER HEARTFELT SUBMISSION SUPREME INSTITUTION. FIFTY BELIEVERS DETERMINED RESPOND FILL PIONEERING TRAVEL TEACHING GOALS. OTHERS HOPEFUL MOVE LATER. BESEECH PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES BESTOWAL CONFIRMATION SUCCESS. (Cablegram received 26 February 1980)

United States: FOURTEEN HUNDRED PERSIAN BELIEVERS GATHERED SANTA MONICA CALIFORNIA 24 FEBRUARY PRESENCE HAND CAUSE VARQA COUNSELLORS KHAMSI SALMANPUR AND AYMAN TWO NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBER JALIL MAHMOUDI. SPIRIT DEDICATION INTENSE. COUNSELLORS REMAINED LOS ANGELES FOLLOWING TWO DAYS TO CONSULT WITH PROSPECTIVE PIONEERS . . . (From a cablegram received 2 March 1980)

March

Germany: ABOUT FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY BAHAIS AND FIFTY NONBAHAIS PARTICIPATED NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE LANGENHAIN 22–23 MARCH 1980 BLESSED BY HAND OF THE CAUSE OF GOD PAUL HANEY AND COUNSELLOR ADIB TAHERZADEH WHO ENCOURAGED AND INSPIRED ALL TO ARISE AND SERVE BELOVED FAITH. EXPRESS OUR DEEP GRATITUDE FOR THEIR PRESENCE . . . TWENTY-SIX FRIENDS AROSE FORTHCOMING TEACHING ACTIVITIES . . . (From a cablegram received 24 March 1980)

April

Canada: OVER ELEVEN HUNDRED DELEGATES OBSERVERS ASSEMBLED CANADIAN CONVENTION VANCOUVER BLESSED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND

CAUSE JOHN ROBARTS . . . ACTIVE PARTICIPATION INDIGENOUS MINORITIES . . . NUMBER ASSEMBLIES NOW OVER THREE HUNDRED TWENTY . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1980)

Korea: THOUGH DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING THREE HANDS CAUSE GOD DISTRESSED OPPOSITION FRIENDS IRAN KOREAN DELEGATES DETERMINED SHARE BURDEN IRANIAN COMMUNITY . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1980)

United States: WE UNMISTAKABLY SENSE THE ADVENT OF THE LONG-AWAITED SORELY-NEEDED SPIRITUAL REBIRTH PROMISED BY THE MASTER IN TABLETS OF THE DIVINE PLAN. THE SPIRIT OF OPTIMISM COUPLED WITH UNSHAKABLE CONFIDENCE IS PERVADING THIS COMMUNITY . . . WE FEEL THAT THE CONCOURSE OF ABHA RECENTLY REINFORCED BY THE PASSING OF THREE HANDS OF THE CAUSE IS WAITING TO ASSIST THOSE WHO ARISE IN THE SERVICE OF OUR BELOVED CAUSE . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1980)

May

United States: Over one hundred Bahá'ís attended a three-day conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, held from 9 to 11 May. The conference commemorated the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to that city in 1912. The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem was the featured speaker for the occasion. Several of the meetings were held in the same room in Schenley Hall where the Master spoke in 1912 when it was the Schenley Hotel. It is now part of the University of Pittsburgh's Student Union building . . . Mr. Khádem spoke several times during the weekend. He outlined the Master's visit to the United States, spoke on the station of the Manifestations of God and of the authorized interpreters of the Bahá'í Writings, and closed by encouraging all participants to deepen themselves in the Faith in order that they might better convey its truths . . . (From a report received 26 May 1980)

June

Canada: The Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith held its fifth Annual Conference and its first International Conference on health and healing, both within the period of 30 May to 4 June in Ottawa, with a combined attendance of more than five hundred persons . . . the Hand of the Cause John Robarts encouraged the friends throughout the Conferences. In attendance were members of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Haiti, Switzerland and Canada; members of the Auxiliary Board; and a distinguished array of Bahá'ís from all parts of Canada, the United States, the Caribbean, Mexico, Europe and New Zealand. A special lectureship on Bahá'í history was initiated at this year's annual meeting in memory of the late Hand of the Cause Ḥasan M. Balyúzí. The Hand of the Cause John Robarts spoke about Mr. Balyúzí's life. Dr. 'Abbás Afnán and Dr. Muḥammad Afnán, both of whom are descendants of the Báb and relatives of the late Hand of the Cause, talked about his illustrious lineage. The special lectureship, which will be continued at future annual meetings, was capped by a scholarly address by Mr. Douglas Martin, a historian and secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada. He reviewed Mr. Balyúzí's immense life work as a historian . . . (From a report received 23 July 1980)

World Centre: Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum left the World Centre on 25 June for a brief sojourn in England, travelling thereafter to Spain for a week's stay, which included visits to the friends in Madrid and Barcelona and the dedication of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in the latter city. Following this she spent fourteen weeks in Toronto, Canada, editing a two-hour documentary film entitled 'The Pilgrimage'. This historic film—a beautiful and deeply moving account of the Holy Places in 'Akká and Haifa—was written, narrated, directed and edited by Amatu'l-Bahá, and in addition to its interest to the public will provide a most effective and inspiring deepening experience for the believers . . . Filmed at the World Centre by Prism Productions Inc., 'The Pilgrimage' is a superb documentary depicting the Bahá'í Holy Places in great detail. It is a two-hour, 16mm sound colour film on four reels to facilitate screening and is available in English, French and Spanish. (From various reports received June–December 1980)

July

United States: IN DIGNIFIED UPLIFTING CEREMONY WITNESSED BY HAND CAUSE KHADEM HOUSE OF JUSTICE MEMBER AMOZ GIBSON COUNSELLORS COWAN GARDNER TRUE REPRESENTATIVES NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES ALASKA CANADA AND UNITED STATES AND NUMBER AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS NATIVE COUNCIL ENTRUSTED SPECIAL GIFT FOR MIGHTY HOUSE OF JUSTICE TO MRS. MARY GIBSON IN HOPE SHE CAN PRESENT IT TO SUPREME INSTITUTION IN SPIRIT IN WHICH IT WAS GIVEN. ONE FEATURE CONFERENCE A POW-WOW HELD ON LAKESIDE PROPERTY UNDER SHADOW OF MASHRIQULADHKAR DREW ATTENDANCE NUMBERING APPROXIMATELY ONE THOUSAND SCINTILLATING THE MINDS AND SPIRITS FOR ITS AESTHETIC EXECUTION BUT MORE IMPORTANT POWERFULLY IMPRESSING UPON THEM BAHAI IDEAL ONENESS MANKIND . . . (From a cablegram received 15 July 1980)

Sweden: NORWEGIAN–SWEDISH SUMMER SCHOOL BLESSED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND CAUSE GOD GIACHERY COUNSELLOR TAHERZADEH AUXILIARY BOARDS OVER TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY FRIENDS FORTY-FOUR CHILDREN TWENTY YOUTH TWELVE COUNTRIES. INSPIRED TO HIGH DEGREE HEROISM SACRIFICE FRIENDS MARTYRS IRAN. MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD BELOVED EXEMPLAR DEDICATION CAUSE GOD ANGELINE GIACHERY. HUMBLY REQUEST PRAYERS SHRINES SPIRITUAL GROWTH CHILDREN CONFIRMATIONS BELIEVERS NORDIC REGIONS . . . (From a cablegram received 28 July 1980)

World Centre: WITH SORROWFUL HEARTS ANNOUNCE PASSING BELOVED HAND CAUSE ADELBERT MUHLSCHLEGEL. GRIEVOUS LOSS SUSTAINED ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD PARTICULARLY FELT EUROPE MAIN ARENA HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICES CAUSE GOD. SERVING FOR MANY YEARS NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY GERMANY HE BECAME AFTER ELEVATION RANK HAND CAUSE ONE OF CHAMPION BUILDERS EMERGING EUROPEAN BAHAI COMMUNITY CONSTANTLY TRAVELLING ENCOURAGING RAISING SPIRITS FRIENDS RESIDING WHEREVER SERVICES MOST NEEDED FINALLY PIONEERING GREECE AND SURRENDERING HIS SOUL PIONEER POST. HIS CONSTANT WILLINGNESS SERVE HIS ABILITY ENDEAR HIMSELF BELIEVERS AND OTHERS ALIKE BY HIS LOVING GENTLENESS SERENE HUMILITY RADIANT CHEERFULNESS HIS NEVER CEASING PURSUIT KNOWLEDGE AND TOTAL DEDICATION BLESSED BEAUTY PROVIDE WONDERFUL EXAMPLE BAHAI LIFE. ADVISE FRIENDS COMMEMORATE HIS PASSING AND REQUEST BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICES ALL MOTHER TEMPLES. (Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies 29 July 1980)

United States: Your cable dated 29 July 1980 was received and on the following night, in the meeting of the friends in St. Louis, its text was read. The hearts of the friends were deeply touched and grieved, but they felt resigned before the will of the Lord, fully conscious that the soul of Dr. Adelbert Mühlschlegel is now in the Abhá Kingdom in the utmost joy and gratitude, as he recalls the efforts he exerted during his lifetime in the promotion of God's Holy Faith which is the sole path for the salvation of the world from the great convulsions with which it is beset . . . (From a report by the Hand of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í)

Kenya: DEEPLY GRIEVED SUDDEN PASSING HAND CAUSE ADELBERT MUHLSCHLEGEL. HIS HUMBLENESS DEPTHS UNDERSTANDING FAITH SHOWN PROCLAIMING FAITH DURING VISIT NINE YEAR PLAN RECALLED KENYA BAHAI COMMUNITY WITH ADMIRATION . . . (From a cablegram received from the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya)

August

Switzerland: TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY PARTICIPANTS FROM TEN COUNTRIES INCLUDING MANY YOUTH AND THIRTY CHILDREN ASSEMBLED TAVERNE TICINO. UPLIFTED PRESENCE HAND OF CAUSE OF GOD UGO GIACHERY . . . STIMULATED BY THEME NEW STANDARDS OF LIFE WHICH PROMOTES ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF ALL FRIENDS. SUCCESSFUL CHILDRENS CLASSES AND TEENAGERS WORKSHOP. HIGHLY SPIRITUAL COMMEMORATION PASSING HAND OF CAUSE OF GOD ADELBERT MUHLSCHLEGEL AND REMEMBRANCE ANGELINE GIACHERY. TWO PUBLIC MEETINGS ORGANIZED IN TAVERNE AND LUGANO. FOUR DECLARATIONS . . . (From a cablegram received 3 August 1980)

Canada: TEACHING PROJECT SHAWINIGAN HEARTLAND QUEBEC SUPPORTED COUNSELLORS SUSTAINED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND TEACHING COMMITTEE. SUPPLICATE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES SUCCESS CULMINATION PROJECT AUGUST 9.

TWO HANDS CAUSE AUXILIARY BOARD FRIENDS QUEBEC PARTICIPATE RECEPTION MUNICIPALITY SIGNATURE CITYS GOLDEN BOOK AND PROCLAMATION PICNIC THOUSANDS INVITED. AUSPICIOUS TEACHING DEDICATED HEROIC MARTYRS PERSECUTED BRETHREN CRADLE FAITH . . . (From a cablegram received 6 August 1980)

Canada: A beautiful example of the kind of collaboration we are experiencing here in Canada between the institutions of the Faith took place at the annual 'Gathering'. Organized by the Hand of the Cause of God William Sears, this year's 'Gathering' was specially for the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants. Three Hands of the Cause were among the honoured guests, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, John Robarts and 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá. As soon as Mr. Sears learned of the new initiatives taken by the National Assembly, however, he turned over a key portion of the programme to the Assembly to introduce its plan to focus the entire resources of the Canadian Bahá'í community on winning our international pioneer goals. Throughout the weekend speakers continually referred to the National Assembly's plan. Those present saw the entire administration move as one body in response to this priority focus.

A memorable part of the 'Gathering' was a special memorial service for the Hands of the Cause Enoch Olinga, Ḥasan M. Balyúzí, Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Adelbert Mühlschlegel. It was very stirring to see four devoted Hands of the Cause gathered to pay tribute to their much loved co-workers. The potency of the occasion was augmented with the realization that these souls were four from a company of twelve remaining Chief Stewards. It was a priceless privilege to hear stories of the meetings of the conclaves of the Hands between 1957 and 1963, and to catch a glimpse of the comradeship and power that characterized these conclaves. (From a report received 1 September 1980)

September

Papua New Guinea: Cabled greetings were sent from an inspirational institute with the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Madge Featherstone at Goroka on 14 September. Thirty-two pioneers and many local believers from other parts of Papua New Guinea gathered with Counsellor Violet Hoehnke, six Auxiliary Board members and seven members of the National Assembly to pledge themselves to the current two-year phase goals, particularly the re-election of lapsed Assemblies . . . (From a report received 14 September 1980)

November

World Centre: HEARTS FILLED WITH SORROW PASSING INDEFATIGABLE SELFSACRIFICING DEARLY LOVED HAND CAUSE GOD ABUL QASIM FAIZI. ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD MOURNS HIS LOSS. HIS EARLY OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN CRADLE FAITH THROUGH EDUCATION CHILDREN YOUTH STIMULATION FRIENDS PROMOTION TEACHING WORK PROMPTED BELOVED GUARDIAN DESCRIBE HIM AS LUMINOUS DISTINGUISHED ACTIVE YOUTH. HIS SUBSEQUENT PIONEERING WORK IN LANDS BORDERING IRAN WON HIM APPELLATION SPIRITUAL CONQUEROR THOSE LANDS. FOLLOWING HIS APPOINTMENT HAND CAUSE HE PLAYED INVALUABLE PART WORK HANDS HOLY LAND TRAVELLED WIDELY PENNED HIS LITERARY WORKS CONTINUED HIS EXTENSIVE INSPIRING CORRESPONDENCE WITH HIGH AND LOW YOUNG AND OLD UNTIL AFTER LONG ILLNESS HIS SOUL WAS RELEASED AND WINGED ITS FLIGHT ABHA KINGDOM. CALL ON FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERINGS HIS HONOUR INCLUDING SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE MEETINGS HIS NAME IN HOUSES WORSHIP ALL CONTINENTS. MAY HIS SHINING EXAMPLE CONSECRATION CONTINUE INSPIRE HIS ADMIRERS EVERY LAND. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES HIS NOBLE RADIANT SOUL MAY BE IMMERSED IN OCEAN DIVINE MERCY CONTINUE ITS UNINTERRUPTED PROGRESS IN INFINITE WORLDS BEYOND. (Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies 20 November 1980)

World Centre: The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí was laid to rest in the Bahá'í Cemetery at the foot of Mount Carmel on Sunday, 23 November 1980. The service was attended by his fellow Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and Paul Haney, members of the Universal House of Justice, Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre, members of his family and the staff serving at the World Centre. A special gesture of love was made when the children, each carrying a

bouquet of flowers, placed them around the graveside, kneeling and bowing their heads in sorrow at the passing of their beloved friend.

Earlier, all of the friends had assembled at the temporary Seat of the Universal House of Justice at No. 10 Haparsim Street. Many floral tributes from all over the world were placed at the front of the room, and the readings and prayers, especially one by Mr. Faizí's dearly-loved grandson, Paul, brought tears to the eyes of those who had the honour of witnessing this touching tribute to the Hand of the Cause. His humility and love had endeared him not only to those with whom he lived and worked, but to the pilgrims and the friends in different parts of the world with whom he had visited and corresponded, bringing them encouragement and love. On Wednesday, 19 November, after two years of illness, he peacefully passed away in his own home. He is universally mourned, and remembrances of his gentle and loving nature will always be in our hearts. (From a report dated 15 December 1980)

United States: The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí leaves a rich written legacy. His most recent work, published posthumously, is the foreword to *A Concordance to the Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, compiled by Dr. Jalil Mahmoudi and published by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of the United States. Other titles include *Stories from the Delight of Hearts*, *Three Meditations on the Eve of November the Fourth*, *The Wonder Lamp*, *Explanation of the Emblem of the Greatest Name*, *Milly: A Tribute to Amelia E. Collins*, and *The Prince of Martyrs*. Mr. Faizí's *Commentary on the Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* is available as a cassette recording . . . (From a report received 15 December 1980)

Switzerland: Approximately eighty friends gathered on 1 November 1980 at 4:00 p.m. in Büchtold-Haus to commemorate the passing of the Hand of the Cause Adelbert Mühlschlegel. The participants, who came from all parts of Switzerland to express their affection and admiration, recited prayers in various languages including Esperanto, one of the many languages spoken by Dr. Mühlschlegel. A number of people gave their recollections of Dr. Mühlschlegel and described happy moments spent in his presence. A photograph of him, surrounded by flowers, was prominently displayed. Ginette Dunand revived before our spiritual eye the solemn and poignant scene at the most beautiful cemetery in Greece where friends from many places accompanied his mortal remains to their last resting-place. They said their final farewells to the earthly 'temple' of this pure spirit and pledged themselves to follow his example of service. Those who have heard him describe being called by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum to prepare the body of Shoghi Effendi for burial will not readily forget how vividly he seemed to relive that deeply moving experience . . . At the memorial service some of Dr. Mühlschlegel's poems were read to the accompaniment of music and projected slides showing him surrounded by the friends in diverse gatherings. The meeting ended with the chanting of a prayer. The life of the Hand of the Cause of God was one deserving of emulation . . . (Adapted from a report by Verena Stroligo in *bulletin bahá'í suisse*, December 1980)

Canada: From many locations in British Columbia three hundred Bahá'ís came to Vancouver in November to hear the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá speak about the importance of developing a personal teaching plan. Dr. Varqá, who considers Canada his second home, spoke on the 'victories which come with self-discipline'. He spoke again at Nanaimo where fifty Bahá'ís assembled from distant points . . . In Vancouver he met with Bahá'í youth at a special meeting, telling of the crucial role they can play in the Cause, specifying their work in pioneering, teaching and child education. Dr. Varqá also addressed a gathering of one hundred Bahá'ís in Calgary in November. (From a report received in December 1980)

France: One hundred and sixty Bahá'ís of France attended a national teaching conference in Paris on 22–23 November 1980 which was graced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery. Three Auxiliary Board members, Mr. Paul Hakím, Dr. 'Azíz Miṣbáḥ and Mrs. Diane Starcher participated, as did the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Sixty-five persons pledged themselves to various aspects of the teaching work—eight of them as pioneers, twenty-eight as travelling



The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájír with friends in Mendoza, Argentina; December 1979.



The Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney at the site of the House of Worship in India, with members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia; 6 January 1981.

teachers . . . A unity evening was conducted by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Paris in an intensely spiritual atmosphere, enriched immensely by the presence of Dr. Giachery. (From a report received 23 December 1980)

December

Canada: During her stay in Canada to work on the film 'The Pilgrimage', the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum addressed the Bahá'ís both in Persian and English, in Montreal and Toronto; gave the eulogy in English at the memorial service for the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí held on 7 December at the Toronto Bahá'í Centre; and was interviewed for a Toronto television programme entitled 'Sounds of the East' which was broadcast on 8 December and repeated on 11 December. Following the completion of the pilgrimage film, she flew to Los Angeles on 11 December and thence to Vancouver on 17 December, again speaking to large gatherings of Bahá'ís in both these cities. Following the conference in Panama of the Continental Board of Counsellors for the Americas (from 2 to 4 January) which she will attend as the representative of the Universal House of Justice, she plans to visit most of the Central American countries. (From a report received 10 December 1980)

Germany: HAND CAUSE DHIKRULLAH KHADEM COUNSELLORS ANNELIESE BOPP AGNES GHAZNAVI WINTER SCHOOL OBERURSEL SOUTH GERMANY. ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY PARTICIPANTS. ENTHUSIASTIC DEEPENING . . . YOUTH PROGRAMME EMPHASIZED TEACHING AND PIONEERING. THREE DECLARATIONS . . . (From a cablegram received December 1980)

United Kingdom: *Mothers, Fathers and Children*, by the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, which was originally published in Persian in 1960 under the title *Essays on Education*, has become a widely used guide to child-raising for parents in Írán. It has now been published in English for the first time. How to train a child according to Bahá'í principles while dealing with day-to-day problems is the subject of this immensely practical book. The Bahá'í reader will realize, more than ever, some of the implications of the many references in the Bahá'í Writings to child-training. The author approaches his subject with knowledge and zest, and his readers—parents—with sympathy and with encouragement to enjoy their children, to take a moral stand, and, above all, to realize that being a mother or father is an honourable activity. Mr. Furútan is well-known throughout the Bahá'í world as an educator. He was appointed a Hand of the Cause in 1951 and now, with three fellow Hands of the Cause and four Counsellors, he is one of those who constitute the nucleus of the International Teaching Centre at the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith. (From a report received December 1980)

Canada: The energetic support given the work of the Faith by the Hand of the Cause John Robarts has excited the admiration of the Canadian believers. Following successful teacher-training sessions in November, he has been active in the Province of Quebec for the past several weeks, meeting with the National Spiritual Assembly, with a group of six Counsellors of the Americas, and with the Canadian National Teaching Committee. In Toronto he attended important planning meetings in November with Counsellors Arbab and Gardner, Auxiliary Board members for Eastern Canada and National and Regional Teaching Committee members. The Hand of the Cause worked actively in Quebec from September through November, speaking at the 'stage' conferences, at the three-day French Council and the Native Council in October. He led intensive teaching workshops in Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa on three weekends. It is reported that the friends left the meetings inspired, refreshed and committed to increasing their individual and group efforts. He next attended the Eastern Ontario Winter School and the International Developments Conference at the National Centre of Canada. The National Assembly writes, 'Both the Hand and his dear wife, Audrey, have cheered the friends with their vitality and enthusiasm . . .' (From a report received 1 January 1982)

January

Africa: The inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa opened in Nairobi, Kenya, with devotions and the reading of the message of the Universal House of Justice by its representative, the Hand of the Cause William Sears . . . A meeting with the Continental Pioneer Committee for Africa was held during one full session and specific decisions reached which will bring close collaboration on pioneer work, travel teaching projects, record keeping, orientation of new pioneers and continuing ties with them . . . It was felt that the unification of the Board of Counsellors for all Africa could well presage the long-yearned-for unity of all the peoples of this vast continent . . . After his attendance at the Nairobi conference, Mr. Sears travelled to South Africa where he met with the National Spiritual Assembly and laid plans to visit Transkei, Swaziland and Lesotho, going finally to South-West Africa/Namibia for the inaugural convention of that National Spiritual Assembly at Riḍván . . . Mr. Sears maintains close contact with the Continental Board of Counsellors, Auxiliary Board members and National Spiritual Assemblies in Africa through cassette recordings and round-robin letters. (From reports received through January 1981)

Africa: The Hand of the Cause of God John Robarts is on a lengthy teaching mission, having spent several days in the United Kingdom. He is presently in South Africa and will undertake extensive travel before attending the inaugural convention of Bophuthatswana during the Riḍván period. (From a report received January 1981)

The Americas: On 1 January the Counsellors in the Americas, coming to Panama from as far north as Alaska and as far south as Argentina, along with Counsellor member of the International Teaching Centre, Mr. Hooper Dunbar, and a large representation of Panamanian believers, were at the airport to welcome the representative of the Universal House of Justice, the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. She was warmly greeted with music, dancing and song. Before the consultative meetings began, the Counsellors gathered at dawn for devotions in the Mother Temple of Latin America . . . At a special session on Saturday evening Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum made reference to the future responsibilities of the Counsellors now that their jurisdiction extends from pole to pole . . . (From a report received January 1981)

The Americas: News reaching the World Centre during January in the course of Amatu'l-Bahá's progress through the Central American countries tells of exciting proclamation victories. From Panama she cables: SPENT ONE DAY AND NIGHT WITH CUNAS SAN BLAS. OVER THREE THOUSAND VILLAGERS SAW GREEN LIGHT FILM. ALSO TWO NIGHTS IN CHIRIQUI. SECOND LARGEST GATHERING SINCE DEDICATION TEMPLE HELD AT MUHAJIR INSTITUTE OVER NINE HUNDRED PRESENT. TWENTY-FOUR GUAYMI COMMUNITIES REPRESENTED. RUTH PRINGLE LAURETTA KING ACCOMPANIED ME. ATTENDED TEMPLE SERVICE TWO SUNDAYS. MEETING WITH NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY BAHAIS AND PUBLIC ALL CONTRIBUTED MEMORABLE VISIT MUCH LOVED COUNTRY. Moving northward, from Costa Rica she cabled this heartening news: RECEIVED CORDIALLY . . . HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT RODRIGO CARAZO ODIO FOLLOWED PRIVATE MEETING FIFTY MINUTES HIS DISTINGUISHED WIFE VERY ACTIVE NATIONAL FIGURE. ALSO EXCELLENT HALF-HOUR MEETING PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER . . . WEEKEND CONFERENCE BAHAIS LARGE PUBLIC MEETING AND UNITY FEAST AND SPECIAL AIR TRIP TO TALMANCA MEET INDIANS LOCAL FRIENDS PIONEERS . . .'

On 31 January Amatu'l-Bahá advised: WEEKS VISIT NICARAGUA IMPRESSIVE EVERY WAY . . . VERY CORDIAL THIRTY-FIVE MINUTE INTERVIEW REGARDING FAITH FIRST CONTACT NEW GOVERNMENT. PRESENTED BEHALF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY LARGE PRINTED FRAMED STATEMENT OBEDIENCE GOVERNMENT ENJOINED BY BAHAULLAH. EXCEPTIONALLY FINE STATEMENT PRINTED LEADING NEWSPAPER AFTER PRESS CONFERENCE AND RECORDED INTERVIEW BROADCAST NEWS PERIOD ON NATIONAL STATION AS WELL AS NOTICE MY VISIT BLUEFIELDS. PUBLIC LECTURES MANAGUA BLUEFIELDS WELL ATTENDED MOSTLY NONBAHAIS. WARM RECEPTION MANY QUESTIONS. WEEKEND CONFERENCE OTHER

MEETINGS BELIEVERS MANAGUA GRANADA BLUEFIELDS AND THREE MEETINGS WITH NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY . . . (From cablegrams received through 31 January 1981)

Australasia: In close proximity to the beautiful House of Worship of the Antipodes in Sydney, the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, representing the Universal House of Justice, and all seven members of the Board of Counsellors in Australasia, gathered to discuss recent developments announced by the Supreme Body in the functioning of the Boards of Counsellors . . . Towards the close of the conference, at the request of the Counsellors, Mr. Featherstone spoke in inspiring terms on the evolution of the institution and the challenging times that face humanity in the immediate future . . . Following these meetings Mr. Featherstone attended a National Teaching Conference at Albury, New South Wales, and a National Youth Conference from 11 to 14 January. Following that, and meetings with Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, he and Mrs. Featherstone returned to their home in Rockhampton where they readied themselves for their next swing through the Pacific Ocean regions that were anticipating the visit of the Hand of the Cause . . . (From reports received through 31 January 1981)

Asia: In conjunction with his attendance at the New Delhi meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia, the Hand of the Cause of God Paul E. Haney fulfilled an ambitious schedule of events laid out for him by the National Spiritual Assemblies of India and Pakistan. Before the New Delhi meeting he went to the New Era School, Panchgani, where he addressed the students and those friends who remained after the Winter School held there. Accompanied by Counsellor Manúchihr Salmánpúr he spent six days visiting Karachi believers and consulting with the National Spiritual Assembly. He visited the community of Lahore in the Punjab area of North Pakistan which had not been visited by a Hand of the Cause since Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí was there seventeen years ago. Returning to India on 13 January, Mr. Haney participated in a successful three-day teaching conference for North India held in New Delhi and then went on to the Indore Institute in Madhya Pradesh, the area of large-scale enrolments of recent years. He was accompanied by the Counsellor, Mrs. Shirin Boman. Mr. Haney next travelled to Bangalore where he took part in the South India Teaching Conference held in that city on 18–19 January. After twenty-five days of continuous travel, giving selflessly of his time and energies, Mr. Haney returned to the Holy Land on 21 January.

Europe: As all the meetings of the Counsellors on the five continents were about to begin, the Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem, representative of the Universal House of Justice, all nine members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe, and visiting member of the International Teaching Centre, Counsellor Anneliese Bopp, sought guidance and rendered thanks for the historic meeting with prayers at the Mother Temple of Europe in Frankfurt. Described as a 'wonderful, happy meeting', the first session opened with the message of the Supreme Body read by Mr. Khádem . . . Following the decisions on major policy, aspects of the work in Europe were reviewed with the valuable participation of Mr. Khádem. A highlight of the days spent together came on Saturday evening when the Hand of the Cause spoke to the Counsellors and to many friends gathered from far and near in the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. His subject was the suffering of the Bahá'ís in Írán and how sacrifice furthers the Cause of God . . . (From a report received January 1981)

Europe: Thirty-five days of intensive travel in December and January by the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery took him half-way around the world to Western Samoa for his fourth visit to that country. On 30 December he was received by His Highness the Malietoa Tanumafili II . . . Dr. Giachery's stay in Samoa included attendance at the 'most historic and bountiful Summer School ever', as reported by Counsellor Suhayl 'Alá'í, who said that before 'a large gathering of more than two hundred friends from all three major islands and the island of Tau (Manua Islands), Dr. Giachery poured out his heart day and night, his luminous spirit enriching the heart and soul of every believer'. Dr. Giachery proceeded to the Hawaiian Islands where he

appeared at two meetings in Honolulu and one in Lihue, Kauai, all well-attended, and took part in a memorial meeting for the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí. Moving on to Southern California, he attended gatherings two and three times a day, meeting old friends after an absence of eleven years . . . (From a report received January 1981)

United States: At a gala evening entitled 'A Tribute to the Hands of the Cause' sponsored by the Bahá'í community of Irvine, California, on 12 January 1981, the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery happily was able to be present, as if in answer to the prayers of the planning community . . . in attendance were Counsellors Hooper Dunbar and Fred Schechter . . . Dr. Giachery's address on the Guardian and the few remaining Hands was poignant beyond description. The marvellous evening was evidence of the reality of the spiritual power flowing from the Institutions of the Hands, the International Teaching Centre and the Continental Boards of Counsellors . . . (From a report received 29 January 1981)

February

The Americas: For nearly a year Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum's travels through the western hemisphere have brought countless opportunities to grateful national communities to proclaim the Faith as never before. Since her participation in the Counsellors' conference held in January in Panama she has visited Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Antigua, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica . . . The Bahá'í community of Honduras shared nineteen unforgettable days with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. In the capital city she spoke to a capacity crowd at the Hotel Honduras Maya on world peace. A national teaching conference opened the following day. Forty Bahá'ís of the Paya Indian tribe travelled by chartered bus from the distant Department of Olancho. Accompanied by Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání, Amatu'l-Bahá paid a courtesy visit to the President of the City Council of Tegucigalpa. An article and a photograph appeared in a prominent paper, with details of the cordial discussion they held. A picnic was held where many friends enjoyed the company of the Hand of the Cause . . . Leaving Tegucigalpa on 5 February she went by plane to the northern coastal city of La Ceiba where Bahá'ís from that community and from nearby Corozal were waiting in the airport. When the plane touched down, the Black Carib Bahá'ís of Corozal began their typical dances, much to the surprise and enjoyment of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. An in-depth radio interview was broadcast by Radio Ceiba whose manager was greatly impressed by the wisdom and dignity of his guest . . . She and her companion called on the Mayor of La Ceiba, holding a cordial forty-minute interview. Following an afternoon press conference, she spoke in the evening to a crowd of more than two hundred persons, which included the Mayor and people from all classes of society.

A Saturday morning radio interview lasted for an hour; next came a two-day teaching conference with two hundred and fifty Bahá'ís from twenty-seven communities. She was next taken to the village of Corozal where Black Caribs, the Farfunas, live. More than two hundred Bahá'ís quickly gathered and performed an ancient folk dance for the visitors . . . that same evening thirty-five new believers embraced the Faith. The next day she paid a courtesy visit to the Governor of the Department of Atlántida, a woman. The two women spoke together cordially for more than an hour about the Faith and its purposes. Another radio interview in the afternoon was followed by a visit to Sambo Creek village where a public meeting with more than one hundred Bahá'ís and seekers was held . . . After a well-deserved day of rest, Amatu'l-Bahá visited Brus Laguna in the heart of the Mosquitia area of swamps and lagoons . . . walking for many hours, or canoeing, the beloved friends, men and women and children, arrived in small groups to meet the first Hand of the Cause to make that perilous journey. During the teaching conference they were like many small rivers of spirit flowing towards Rúḥíyyih Khánum's ocean of love . . . On 15 February the group walked to the village of Kusuapayka where the believers spoke of their ancient Miskito customs. It was truly beautiful to see how they confided in her. She

in turn spoke of the importance of the indigenous peoples . . .

A week before the arrival of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání in Belize, on 19 February the newspapers carried articles about Amatu'l-Bahá and spoke of Belize as the 'one hundred and twenty-seventh country to be visited by her'. She was met at the plane by Counsellor Aḥmadíyyih, members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the Deputy Mayor of Belize City. Beneath a large banner reading 'Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum—Welcome to Belize' she was officially greeted on behalf of the Mayor and met Bahá'ís of Belmopan, San Ignacio, Belize City and Burrell Boom. She had a special word for each one. All were captivated by her natural charm and open manner.

A banquet in her honour brought many distinguished guests. Her book *Prescription for Living* was distributed to each one as a gift from the National Assembly. A public meeting in the hotel ballroom brought nearly one hundred persons to hear her speak on 'A Pattern for World Unity'.

On the twenty-first she recorded three radio programmes—one for Radio Belize and two for the Bahá'í series. In the afternoon she travelled to the capital city, Belmopan, where a public meeting was held at the Bahá'í Centre. On Sunday an all-day conference brought nearly five hundred Bahá'ís from all over the country to the largest Bahá'í gathering ever held in Belize where the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, Mrs. Shirley Warde, who has been a pioneer in Belize since 1953, was introduced.

A visit to the Governor of Belize was a cordial one. Books were given to him. The Commissioner of Police and his Deputy had met the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and expressed their great admiration for the Bahá'ís.

On 24 February Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum was welcomed to the Carib settlement of Dangriga by the Mayor and a group of Bahá'ís. Later, she dined in the District Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds with the Local Assembly, all of whose members are Caribs. A Carib dance was performed in Town Hall by professional dancers, and was followed by a talk by Amatu'l-Bahá to an audience of seventy people . . . After meetings with the National Spiritual Assembly, Amatu'l-Bahá left for El Salvador, assured by the Belize friends that her visit, though short, 'had inspired all with a new spirit of dedication to the Cause of God'. (From reports received through 29 February 1981)

March

The Americas: The itinerary established for Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum in El Salvador began with a meeting with the National Spiritual Assembly, followed by the celebration of Ayyám-i-Há. A talk at the Cultural Centre was attended by seventy people, mostly women. On the weekend, almost four hundred Bahá'ís from all over the country, and some seekers as well, met at the International School to hear the visitor discuss many subjects . . . A Unity Feast was held on 1 March with the Hand of the Cause participating in the devotional part . . .

For nine days in Guatemala, Amatu'l-Bahá gave talks and lectures for Bahá'ís and their guests. On 7–8 March about one hundred Bahá'ís arrived in the capital city to listen to the Hand of the Cause whose talks were filled with wisdom and inspiration. On Monday she travelled to San Lucas Toliman, in Sololá, where she talked to indigenous believers of that area . . . A banquet for prominent persons and a press conference completed the schedule in Guatemala City . . .

In Yucatán the seemingly tireless travellers spent a week, the most important events of which were: a reception tea with outstanding women of Mérida; a public meeting in the National Chamber of Commerce; a half-hour interview with the assistant to the Mayor; a six-minute interview on the television news programme; and, finally, three regional teaching conferences with Mayan believers . . .

In a cablegram from the Hand of the Cause herself, the World Centre learned of her meeting on 20 March, the eve of Naw-Rúz, with José Lopez Portillo, the President of Mexico. She states that she was 'received most courteously' and presented him with *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* and the statement on obedience to government . . . (From reports received through 4 June 1981)

Swaziland: On 8 March the Hand of the Cause William Sears and his wife, Marguerite,

came to Mbabane and many friends gathered on short notice to meet them at the Bahá'í Centre there. Mr. and Mrs. Sears told of their decision to return to Africa, a decision prompted by the news of the death of Enoch Olinga which reached them while they were praying at the cornerstone of the Mother Temple of North America. They had pioneered to South Africa from 1953 to 1959, the first Regional Assembly comprised of fourteen countries having been formed in a meeting at their farm near Johannesburg in 1956 . . . (From a report received March 1981)

Zimbabwe: The dedication, on 22 March, of an outstanding Bahá'í Centre at Templeton Ranch Compound in Mtoroshanga was made even more outstanding by the participation of the Hand of the Cause John Robarts and his wife, Audrey. The money to purchase the building materials of the new Centre was raised by the women of this community by baking small cakes in the kitchen of pioneers Mike and Becky Figgins and then selling them to workers in the nearby mines. Four Bahá'í men built the structure which is large enough to accommodate thirty to fifty persons . . . Gifts were brought for the occasion from the Continental Board of Counsellors, the Rose Garden community of Greater Salisbury and by visitors from Zambia. Even from Urbana, Ohio, U.S.A., a gift was airmailed—a replica of the Greatest Name made especially for this Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds . . . The Bahá'ís of Templeton presented Mr. and Mrs. Robarts with a carving of the Zimbabwe bird and a large spoon and fork made from animal horns. Food was served to everyone from huge, three-legged iron kettles, standing over open fires. The friends sat under the trees eating together and singing music to lift the hearts on that beautiful day. (From a report received 15 April 1981)

April

Bermuda: INEXPRESSIBLE JOY THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION ERECTION YET ANOTHER PILLAR IN THE AMERICAS . . . CONVENTION BLESSED ATTENDANCE HAND CAUSE AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM COUNSELLOR SARAH PEREIRA NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVE GLENFORD MITCHELL . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Bermuda: Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum herself cabled: BLESSED ISLE BERMUDA PEARL ATLANTIC UPLIFTED NEW HEIGHTS . . . WONDERFUL SPIRIT RECEPTION PRECEDING CONVENTION GRACIOUSLY ATTENDED PREMIERS WIFE ALSO LEADING SENATOR AND MINISTER HEALTH OTHER DISTINGUISHED GUESTS INCLUDING SIXTY-THREE OVERSEAS BAHAIS. PREMIER CORDIALLY RECEIVED ME. SPOKE ROTARY CLUB TELEVISION PRESS RADIO INTERVIEWS MYSELF AND OTHERS. BAHAI PROGRAMMES SATURATED PUBLIC NEWS OUR HISTORIC ELECTION FIRST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY. (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Bophuthatswana: Assembled at Mmabatho, the delegates to the first Convention of Bophuthatswana cabled the Universal House of Justice: INSPIRED PRESENCE HAND CAUSE JOHN ROBARTS . . . GRATEFUL GUIDANCE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE PARENT ASSEMBLY SOUTH AND WEST AFRICA AND REPRESENTATIVE OF COUNSELLORS . . . ASSEMBLY GOAL ALREADY ACHIEVED . . . DETERMINATION SURPASS GOAL FULFIL CONFIDENCE BELOVED HOUSE. TOTAL ATTENDANCE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Botswana: A ten-day visit to Botswana by the Hand of the Cause John Robarts and Mrs. Audrey Robarts brought special joy to the villagers of Francistown, Palapye and Mahalapye—small places which seldom receive visitors. From 8 to 18 April the Robarts visited the friends in Gaborone, the capital city, on three occasions, and were interviewed by Radio Botswana. An article about them appeared, unsolicited, in the *Daily News* and their visit was broadcast as a news item on the radio . . . The National Spiritual Assembly stated that 'it is difficult to express how much this visit meant to our community . . . Mr. Robarts is loved . . . as the person who, with his wife and family, brought the wonderful Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the people of Botswana'. (From a report received 25 June 1981)

Italy: TWENTIETH ITALIAN CONVENTION HEARTS FULL OF JOY PRESENCE BELOVED HAND CAUSE GIACHERY . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Leeward Islands: From its seat in St. John's,

Antigua, the Leeward Islands Convention cabled: . . . PRAYERS GUIDANCE YOUR FAITH IN US HAVE MADE POSSIBLE THIS JOYOUS OCCASION INAUGURATION NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY LEEWARD ISLANDS. ALSO THANK YOU FURTHER PLEASURE DISTINCT HONOUR PRESENCE HAND CAUSE AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM . . . SIXTY-SEVEN BELIEVERS PRESENT FROM SIXTEEN ISLANDS. HAPPY ANNOUNCE DEDICATION BEAUTIFULLY DECORATED NEW HAZIRATULQUDS. YOUR MESSAGE CREATED ENTHUSIASM DETERMINATION FULFIL NEW GOALS. (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

South and West Africa: HEARTS BURDENED CONTINUOUS PERSECUTION FRIENDS IRAN . . . YET JOYOUS UPLIFTED ADVANCES EXPANSION HOLY CAUSE GOD. BLESSED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND WILLIAM SEARS. (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

South West Africa/Namibia: HEARTFELT GRATITUDE YOUR REPRESENTATIVE HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS . . . ALSO PRESENT COUNSELLOR MASEHLA FOUR NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES FOUR AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS TEN DELEGATES SIXTY-SIX BELIEVERS TEN CHILDREN . . . ALL GREATLY INSPIRED BY BELOVED HAND ELECTION FIRST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY. (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Tuvalu: From its seat in Funafuti, the new Tuvalu National Spiritual Assembly cabled hailing the MARKED VICTORY OF THE NINTH PILLAR OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE IN AUSTRALASIA . . . CONVENTION UPLIFTED PRESENCE HAND OF CAUSE OF GOD COLLIS FEATHERSTONE . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

United States: TWO THOUSAND GATHERED AT SEVENTY-SECOND CONVENTION . . . IN PRESENCE HANDS OF THE CAUSE SHUAULLAH ALAI AND DHIKRULLAH KHADEM . . . STIRRED BY TRAGIC NEWS OF THE THREE MARTYRDOMS ON THE EVE OF OUR CONVENTIONS OPENING . . . ATTRACTING THE LIGHT OF PUBLIC ATTENTION AND COMPASSION GUARANTEEING GROWTH AND SPEEDING THE EMERGENCE OF THE FAITH FROM OBSCURITY. (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Windward Islands: WITH JOYFUL HEARTS SINGING PAEAN PRAISE INAUGURAL CONVENTION BOUNTY OF PRESENCE HAND CAUSE VARQA . . . MANY FRIENDS THREE ISLANDS . . . DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE FORMATION FORTY-ONE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES ALL ISLANDS . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1981)

Following the Convention there was a press interview with Dr. Varqá and Counsellor Ruth Pringle, and interviews with the acting Governor-General and the Prime Minister. Each of these high-ranking officials received the Bahá'ís warmly . . . In each of the three interviews questions were raised about the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán. (From a report received 7 June 1981)

May

The Americas: After attending the inaugural Conventions of the Leeward Islands and of Bermuda, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum proceeded to Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica. These eventful stops are summarized in a cabled message she sent to the World Centre: . . . THREE NIGHTS IN PUERTO RICO INCLUDED PUBLIC AND BAHAI MEETINGS AND A MEETING WITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. A HAPPY OCCASION. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FIVE-DAY VISIT VERY SUCCESSFUL . . . WEEKEND CONFERENCE ABOUT ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY ATTENDANTS MANY LOCALITIES. MEETING WITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ALSO PRESS INTERVIEWS AND EXCELLENT PUBLIC MEETING. TEN DAY VISIT HAITI INCLUDED MEETINGS PORT-AU-PRINCE PETIONVILLE JACMEL LES CAYES AND LILAVOIS ALSO SMALL WEEKEND CONFERENCE NATIONAL CENTRE TWO TELEVISION AND TWO RADIO INTERVIEWS AND A VERY WELL ATTENDED PUBLIC MEETING. AT BAHAI SCHOOL (ANIZ ZUNUZI) MET MAYOR OF LILAVOIS CHIEF OF POLICE OF AREA AND OTHER OFFICIALS THEIR FIRST VISIT SCHOOL ENABLING US PRESENT FAITH AND OBJECTIVES SCHOOL . . . FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVIEW FOREIGN MINISTER . . . WHO ALSO HOLDS PORTFOLIO RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS.

Of the Jamaican community she cables: . . . DURING SIX-DAY VISIT RECEIVED BY GOVERNOR GENERAL FOR CORDIAL THIRTY-MINUTE INTERVIEW . . . AND FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVIEW WITH PRIME MINISTER TO WHOM PRESENTED CASE PERSIAN PERSECUTIONS VERY STRONGLY . . . BOTH INTERVIEWS WERE OFFICIALLY TELEVISED AND SHOWN LATER ON NATIONAL NEWS PROGRAMME. OVER TWO HUNDRED BAHAIS ATTENDED WEEKEND CONFERENCE AND ABOUT THREE HUNDRED PEOPLE EIGHTY PERCENT NON-

BAHAIS AT PUBLIC MEETING. TWENTY-MINUTE SPECIAL TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON FAITH PRESS CONFERENCE WITH RADIO AND TELEVISION REPORTERS PRESENT AND MEETING WITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ALL CONTRIBUTED HAPPY ENDING SUCCESSFUL VISIT.

From her succession of stunning victories in the Caribbean, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum flew to Ottawa, Canada, for two talks before the Canadian Association for Bahá'í Studies, continuing the unique service she has been rendering to the believers of the western hemisphere during almost one year of sustained effort. (From reports, newsletters and cablegrams received through 4 June 1981)

Australasia and the Pacific: Leaving his home in February, the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, began a seventy-two-day journey that took him to nine National Spiritual Assembly areas, scores of islands and to communities where he met many hundreds of individual believers. Some highlights of his visits were: meetings with the Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur, and with the believers at Petalangjaya, assisting them with proclamation planning; in the Marianas, visits to pioneers on Saipan and Rota, bringing ideas and encouragement; in the Carolines, the dedication of a new National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds on Ponape where his talk was recorded by a radio announcer to be repeated at intervals on Ponape radio broadcasts; meetings with believers, radio and press interviews in Majuro, in the Marshalls, and a courteous interview with President Amata Kabua who said, with great warmth, 'You have brought light into a dark room'; a busy programme in Kiribati during which Mr. Featherstone met with the National Spiritual Assembly, gave a radio interview and travelled by motorized outrigger canoe (a three-and-a-half-hour, twenty-five mile trip) to meet with believers of Tewai village on Tabiteueau South. The Kiribati sojourn ended with a three-day teaching conference in Tarawa and was followed by a ten-day visit to Fiji. Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone returned to their home on 9 May for a brief respite . . . (From reports received through 1 June 1981)

Barbados: During the stay in Barbados of the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá in May, when he attended the National Convention of that island country, he called on the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Brazane Babb. The cordial twenty-minute interview with Dr. Varqá included presentation by the Secretary of the National Assembly of a kit containing Bahá'í Writings and pamphlets to be passed on to the Minister of External Affairs. There was also a short visit to the Chief of Protocol who was very friendly and who had visited the Shrine of the Báb on Mount Carmel. (From a report received 1 June 1981)

June

World Centre: Count Paolo Marzotto, the president of Industria dei Marmi Vicentini, the firm in Chiampo, Italy, which cut and carved all the marble and granite for the Shrine of the Báb, the International Archives building and the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, generously decided to bring to the Holy Land the workers whose skill and artistry has gone into the nearly-completed building which is to serve as the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice. Count and Countess Marzotto, accompanied by forty-four guests, together with the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and Mr. Sohrab Youssefian, both of whom have been intimately connected with this great structure, arrived at the World Centre. With the permission of the Universal House of Justice, some eighty Bahá'ís from Italy joined the special flight and came with the group to the World Centre for a three-day visit, bringing with them, as guests of the Italian National Spiritual Assembly, five very prominent Italian journalists. The visit proved to be a profoundly moving and highly significant occasion.

Early on Friday morning, the party from Industria dei Marmi Vicentini and the journalists, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Ḥusayn Amánat, Mr. and Mrs. Youssefian and Mr. Giovanni Ballerio, were taken to visit the old city of 'Akká and the Cell of Bahá'u'lláh. They then proceeded to Bahjí where they were welcomed by Dr. Ugo Giachery and those members of the Universal House of Justice who had served on the Building Committee, as well as members of the World Centre staff who had worked on the Seat,

and their wives. After a cooling refreshment, all visited the Most Holy Shrine where Dr. Giachery recited the Tablet of Visitation in Italian . . . a moving address of welcome was given by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Giachery on behalf of the Universal House of Justice and a very touching and extremely cordial response was delivered by Count Marzotto.

Returning to Haifa, all went immediately to the Seat of the Universal House of Justice and were conducted through it by the architect, Mr. Amánat, and the resident engineer, Mr. 'Azíz Khabípúr.

That evening the Pilgrim House in Haifa was a joyous gathering place for the pilgrims, the Italian three-day visitors, the group from Chiampo and the journalists.

Count Marzotto and his guests left the following morning to visit the Christian Holy Places in Israel, but the Italian journalists remained for two more days to visit other Bahá'í Holy Places and to conduct interviews about the Faith. It was surely providential that they had thus been fully informed about the Cause and had had dispelled many misconceptions when, while they were still present, the tragic news reached the World Centre of the martyrdom of seven members of the Spiritual Assembly of Hamadán. This news affected them deeply, and they left for Rome determined to do all they could to ensure that the public would learn the truth of the tragic events. (From a report dated June 1981)

July

Sweden: Sweden's first Summer School held in July brought friends from eight other countries and received considerable press and radio publicity. The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and Counsellor Hartmut Grossmann brought joy and inspiration to the one hundred and seventy friends who had been deeply grieved by the news of martyrdoms in Írán. (From a report received 11 August 1981)

United Kingdom: JOYOUS GREETINGS NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE UNITED KINGDOM DEDICATED MEMORY FIVE BELOVED HANDS OF CAUSE RECENTLY PASSED ABHA KINGDOM. INESTIMABLE BOUNTY PRESENCE HAND OF CAUSE RUHIYYIH KHANUM COUNSELLOR TAHERZADEH FOUR AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS THREE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS ALMOST NINE HUNDRED AND FIFTY PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTING OVER TWENTY NATIONALITIES . . . PILGRIMAGE GUARDIANS GRAVE BESEECH CONFIRMATION TEACHING PROJECT VIRGIN AREAS UNITED KINGDOM AFTER CONFERENCE AND RELIEF IRANIAN BELIEVERS. ENTIRE CONFERENCE AROSE PLEDGE DAILY LIFE SERVICE BAHAULLAH . . . (From a cablegram received 22 July 1981)

United States: In Kansas City, Missouri, from 2 to 5 July three thousand five hundred youth of the North American continent signed a commemorative scroll pledging unity and sacrifice and dispatched it to the Universal House of Justice on the seventy-sixth anniversary of a similar pledge made to 'Abdu'l-Bahá by American believers. The first Continental Youth Conference, honoured by the attendance of the Hands of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and Dhikru'lláh Khádem brought young believers from twenty countries to the huge gathering. They adopted a national youth plan . . . and launched eight summer teaching projects. (From a report received 8 July 1981)

August

Alaska: A total of fifty-nine different activities were reported by thirteen Alaskan communities in response to the inspiring plan launched by the Hand of the Cause William Sears last year before leaving North America to reside in Africa. Called 'Operation Befriend', the disarmingly simple but effective application of the Teachings consists of Bahá'í communities discovering ways to serve their larger community. Notable service activities of Alaskan communities: an international music festival with proceeds given to a local charity; a Human Rights essay contest; a cultural arts fair; Bahá'í music in community chorus programmes; murals for a children's ward of a hospital; a dance group which performs for schools. One community helped immigrants to attain official status, assisting with government procedures. In one community Bahá'í children wrote, planned and performed a mini-circus for a geriatric ward in a hospital. Some communities assisted with civic clean-up days, made donations of food, goods or services to non-Bahá'í functions, participated in local parades and celebrations,

or helped in libraries, health and other service organizations. (From a report received August 1981)

Australia: In Wollongong, New South Wales, two hundred and twenty-five believers gathered on the last weekend of August with the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone for an Institute opened by the Lord Mayor of the Australian town. Participation by three Auxiliary Board members and showing of the new film 'The Pilgrimage' brought deepened understanding and an intense spiritual atmosphere to deliberations on the Seven Year Plan.

British Isles: The month of August added to the amazing tally of locations visited during the fourteen-month travel schedule of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum the cities of Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland, and the Shetland, Orkney and Hebrides Islands groups.

On 14 August at Inverness an interview was held with the Hand of the Cause by the British Broadcasting Corporation. In it she spoke of the persecutions in Írán. On the same day she was received by the Lord Provost (Mayor) of the city of Inverness, and that night she attended a conference of the Bahá'ís for the highland area of Scotland. Twenty-five attended from Aberdeen and other centres.

August 15 and 16 found her in the Shetland Islands city of Lerwick where she met with the Bahá'ís on several occasions and made a courtesy call on the County Convenor, the head of the entire administration of the Shetland Islands . . . On 18 August B.B.C. radio conducted an excellent interview with Amatu'l-Bahá after which she lunched with the Bahá'ís and carried out a day-long meeting.

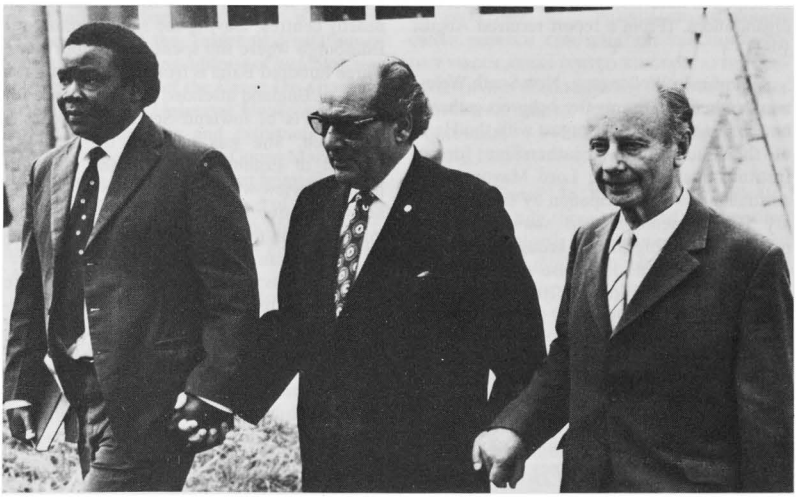
Stornoway, in the Western Isles of the Outer Hebrides, was the next stop where a dinner with the Bahá'ís was followed by a large public meeting at which Rúḥíyyih Khánum spoke.

She then flew to Glasgow where a small chartered plane flew her to the Island of Mull in the Inner Hebrides. She was accompanied by the chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom. In Mull she met with members of the Local Spiritual Assembly, had a lunch with them followed by a meeting with more than forty Bahá'ís from nearby centres, leaving the same evening for Edinburgh where she spent a busy four days. Three hundred Bahá'ís from Scotland and the north of England attended the conference for the Bahá'ís of lowland Scotland which she addressed. She was received by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and during her half-hour interview with him was able not only to answer his questions regarding the Faith but inform him in detail of the bitter persecutions of the Persian believers now taking place. On 30 August, just prior to her departure from the British Isles, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum lunched with the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom.

September

Australia: Dedicating August and September to the Bahá'ís of Australia, the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone gave generously of his time and energies to participate in public meetings, seminars, deepening sessions, firesides, youth meetings, a Summer School, a special service for the twentieth anniversary of the dedication of the Temple and numerous visits of assistance to and consultation with individual believers, Assemblies, Board members and the National Spiritual Assembly. Mrs. Featherstone also participated actively, addressing deepening sessions on the subject of the Guardian and speaking to a women's group in Renmark which included among the thirteen non-Bahá'í women the lady Mayor of that city. In all, the Featherstones travelled to eighteen Australian cities during August and September. (From a report received September 1981).

Cyprus: September brought Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and her companion, Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání closer to the Holy Land. The final two weeks of Amatu'l-Bahá's journey were spent in Cyprus in both the Greek and Turkish areas. The Greek-language newspaper, *Simerini*, sent a reporter to the airport for the arrival of the Hand of the Cause on 1 September, having already printed news of her coming in the previous Sunday's paper. A prominent English-language newspaper, the *Cyprus Weekly*, interviewed her on 3 September and a long and sympathetic article head-



The Hands of the Cause (left to right) Enoch Olinga, Abu'l-Qásim Faizí and Dr. Adelbert Mühlschlegel, Teaching Conference, Plön, Germany; 1972.



The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem (far left) with members of the Spanish and Asian Regional Teaching Committees, National Bahá'í Centre, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A.; August 1982.

lined 'Genocide against the Bahá'ís of Írán, was published.

Cyprus Bahá'ís reported, 'The presence of the Hand of the Cause seemed to give great courage to the friends who issued at least two hundred invitations to the special gathering on 5 September at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Nicosia . . . A most moving commemoration took place with nearly fifty people present when, with prayers, stories, readings, to a background of music and slides, we remembered our fellow Bahá'ís who have laid down their lives for the Faith . . .' Many sympathetic friends attended their first Bahá'í function that day.

Cypriot Bahá'ís on the Turkish side of the island came to an all-day conference and were privileged to lunch with their distinguished visitor. Later she was shown the land for their Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. Returning to Limassol, on the Greek side, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum met with the believers there on 9 September.

On the evening of Tuesday, 15 September 1981, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum returned to the Holy Land, having devoted one year, two months and twenty-one days to travels on behalf of the Cause, accompanied by her valued companion. She had visited at least twenty-six countries, meeting government officials and dignitaries on every level from municipal to national, including several heads of state; giving interviews to the press, radio and television; and visiting with Bahá'ís of these same countries in city and hamlet, village or town, encouraging, instructing and stimulating them to make their best efforts on behalf of the Cause, and bringing the special spiritual ambience of the Holy Land and Holy Family. (From reports received through 15 September 1981)

Portugal: The national Summer School in Lisbon on 23 September brought one hundred Bahá'ís together in the presence of the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, who inspired, instructed and encouraged them in 'greater service . . . to the remaining goals of the Seven Year Plan . . . and the quality of Bahá'í life'. (From a report received September 1981)

United Kingdom: A conference in London with ninety participants on 29 September brought together the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, nine Counsellors of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Europe, members of eighteen National Spiritual Assemblies, and of the Continental Pioneer Committee of Europe, and representatives of the Bahá'í International Community staff. They observed in a cabled message to the Universal House of Justice that the IRREVERSIBLE PROCESS OF EMERGENCE OBSCURITY CALLS FOR NEW UNDERSTANDING UNDERLYING SPIRITUAL NATURE TEACHINGS to reinforce all individual and collective efforts in proclamation, expansion and consolidation. They spoke of the need to achieve RADICAL CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AND APPROACHES to meet new needs and rapidly changing conditions in Europe. (From a cablegram received 29 September 1981)

United States: Two Hands of the Cause of God, Dhikru'lláh Khádem and John Robarts, spoke to a busload of French Canadian visitors from Quebec who toured the Mother Temple of the West in Wilmette, Illinois, which was designed by a French Canadian architect, Louis Bourgeois. Their visit was the first such organized trip by French Canadians and was marked by special readings at the Temple, a film of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and a slide presentation on the history of the Temple. (From a report received September 1981)

October

Australia: From all parts of Australia more than three hundred Bahá'ís came to a conference of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia held in collaboration with the National Spiritual Assembly in Adelaide from 10 to 12 October 1981. Among those attending were the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, who was making a return visit to the city in which he had been enrolled as a Bahá'í many years ago, Counsellor Peter Khan, three members of the Auxiliary Board and four members of the National Assembly . . . Analysis of the present state of the Seven Year Plan brought the happy news of several new Assemblies and an increased rate of enrolment . . . The entire conference was video-taped—a first for an Australian Bahá'í conference—for use in later deepening clas-

ses. (From a report received 20 November 1981)

Zambia: Careful advance planning, allocation of areas, and preparation of teaching aids preceded the Zambian teaching programme spanning the period 20 October to 12 November. Aimed at creating fifty new Local Assemblies, the programme was undertaken in the name of the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir . . . The first word received was that the campaign ended with at least ten new Local Assemblies, thirty new localities and two hundred new Bahá'ís. (From a report received December 1981)

December

Australasia: From mid-November through December the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, accompanied by Mrs. Featherstone, travelled to Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Indonesia, returning home to Australia on 29 December. In May 1982 the Hand of the Cause will attend the International Conference in Manila, will travel to various countries of Asia and Europe, and will arrive in the Republic of Ireland in June to represent the Universal House of Justice at the Dublin International Conference. (From reports received through 26 January 1982)

1982

January

World Centre: The months of August and September will witness the last three International Conferences called by the Universal House of Justice for 1982 . . . The 6–8 August gathering in Quito, Ecuador, will be held in the sports pavilion of Colegio Benalcazar in the heart of Quito where more than a thousand Bahá'ís will greet the Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney who will come to them from Haifa as the representative of the Universal House of Justice to the Conference . . . The Hand of the Cause William Sears will be the emissary of the Universal House of Justice to the Lagos Conference . . . The Montreal Conference on 3–5 September will be the last of the series, and its close will mark the mid-point of the Seven Year Plan . . . it will take the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, in her capacity as representative of the Universal House of Justice to the Conference, back to her ancestral home. The house which belonged to her distinguished parents, and which was visited by the Master, is now maintained as a Shrine by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada . . . (From a report dated January 1982)

Benin: A Regional Centre named after the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was dedicated on 24 January 1982 in Abomey, provincial capital of the Zou, and the historic royal capital of the Fon people . . . 'Centre Muhájir' stands in the heart of Abomey on the main artery through town, directly across from the entrance to the Museum and the historic royal palace of the Fon kings. The titular head of the royal families of the Fon people, Agoliagbo II, came to the dedication and spoke of his interest in and support of the Bahá'í teachings. National Assembly members presented Bahá'í books to the King and thanked him for coming. Counsellor Thelma Khelghati welcomed the audience and explained the relationship of the Bahá'í teachings to traditional beliefs . . . two hundred and fifty Bahá'ís and invited guests were present at the dedication. (From a report received 11 March 1982)

United States: *A Cry from the Heart*, a new book by the Hand of the Cause of God William Sears, will be available at the Bahá'í National Convention . . . Mr. Sears, deeply moved by the savage onslaught on the heroic Bahá'í community in Írán, has written a dramatic account of the current persecutions. In doing so he has drawn on his own travels in Írán where he came to know and love the Persian Bahá'ís. He also makes use of detailed information available at the World Centre where he wrote the first draft of the book . . . (From a report received January 1982)

April

Canada: PROFOUNDLY MOVED EMOTIONAL APPEAL HAND OF CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS TO EXPLOIT TEACHING POSSIBILITIES A CRY FROM THE HEART . . . DELEGATES INCLUDING TEN INDIANS ONE INUIT FIVE FRENCH CANADIANS TWENTY-FIVE

PERSONS OTHER MINORITIES . . . IMPRESSED RESPONSE MEDIA SUPPORT GOVERNMENT BAHAI APPEAL JUSTICE IRANIAN CRISIS . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1982)

Canada: On the weekend of 10–11 April, forty-five individuals met in Ottawa, invited by the Executive committee of the Association for Bahá'í Studies to inaugurate the work of the Bahá'í International Health Agency. The creation of such an agency had been approved by the Universal House of Justice and endorsed by the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada. The policy conference was honoured to have the Hand of the Cause John Robarts in attendance and enriching the consultation . . . (From a report received 13 June 1982)

France: IN PRESENCE HANDS OF THE CAUSE GIACHERY KHADEM . . . ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY-TWO PARTICIPANTS . . . CONVENTION CONSIDERED GALVANIZING MESSAGES . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1982)

Hawaiian Islands: ASSEMBLED DELEGATES BOARD MEMBERS GUESTS STIRRED BY PRESENTATION A CRY FROM THE HEART. ALL PRESENT BROUGHT TO TEARS OVERPOWERING EMOTIONAL RESPONSE SUPREME SACRIFICES OFFERED BY OUR BELOVED BROTHERS AND SISTERS CRADLE FAITH. HAND SEARS IMAGERY OF IMPOSSIBILITY DESTRUCTION ORANGE TREE BLESSED BAB SYMBOLIZED OUR UNSHAKEABLE CONFIDENCE FUTILITY ENEMIES ANNIHILATE FAITH OF GOD . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1982)

Malaysia: INSPIRED PRESENCE BELOVED HAND COLLIS FEATHERSTONE . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1982)

Singapore: HAND CAUSE FEATHERSTONES MESSAGE ON URGENCY OF TEACHING TIMELY AND STIMULATING. DEEPLY MOVED . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1982)

United States: HIGH SPIRIT GENERATED BY RELEASE HOUSE OF JUSTICE RIDVAN MESSAGE APPEARANCE HAND CAUSE SEARS . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1982)

May

Australia: A cable from the Australian National Spiritual Assembly expresses delight about a MEMORABLE HAPPY BUSY WEEKEND JUST PASSED as it reports on 31 May two nation-wide television programmes on the Faith. . . . THE SIXTY-MINUTES SHOW . . . EXTREMELY WELL DONE FIFTEEN MINUTES OF BEAUTIFUL PICTURES OF THE [BAHAI HOLY PLACES] AND THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY. THE SHOW FEATURED THE HAND OF THE CAUSE AMATULBAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM WHO WAS AS USUAL BRILLIANT. Another programme of fifteen-minute length on ABC-TV called 'Nation-wide' dealt with the Faith, with emphasis on Iranian Bahá'ís in what was described as a well-balanced and sympathetic presentation. (From a cablegram received 31 May 1982)

June

Republic of Ireland: The participation in the Dublin Conference of the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone came at the mid-point of a four-month journey in which he left Australia on 27 April with his wife, Mrs. Madge Featherstone, to visit seventeen countries and return to Australia in time for the opening on 2 September of the International Conference in Canberra. Among the countries visited were Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines (in time for the National Convention), Thailand, Cyprus, Greece and Switzerland . . . (From reports received through 29 June 1982)

India: *Glory*, the youth magazine of India, is celebrating its tenth year of publication. Its anniversary edition, vol. X, no. 6, is a compendium called 'The Best of Glory'. The opening page acknowledges a debt to the late Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí who helped to bring the youth publication into existence and fanned the flickering flame of its life through some difficult years . . . (From a report received June 1982)

July

Finland: The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, Counsellor Hartmut Grossmann, members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Finland, Auxiliary Board members, their assistants, and friends from seven countries assembled at the Finnish Summer School in Savonlinna from 23 to 31 July. The first day was devoted to the Dublin Conference. The message of the Universal House of Justice to that Conference was read by Mr. Featherstone and discussed by the friends . . . (From a report received 9 August 1982)

Norway: The Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery was among the one hundred and thirty persons who attended the Summer School of Norway from 17 to 24 July . . . Dr. Giachery's stirring account of the life of the Greatest Holy Leaf was part of a full day dedicated to her memory, which constituted the Norwegian Bahá'í community's fiftieth anniversary commemoration of her passing. Participants represented fourteen countries and Norway's principal minority group, the Lapplanders (or Same) people . . . (From a report received July 1982)

August

Canada: CONTINENTAL INDIGENOUS COUNCIL BLOOD RESERVE ALBERTA SEND WARMEST LOVING GREETINGS FROM FOUR HUNDRED THIRTY-SIX ATTENDEES REPRESENTATIVES SIXTY TRIBES TEN COUNTRIES. GRATEFUL ATTENDANCE HAND CAUSE RUHIYYIH KHANUM COUNSELLORS BOMAN KING PAVON. SPIRIT IS BUILDING TO PROCLAIM TEACH FAITH TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLE. (Cablegram received 14 August 1982)

Canada: The seventh annual meeting of the Association for Bahá'í Studies brought seven hundred members and guests to Ottawa on 30 August for a four-day gathering which preceded the great International Conference in Montreal . . . In connection with the Association meeting, the Governor-General of Canada, Edward Schreyer, greeted Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum at the University of Ottawa campus on 2 September . . . (From a report received September 1982)

Costa Rica: A satellite conference held on 14 August in Costa Rica was graced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney and Counsellor Donald Witzel . . . It was stated that two hundred Bahá'ís attended the conference from all parts of Costa Rica, including approximately forty Guaymi believers from Talamanca and Térraba . . . (From a report received September 1982)

Haiti: The Anís Zunúzí School, which has arisen in Haiti during 1979–1981, first opened its doors in the academic year 1980 with a few classes, and will have its official inauguration on 20 October 1982. As a focus of prestige and recognition for the Faith in Haiti, it has already begun to assume importance. The public relations efforts of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, and of Mme. Lea Nys of Belgium, brought about newspaper articles and a television report from the school site . . . In October, with official recognition as a public utility under the direction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Haiti, and with additional grade levels and the first stages of a programme leading to a technical school, the Anís Zunúzí School will enter a new phase, with unlimited possibilities for future growth and advances in a country where illiteracy is a grave social problem. (From a report received August 1982)

September

Samoa: Following his attendance at the International Conference in Canberra where he represented the Universal House of Justice, Dr. Ugo Giachery made a brief but memorable visit to Samoa where, on 13 September 1982, he was received by His Highness Malietoa Tunamafili II at a morning reception lasting two hours . . . During Dr. Giachery's stay in Apia the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa held a traditional 'sua', including the traditional kava ceremony and the presentation of a fine mat and food. Many believers came from Upolu and Savai'i to be with the Hand of the Cause and hear him speak. Dr. Giachery also visited American Samoa for one night, meeting with the friends at Fagaitua, and participating in a half-hour television interview which was broadcast the following Sunday. He also took the opportunity to tour the site of the Samoan House of Worship . . . (From a report received 19 October 1982)

South Africa: HISTORICAL FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE SOUTH AFRICA HELD HOLIDAY INN JOHANNESBURG INSPIRED BY HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS COUNSELLORS MASEHLA AND WINCKLER NINE BOARD MEMBERS. ATTENDANCE INCLUDED ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY PIONEERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA LESOTHO SWAZILAND BOPHUTHATSWANA UNITED STATES BOTSWANA ZIMBABWE CISKEI VENDA LEBOWA KWAZULU PLUS ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN INDIGENOUS AFRICAN COLOURED MALAY INDIAN WHITE BELIEVERS SAME COUNTRIES PLUS MALAWI . . . (From a cablegram received 21 September 1982)

Bophuthatswana: JOYFUL ANNOUNCE SUCCESS HISTORIC INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE BOPHUTHATSWANA DEDICATED GREATEST HOLY LEAF. GIANT STEP EMERGENCE FAITH FROM OBSCURITY SOUTHERN AFRICA. REPRESENTATIVE HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS COUNSELLOR WILLIAM MASEHLA FIVE AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS FOURTEEN COUNTRIES OVER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY ADULTS SEVENTY CHILDREN INCREASED AWARENESS COMMON GOALS ESPECIALLY BORDER TEACHING . . . (From a cablegram received 30 September 1982)

Brazil: In preparation for the large-scale teaching efforts to be launched in the west-central region of the country, the National Spiritual Assembly sponsored a regional teaching conference in Campo Grande on 4 September dedicated to the memory of the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who set an immortal example in mass teaching efforts . . . (From a report received 13 October 1982)

United States: The recent travels of the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone have taken him to a number of centres in the United States. In New York, Mr. Featherstone visited the offices of the Bahá'í International Community and later addressed a meeting attended by two hundred believers at the New York Bahá'í Centre. In Chicago Mr. Featherstone met with the National Spiritual Assembly, gave a talk to members of the National Centre staff, and on a later occasion spoke to a gathering of Bahá'ís in Foundation Hall at the Mother Temple of the West.

In St. Louis, Missouri, Mr. Featherstone addressed the believers and held a public meeting. Similar meetings for the friends and the public were held in San Francisco and Los Angeles, approximately twelve hundred people attending the latter gathering. Mr. Featherstone's arrival in Canberra, Australia, coincided with the opening of the International Conference in which he participated. (From a report received December 1982)

October

Bermuda: *A Cry from the Heart*—the stirring book by the Hand of the Cause William Sears that deals with the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Írán—is now available for sale at the three major commercial bookshops in Bermuda, the National Spiritual Assembly has reported . . . a copy is also being donated to the public library. An article describing the book is in process of preparation and is expected to appear in one of the island's three newspapers . . . (From a report received October 1982)

Canada: The journey undertaken by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum on 11 August covered twenty thousand miles and took her to forty-five locations. She visited centres in all Canadian provinces, including the Magdalen Islands, Quebec and Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, and toured the Yukon Territory and Labrador. In addition, she visited Greenland and Iceland. Throughout her travels she met many Indians and Eskimos whose spiritual receptivity deeply impressed her. 'Her deep love for the native people of North America was reflected in visits to many Indian reserves including: Blood Reserve, Alberta (where a major Native Council took place); Carcross Band Reserve, Yukon; Fountain Band and Thunder Bird Band Reserves in British Columbia; Peigan Reserve, Alberta; Dreamers Rock Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario; Lennox Island Reserve, Prince Edward Island; and Eskasoni Reserve, Nova Scotia. Believers in some of Canada's geographically remote communities, which all too seldom receive travel teachers, will be forever grateful for her loving consideration when she visited: St. John's and Grand Falls, Newfoundland; Happy Valley, Labrador; and Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island. Even Canada's overseas northern goals were included with especially significant visits to Nuuk, Greenland and Reykjavik, Iceland,' Counsellor Gardner wrote.

A warm personal reception was accorded Amatu'l-Bahá not only by her Bahá'í hosts but by many high officials including the President of Iceland, the Eskimo Premier and Danish Governor of Greenland, the Lieutenant-Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Premier and Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory and the Regional Director of Baffin Island. Local Bahá'ís enthusiastically arranged excellent meetings and publicity for their distinguished guest . . .

Following her tour of Canada, Greenland and Iceland, Amatu'l-Bahá's itinerary took her to Haiti where she participated in the inauguration of the Anís Zunúzí School. (From reports received through 28 October 1982)

Ḥaiti: THANKFULLY ANNOUNCE SINGULAR SUCCESS INAUGURATION ANIS ZUNUZI SCHOOL INSPIRING DAY PRESENCE HAND CAUSE AMATUL-BAHA REPRESENTATIVE OF MONSIEUR MADAME PRESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE DEPARTMENT EDUCATION AMBASSADOR CANADA MAYOR DEPUTIES CROIS DESBOUQUETS THREE COUNSELLORS FIVE HUNDRED PARTICIPANTS LOCAL BAND RADIO TELEVISION . . . (From a cablegram received 22 October 1982)

Kenya: Mr. William Sears has concluded a five-week journey that took him to each of Africa's five satellite conferences. The following cablegram was received from Nairobi: FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE BAHAIS INCLUDING FOUR COUNSELLORS SEVENTEEN BOARD MEMBERS NINETY CHILDREN FROM TWELVE COUNTRIES HONOURED PRESENCE DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS. CONFERENCE ADDRESSED BY PROMINENT KENYAN EFFIE OWUOR RECENTLY ELEVATED FIRST WOMAN HIGH COURT JUDGE . . . CONFERENCE DEEPLY INSPIRED SACRIFICIAL SPIRIT GREATEST HOLY LEAF YOUR ENCOURAGING MESSAGES HIGHLY MOVING TALKS HAND CAUSE AND EXCELLENT PRESENTATION OTHER SPEAKERS . . . HEARTS WARMED PRESENCE THIRTEEN EGYPTIANS TWENTY-SIX TANZANIANS THIRTEEN UGANDANS . . . (From a cablegram received 21 October 1982)

Transkei: WORDS FAIL EXPRESS HIGH SPIRIT OF LOVE SERVICE GENERATED BY MESSAGES UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE NEWS LAGOS CONFERENCE EXALTED EXAMPLE GREATEST HOLY LEAF PRESENTED HAND CAUSE WILLIAM SEARS COUNSELLOR BAHIYYIH WINCKLER TO INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CONFERENCE TRANSKEI . . . HONOURABLE MINISTER OF WELFARE SPORT CULTURAL AFFAIRS WHO SPOKE MOVING WORDS ABOUT THE FAITH . . . [AND WAS] ATTRACTED BY SPIRIT OF CONFERENCE DEMONSTRATING UNITY OF RACE . . . (From a cablegram received 5 October 1982)

December

World Centre: WITH STRICKEN HEARTS ANNOUNCE SUDDEN IRREPARABLE LOSS THROUGH AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT 3 DECEMBER HIGHLY DISTINGUISHED GREATLY PRIZED HANDCAUSE GOD STAUNCH DEFENDER COVENANT PAUL HANEY. THIS DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BAHAULLAH WAS BLESSED CHILDHOOD THROUGH ATTAINMENT PRESENCE ABDULBAHA. HIS NATURAL GENTLENESS GENUINE HUMILITY UNAFFECTED UNBOUNDED LOVE HIS UPRIGHTNESS INTEGRITY HIS SINGLE-MINDED DEVOTION CAUSE SINCE YOUTHFUL YEARS HIS UNFAILING RELIABILITY METICULOUS ATTENTION DETAIL CHARACTERIZED HIS HISTORIC SERVICES BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS. SPANNING MORE THAN HALF CENTURY HIS TIRELESS LABOURS INCLUDED LONG TIME MEMBERSHIP AMERICAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. SINCE 1954 HE CONSECRATED HIS ENERGIES AS MEMBER UNIQUE COMPANY CHIEF STEWARDS FAITH AND LATER AS MEMBER BODY HANDS CAUSE RESIDING HOLY LAND AT ONE OF MOST CRITICAL PERIODS BAHAI HISTORY. LAST DECADE HIS EARTHLY LIFE WAS FULLY DEDICATED DEVELOPMENT NEWLY FORMED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE. GENERATIONS YET UNBORN WILL GLORY IN HIS IMPERISHABLE ACHIEVEMENTS AND BE INSPIRED BY HIS UNIQUE FORTITUDE. ARDENTLY SUPPLICATING HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. ADVISE HOLD THROUGHOUT BAHAI WORLD INCLUDING ALL MASHRIQULADHKARS MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING HIS HIGH RANK AND HIS MERITORIOUS SERVICES. (Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies 5 December 1982)

World Centre: The Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney, who served in the Holy Land since 1957, was laid to rest in the Bahá'í Cemetery at the foot of Mount Carmel on Sunday, 5 December 1982. The service was attended by his widow, supported by the friends serving at the World Centre, and pilgrims. Also in attendance were a number of Israeli guests whose friendship and admiration Mr. Haney had won during his long residence in the Holy Land. All assembled at the present Seat of the Universal House of Justice at 10 Haparsim Street, Haifa, where the service was conducted. A moving selection of readings and prayers was read in an atmosphere of sorrow lightened by the friends' recollection of Mr. Haney's unfailing cheerfulness, unflagging zeal and unswerving integrity in service to the

Faith. Mr. Haney was appointed by Shoghi Effendi a Hand of the Cause on 19 March 1954. The motor accident which claimed his life on 3 December terminated a record of service which stretches back to his earliest years in his native America . . . (From a report dated December 1982)

World Centre: The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan returned to the Holy Land on 30 December after a tour of Canada and the United States focusing on communities in Ontario, Canada; and Boston, Alexandria and Southern California in the United States. During the four-month trip, Mr. Furútan gave eighty-two talks to diversified and to solely-Persian audiences. In a meeting with the friends who serve in the Holy Land which was held in the magnificent new Seat of the Universal House of Justice, he commented that he was astonished and touched by the love which he observed, during his tour, between the Persian and Western friends. Many mornings he would be visited by the families of the martyrs. Mr. Furútan admitted that often the stories they told would be so moving that he would have to tell them he could bear no more, but when he attempted to console them, he found that their response was only humble pride at the courage and steadfastness of their relatives who had suffered martyrdom. He was accompanied and assisted on his journey by his daughter, Mrs. Írán Muhájir. (From a report dated 15 January 1982)

Bangladesh: A week-long teaching programme in the name of the much-loved Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was held in Rajshahi town. In one week thirty-five hundred persons, many of them dignitaries, professors, doctors and students, heard about the Faith and received literature. A book exhibit was mounted at the district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of Rajshahi, containing publications in Bengali, English and other languages, and accompanied by posters illustrating Bahá'í principles . . . about one thousand persons visited, twenty of whom embraced the Faith. A slide show on the Faith was well attended each evening. News of the exhibit was carried on notice boards in five locations about town and the newspapers carried articles for three days . . . (From a report received 15 December 1982)

Canada: Bahá'í publications are being retailed in Canada by thirty-five bookstores in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec because of action by communities to promote the new books on persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Írán. English-language bookshops are carrying *Írán's Secret Pogrom* by Dr. Geoffrey Nash and *A Cry from the Heart* by the Hand of the Cause William Sears, while French-language bookstores are displaying *Les Bahá'ís ou victoire sur la violence* by Christine Hakím-Samandarí. One chain carries a complete range of Bahá'í titles . . . (From a report received December 1982)

Costa Rica: The national teaching plan of Costa Rica was launched at a Summer School in December, in the name of the late Hand of the Cause of God Paul E. Haney. The two hundred and fifty persons who attended the school, including indigenous believers from Talamanca, were inspired by the presence of three Counsellors of the Continental Board—Mrs. Lauretta King, Mrs. Ruth Pringle and Mr. Raúl Pavón.

Haiti: In consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum worked out a detailed schedule for her five weeks in Haiti during which she and her companion, Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání travelled the length and breadth of the country and visited twenty-five Bahá'í communities. 'In Amatu'l-Bahá's estimation,' her companion reported, 'the outstanding event was the opening of the island of Île-à-Vache, one of the goals of the Seven Year Plan of the Universal House of Justice, where twenty-eight people accepted the Faith, including the Magistrate of this charming tropical island of over 7,000 inhabitants. Rúḥíyyih Khánum, accompanied by eight other Bahá'ís, hired a boat in the town of Les Cayes and crossed the turbulent sea, over an hour's trip; the weekly market had brought many buyers and sellers, not only from this little island but also from the mainland. Moving in the crowded market amongst the friendly and cheerful people, she attracted a number of people, and when the Magistrate

suggested that we sit under a grove of coconut palms by the sea for our picnic lunch, she invited him to join us. Afterwards she asked the Auxiliary Board member, Mr. René Jean Baptiste, to give in Creole an introductory talk on the Faith; questions were asked, literature distributed, and our hearts were moved when the Magistrate and twenty-seven other people accepted the Cause. We have since heard that in follow-up visits by other Bahá'ís these new believers have proved their sincere devotion to the Cause of God.'

The few days spent in Toronto, Canada, prior to her return to the Holy Land coincided with the memorial meeting held there for the Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney. Two Hands of the Cause, John Robarts, who acted as chairman for the occasion, and Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, were present on the podium with Amatu'l-Bahá; her moving tribute in memory of her distinguished co-worker and 'life-long friend' deeply touched the audience of over five hundred Bahá'ís who were present.

In a period of five and a half months Amatu'l-Bahá has covered over thirty thousand miles and visited over eighty-five centres . . . . (From reports received through December 1982)

1983

January

Alaska: HAPPY ANNOUNCE THIRD YOUTH CONFERENCE HELD LAKE ALASKA . . . DEDICATED IRANIAN YOUTH. LAST EVENING RESERVED TRIBUTE ALL HANDS CAUSE OF GOD. SPECIAL MEMORIAL SERVICE PAUL HANEY. HIGH SPIRIT UNITY ACHIEVED . . . (From a cablegram received 10 January 1983)

Australasia: Between 1 December and 31 January, the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, accompanied by Mrs. Featherstone, visited the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, as well as two locations in Australia. Mr. Featherstone's activities in the Philippines included a meeting with the Dean of the University of Philippines College to whom he presented a proclamation book which was warmly received.

In Japan Mr. Featherstone met with Bahá'ís at the Osaka Centre then flew to Kagoshima and taxied to Ibusuki, sister city to Rockhampton, Australia, Mr. Featherstone's home town. On 13 December, Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone met the Mayor and presented colour photos of the Japanese Garden in Rockhampton. (On a later occasion the proclamation book and pamphlet were presented to the Mayor.) They went next to the site of the Australian garden, to be planted later in the year with 2,000 Australian gum trees and other shrubs. In Tokyo the Featherstones met with the National Spiritual Assembly in the New National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds.

In Korea Mr. Featherstone met with the youth of Seoul and was received by the Vice Mayor of Anyung City. He spoke at a public meeting there and also at the Bahá'í Winter School at Kadrion Mountain in the Dong Hang Temple area.

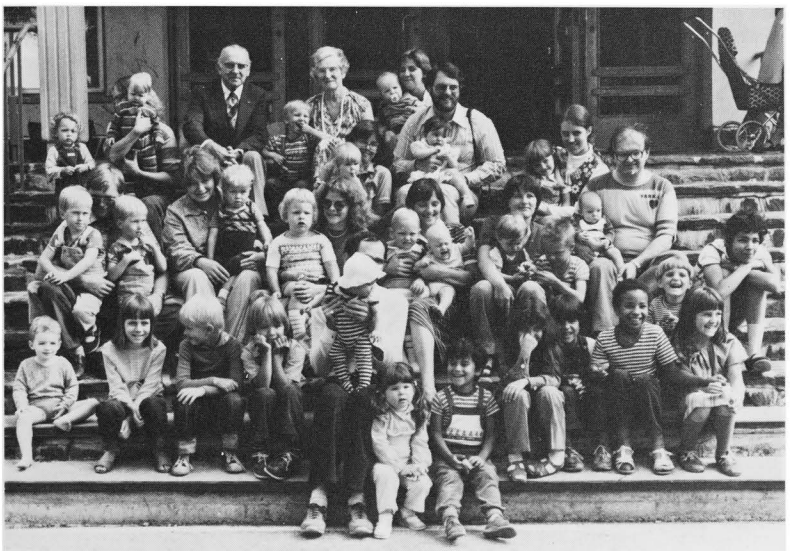
Mr. Featherstone addressed the English-speaking division of Rotary Club at the Hilton Hotel in Taipei, met the Mayor of Fengyuen, and spoke to the friends at the Bahá'í Winter School. Many prominent officials were contacted by the Hand of the Cause while he was in Taiwan, among them the Governor who knew of the Faith and was most cordial, and who accepted a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, and the proclamation pamphlet.

The friends gathered at the airport in Hong Kong to receive the Hand of the Cause. Several hundred people read the Bahá'í banners in Chinese, Vietnamese and English, and many asked questions.

The Featherstones were taken by jet hydrofoil to Macau and were immediately taken to a luncheon attended by seventy people including members of the press and radio. Excellent publicity resulted in the press. The Mayor praised the Bahá'ís so much that media representatives asked him if he was a Bahá'í. A radio spot on 11 January gave twenty minutes of prime time to the Faith, the announcer describing the teachings, reading from the Writings and giving the address of the Bahá'í Centre, urging everyone listening 'to investigate this beautiful Faith for themselves'.



The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan with some delegates to the International Convention; April 1983.



The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone (back row) with Mrs. Featherstone and some participants in the Bahá'í children's classes, Summer School, Savonlinna, Finland; July 1982.

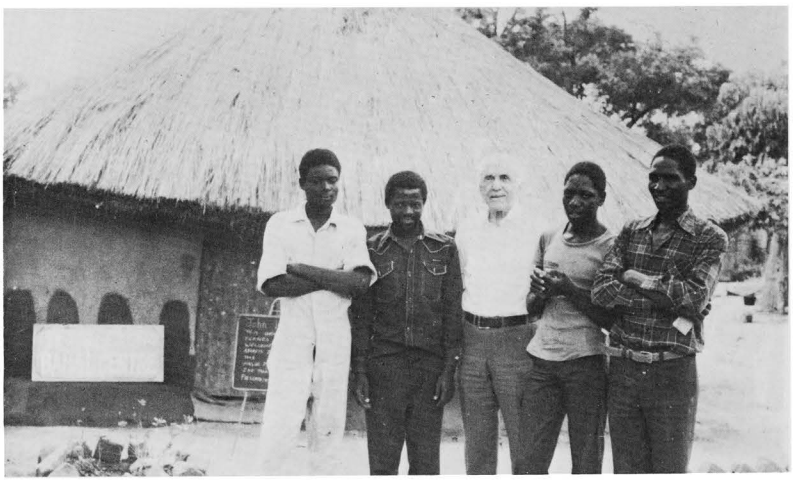
A busy schedule in Thailand took Mr. Featherstone to the new Yasothon School and to the World Religion Day meeting in Bangkok where Mr. Featherstone and a Buddhist professor were principal speakers. Stopping briefly in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Featherstones attended the Feast at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. Returning to Australia on 22 January, the Hand of the Cause fulfilled a schedule of deepening classes, meetings with Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, a meeting with youth, an open house and a public meeting held jointly with Counsellor Dr. Peter Khan—three days of activity arranged by the Regional Teaching Committee of Western Australia in the area of Perth. On 29–30 January Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone took part in the South Australian Youth Camp at Mt. Breckon, Victor Harbour. In the evening the Hand of the Cause addressed a public meeting and the following day set out for home. (From reports received through February 1982)

April

India: The first Bahá'í Women's Conference on the State level in India was held in Tumkur, Karnataka from 9 to 10 April . . . The women were thrilled by the receipt of a cablegram from the Universal House of Justice, and another from the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, encouraging them to foster the Bahá'í family atmosphere, a letter from the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone which was hand-delivered to the assembled women and read out to them, and a cable from the National Spiritual Assembly of India calling for a 'great upsurge of teaching by women throughout India'. (From a report received 9 May 1983)

Dominica: HAPPY ANNOUNCE FORMATION NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY DOMINICA PRESENCE HAND CAUSE KHADEM COUNSELLOR PRINGLE SECRETARY PARENT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY FIRST PIONEER DOMINICA BILL NEDDEN . . . (From a cablegram received Riḍván 1983)

St. Lucia: ELEVEN ASSEMBLED DELEGATES FIRST NATIONAL BAHAI CONVENTION ST. LUCIA HONOURED BOUNTY INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. ALL PROGRESS DUE YOUR UNFAILING GUIDANCE. SUCCESSFUL SPIRIT-FILLED CONVENTION RESULT PRESENCE HAND CAUSE KHADEM REPRESENTATIVE YOUR AUGUST BODY. (Cablegram received Riḍván 1983)



The Hand of the Cause John Robarts, with the four Bahá'ís who built the Templeton Ranch Bahá'í Centre, Mtoroshanga, Zimbabwe, photographed at the dedication of the Centre; 22 March 1981.

3. HANDS OF THE CAUSE WHO REPRESENTED THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE AT CONVENTIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF NEW NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Listed below are the Hands of the Cause who represented the Universal House of Justice at inaugural Conventions held in the period 1979–1983, the name of the new National Spiritual Assembly, its seat, the parent or sponsoring National Assembly and, in chronological order, the dates of the Conventions.

Riḍván 1981

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum	Bermuda—Hamilton (United States) 24–26 April Leeward Islands—St. Johns, Antigua (Leeward and Virgin Islands) 1–2 May
Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá	Windward Islands—Kingstown, St. Vincent (Barbados and the Windward Islands) 24–26 April
Collis Feathersone	Tuvalu—Funafati (Kiribati and Tuvalu) 25–27 April
John Robarts	Bophuthatswana—Mmabatho (South and West Africa) 1–3 May
William Sears	Southwest Africa/Namibia—Windhoek (South and West Africa) 2–3 May

1983

Dhikru'lláh Khádem	St. Lucia—Castries (Windward Islands) 26–28 May Dominica—Roseau (Windward Islands) 29–30 May

4. A TRIBUTE TO THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD[1]

LILIAN 'ALÁ'Í

Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon the Hands of His Cause, through whom the light of fortitude hath shone forth and the truth hath been established that the authority to choose rests with God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Unconstrained . . . We beseech Him—exalted is He—to shield them through the power of His hosts, to protect them through the potency of His dominion and to aid them through His indomitable strength which prevaileth over all created things . . .

WITH these words Bahá'u'lláh in His *Tablet of the World* (Lawḥ-i-Dunyá) describes the station of servitude to which the Hands of the Cause of God are called. He beseeches God to shield them, to protect them and to aid them. They are His precious trust among us and their like will never be seen again. Perhaps the greatest tribute one can pay is to speak of their place in Bahá'í history. We are so intimately associated with them and stand so near to them, that only future historians will be able to do full justice to their exploits.

The origin of the Hands of the Cause can be found in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. During His lifetime He appointed four to assist Him.

Many references to the Hands of the Cause can be found in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He clearly defined their station and functions but did not appoint any living Hands of the Cause. However, there were certain outstanding teachers of the Faith who, after their passing, were referred to by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as Hands.

For thirty years Shoghi Effendi continued to do as his Grandfather had done, and it was not until December 1951 that he cabled the following announcement to the Bahá'í world:

> HOUR NOW RIPE TAKE LONG INEVITABLY DEFERRED STEP CONFORMITY PROVISIONS ABDUL-BAHAS TESTAMENT . . . APPOINTMENT FIRST CONTINGENT HANDS CAUSE OF GOD TWELVE IN NUMBER EQUALLY ALLOCATED HOLY LAND ASIATIC AMERICAN EUROPEAN CONTINENTS.

He then went on to say that this step was in preparation for the full development of the Institution provided in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament. Furthermore, he said that there would be a parallel measure—the formation of the Universal House of Justice.

The Guardian then named the twelve Hands of the Cause. In the Holy Land, Sutherland Maxwell, Mason Remey, Amelia Collins (President and Vice-President of the International Bahá'í Council); in the Cradle of the Faith, Valíyu'lláh Varqá, Ṭaráz'ulláh Samandarí, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan; in the American continent, Horace Holley, Dorothy Baker, Leroy Ioas; and in the European continent, George Townshend, Hermann Grossmann and Ugo Giachery.

During the remaining six years of his life he developed the Institution of the Hands of the Cause, broadening and strengthening the scope of its activities, appointing additional Hands and providing for the appointment by the Hands of Auxiliary Board members who were to assist them in their work.

In February 1952 the Guardian raised their number to nineteen by adding another seven distinguished Bahá'ís, namely, Fred Schopflocher, Corinne True, Dhikru'lláh Khádem, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Adelbert Mühlschlegel, Músá Banání, and Clara Dunn. The body of the Hands of the Cause now

[1] An address given by Lilian 'Alá'í during the International Bahá'í Conference held in Canberra, Australia, 1–4 September 1982.

represented all five continents of the globe and the 'three principal world religions of mankind'. He said that they had a two-fold sacred function, propagation and preservation of the unity of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

For five years after 1952 there was no increase in the number of Hands. However, during that time five of them passed away—namely, Sutherland Maxwell, Fred Schopflocher, Dorothy Baker, Valíyu'lláh Varqá and George Townshend. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Jalál Kházeh, Paul E. Haney, 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá and Agnes Alexander were appointed to replace them.

In his last message to the Bahá'í world the beloved Guardian raised the membership of the Hands of the Cause to twenty-seven. Many of us will recall the exciting years of the World Crusade. He described the astonishing achievements of those days as 'So marvelous a progress, embracing so vast a field, achieved in so short a time, by so small a band of heroic souls . . .'

He then said that this progress '. . . well deserves . . . to be signalized by, and indeed necessitates, the announcement of yet another step in the progressive unfoldment of one of the cardinal and pivotal institutions ordained by Bahá'u'lláh . . . involving the designation of yet another contingent of the Hands of the Cause of God . . . The eight now elevated to this exalted rank are: Enoch Olinga, William Sears . . . John Robarts . . . Ḥasan Balyúzí . . . John Ferraby . . . Collis Featherstone . . . Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir . . . and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí . . . a group chosen from the four continents of the globe, and representing the Afnán, as well as the black and white races and whose members are derived from Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Pagan backgrounds.

Many of the Hands of the Cause were also pioneers of the World Crusade and yet others became homefront pioneers.

During Riḍván 1954 Shoghi Effendi implemented his promised inauguration of the auxiliaries of the Institution of the Hands, namely, the Board members, who were to act as deputies, assistants and advisers to the Hands and work in conjunction with the National Spiritual Assemblies, through calling upon the Hands to appoint thirty-six Board members, nine each in America, Europe, and Africa, seven in Asia, and two in Australia. Five Continental Funds were also inaugurated at that time.

The first International Bahá'í Council had already been appointed by Shoghi Effendi, in 1951; its membership included five Hands, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Mason Remey, Amelia Collins, Ugo Giachery and Leroy Ioas. Four lived in the Holy Land and the fifth, Dr. Giachery, who was pioneering in Italy, was designated as member-at-large.

In June 1957 the Guardian called upon the Hands of the Cause and the National Assemblies to engage in close association and consultation not only in connection with the teaching work, but especially in regard to the protection of the Faith. In his last message to the Bahá'í world he further expanded the Institution of the Hands of the Cause by requesting each group of continental Hands to appoint an Auxiliary Board with the specific duty of watching over the security of the Faith. And so we can see how, step by step, in less than six years, he built a strong Institution functioning throughout the world whose nerve centre was in the Holy Land. In addition, the parallel body, the International Bahá'í Council, had also been established.

Very suddenly, a few short weeks later, Shoghi Effendi, the Sign of God on earth and our beloved Guardian, ascended to the world beyond, leaving behind a grief-stricken community, bewildered and bereft. Upon the Hands of the Cause now fell the onerous task of directing and safeguarding the affairs of the Faith of God.

It is well for us to think deeply about the events that followed the sudden removal from our midst of our beloved Guardian, the one who had for so long and so lovingly guided our steps. Let us not forget that when the Blessed Beauty's ascension took place He left a Will appointing 'Abdu'l-Bahá and when 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed to the great beyond, He too left a Will appointing Shoghi Effendi. I do not feel that any Bahá'í can pay greater tribute to the Hands of the Cause than acknowledging and being eternally grateful to them for the steps they now took.

'It was upon Rúḥíyyih Khánum in . . . her hour of greatest trial and grief that the terrible weight of responsibility rested of informing the Bahá'ís of the world that their Guardian had suddenly passed away. It devolved upon

her to initiate the steps necessary to protect the Faith at this moment of unparalleled crisis.' She lovingly did so in a series of cables to the Bahá'í world preparing them for the news of his passing. She 'telephoned the members of the International Bahá'í Council in Haifa . . . It was agreed that immediate steps be taken to seal the door of the apartment occupied by the Guardian in order to ensure that no person should enter these quarters until the Hands of the Cause could take appropriate action . . . By November 8, nearly all Hands of the Cause had arrived in London. At the request of Rúḥíyyih Khánum, they met that night to plan the funeral service . . . This tragic and moving occasion marked the first meeting . . . of the Hands from the Holy Land and the various continents since their appointment by Shoghi Effendi.' ·

'On November 15, 1957 . . . Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Mason Remey, Amelia Collins and Leroy Ioas, accompanied by Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery . . . entered the apartment of the Guardian and sealed with tape and wax the safe where important documents were kept. The keys of the safe were placed in an envelope which was sealed and signed by the five Hands and then placed in the safe of Mr. Ioas, the Secretary-General of the International Bahá'í Council. The drawers of Shoghi Effendi's desk were also sealed and the seals countersigned.

'Three days later, on November 18, 1957, just two weeks after the ascension of the Guardian, the Hands of the Cause assembled in the Holy Land, held a memorial meeting in the precincts of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, and then entered upon . . . fateful days of prayerful and soul-searching consultation which led to . . . vital and far-reaching decisions . . .'

The historic document, Proclamation by the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'ís of East and West, written from the meeting, contained these words:

> 'On the following morning, November 19th, nine Hands of the Cause, selected from the Holy Land, and the several continents of East and West, with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, broke the seals placed upon the beloved Guardian's safe and desk and made careful examination of their precious contents. These same Hands, rejoining the other Hands assembled in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, certified that Shoghi Effendi had left no Will and Testament. It was likewise certified that the beloved Guardian had left no heir. The Aghṣán (branches) one and all are either dead or have been declared violators of the Covenant by the Guardian for their faithlessness to the Master's Will and Testament and their hostility to him [who was] named first Guardian in that sacred document.

'The first effect of the realization that no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him was to plunge the Hands of the Cause into the very abyss of despair . . . From this dark abyss, however, contemplation of the Guardian's own life of complete sacrifice and his peerless services gradually redeemed our anguished hearts . . .'

The Hands then wrote of the achievements of the beloved Guardian in words designed to encourage and strengthen the friends.

'Has not the World Centre, with its sacred Shrines and institutions, been firmly established? Has not the Message been established in 254 countries and dependencies? Have not the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies . . . been implanted in twenty-six great areas of all continents? Has not the Guardian left us not only his incomparable translations, for English-reading Bahá'ís, of the Bahá'í sacred literature but also his own master works of interpretation which disclose to us the unshatterable edifice of an evolving Bahá'í Order and world community? Has not the Guardian, building upon the enduring foundation of the Master's Tablets of the Divine Plan, created the World Crusade to guide our work until 1963? Has not the Guardian, moreover, in his mysterious insight into the present and future needs of the Bahá'í community, called into being the International Bahá'í Council and the company of twenty-seven Hands with their Auxiliary Boards, whom in his final communication to the Bahá'ís, he designated "Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh"? . . .

'Beloved friends! Is not the most precious legacy bequeathed to us all by Shoghi Effendi the privilege of constancy in the Faith of

Bahá'u'lláh and devotion in teaching His Message? This is the heartfelt plea we direct to every Bahá'í: The hour has come, as it came with the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, when true Bahá'ís will be distinguished by their firmness in the Covenant and their spiritual radiance while pressing forward the mighty work committed to every area of the world community—to every individual Bahá'í! For now our implacable opponents may, and probably will, unleash attacks, assuming in their ignorance that the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is weakened and defenceless. By consecration of spirit we are armed against all manner of assault and we hold the weapon of faith with which the triumph of the Guardian's aims and purposes is assured . . .'

Such were their words as they took us under their protection.

In other documents the Hands of the Cause made decisions on how their body would function and their relationship with National Assemblies. In response to their appeal, all National and Regional Assemblies in the Bahá'í world recognized the body of the nine Hands in the Holy Land and gave their full support. Because of this and actions taken by the Hands, it was possible to safeguard the Bahá'í properties and funds and to be recognized by the Government.

From that time onwards until the establishment of the Universal House of Justice in 1963 the Hands of the Cause sent a series of messages to the Bahá'í world from each of its annual conclaves. They actively and unceasingly encouraged the friends to attain the goals set by the Guardian and watched over the community with loving hearts. In 1959 they wrote:

> 'As we look back over the past two years which have elapsed since that unforgettable and heart-breaking moment when we realized our beloved Guardian had been taken from us, we cannot but marvel at the protection which has been vouchsafed this Holy Cause. As one man, the believers have rallied to the support of their Faith, closed their ranks, stood firm in the hour of supreme test, and arisen to carry forward the World Crusade.'

In the same message they announced that the election of the International Bahá'í Council by all members of National and Regional Assemblies would take place during Riḍván 1961.

In their 1960 message they mentioned that since 1953 almost 3,000 pioneers had left their homes and scattered over the face of the planet. There was evidence of the possibility of mass conversion. Tens of thousands of people in Africa, India and South America were becoming Bahá'ís and it became necessary for the Hands of the Cause to devote their labour on a global scale. Thus they began their journeys throughout the countries of the world bringing hope and encouragement to the friends and edifying the hearts of all men. They attended a multitude of conferences, summer schools, conventions. They met with all strata of society from the highest to the lowest in the land. They met with pioneers, often making special and difficult journeys to be with a lone pioneer, to cheer their hearts and encourage them and the fledgling communities that were being created around them. And through it all, they lovingly watched over and protected the Faith.

As far back as 1961 they prepared the Bahá'í world for the election of the Universal House of Justice during Riḍván 1963. This long-awaited and eagerly anticipated event took place on the first day of Riḍván 1963 in the central hall of the historic home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Guardian in Haifa. Two hundred and eighty-eight members of fifty-six National and Regional Assemblies were present as delegates, representing every continent and the islands of the seas, and from virtually every one of the major races and ethnic groups of mankind. The Universal House of Justice, the supreme legislative body ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and vouchsafed by Him as being under the unerring guidance of God, had been established. The master helmsmen had sailed the seas charted by the beloved Guardian and brought their vessel to safe harbour.

In 1968, the Universal House of Justice met in consultation with the Hands of the Cause and from this meeting came the Institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors which was to 'grow and operate in harmony with the principles governing the functioning of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause'. The Auxiliary Boards then came under the direc-

tion of the Continental Boards of Counsellors. The International Teaching Centre was established in 1973 'destined to evolve into one of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions ordained by Bahá'u'lláh. Its establishment brings to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land.'

Many years have passed, and from the original twenty-seven Hands only eleven remain. Many of them have visited the countries and islands encompassed by this conference and have become very dear to us. Some, such as Agnes Alexander, John Henry and Clara Hyde Dunn, Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and dear Collis Featherstone, have lived and continue to live among us. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum dedicated the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Antipodes and represented the Universal House of Justice at the laying of the foundation stone of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific in Samoa. Our very dear Dr. Giachery, besides his memorable work in connection with the Shrine of the Báb, was instrumental in presenting the Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh in such a way to His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa, that he was moved to declare his belief in Bahá'u'lláh and to visit the resting-place of the beloved Guardian. All of them, including the Hands of the Cause Enoch Olinga, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Dhikru'lláh Khádem, William Sears, John Robarts and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí, made great teaching journeys through our lands and islands. They took our burdens upon their shoulders. Nowhere in recorded religious history has there been such a group of people as the Hands of the Cause of God, who, with such purity of soul, selflessness, complete dedication and faithfulness, guided and watched over an emerging religion.

To them, in remembrance of their fortitude, I address the beautiful poem contained in the following Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

O thou who hast been sore afflicted on the pathway of the Covenant! Anguish and torment, when suffered on the pathway of the Lord, Him of Manifest signs, is only favour and grace; affliction is but mercy, and grief a gift from God. Poison is sugar on the tongue, and wrath is kindness, nourishing the soul.

Then praise thou Him, the loving Provider, for having ordained this dire affliction, which is but bounty unalloyed.

If I, like Abraham, through flames must go,
Or yet like John a bloodstained road must run;
If Joseph-like, Thou'd cast me in a well,
Or shut me up within a prison cell—
Or make me e'en as poor as Mary's Son–
I will not go from Thee,
But ever stand
My soul and body bowed to Thy command.

Dear friends, when we become tired and dispirited, when our goals seem unobtainable, let us think of them. Let us try, in some small way to be like them. They are our Hands of the Cause and the world has never seen their like.

Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon them!

REFERENCES:

The Bahá'í World, vol. XIII, pp. 333–363
The Bahá'í World, vol. XVI, pp. 406–414.
Poem from *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*.

5. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD: AN APPRECIATION

RAY HUDSON

I

AMONG the wonders accomplished by Shoghi Effendi during the last few years of his ministry was the elevation to the rank of Hands of the Cause of God of a few believers from among the Bahá'ís of the world. These precious souls were like jewels buried among the mass of the believers until the beloved Guardian plucked them out. The consummate wisdom of this action became evident when the Universal House of Justice, in its first message presented 30 April 1963, at the World Congress, paid tribute to the work accomplished by the Hands of the Cause following the passing of the Guardian:

> 'The Universal House of Justice, with pride and love, recalls on this supreme occasion its profound admiration for the heroic work which they have accomplished. We do not wish to dwell on the appalling dangers which faced the infant Cause when it was suddenly deprived of our beloved Shoghi Effendi, but rather to acknowledge with all the love and gratitude of our hearts the reality of the sacrifice, the labor, the self-discipline, the superb stewardship of the Hands of the Cause of God.'[1]

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh is crowned with the Universal House of Justice, an Institution which was created by Bahá'u'lláh Himself and which is under the guidance of both Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. 'Abdu'l-Bahá declared this body to be *the source of all good and freed from all error.*[2] The beloved Guardian labored all his life to erect this Institution which is twin to the Institution of the Guardianship, and through those Hands of the Cause whom he appointed the election for this Supreme Body was called.

The work of the Hands of the Cause constitutes an integral part of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Today this work is flourishing throughout the world, and under the guidance of the Universal House of Justice it will continue in future decades and centuries. The story of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God is such that centuries will be unable to fathom the love these believers held for their beloved Guardian nor will ages comprehend the iron resolution of their steadfastness in the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. There will be no repetition of their examples. They are unique among the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. They are the priceless gifts which Shoghi Effendi gave to us.

Where does the story of such enduring love begin?

II

Bahá'u'lláh Himself named the first Hands of the Cause and called them those *through whom the light of fortitude hath shown forth and the truth hath been established that the authority to choose rests with God.* He said they were those *through whom the ocean of bounty hath surged and the fragrance of the gracious favours of God, the Lord of Mankind, hath been diffused.*[3] 'The Hands of the Cause, of Bahá'u'lláh's days,' stated Shoghi Effendi through a letter written by his secretary, 'will be known to the friends by name when the history of the Cause in Persia and the Near East is written and available.'[4]

'Abdu'l-Bahá did not Himself formally appoint any Hands of the Cause. Certain outstanding Bahá'ís, however, were referred to by Him as Hands.

[1] *Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 2.
[2] *Will and Testament*, p. 14.
[3] *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 83.
[4] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 445.

III

Shortly after His ascension it was discovered that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had produced an extraordinary Will and Testament, portions of which outlined the appointment, duties, and obligations of the Hands of the Cause. Written entirely in His Own hand, this great testament, the Guardian has declared, is the Charter of the Administrative Order, 'His greatest legacy to posterity' and 'the brightest emanation of His mind.'[1] Providing an 'indissoluble link' insuring 'the continuity of the three ages that constitute the component parts of the Bahá'í Dispensation'[2] (the Heroic, the Formative, and the Golden Ages) this document requires 'time, and the guidance of God's Universal House of Justice, to obtain a clearer and fuller understanding of its provisions and implications.'[3] The Guardian, writing through his secretary, stated: 'The contents of the Will of the Master are far too much for the present generation to comprehend. It needs at least a century of actual working before the treasures of wisdom hidden in it can be revealed . . .'[4] In *God Passes By*, page 328, Shoghi Effendi summarizes, in his concise and masterly way, the contents of the Will and Testament. Here, however, we are primarily interested in what was written about the Hands of the Cause.

The appointment of the Hands of the Cause, 'Abdu'l-Bahá categorically states, must be made by the Guardian of the Cause.

> *The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from all earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners their deeds and their words.*[5]

The Hands of the Cause are urged by 'Abdu'l-Bahá *to diffuse the sweet savors of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world, for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined.*[6] 'Abdu'l-Bahá further bestows *salutation and praise . . . upon the Hands* [pillars] *of the Cause of God that have diffused widely the Divine Fragrances, declared His Proofs, proclaimed His Faith, published abroad His Law, detached themselves from all things but Him, stood for righteousness in this world, and kindled the Fire of the Love of God in the very hearts and souls of His servants.*[7]

He also states: *This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the guardian of the Cause of God.*[8] As we witness (and as history will study) the steadfastness and complete, wholehearted, joyful obedience of the Hands of the Cause we might understand the meaning of being *under the direction of the guardian of the Cause*. The spontaneity that they have shown in fulfilling the wishes of the Guardian and the Universal House of Justice endures as a lasting lesson to all Bahá'ís. Obedience is the true measure of love for Bahá'u'lláh; the loving devotion of the Hands of the Cause found expression in an exact and instantaneous obedience.

Such obedience does not come automatically. By appointment as Hands of the Cause these believers were not guaranteed steadfastness in the Covenant. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá placed the Hands under the direction of the Guardian He said: *Should any, within or without the company of the Hands of the Cause of God disobey and seek division, the wrath of God and His vengeance will be upon him, for he will have caused a breach in the true Faith of God.*[9] Yet 'Abdu'l-Bahá stressed that the Hands had responsibility for protecting the Cause. He said they *must be ever watchful* and He gave them the authority needed to preserve the security of the Faith.

In formally establishing this institution 'Abdu'l-Bahá presented the Hands of the Cause with the *dual function of guarding over the security, and of insuring the propagation, of His Father's Faith.*[10] 'Abdu'l-Bahá called them to this high station. Who could do these things? Who could demonstrate such stead-

[1] *God Passes By*, p. 325.
[2] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 143.
[3] *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 62.
[4] Quoted in *Messages from the Universal House of Justice: 1968–1973*, p. 44.
[5] *Will and Testament*, p. 13.
[6] ibid.
[7] ibid., p. 3.
[8] ibid., p. 13.
[9] ibid.
[10] *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 127.

fastness, encompass such knowledge, and personify such love? During the thirty years that followed 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ascension it was seen that a few Bahá'ís had achieved this station. Periodically Shoghi Effendi cabled or wrote National Assemblies the news that a certain outstanding teacher or administrator of the Cause had died. On rare occasions he would use such a communication to announce that this believer 'by sheer merit deserved to rank as one of the Hands of the Cause of God'[1] or that the services of another believer 'entitled her to an eminent rank among the Hands of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.[2] There were ten believers posthumously named Hands of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi. The complete list is found in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, pages 447–449, and includes:

1. Martha Root—'that star-servant of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh,' the 'foremost Hand which 'Abdu'l-Bahá's will has raised up in the first Bahá'í century.'[3]
2. Keith Ransom-Kehler—the 'first and distinguished' American martyr.[4]
3. Dr. John Esslemont—whom Shoghi Effendi called 'the warmest of friends, a trusted counsellor, an indefatigable collaborator, a lovable companion.'[5]
4. Louis Gregory—the 'noble-minded, golden-hearted' believer who was 'loved, admired and trusted by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.'[6]

After 1951 when the first contingent of living Hands of the Cause was named there were no further posthumous appointments.

IV

As 1953 approached the Guardian began to make plans for the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation in the Síyáh-Chál, that dark loathsome prison of Ṭihrán. This called for a series of four International Conferences and the launching of an unprecedented teaching campaign that would establish the Faith throughout the world. This Ten Year Spiritual Crusade constituted one of ten stages of 'the plan wrought by God Himself for humanity'—a plan which began with Adam and which will culminate when 'the light of God's triumphant Faith shining in all its power and glory will have suffused and enveloped the entire planet.'[7]

This Spiritual Crusade was to be a glorious enterprise and glorious were the events that led to its launching. Among these preparatory events was the announcement, on 24 December 1951, of the first contingent of living Hands of the Cause of God. Those named were: Sutherland Maxwell, Mason Remey, Amelia Collins, Valíyu'lláh Varqá, Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Horace Holley, Dorothy Baker, Leroy Ioas, George Townshend, Hermann Grossmann, and Ugo Giachery. On 29 February 1952 the twelve Hands were increased to nineteen with the nominations of Fred Schopflocher, Corinne True, Dhikru'lláh Khádem, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Adelbert Mühlschlegel, Músá Banání, and Clara Dunn.

With this announcement the Guardian said: MEMBERS AUGUST BODY INVESTED IN CONFORMITY WITH ABDULBAHAS TESTAMENT, TWOFOLD SACRED FUNCTION, THE PROPAGATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE UNITY OF THE FAITH OF BAHAULLAH AND DESTINED TO ASSUME INDIVIDUALLY IN THE COURSE OF TIME THE DIRECTION OF INSTITUTIONS PARALLELING THOSE REVOLVING AROUND THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE . . .[8]

Over the next five years the number of Hands was kept at nineteen. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Jalál Kházeh, Paul E. Haney, 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, and Agnes B. Alexander replaced those Hands of the Cause who passed away.

In October 1952 the Guardian called upon the Hands, 'by virtue of their supreme function as chosen instruments for the propagation of the Faith,' to appoint during Riḍván 1954 Auxiliary Boards whose members would act as the 'assistants, deputies, and advisers' of the Hands on each continent.

[1] *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 98.
[2] *Messages to America*, p. 3.
[3] ibid., p. 30.
[4] ibid., p. 3.
[5] *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 98.
[6] *Citadel of Faith*, p. 163.
[7] *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 155.
[8] ibid., p. 21.

From the time of their appointments the Hands of the Cause were outstanding in helping to win the goals of the Ten Year Crusade in their respective continents. In them the Faith also found leonine defenders and Shoghi Effendi once wrote how certain Hands had shared in 'administering a stunning defeat to the enemies of the Faith.'[1]

The protective function of the Hands of the Cause was further re-enforced in October 1957 when the number of Hands was increased to twenty-seven. The Guardian said this body was 'one of the cardinal and pivotal institutions ordained by Bahá'u'lláh, and confirmed in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.' He called the Hands of the Cause 'the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, who have been invested by the unerring Pen of the Center of His Covenant with the dual function of guarding over the security, and of insuring the propagation of His Father's Faith.' He wrote:

> 'The eight now elevated to this exalted rank are: Enoch Olinga, William Sears, and John Robarts, in West and South Africa; Ḥasan Balyúzí and John Ferraby in the British Isles; Collis Featherstone and Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir in the Pacific Area; and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí in the Arabian Peninsula—a group chosen from four continents of the globe, and representing the Afnán, as well as the black and white races and whose members are derived from Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Pagan backgrounds.
>
> 'This latest addition to the band of high-ranking officers of a fast evolving World Administrative Order, involving a further expansion of the august institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, calls for, in view of the recent assumption by them of their sacred responsibility as protectors of the Faith, the appointment by these same Hands, in each continent separately, of an additional Auxiliary Board, equal in membership to the existing one, and charged with the specific duty of watching over the security of the Faith, thereby complementing the function of the original Board, whose duty will henceforth be exclusively concerned with assisting the prosecution of the Ten-Year Plan.'[2]

The Ten Year Crusade was nearing its midpoint on a wave of unprecedented victories. The believers had pioneered throughout the world. They were raising the call of *Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá** through all regions. Translations of the Writings were being made. Incorporations and legal recognitions of the Faith were being obtained. Bahá'í Centers, local and national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds were materializing. It was a vibrant time. The air was electric. During his few moments of rest from the administration of the vast complexities of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi was hard at work on a beautiful map which gave expression to the joy and pride he felt for the believers. From every continent he drew colored arrows charting accomplishments and from Haifa golden rays burst forth keyed to record the development of the World Center of the Faith. One gold ray was the recent appointment of additional Hands of the Cause. With an abruptness that stilled all things the hand of the beloved Guardian was withdrawn. He died in London on 4 November 1957.

V

Prostrate with grief yet steadfast, overwhelmed with sorrow yet steadfast, the Hands of the Cause of God began the most extraordinary period of their services. The reins of the Cause had suddenly been handed to its Chief Stewards. It is to this period, spanning the last six years of the Ten Year Crusade, that the Universal House of Justice paid moving tribute:

> 'Following the passing of Shoghi Effendi the international administration of the Faith was carried on by the Hands of the Cause of God with the complete agreement and loyalty of the national spiritual assemblies and the body of the believers. This was in accordance with the Guardian's

[1] ibid., p. 31.
[2] ibid., pp. 127–128.

* 'O Thou the Glory of Glories!', another form of the Greatest Name *Alláh-u-Abhá*.

designation of the Hands as the "Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth."

'From the very outset of their custodianship of the Cause of God the Hands realized that since they had no certainty of Divine guidance such as is incontrovertibly assured to the Guardian and to the Universal House of Justice, their one safe course was to follow with undeviating firmness the instructions and policies of Shoghi Effendi. The entire history of religion shows no comparable record of such strict self-discipline, such absolute loyalty, and such complete self-abnegation by the leaders of a religion finding themselves suddenly deprived of their divinely inspired guide. The debt of gratitude which mankind for generations, nay, ages to come, owes to this handful of grief-stricken, steadfast, heroic souls is beyond estimation.'[1]

For six years the Hands of the Cause guided the Bahá'ís with infinite tenderness and love. They for whom the loss of the Guardian was greatest gave the most to their fellow believers. On them descended, with all its fearful implications, the actuality of protecting the Faith when the storm of opposition to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh was again unleashed. Speaking at the Intercontinental Conference in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1958, the Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins said:

> 'We are all, in a way, Shoghi Effendi's heirs. We have inherited his work. His plan is completely laid out. Ours is the task to fulfill it. We must, each of us, complete our share of the World Crusade. This is the memorial we must build to our beloved Shoghi Effendi.
>
> 'Let us love him more now than ever before, and through the power of our love attract his love to us, and bring his blessing on our labors.
>
> 'Let us not fail him, for he never failed us. Let us never forget him, for he never forgot us.'[2]

The labors and sufferings of the Hands of the Cause were blessed. On 22 April 1963, from the International Convention in Haifa, they were able to cable all National Assemblies:

> OCCASION WORLDWIDE CELEBRATIONS MOST GREAT JUBILEE COMMEMORATING CENTENARY ASCENSION BAHAULLAH THRONE HIS SOVEREIGNTY WITH HEARTS OVERFLOWING GRATITUDE HIS UNFAILING PROTECTION OVERFLOWING BOUNTIES JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE FRIENDS EAST WEST ELECTION SUPREME LEGISLATIVE BODY ORDAINED BY HIM IN HIS MOST HOLY BOOK PROMISED BY HIM RECEIVE HIS INFALLIBLE GUIDANCE.

And they also said:

> TO JUBILATION ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD VICTORIOUS COMPLETION BELOVED GUARDIANS UNIQUE CRUSADE NOW ADDED HUMBLE GRATITUDE PROFOUND THANKSGIVING FOLLOWERS BAHAULLAH FOR ERECTION UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE AUGUST BODY TO WHOM ALL BELIEVERS MUST TURN WHOSE DESTINY IS TO GUIDE UNFOLDMENT HIS EMBRYONIC WORLD ORDER THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS PRESCRIBED BY BAHAULLAH ELABORATED BY ABDULBAHA LABORIOUSLY ERECTED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI AND INSURE EARLY DAWN GOLDEN AGE FAITH WHEN THE WORD OF THE LORD WILL COVER THE EARTH AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEA.[3]

With that beautiful cable an era in the work of the Hands of the Cause came to a close. Now their destiny was to be unfolded for them by this same Universal House of Justice. A new chapter in the evolution of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause was about to open.

VI

Inaugurated by Bahá'u'lláh, formally established by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, brought into operation by Shoghi Effendi, the Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God now looked upon the Universal House of Justice to insure its continuation into the future. How would this be done? In November 1964 the House of

[1] *Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 45.

[2] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 840.

[3] ibid., p. 362.

Justice announced: 'There is no way to appoint, or to legislate to make it possible to appoint, Hands of the Cause of God.' How then could this 'cardinal and pivotal' institution extend 'into the future . . . its appointed functions of protection and propagation'?

The initial step was taken in November 1964 when the Hands were formally related to the House of Justice. Still assigned to specific continents, they were 'reinforced by a wider and more efficient organization of their work' through an increase in the number of Auxiliary Board members and the appointment of certain Board members to act in an executive capacity on behalf of each Hand.[1]

After much thought and study, after 'prolonged and prayerful consultation between the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause of God', in June 1968 the Supreme Body announced the establishment of Continental Boards of Counselors for the protection and propagation of the Faith. The creation of this institution insured the extension into the future of the appointed functions of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause. The Hands of the Cause were released from administration of the Auxiliary Boards whose members now were appointed by and reported to the Continental Boards of Counselors.

'The Hands of the Cause of God,' wrote the Universal House of Justice, 'are one of the most precious assets the Bahá'í world possesses.' The House of Justice looked forward to these appointees of the Guardian being able 'to concentrate their energies on the more primary responsibilities of general protection and propagation, "preservation of the spiritual health of the Bahá'í communities" and "the vitality of the faith" of the Bahá'ís throughout the world.'[2] The increased freedom for the Hands to travel widely has had a profound effect on the progress of the Cause. At the conclusion of the Nine Year Plan, the Universal House of Justice wrote: 'They have, in all parts of the world, inspired the friends, assisted National Spiritual Assemblies, promoted the teaching work and played a vital part in the success of the Plan. The lagging fortunes of more than one national community have been revolutionized by a visit of a Hand of the Cause; swift and energetic action, inspired by the Hand, has been followed by astonishing results, completely reversing that community's prospects.'[3]

When the House of Justice announced the creation of the Continental Boards of Counselors it alluded to the eventual establishment of an international teaching center at the World Center. This teaching center had been foreshadowed in the writings of the beloved Guardian. The evolution of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause took a further step in June 1973 when the House of Justice announced: 'The time is indeed propitious for the establishment of the International Teaching Center, a development which, at one and the same time, brings to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land and provides for its extension into the future, links the institution of the Boards of Counselors even more intimately with that of the Hands of the Cause of God, and powerfully reinforces the discharge of the rapidly growing responsibilities of the Universal House of Justice.'[4] All the Hands of the Cause are members of the International Teaching Center. Each Hand is kept informed of the activities of the Center, each conveys suggestions, recommendations and information to the Center, and when in the Holy Land, takes part in the consultations and activities of the Center. In addition, four believers with the rank of Counselor serve on this body.

In announcing the Seven Year Plan the Universal House of Justice wrote: 'The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, is bearing a precious fruit in the development of the International Teaching Center as a mighty institution of the World Center of the Faith; an institution blessed by the membership of all the Hands of the Cause; an institution whose beneficent influence is diffused to all parts of the Bahá'í community through the Continental Boards of Counselors, the members of the Auxiliary Boards and their assistants.'[5]

The marvel and wonder of the International Teaching Center is only beginning to unfold before us. It is a further evidence of the

[1] *Wellspring of Guidance*, pp. 40–43.
[2] ibid., p. 142.
[3] *Messages: 1968–1973*, p. 116.
[4] Universal House of Justice letter dated 8 June 1973.
[5] Universal House of Justice letter dated Naw-Rúz 1979.

eternal legacy of the Hands of the Cause. In the future it will operate from that building on the arc on Mount Carmel designated by the Guardian as the Seat for the Hands of the Cause.[1]

The Universal House of Justice in writing about the Hands of the Cause of God, the Counselors and the members of the Auxiliary Boards, said that 'it is not incorrect to refer to the three ranks collectively as one institution.'[2] It explained that the Auxiliary Boards were brought into being to assist the Hands, and they are now the 'assistants, deputies, and advisers' of the Continental Board of Counselors for each respective area. The Continental Boards of Counselors were brought into being to carry into the future the vital functions of protection and propagation vested in the Institution of the Hands of the Cause. 'However,' continued the Universal House of Justice, 'each is also a separate institution in itself.' The House of Justice also has stated that 'Although the Counselors occupy a rank lower than that of the Hands of the Cause, they are nevertheless charged with the same two responsibilities and follow in the footsteps of the Hands of the Cause.'[3] The Supreme Body in addition stated that the Hands of the Cause would 'nurture the new institution and function in close collaboration with it as long as possible.'[4]

The Hands of the Cause of God are the standard-bearers. They are the 'divinely appointed, tried, and victorious souls . . .'[5] 'Their deeds are such as to eclipse the acts of the apostles of old and to confer eternal splendor on this period of the Formative Age.'[6]

What more can be said once the Universal House of Justice, *freed from all error*, has stated categorically that our debt of gratitude to them is beyond estimation?

'These few gallant and dedicated believers, whose place in history is forever assured by virtue of their appointment to their high office,' wrote the Universal House of Justice on another occasion, 'are indeed a precious legacy left to us by our beloved Guardian, and as the years go by there is increasingly added to the honor and respect which is their due by reason of their exalted rank, the love and admiration of the friends evoked by their constant services.'[7]

[1] Universal House of Justice letter dated 8 June 1973.
[2] *Messages: 1968–1973*, p. 92.
[3] Universal House of Justice letter to a National Spiritual Assembly dated 20 May 1970.
[4] *Messages: 1968–1973*, p. 92.
[5] *Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 26.
[6] *Messages: 1968–1973*, p. 70.
[7] *Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 106.

6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS[1]

21 June 1968

REJOICE ANNOUNCE MOMENTOUS DECISION ESTABLISH ELEVEN CONTINENTAL BOARDS COUNSELLORS PROTECTION PROPAGATION FAITH THREE EACH FOR AFRICA AMERICAS ASIA ONE EACH FOR AUSTRALASIA EUROPE . . .

The Universal House of Justice

24 June 1968

. . . those who have been appointed to the first Continental Boards of Counsellors for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith:

Northwestern Africa

Ḥusayn Ardikání (Trustee, Continental Fund), Muḥammad Kebdani, William Maxwell.

Central and East Africa

Oloro Epyeru, Kolonario Oule, Isobel Sabri, Midhí Samandarí, 'Azíz Yazdí (Trustee, Continental Fund).

Southern Africa

Seewoosumbur-Jeehoba Appa, Shidán Fatḥ-i-A'ẓam (Trustee, Continental Fund), Bahiyyih Ford.

North America

Lloyd Gardner, Florence Mayberry, Edna True (Trustee, Continental Fund).

Central America

Carmen de Burafato, Artemus Lamb, Alfred Osborne (Trustee, Continental Fund).

South America

Athos Ċostas, Hooper Dunbar (Trustee, Continental Fund), Donald Witzel.

Western Asia

Masíḥ Farhangí, Mas'úd Khamsí, Ḥádí Raḥmání (Trustee, Continental Fund), Manúchihr Salmánpúr, Sankaran-Nair Vasudevan.

Southeast Asia

Yan Kee Leong, Khudáraḥm Paymán (Trustee, Continental Fund), Chellie Sundram.

Northeast Asia

Rúḥu'lláh Mumtází (Trustee, Continental Fund), Vicente Samaniego.

Australasia

Suhayl 'Alá'í, Howard Harwood, Thelma Perks (Trustee, Continental Fund).

Europe

Erik Blumenthal, Dorothy Ferraby (Trustee, Continental Fund), Louis Hénuzet.'

The Universal House of Justice

24 June 1968

'. . . The number of Auxiliary Board members to be assigned to each continental zone is as follows:

	Protection	*Propagation*
AFRICA		
Northwestern	3	6
Central and East	4	7
Southern	2	5
	9	18
AMERICA		
North	4	9
Central	2	8
South	3	10
	9	27
ASIA		
Western	4	15
Southeastern	2	7
Northeastern	1	7
	7	29
AUSTRALASIA	2	7
EUROPE	9	18'

The Universal House of Justice

10 July 1969

'With great joy we announce that we have decided to increase the total number of members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith to thirty-eight by adding John McHenry III to the Continental Board of Counsellors in North East Asia and Mas'úd

[1] Adapted from the History Calendar published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands, 1983.



Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa (1981) with the Hand of the Cause William Sears. Seated, left to right: William Masehla, Friday Ekpe, Thelma Khelghati, William Sears, Bahiyyih Winckler, Isobel Sabri, Peter Vuyiya. Standing, left to right: Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, Mihdi Samandari, Muhammad Kebdani, Oloro Epyeru, Hushang Ahdieh, Zekrollah Kazemi, Kolonario Oule, Husayn Ardekani.



Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas (1981) with the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. Seated, left to right: Ruth Pringle, Velma Sherrill, Carmen de Burafato, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Lauretta King, Sarah Pereira. Standing, left to right: Peter McLaren, Angus Cowan, Farzam Arbab, Artemus Lamb, Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih, Raúl Pavón, Lloyd Gardner, Mas'úd Khamsí, Donald Witzel, Athos Costas, Fred Schechter.

Khamsí to the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America. . .

'We also rejoice to announce the appointment of Mrs. Shirin Boman to the Continental Board of Counsellors of Western Asia to fill a vacancy on that Board . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

Riḍván 1970

. . . IN VIEW EFFECTIVE REINFORCEMENT THIS NOBLE WORK BY ABLE DEDICATED CONTINENTAL BOARDS COUNSELLORS THEIR AUXILIARY BOARDS TOGETHER WITH GROWING NEED AND EXPANSION WORLD COMMUNITY ANNOUNCE AUGMENTATION VITAL INSTITUTION THROUGH APPOINTMENT THREE ADDITIONAL COUNSELLORS IRAJ AYMAN WESTERN ASIA ANNELIESE BOPP BETTY REED EUROPE AND AUTHORIZATION APPOINTMENT FORTYFIVE ADDITIONAL AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS NINE AFRICA SIXTEEN ASIA TWO AUSTRALASIA EIGHTEEN WESTERN HEMISPHERE . . .

The Universal House of Justice

5 June 1973

ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHMENT HOLY LAND LONG ANTICIPATED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE DESTINED EVOLVE INTO ONE THOSE WORLD SHAKING WORLD EMBRACING WORLD DIRECTING ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS ORDAINED BY BAHAULLAH ANTICIPATED BY ABDULBAHA ELUCIDATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI. MEMBERSHIP THIS NASCENT INSTITUTION COMPRISES ALL HANDS CAUSE GOD AND INITIALLY THREE COUNSELLORS WHO WITH HANDS PRESENT HOLY LAND WILL CONSTITUTE NUCLEUS ITS VITAL OPERATIONS. CALLING UPON HOOPER DUNBAR FLORENCE MAYBERRY AZIZ YAZDI PROCEED HOLY LAND ASSUME THIS HIGHLY MERITORIOUS SERVICE . . .

The Universal House of Justice

8 June 1973

'The number of zones has been raised to twelve by . . . the new zone of South Central Asia . . .

'The number of Counsellors is now raised to fifty-seven by the appointment of Mr. Friday Ekpe and Mr. Dhikru'lláh Káẓimí in North-western Africa, Mr. Húshang 'Ahdíyyih and Mr. Peter Vuyiya in Central and East Africa, Dr. Sarah Pereira and Mrs. Velma Sherrill in North America, Mr. Rowland Estall and Mr. Paul Lucas in Central America, Mrs. Leonora Armstrong, Mr. Peter McLaren and Mr. Raúl Pavón in South America, Mr. Dipchand Khianra and Mrs. Zena Sorabjee in South Central Asia, Mr. Firaydún Míthāqíyán in South-eastern Asia, Mr. Richard Benson and Miss Elena Marsella in North-eastern Asia and Miss Violet Hoehnke in Australasia. Dr. William Maxwell who has been rendering distinguished service as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North-western Africa has been obliged to return to the United States . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

7 October 1973

'. . . the number of Auxiliary Board members throughout the world is to be raised to two hundred and seventy, of whom eighty-one will serve on the Auxiliary Boards for the Protection of the Faith and one hundred and eighty-nine will serve on the Auxiliary Boards for the Propagation of the Faith. In all there will be fifty-four Auxiliary Board members in Africa, eighty-one in the Western Hemisphere, eighty-one in Asia, eighteen in Australasia and thirty-six in Europe.'

The Universal House of Justice

30 September 1974

'. . . Mrs. Salisa Kermani was appointed by the House of Justice to the Board of Counsellors for South Central Asia in place of Mr. Vasudevan who is presently furthering his education in the United States. Mr. John McHenry . . . has returned to the United States . . . He has tendered his resignation as a Counsellor . . .'

International Teaching Centre

6 January 1975

'. . . The decision has been taken, therefore, after consultation with the International Teaching Centre, to break the present zone of North-western Africa into two separate zones of Northern and Western Africa, to each of which will be transferred parts of the Central and East African zone . . .

'Because of the creation of a new Board[1] for Northern Africa, the Counsellors in this and the one for Western Africa must be regrouped, new appointments made to the Northern Board, and the number of Auxiliary

[1] Raising the total to thirteen.



Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia (1981) with the Hand of the Cause Paul Haney. Seated, left to right: Khudáraḥm Paymán, Yan Kee Leong, Shirin Boman, Paul E. Haney, Zena Sorabjee, Dipchand Khianra, Rúhu'lláh Mumtází. Standing, left to right: John Fozdar, Burháni'd-Dín Afshín, Manúchihr Salmánpúr, S. Nagaratnam, Zabíḥu'lláh Gulmuḥammadí, Chellie J. Sundram, Vicente Samaniego. Hideya Suzuki left the meeting before the photograph was taken. Aydin Güney and Masíḥ Farhangí were unable to attend. Dr. Farhangí, imprisoned at that time in Írán, was executed in June 1981.



Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia (1981) with the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone. Front row, left to right: Ben Ayala, H. Collis Featherstone, Tinai Hancock, Lisiate Maka. Back row, left to right: Suhayl 'Alá'í, Peter Khan, Richard Benson, Owen Battrick.

Board members increased. We decided, therefore, that the Board for Northern Africa will consist of Mr. Muḥammad Kebdani, already serving as a Counsellor, Mr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, and Mr. 'Imád Sábirán. The Board for Western Africa will consist of Mr. Ḥusayn Ardikání (Trustee), Mr. Friday Ekpe, Mr. Dhikru'lláh Káẓimí, and Dr. Mihdí Samandarí (transferred from the Central and East African Board).

'We are also increasing the number of Auxiliary Board members in Africa, adding 9 members to the Board for Protection, and 9 to that for Propagation, bringing the totals for that continent to 27 and 45 respectively . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

17 March 1976

'The membership of six of the Boards of Counsellors has been increased by the appointment of one additional Counsellor in each case, as follows: Western Africa, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati; Southern Africa, Mr. William Masehla; South Central Asia, Mr. Burháni'din Afshín; North-eastern Asia, Mr. Hideya Suzuki; Australasia, Mr. Owen Battrick; Europe, Mr. Adib Taherzadeh.

'The number of Auxiliary Board members throughout the world has been raised from 288 to a new total of 378, 117 of which are for protection and 261 for propagation . . .'

International Teaching Centre

24 March 1976

'. . . the Universal House of Justice has authorized the appointment of ninety more Auxiliary Board members . . .'

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

31 October 1976

'The Universal House of Justice announces with pleasure that it has appointed three new Counsellors as follows:

Dr. Peter Khan—to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia

Dr. Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih—to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America

Mr. Angus Cowan—to the Continental Board of Counsellors in North America'

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

24 March 1977

ANNOUNCE AUTHORIZATION INCREASE MEMBERSHIP BOARDS BY 297 RAISING TOTAL TO 675 OF WHICH 279 ARE AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS FOR PROTECTION AND 396 FOR PROPAGATION OF FAITH . . .

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

29 August 1977

KINDLY CABLE MR IMBUM CHINNIAH . . . QUOTE INFORM YOU WITH PLEASURE YOUR APPOINTMENT CONTINENTAL BOARD COUNSELLORS SOUTHEASTERN ASIA . . .

The Universal House of Justice

29 June 1979

. . . MOMENT PROPITIOUS ANNOUNCE DURATION TERMS SERVICE MEMBERS CONTINENTAL BOARDS COUNSELLORS AS ANTICIPATED IN ANNOUNCEMENT ESTABLISHMENT THAT INSTITUTION AND IN CONSTITUTION UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE. DECISION NOW TAKEN THAT TERMS WILL BE OF FIVE YEARS STARTING DAY COVENANT 26 NOVEMBER 1980 . . .

The Universal House of Justice

4 July 1979

JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT COUNSELLOR ANNELIESE BOPP TO MEMBERSHIP INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE

The Universal House of Justice

7 February 1980

. . . DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING DEVOTED COWORKER INPERAJU CHINNIAH . . .

The Universal House of Justice

20 October 1980

HEARTS SADDENED PASSING DISTINGUISHED COUNSELLOR LEONORA STIRLING ARMSTRONG . . .

The Universal House of Justice

3 November 1980

'. . . we have decided that the time is ripe for a further step in the development of the institution itself that will, at one and the same time, accord greater discretion and freedom of action to the Continental Boards of Counsellors in the carrying out of their duties, and widen the scope of each Board to embrace an entire continent. In accordance with this decision, the zones of the Continental Boards of Counsellors will, from the Day of the



Inaugural meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe (1981) with the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem. Seated, left to right: Ursula Mühlschlegel, Erik Blumenthal, Betty Reed, Anneliese Bopp (International Teaching Centre), Dhikru'lláh Khádem, Dorothy Ferraby. Standing, left to right: Louis Hénuzet, Agnes Ghaznavi, Hartmut Grossmann, Leo Niederreiter, Adib Taherzadeh.



The members of the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause, Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre and members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors photographed with some members of their families at Mazra'ih following the International Convention; 1983.

Covenant of the year 137 [26 November 1980] be as follows:

1. Africa, comprising the areas of the four present zones of that continent.
2. The Americas, comprising the present zones of North, Central and South America.
3. Asia, comprising the present zones of Western, South Central and South-eastern Asia, together with the present zone of North-eastern Asia without the Hawaiian Islands and Micronesia.
4. Australasia, comprising the present zone of Australasia plus the Hawaiian Islands and Micronesia.
5. Europe.

'Those who are now appointed as Counsellors to serve on these Continental Boards for the next five years are:

Africa: Dr. Húshang Ahdieh (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Ḥusayn Ardekání, Mr. Friday Ekpe, Mr. Oloro Epyeru, Mr. Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, Mr. Zekrollah Kazemi, Mr. Muḥammad Kebdani, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, Mr. William Masehla, Mr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, Mr. Kolonario Oule, Mrs. Isobel Sabri, Dr. Mihdí Samandarí, Mr. Peter Vuyiya, Mrs. Bahíyyih Winckler.

The Americas: Dr. Hidáyatu'lláh Aḥmadíyyih, Dr. Farzam Arbáb, Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mr. Athos Costas, Mr. Angus Cowan, Mr. Lloyd Gardner (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Mas'úd Khamsí, Mrs. Lauretta King, Mr. Artemus Lamb, Mr. Peter McLaren, Mr. Raúl Pavón, Dr. Sarah Pereira, Mrs. Ruth Pringle, Mr. Fred Schechter, Mrs. Velma Sherrill, Mr. Donald Witzel.

Asia: Mr. Burháni'd-Dín Afshín, Mrs. Shirin Boman, Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí, Dr. John Fozdar, Mr. Zabíḥu'lláh Gulmuḥammadí, Mr. Aydin Güney, Mr. Dipchand Khianra, Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Mumtází, Mr. S. Nagaratnam, Mr. Khudáraḥm Paymán (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Manúchihr Salmánpúr, Mr. Vicente Samaniego, Mrs. Zena Sorabjee, Dr. Chellie Sundram, Mr. Hideya Suzuki, Mr. Yan Kee Leong.

Australasia: Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í, Mr. Ben Ayala, Mr. Owen Battrick (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mr. Richard Benson, Mrs. Tinai Hancock, Dr. Peter Khan, Mr. Lisiata Maka.

Europe: Mr. Erik Blumenthal, Mrs. Dorothy Ferraby, Dr. Agnes Ghaznavi, Mr. Hartmut Grossmann, Mr. Louis Hénuzet (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Mrs. Ursula Mühlschlegel, Dr. Leo Niederreiter, Mrs. Betty Reed, Mr. Adib Taherzadeh.

'A number of friends who have rendered highly valued services as Counsellors are not being reappointed for the coming term, and we wish to express here our profound gratitude for the devoted labours they have rendered and are rendering in the path of the Cause. These dearly-loved believers are:

Mr. Seewoosumbur-Jeehoba Appa, Dr. Iraj Ayman, Mr. Rowland Estall, Mr. Howard Harwood, Miss Violet Hoehnke, Mrs. Salisa Kermani, Mr. Paul Lucas, Miss Elena Marsella, Mr. Alfred Osborne, Miss Thelma Perks, Mr. Hádí Raḥmání, Mr. 'Imád Sábirán, Miss Edna True . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

14 November 1980

'The Universal House of Justice has requested that we inform the Boards that the number of Auxiliary Board members allotted to each continent is as follows:

	Protection	*Propagation*
Africa	81	99
Americas	54	117
Asia	99	117
Australasia	18	27
Europe	27	36
Totals	279	396'

International Teaching Centre

27 November, 1980

'In consideration of the extension of the area of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia we have decided to increase the number of Auxiliary Board members allocated to that continent by nine on each Board, raising the totals to twenty-seven Protection Board members and thirty-six Propagation Board members . . .'

The Universal House of Justice

24 June 1981

. . . ANOTHER FOUR DISTINGUISHED BELIEVERS NOW GATHERED ABHA KINGDOM ON BEING MARTYRED . . . DR. MASIH FARHANGI MEMBER BOARD COUNSELLORS ASIA . . .

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

17 August 1981

. . . DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING EMINENT DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY MEMBER BOARD COUNSELLORS AFRICA . . . MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA . . .

The Universal House of Justice

13 May 1982

'The Universal House of Justice announces with pleasure the appointment of Dr. Ṣábir Áfáqí to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia to replace Dr. Masíḥ Farhangi, who was martyred last year.'

On behalf of the Universal House of Justice



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum with His Excellency Sir Gerald Christopher Cash, Governor General of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas; 29 April 1981.

III

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

1. INTRODUCTION

THE sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith create organic institutions having a membership elected by the Bahá'í community. Bahá'u'lláh called these institutions into being; their establishment, definition, training and development came later, in the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in that of the Guardian appointed in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Testament.

Since the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1921, the formation of Local Spiritual Assemblies has multiplied in East and West, and the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly has become firmly established. Concerning this national administrative body Shoghi Effendi has provided clear information and direction. Its purpose, its power, its responsibility and its functions and duties are definitely prescribed.

'Its immediate purpose is to stimulate, unify and co-ordinate by frequent personal consultations the manifold activities of the friends [believers] as well as the Local Assemblies; and by keeping in close and constant touch with the Holy Land [Bahá'í World Centre], initiate measures, and direct in general the affairs of the Cause in that country.

'It serves also another purpose, no less essential than the first . . . in conjunction with the other National Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í world, to elect directly the members of the International House of Justice, that Supreme Council that will guide, organize and unify the affairs of the [Faith] throughout the world.

'. . . it has to exercise full authority over all the Local Assemblies in its province, and will have to direct the activities of the friends, guard vigilantly the Cause of God, and control and supervise the affairs of the [Faith] in general.

'Vital issues, affecting the interests of the Cause in that country . . . that stand distinct from strictly local affairs, must be under the full jurisdiction of the National Assembly. It will have to refer each of these questions . . . to a special committee, to be elected by the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, from among all the friends in that country . . .

'With it, too, rests the decision whether a certain point at issue is strictly local in its nature . . . or whether it should fall under its own province and be regarded as a matter which ought to receive its special attention.'[1]

'The need for the centralization of authority in the National Spiritual Assembly, and the concentration of power in the various Local Assemblies, is . . . manifest.'[2]

'The authority of the National Spiritual Assembly is undivided and unchallengeable in all matters pertaining to the administration of the Faith [throughout its country].'[3]

The individual Bahá'í has spiritual citizenship in a world community of believers acting through local, national and international bodies. There is no division of interest or conflict of authority among these institutions, for ever since the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh in 1892 His Faith has possessed infallible guidance by virtue of His Covenant, which specifically provides it. The action of a Bahá'í administrative body, therefore, while rationally determined by constitutional principles, operates in a spiritual realm revealed by the Manifestation of God and maintained free from political pressure and the influence of materialism. Apart from the appointed Interpreter, no Bahá'í has individual authority. Decisions are confined to the sphere of action and are made by a body of nine persons.

The advice and direction clarifying the nature and operation of a National Spiritual Assembly have been compiled by the American Bahá'ís from letters written to them by Shoghi Effendi.[4]

[1] *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 edition) pp. 39–40.
[2] ibid., p. 42
[3] *Bahá'í Procedure* (1949), p. 63.
[4] *Bahá'í Administration:* Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

During the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, after He had approved the petition submitted to Him by the American Bahá'ís expressing their desire to construct a House of Worship, these Bahá'ís formed a national body known as Bahá'í Temple Unity, incorporated for the purpose of gathering funds and co-ordinating plans to erect the Temple in Wilmette. That body, though national in scope and elected by delegates representing the various local Bahá'í communities, was not a National Spiritual Assembly. It is interesting to note that in Bahá'í Temple Unity the American Bahá'ís established a body reflecting their own national historical experience. The local communities preceded the national body in time and each exercised an independent authority in the conduct of its own affairs. When their representatives agreed to form a national Bahá'í body with full jurisdiction over Temple matters, they transferred to it powers which vested final decision, not in its directors, but in the Annual Convention. The vital distinction between Temple Unity and the National Spiritual Assembly when later established lay in this field of ultimate authority. The National Spiritual Assembly possessed original authority, powers and functions of its own. It came into existence through election of its nine members at a National Convention but constituted a continuing authority derived from the Bahá'í teachings and not conferred by any action of the believers, whether as local communities or as delegates. This authority emerged supreme in relation to Bahá'í matters within the national community but subject to the higher authority of the Guardian and also of the future International House of Justice.[1]

Within its own realm the National Spiritual Assembly is an institution created by the Teachings of the Faith independent of the Bahá'ís who elect its members and of the Bahá'ís composing its membership. In no way does this institution reflect either the political or the ecclesiastical influences of its environment, whether in America, Europe or the East. This fact has paramount importance. On the one hand it reveals the existence of an organic religious society; on the other hand it demonstrates the freedom of this new community from the legalisms and devices acting within every human institution.

While the transition from Bahá'í Temple Unity to National Spiritual Assembly in North America emphasizes certain principles inherent in Bahá'í institutions, the formation of a National Spiritual Assembly in a new area represents more profoundly the creation of a new type of society. Every national Bahá'í community has gone through some evolution reflecting its historical background before its National Assembly was established.

The functions of a National Spiritual Assembly are manifold: the publication of Bahá'í literature; national teaching plans; supervision of local communities; encouragement and direction of all the Bahá'ís in their service to the Faith; and representation of the Bahá'ís in relation to the civil authorities. Each national body prepares and adopts its own constitution, formulated on the basis of the model approved by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. All the National Spiritual Assemblies collectively, under the title of the Bahá'í International Community, constitute an international non-governmental organization whose delegates are accredited by United Nations for attendance and participation in its regional conferences.[2]

Through the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly, Bahá'ís are enabled to carry out plans of considerable magnitude, collaborate with Bahá'ís of all other lands in matters of international interest, maintain common standards of administrative principle, and take advantage, in the appointment of committees, of particular talents and aptitudes possessed by individual believers. The National Spiritual Assembly stands as one of the pillars supporting the Bahá'í world community. Participation in national Bahá'í activities serves to insulate the individual Bahá'í from infection by the psychic ills which afflict modern society as a result of its lack of faith and spiritual direction. Within the shelter of this emerging order the storms of partisanship cannot engulf the soul.

HORACE HOLLEY

[1] Written in 1954.

[2] Consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council was obtained on 27 May 1970.

2. A MODEL DECLARATION OF TRUST AND BY-LAWS

for a

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

FOREWORD

THE 1926–27 National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada completed a task which, while pertaining to the outer and more material aspects of the Cause, nevertheless has a special significance for its spirit and inward sacred purpose. This task consisted in creating a legal form which gives proper substance and substantial character to the National Spiritual Assemblies and the administrative processes embodied in the Bahá'í teachings by a form of incorporation recognized under common law. This Declaration of Trust, with its attendant By-Laws, became the model to be followed, with adaptations as local laws and circumstances required, by other National Spiritual Assemblies. The years following the election of the Universal House of Justice witnessed a great increase in the number of National Spiritual Assemblies (from 57 in 1963 to 135 by Riḍván 1983) and the House of Justice itself provided a model document, largely based on the one devised by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, to be followed as closely as possible by all new National Spiritual Assemblies as they became incorporated, which they were required to do under the Nine Year Plan.

Careful examination of the Declaration and its By-Laws will reveal the fact that this document contains no arbitrary elements nor features new to the Bahá'í Cause. On the contrary, it represents a most conscientious effort to reflect those very administrative principles and elements already set forth in the letters of the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and already determining the methods and relationships of Bahá'í collective association. The provision both in the Declaration and in the By-Laws for amendments in the future will permit the National Spiritual Assemblies to adapt this document to such new administrative elements or principles as may at any time be given forth. The Declaration, in fact, is nothing more nor less than a legal parallel of those moral and spiritual laws of unity inherent in the fullness of the Bahá'í Revelation and making it the fulfilment of the ideal of religion in the social as well as spiritual realm. Because, in the Bahá'í Faith, this perfect correspondence exists between spiritual and social laws, the Bahá'ís believe that administrative success is identical with moral success, and that nothing less than the true Bahá'í spirit of devotion and sacrifice can inspire with effective power the world-wide body of unity revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.

DECLARATION OF TRUST

By the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF . . . . .

WE,

duly chosen by the representatives of the Bahá'ís of . . . at the Annual Meeting held at . . . , on . . . , to be the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . , with full power to establish a Trust as hereinafter set forth, hereby declare that from this date the powers, responsibilities, rights, privileges and obligations reposed in said National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . by Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, its Interpreter and Exemplar, by

Shoghi Effendi, its Guardian, and by the Universal House of Justice, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh in His sacred Writings as the supreme body of the Bahá'í religion, shall be exercised, administered and carried on by the above-named National Spiritual Assembly and their duly qualified successors under this Declaration of Trust.

The National Spiritual Assembly in adopting this form of association, union and fellowship, and in selecting for itself the designation of Trustees of the Bahá'ís of . . . , does so as the administrative body of a religious community which has had continuous existence and responsibility for . . . . In consequence of these activities the National Spiritual Assembly is called upon to administer such ever-increasing diversity and volume of affairs and properties for the Bahá'ís of . . . , that we, its members, now feel it both desirable and necessary to give our collective functions more definite legal form. This action is taken in complete unanimity and with full recognition of the sacred relationship thereby created. We acknowledge in behalf of ourselves and our successors in this Trust the exalted religious standard established by Bahá'u'lláh for Bahá'í administrative bodies in the utterance: *Be ye Trustees of the Merciful One among men*; and seek the help of God and His guidance in order to fulfil that exhortation.

(*Signatures of the nine members*)

Date

ARTICLE I

The name of said Trust shall be the 'National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . .'

ARTICLE II

Sharing the ideals and assisting the efforts of our fellow Bahá'ís to establish, uphold and promote the spiritual, educational and humanitarian teachings of human brotherhood, radiant faith, exalted character and selfless love revealed in the lives and utterances of all the Prophets and Messengers of God, Founders of the world's revealed religions—and given renewed creative energy and universal application to the conditions of this age in the life and utterances of Bahá'u'lláh—we declare the purposes and objects of this Trust to be to administer the affairs of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh for the benefit of the Bahá'ís of . . . according to the principles of Bahá'í affiliation and administration created and established by Bahá'u'lláh, defined and explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, interpreted and amplified by Shoghi Effendi, and supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice.

These purposes are to be realized by means of devotional meetings; by public meetings and conferences of an educational, humanitarian and spiritual character; by the publication of books, magazines and newspapers; by the construction of temples of universal worship and of other institutions and edifices for humanitarian service; by supervising, unifying, promoting and generally administering the activities of the Bahá'ís of . . . in the fulfilment of their religious offices, duties and ideals; and by any other means appropriate to these ends, or any of them.

Other purposes and objects of this Trust are:

a. The right to enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every sort and kind for the furtherance of the objects of this Trust with any person, firm, association, corporation, private, public or municipal or body politic, or any state, territory or colony thereof, or any foreign government; and in this connection, and in all transactions under the terms of this Trust, to do any and all things which a co-partnership or natural person could do or exercise, and which now or hereafter may be authorized by law.
b. To hold and be named as beneficiary under any trust established by law or otherwise or under any will or other testamentary instrument in connection with any gift, devise, or bequest in which a trust or trusts is or are established in any part of the world as well as in . . . ; to receive gifts, devises or bequests of money or other property.
c. All and whatsoever the several purposes and objects set forth in the written utterances of Bahá'u'lláh,

'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and enactments of the Universal House of Justice, under which certain jurisdiction, powers and rights are granted to National Spiritual Assemblies.

d. Generally to do all things and acts which in the judgement of said Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . , are necessary, proper and advantageous to promote the complete and successful administration of this Trust.

ARTICLE III

SECTION 1. All persons, firms, corporations and associations extending credit to, contracting with or having any claim against the Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly, and the members thereof, of any character whatsoever, whether legal or equitable and whether arising out of contract or tort, shall look solely to the funds of the Trust and to the property of the Trust estate for payment or indemnity, or for payment of any debt, damage, judgement or decree or any money that may otherwise become due or payable from the Trustees, so that neither the Trustees nor any of them, nor any of their officers or agents appointed by them hereunder, nor any beneficiary or beneficiaries herein named shall be personally liable therefor.

SECTION 2. Every note, bond, proposal, obligation or contract in writing or other agreement or instrument made or given under this Trust shall be explicitly executed by the National Spiritual Assembly, as Trustees, by their duly authorized officers or agents.

ARTICLE IV

The Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly, shall adopt for the conduct of the affairs entrusted to them under this Declaration of Trust, such by-laws, rules of procedure or regulations as are required to define and carry on its own administrative functions and those of the several local and other elements composing the body of the Bahá'ís of . . . , not inconsistent with the terms of this instrument and all in accordance with the instructions and enactments of the Universal House of Justice.

ARTICLE V

The central office of this Trust shall be located in . . . .

ARTICLE VI

The seal of this Trust shall be circular in form, bearing the following inscription:
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . .

ARTICLE VII

This Declaration of Trust may be amended by majority vote of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . at any special meeting duly called for that purpose, provided that at least thirty (30) days prior to the date fixed for said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.

BY-LAWS OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

ARTICLE I

THE National Spiritual Assembly, in the fulfilment of its sacred duties under this Trust, shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Cause throughout . . . , including paramount authority in the administration of this Trust. It shall endeavour to stimulate, unify and coordinate the manifold activities of the Local Spiritual Assemblies (hereinafter defined) and of individual Bahá'ís in . . . and by all possible means assist them to promote the oneness of mankind. It shall be charged with the recognition of such Local Assemblies, the scrutiny of all membership rolls, the calling of the Annual Meeting or special meetings and the seating of delegates to the Annual Meeting and their apportionment among the various electoral districts. It shall appoint all national Bahá'í committees and shall supervise the publication and distribution of Bahá'í literature, the reviewing of all writings pertaining to the Bahá'í Cause, the construction and administration of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and its accessory activities, and the collection and disbursement of all funds for the carrying on of this Trust. It shall decide whether any matter lies within its own jurisdiction or within the jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly. It shall, in such cases as it considers suitable and necessary, entertain appeals from the decisions of Local Spiritual Assemblies and shall have the right of final decision in all cases where the qualification of an individual or group for continued voting rights and membership in the Bahá'í body is in question. It shall furthermore represent the Bahá'ís of . . . in all their co-operative and spiritual activities with the Bahá'ís of other lands, and shall constitute the sole electoral body of . . . in the election of the Universal House of Justice provided for in the sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Cause. Above all, the National Spiritual Assembly shall ever seek to attain that station of unity in devotion to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh which will attract the confirmations of the Holy Spirit and enable the Assembly to serve the founding of the Most Great Peace. In all its deliberation and action the National Assembly shall have constantly before it as Divine guide and standard the utterance of Bahá'u'lláh:

It behooveth them (i.e., members of Spiritual Assemblies) *to be the trusted ones of the Merciful among men and to regard themselves as the guardians appointed of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incumbent upon them to take counsel together and to have regard for the interests of the servants of God, for His sake, even as they regard their own interests, and to choose that which is meet and seemly.*

ARTICLE II

The Bahá'ís of . . . for whose benefit this Trust is established shall consist of all persons of the age of 15 years or over resident in . . . who are accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice required under the following standard set forth by the Guardian of the Faith:

> Full recognition of the station of the Báb, the Forerunner; of Bahá'u'lláh, the Author; and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the True Exemplar of the Bahá'í religion; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of Bahá'í Administration throughout the world.

Those residing in the area of jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly recognized by the National Assembly may declare their faith to, and be enrolled by, the Local Spiritual Assembly; those living outside any such area of local Bahá'í jurisdiction shall be enrolled in such manner as shall be prescribed by the National Assembly.

Upon attaining the age of 21 years, a Bahá'í is eligible to vote and to hold elective office.

ARTICLE III

The National Assembly shall consist of nine members chosen from among the Bahá'ís of . . . , who shall be elected by the said Bahá'ís in manner hereinafter provided, and who shall continue for the period of one year, or until their successors shall be elected.

ARTICLE IV

The officers of the National Spiritual Assembly shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may be found necessary for the proper conduct of its affairs. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Assembly taken by secret ballot.

ARTICLE V

The first meeting of a newly-elected National Assembly shall be called by the member elected to membership by the highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent Chairman shall be chosen. All subsequent meetings shall be called by the Secretary of the Assembly at the request of the Chairman or, in his absence or incapacity, of the Vice-Chairman, or of any three members of the Assembly; provided, however, that the Annual Meeting of the Assembly shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by a majority vote of the Assembly, as hereinafter provided.

ARTICLE VI

Five members of the National Assembly present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and a majority vote of those present and constituting a quorum shall be sufficient for the conduct of business, except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, and with due regard to the principle of unity and cordial fellowship involved in the institution of a Spiritual Assembly. The transactions and decisions of the National Assembly shall be recorded at each meeting by the Secretary, who shall supply copies of the minutes to the Assembly members after each meeting, and preserve the minutes in the official records of the Assembly.

ARTICLE VII

Whenever in any locality of . . . , the number of Bahá'ís resident therein recognized by the National Spiritual Assembly exceeds nine, these shall on April 21st of any year convene and elect by plurality vote a local administrative body of nine members, to be known as the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that community. Every such Spiritual Assembly shall be elected annually thereafter upon each successive 21st day of April. The members shall hold office for the term of one year or until their successors are elected and qualified.

When, however, the number of Bahá'ís in any authorized civil area is exactly nine, these shall on April 21st of any year, or in successive years, constitute themselves the Local Spiritual Assembly by joint declaration. Upon the recording of such declaration by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, said body of nine shall become established with the rights, privileges and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly as set forth in this instrument.

SECTION 1. Each newly-elected Local Spiritual Assembly shall at once proceed in the manner indicated in Articles IV and V of these By-Laws to the election of its officers, who shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as the Assembly finds necessary for the conduct of its business and the fulfilment of its spiritual duties. Immediately thereafter the Secretary chosen shall transmit to the Secretary of the National Assembly the names of the members of the newly-elected Assembly and a list of its officers.

SECTION 2. The general powers and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be as set forth in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.

SECTION 3. Among its more specific duties, a Local Spiritual Assembly shall have full jurisdiction of all Bahá'í activities and affairs within the local community, subject, however, to the exclusive and paramount authority of the National Spiritual Assembly as defined herein.

SECTION 4. Vacancies in the membership of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community duly called for that purpose by the Assembly. In the event that the number of vacancies exceeds four, making a quorum of the Local Assembly impossible, the election shall be held under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 5. The business of the Local Assembly shall be conducted in like manner as provided for the deliberations of the National Assembly in Article VI above.

SECTION 6. The Local Assembly shall pass upon and approve the qualifications of each member of the Bahá'í community before such members shall be admitted to voting membership; but where an individual is dissatisfied with the ruling of the Local Spiritual Assembly upon his Bahá'í qualifications, such individual may appeal from the ruling to the National Assembly, which shall thereupon take jurisdiction of and finally decide the case.

SECTION 7. On or before the 1st day of November of each year the Secretary of each Local Assembly shall send to the Secretary of the National Assembly a duly certified list of the voting members of the local Bahá'í community for the information and approval of the National Assembly.

SECTION 8. All matters arising within a local Bahá'í community which are of purely local interest and do not affect the national interests of the Cause shall be under the primary jurisdiction of the Spiritual Assembly of that locality; but decision whether a particular matter involves the interest and welfare of the national Bahá'í body shall rest with the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 9. Any member of a local Bahá'í community may appeal from a decision of his Spiritual Assembly to the National Assembly, which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it to the Local Spiritual Assembly for reconsideration. In the event that the National Assembly assumes jurisdiction of the matter, its findings shall be final.

SECTION 10. Where any dissension exists within a local Bahá'í community of such character that it cannot be remedied by the efforts of the Local Spiritual Assembly, this condition shall be referred by the Spiritual Assembly for consideration to the National Spiritual Assembly, whose action in the matter shall be final.

SECTION 11. All questions arising between two or more Local Spiritual Assemblies, or between members of different Bahá'í communities, shall be submitted in the first instance to the National Assembly, which shall have original and final jurisdiction in all such matters.

SECTION 12. The sphere of jurisdiction of a Local Spiritual Assembly, with respect to residential qualification of membership, and voting rights of a believer in any Bahá'í community, shall be the locality included within the recognized civil limits.

All differences of opinion concerning the sphere of jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly or concerning the affiliation of any Bahá'í or group of Bahá'ís in . . . shall be referred to the National Spiritual Assembly, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

ARTICLE VIII

The members of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be elected at an annual meeting to be known as the National Convention of the Bahá'ís of . . . . This Convention shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the National Assembly. The National Convention shall be composed jointly of representatives chosen by the Bahá'ís of each . . . under the principle of proportionate representation, and the members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Notice of the annual meeting shall be given by the National Assembly sixty days in advance in the Convention Call which sets forth the number of delegates assigned to the various electoral units in proportion to the number of Bahá'ís resident in each such unit, to a total of . . . delegates for the Bahá'ís of . . . .

SECTION 1. All delegates to the Convention shall be elected by plurality vote. Bahá'ís who for illness or other unavoidable reasons are unable to be present at the election in person shall have the right to transmit their ballots to the meeting by mail. The meeting held in each . . . for the election of delegates shall be called by the National Spiritual Assembly and conducted by the Bahá'ís present under whatever procedure may be uniformly laid down by said body. Immediately after the meeting a certified report of the election containing the name and address of each delegate shall be transmitted to the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 2. All delegates to be seated at the Convention must be recognized Bahá'ís and residents of the . . . represented by them.

SECTION 3. The rights and privileges of a delegate may not be assigned nor may they be exercised by proxy.

SECTION 4. The recognition and seating of delegates to the National Convention shall be vested in the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 5. Delegates unable to be present in person at the Convention shall have the right to transmit their ballots for election of the members of the National Assembly under whatever procedure is adopted by the National Assembly.

SECTION 6. If in any year the National Spiritual Assembly shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to assemble together the delegates to the National Convention, the said Assembly shall provide ways and means by which the annual election and the other essential business of the Convention may be conducted by mail.

SECTION 7. The presiding officer of the National Spiritual Assembly present at the Convention shall call together the delegates, who after roll call shall proceed to the permanent organization of the meeting, electing by ballot a Chairman, a Secretary and such other officers as are necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the Convention.

SECTION 8. The principal business of the annual meeting shall be consultation on Bahá'í activities, plans and policies, and the election of the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Members of the National Assembly, whether or not elected delegates, may take a full part in the consultation and discussion but only delegates may participate in the election of Convention officers or in the annual election of the members of the National Assembly. All action by the delegates, other than the organization of the Convention, the transmission of messages to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, and the election of the National Assembly, shall constitute advice and recommendation for consideration by the said Assembly, final decision in all matters concerning the affairs of the Bahá'í Faith in . . . being vested solely in that body.

SECTION 9. The general order of business to be taken up at the Annual Convention shall be prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly in the form of an agenda, but any matter pertaining to the Bahá'í Faith introduced by any of the delegates may upon motion and vote be taken up as part of the Convention deliberations.

SECTION 10. The election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be by plurality vote of the delegates recognized by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly, i.e., the members elected shall be the nine persons receiving the greatest number of votes on the first ballot cast by delegates present at the Convention and delegates whose ballot has been transmitted to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly by mail. In case, by reason of a tie vote or votes, the full membership is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be taken on the persons tied until all nine members are elected.

SECTION 11. All official business transacted at the National Convention shall be recorded and preserved in the records of the National Assembly.

SECTION 12. Vacancies in the membership of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by a plurality vote of the delegates composing the Convention which elected the Assembly, the ballot to be taken by correspondence or in any other manner decided upon by the National Spiritual Assembly.

ARTICLE IX

Where the National Spiritual Assembly has been given in these By-Laws exclusive and final jurisdiction, and paramount executive authority, in all matters pertaining to the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Cause in . . . , it is understood that any decision made or action taken upon such matters shall be subject in every instance to ultimate review and approval by the Universal House of Justice.

ARTICLE X

Whatever functions and powers are not specifically attributable to Local Spiritual Assemblies in these By-Laws shall be considered vested in the National Spiritual Assembly, which body is authorized to delegate such discretionary functions and powers as it deems necessary and advisable to the Local Spiritual Assemblies within its jurisdiction.

ARTICLE XI

In order to preserve the spiritual character and purpose of Bahá'í elections, the practice of nominations or any other electoral method detrimental to a silent and prayerful election shall not prevail, so that each elector may vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold.

Among the most outstanding and sacred duties incumbent upon those who have been called upon to initiate, direct and co-ordinate the affairs of the Cause as members of Local or National Spiritual Assemblies are:

To win by every means in their power the confidence and affection of those whom it is their privilege to serve; to investigate and acquaint themselves with the considered views, the prevailing sentiments and the personal convictions of those whose welfare it is their solemn obligation to promote; to purge their deliberations and the general conduct of their affairs of self-contained aloofness, the suspicion of secrecy, the stifling atmosphere of dictatorial assertiveness and of every word and deed that may savour of partiality, self-centredness and prejudice; and while retaining the sacred right of final decision in their hands, to invite discussion, ventilate grievances, welcome advice and foster the sense of inter-dependence and co-partnership, of understanding and mutual confidence between themselves and all other Bahá'ís.

ARTICLE XII

These By-Laws may be amended by majority vote of the National Spiritual Assembly at any of its regular or special meetings, provided that at least fourteen days prior to the date fixed for the said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.

3. A PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ANNUAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTION

I. Convention Call

THE National Spiritual Assembly determines the date, duration and place of the Annual Convention and provides for such meetings in connection with the Convention as it may feel are desirable.

II. Convention Procedure

The Twenty-sixth Annual Convention [of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada], held in 1934, voted a recommendation calling upon the National Spiritual Assembly to supply a parliamentary procedure for the conduct of the Annual Convention, and the present material has been prepared to meet the need indicated by that recommendation.

Order of Business

Prayer and devotional readings, provided by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly.

Opening of the Convention by Presiding Officer of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Roll call of delegates by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Election by secret ballot of Convention Chairman and Secretary. The Convention Officers are to be elected by the assembled delegates from among the entire number of delegates who are present at the Convention.

Annual Report of National Spiritual Assembly.

Annual Financial Report of National Spiritual Assembly.

Convention message to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith.

Annual Committee Reports: These are to be considered as part of the report of the National Spiritual Assembly. They are whenever possible published in *Bahá'í News* in advance of the Convention date, for the information of the delegates.

Subjects for Consultation: Any delegate may, before the Convention convenes, recommend to the National Assembly such topics as he deems of sufficient importance to be included in the Convention agenda; and the National Spiritual Assembly, from the list of topics received from delegates, and also suggested by its own knowledge and experience, is to prepare an agenda or order of business as its recommendation to the Convention.

This agenda may include, as part of the National Assembly's annual report, the presentation of special subjects by well qualified members, committee representatives or non-Bahá'í experts whose exposition is necessary or desirable for the information of the delegates.

On motion duly made, seconded and voted, any such subject may be omitted, and also on motion duly made, seconded and voted, any other subject may be proposed for special consultation.

Annual Election: The election of members of the National Spiritual Assembly is to take place approximately midway during the Convention sessions, so as to enable the delegates to consult with both the outgoing and incoming Assemblies, in accordance with the Guardian's expressed desire.

Conduct of Business

Every deliberative body, to fulfil its functions, must conduct its deliberations in accordance with some established rules of order. The parliamentary procedure here set forth for the Convention is based upon the procedure already adopted for meetings of Local Assemblies and communities. It accordingly extends to sessions of the Annual Convention, the same procedure under which the delegates, in their other Bahá'í activities, are accustomed to conduct discussions and consultation.

The purpose of consultation at the Annual Convention is threefold: to arrive at full and complete knowledge of the current conditions, problems and possibilities of the Faith in America; to give the incoming National Assembly the benefit of the collective wisdom, guidance and constructive suggestions of the assembled delegates, and to contribute to the unity, in spirit and in action, of the entire American Bahá'í community.

The freedom of each and every delegate to take part in discussion and to initiate motions is untrammelled save as the undue activity of one delegate might hamper the rights of the other delegates. Any necessary limitation to be placed upon individual discussion shall be determined by the Chairman in the absence of any specific motion duly voted by the delegates themselves.

It shall be the duty of the Chairman to encourage general consultation and make possible the active participation of the greatest possible number of delegates.

The Chairman has the same power and responsibility for discussion and voting upon motions as other delegates. Members of the outgoing and incoming National Assembly who are not delegates may participate in the consultation but not vote.

A resolution, or motion, is not subject to discussion or vote until duly made and seconded. It is preferable to have each resolution clear and complete in itself, but when an amendment is duly made and seconded, the Chairman shall call for a vote on the amendment first and then on the motion. An amendment must be relevant to, and not contravene, the subject matter of the motion.

The Chairman shall call for votes by oral expression of ayes and nays, but where the result of the vote is doubtful then by a show of hands or a rising vote. A majority vote determines.

Discussion of any matter may be terminated by motion duly made, seconded and voted, calling upon the Chairman to bring the matter to an immediate vote or proceed to other business.

The transactions of the Convention shall be recorded by the Secretary, and when certified by the Convention officers shall be given to the National Spiritual Assembly.

Annual Election

The electors in the Annual Election shall consist of those delegates included in the roll call prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Ballots and tellers' report forms shall be provided by the National Assembly.

The election shall be conducted by the Convention, but delegates unable to attend the Convention shall have the right to vote by mail.

The Chairman shall appoint three tellers, chosen from among the assembled delegates.

The electoral method shall be as follows:

1. The Convention Secretary shall call the roll of delegates, whereupon each delegate, in turn, shall place his or her ballot in a ballot box; and as the names are called ballots received by mail shall be placed in the ballot box by the Secretary of the National Assembly.

2. The ballot box shall then be handed to the tellers, who shall retire from the Convention hall to determine the result of the election.

3. The result of the election is to be reported by the tellers, and the tellers' report is to be approved by the Convention.

4. The ballots, together with the tellers' report, certified by all the tellers, are to be given to the National Spiritual Assembly for preservation.

III. The Convention Record

The permanent record of each successive Annual Convention shall consist of the following:—(1) Convention Call as issued by the National Spiritual Assembly; (2) List of accredited delegates; (3) Annual Reports of the National Spiritual Assembly and of its Committees; (4) Messages sent to and received from the World Centre; (5) Resolutions and other transactions of the assembled delegates; (6) The result of the Annual Election.

4. New National Spiritual Assemblies

1980



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Transkei.

1981



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bermuda.

New National Spiritual Assemblies 1981



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bophuthatswana.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, (one member absent).

New National Spiritual Assemblies 1981



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South West Africa/Namibia.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Tuvalu. The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone is seen fourth from the right in the back row.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Windward Islands.

1983



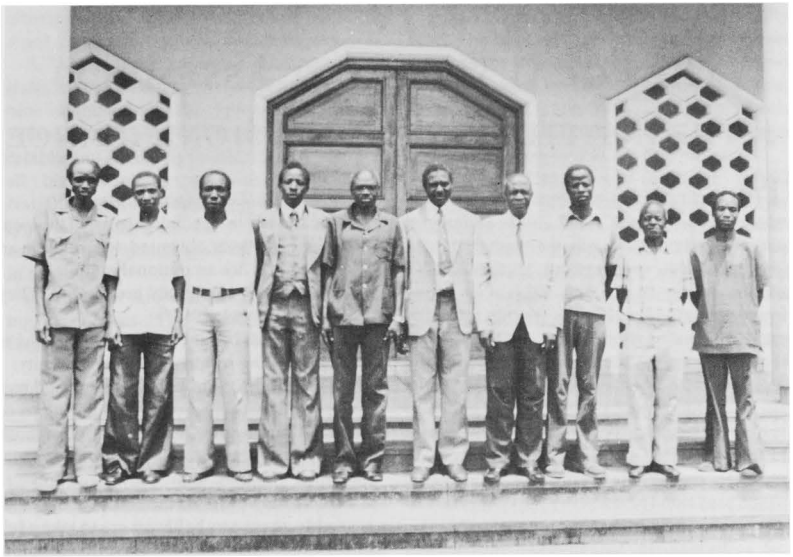
The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dominica (two members absent). The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem is seen seated in the front row, second from the left, and Counsellor Ruth Pringle in the back row, second from the right.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of St. Lucia. The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem and Counsellor Ruth Pringle are seen seated in the front row, third and fourth from the right.



Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum (centre) with delegates and friends who attended the inaugural Convention for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward Islands; 1981.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Uganda; re-established 1981. Counsellor Kolonario Oule is seen fourth from the right.



The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Nepal; re-established 1982.

IV

THE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY[1]

1. THE INSTITUTION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

THE institution of the Spiritual Assembly was created by Bahá'u'lláh and is an integral part of His Revelation, together with the teachings, principles, supplications, truth, and laws written in the Books and Tablets. It is the foundation stone of the new World Order, the establishment of which is the essential aim of the Bahá'í Faith. Through the loyalty of the believers who assist in the unfoldment of its latent attributes and powers, divine guidance and reinforcement is promised, and the forces of unity, justice, affection and fellowship are made to prevail over the negative elements which prey upon and destroy the civilization of an unbelieving age.

'. . . To it (Local Assembly) all local matters pertaining to the Cause must be directly and immediately referred for full consultation and decision. The importance, nay the absolute necessity of these Local Assemblies is manifest when we realize that in the days to come they will evolve into the local House of Justice, and at present provide the firm foundation on which the structure of the Master's Will is to be reared in future.' B.A., p. 37.

'In order to avoid division and disruption, that the Cause may not fall a prey to conflicting interpretations, and lose thereby its purity and pristine vigour, that its affairs may be conducted with efficiency and promptness, it is necessary that every one should conscientiously take an active part in the election of these Assemblies, abide by their decisions, enforce their decree, and co-operate with them wholeheartedly in their task of stimulating the growth of the Movement throughout all regions. The members of these Assemblies, on their part, must disregard utterly their own likes and dislikes, their personal interests and inclinations, and concentrate their minds upon those measures that will conduce to the welfare and happiness of the Bahá'í community and promote the common weal.' B.A., p. 41.

[1] From *The Bahá'í Community*, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, 1963.

Formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly

When the requisite conditions exist, the local group of Bahá'ís is obligated to establish an Assembly. It is not an optional matter.

The requisite conditions are simple. They include the following:

1. There must be nine or more adult Bahá'ís in good standing resident in the community.

2. These Bahá'ís are to be declared and recognized believers, all meeting qualifications of faith laid down by the Guardian. If one or more members of the group are such newly-confirmed Bahá'ís that they are not yet recorded as believers by the National Spiritual Assembly, these new believers are to take a full part in the formation of the Assembly, subject to later determination of their Bahá'í status.

3. Each Local Assembly has a definite area of jurisdiction. In most cases the area is that of the civil boundaries of an incorporated village, town or city. An Assembly may also be formed by nine or more Bahá'ís who reside in the same township or county or unincorporated village.

Where the area of jurisdiction is a township, there must be nine or more adult Bahá'ís resident therein outside the limits of any incorporated town or city in the township, as each Bahá'í civil area must be separate and distinct from other areas where an Assembly might later be formed.

Where the area of jurisdiction is a county, the county itself must be small enough to permit all the believers to meet regularly. The county unit constitutes a Bahá'í area of jurisdiction only when in it there are nine or more Bahá'ís who have access to no smaller civil area such as township or permanent electoral district. Postal areas and school districts do not represent areas of jurisdiction for Bahá'í Assemblies.

4. At the present time there is only one date when Local Assemblies can be formed—April 21 of any year. As the Bahá'í calendar consists of days which begin and end at sunset rather than midnight, the time to form an Assembly is

after sunset on April 20 and before sunset on April 21 except in special circumstances.

5. Where there are more than nine adult Bahá'ís, they form an Assembly by electing the nine members of the Spiritual Assembly. Where there are exactly nine adult Bahá'ís, they establish an Assembly by joint declaration, and all nine members must participate. The National Spiritual Assembly provides different types of report forms for these two methods and the group should apply for the proper form in advance.

(For further information refer to the following section on 'The Annual Election and Organization.')

The Annual Election and Organization

'These Local Spiritual Assemblies will have to be elected directly by the friends, and every declared believer of 21 years and above, far from standing aloof and assuming an indifferent or independent attitude, should regard it his sacred duty to take part conscientiously and diligently, in the election, the consolidation and the efficient working of his own Local Assembly.' B.A., p. 39.

'Pending its (the Universal House of Justice) establishment,[1] and to ensure uniformity throughout the East and throughout the West, all Local Assemblies will have to be re-elected once a year, during the first day of Riḍván, and the result of polling, if possible, be declared on that day.' B.A., p. 41.

The annual meeting on April 21, called for the election of the Spiritual Assembly, provides the occasion for the presentation of annual reports by the Assembly and by all its committees.

The chairman of the outgoing Assembly presides at this meeting.

The order of business includes:
Reading of the call of the meeting
Reading of appropriate Bahá'í passages bearing upon the subject of the election
Appointment of tellers
Distribution of ballots
Prayers for the spiritual guidance of the voters
The election by secret ballot
Presentation of annual reports
Tellers' report of the election
Approval of the tellers' report

[1] Written in 1923.

Assembly members are elected by plurality vote. The believers receiving the nine highest votes on the first ballot are elected, unless two or more are tied for ninth place. In case of a tie, a second ballot is cast by those present, and on this ballot the voter is to write the name of one of those who are tied in the first ballot.

Contrary to the ways of the world, Bahá'í elections are approached in a spirit of prayer without preliminary electioneering or nominating of candidates. Before the ballots are cast, prayers should be read and all participating ask for guidance in selecting those best fitted to serve. In this regard the Guardian wrote:

'. . . Let us recall His ['Abdu'l-Bahá's] explicit and often-repeated assurances that every Assembly elected in that rarefied atmosphere of selflessness and detachment is, in truth, appointed of God, that its verdict is truly inspired, that one and all should submit to its decision unreservedly and with cheerfulness.' B.A., p. 65.

'. . . the elector . . . is called upon to vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold. Moreover, the practice of nomination, so detrimental to the atmosphere of a silent and prayerful election, is viewed with mistrust . . . Should this simple system (based on plurality) be provisionally adopted, it would safeguard the spiritual principle of the unfettered freedom of the voter, who will thus preserve intact the sanctity of the choice he first made . . .' B.A., p. 136.

'The newly-elected Assembly is called together by the believer who received the highest number of votes, or in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent chairman is chosen.' By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly, Art, VIII.

It is preferable to have the election of the officers of the Assembly immediately following the annual election or formation by joint declaration; however, all nine members of the Assembly must be given an opportunity to vote for the officers. In rare instances a meeting for the election of officers cannot be called because of inability on the part of one or more members to attend. In such cases, the best procedure is to elect or appoint immediately a temporary chairman and secretary to serve until such time as all members of the Assembly

can be present to vote in person.

Permanent officers are elected by secret ballot and by majority rather than by plurality vote. (Plurality is the largest number; majority is the number greater than half, which, in this case, is at least five out of the nine.)

When an Assembly is organized, it is to report its formation and election of officers to the National Spiritual Assembly, together with whatever relevant facts may be necessary for recognition of the Assembly.

Dissolution of a Local Spiritual Assembly

Once elected or formed by joint declaration, an Assembly continues to exist until the next annual election or until the National Spiritual Assembly acts to declare the Assembly dissolved. This decision is not to be made by the members of the Local Assembly itself nor by any regional or national committee.

If the number of adult Bahá'ís in the community becomes less than nine, or other conditions arise which make it impossible for the Local Assembly to function, the facts should be reported to the National Assembly for final determination of the status of the Assembly.

Authority and Functions

The Local Spiritual Assemblies are 'invested with an authority rendering them unanswerable for their acts and decisions to those who elect them; solemnly pledged to follow, under all conditions, the dictates of the "Most Great Justice" that can alone usher in the reign of the "Most Great Peace" which Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed and must ultimately establish; charged with the responsibility of promoting at all times the best interests of the communities within their jurisdiction, of familiarizing them with their plans and activities and of inviting them to offer any recommendations they might wish to make; cognizant of their no less vital task of demonstrating, through association with all liberal and humanitarian movements, the universality and comprehensiveness of their Faith; dissociated entirely from all sectarian organizations, whether religious or secular; assisted by committees annually appointed by, and directly responsible to them, to each of which a particular branch of Bahá'í activity is assigned for study and action; supported by local funds to which all believers voluntarily contribute . . .' G.P.B., p. 331.

The various functions of the Local Spiritual Assembly, and its nature as a constitutional body, are duly set forth in Article VII of the By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly, and more definitely defined in the By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly approved by the National Spiritual Assembly as recommended by the Guardian. Each Local Spiritual Assembly of the United States, whether or not legally incorporated, is to function according to those By-Laws, and all members of the local Bahá'í community shall be guided and controlled by their provisions.

An essential function of Local Spiritual Assemblies is to act as intermediaries between the local communities and the National Spiritual Assembly. The Local Assembly is, therefore, the proper medium through which local Bahá'í communities can communicate with the body of their national representatives.

Appointment of Committees

In the appointment of committees, only those committees needed to carry out the activities of the community are necessary. Such committees are appointed by the Assembly from among the entire membership of the community, have specific functions to perform, and are responsible to the Assembly who will exercise constant and general supervision over their work. Before making appointments, it is usually beneficial to discuss the special abilities, aptitudes and personal wishes of the members under consideration in relation to the tasks which are to be performed by the committees.

Meetings

A meeting of the Spiritual Assembly is valid only when it has been duly called, that is, when each and every member has been informed of the time and place. The general practice is for the Assembly to decide upon some regular time and place for its meeting throughout the Bahá'í year, and this decision when recorded in the minutes is sufficient notice to the members. When the regular schedule cannot be followed, or the need arises for a special meeting, the secretary, on request of the chairman, or, in his absence or incapacity, of the vice-chairman, or of any three members of the Assembly, should send due notice to all the members.

The procedure for the calling of the Annual

Meeting is outlined in Article XI of the By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly.

Prime Requisites

The prime requisites for them that take counsel together are purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His Divine Fragrances, humility and lowliness amongst His loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties and servitude to His exalted Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to acquire these attributes, victory from the unseen Kingdom of Bahá shall be vouchsafed to them. In this day, assemblies of consultation are of the greatest importance and a vital necessity. Obedience unto them is essential and obligatory. B.A., p. 21.

The first condition is absolute love and harmony amongst the members of the Assembly. They must be wholly free from estrangement and must manifest in themselves the Unity of God, for they are the waves of one sea, the drops of one river, the stars of one heaven, the rays of one sun, the trees of one orchard, the flowers of one garden. Should harmony of thought and absolute unity be non-existent, the gathering shall be dispersed and that Assembly be brought to naught.

The second condition:—They must when coming together turn their faces to the Kingdom on High and ask aid from the Realm of Glory. They must then proceed with the utmost devotion, courtesy, dignity, care and moderation to express their views. They must in every matter search out the truth and not insist upon their own opinion, for stubbornness and persistence in one's views will lead ultimately to discord and wrangling and the truth will remain hidden. The honoured members must with all freedom express their own thoughts, and it is in no wise permissible for one to belittle the thought of another, nay, he must with moderation set forth the truth, and should differences of opinion arise a majority of voices must prevail, and all must obey and submit to the majority. It is again not permitted that any one of the honoured members object to or censure, whether in or out of the meeting, any decision arrived at previously, though that decision be not right, for such criticism would prevent any decision from being enforced.

In short, whatsoever thing is arranged in harmony and with love and purity of motive, its result is light, and should the least trace of estrangement prevail the result shall be darkness upon darkness . . . If this be so regarded, that assembly shall be of God, but otherwise it shall lead to coolness and alienation that proceed from the Evil One . . . Should they endeavour to fulfil these conditions the Grace of the Holy Spirit shall be vouchsafed unto them, and that assembly shall become the centre of Divine blessings, the hosts of Divine confirmation shall come to their aid, and they shall day by day receive a new effusion of spirit. 'Abdu'l-Bahá. B.A., pp. 22–23.

Recommended Agenda and Procedure

Since order is an important characteristic of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'ís should conduct their business in an orderly manner.

The following agenda is suggested for meetings of the Local Spiritual Assembly:

Prayer.
Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting.
Report of Secretary (or Corresponding Secretary) including correspondence of interest and concern to the body of the believers, and any and all recommendations duly adopted by the community at the last Nineteen Day Feast.
Report of Treasurer.
Report of Committees.
Unfinished business.
New business, including conferences with members of the community and with applicants for enrolment as members of the community.
Closing prayer.

A Spiritual Assembly in maintaining its three-fold function of a body given (within the limits of its jurisdiction) an executive, a legislative and a judicial capacity, is charged with responsibilities for initiating action and making decisions. Its meetings, therefore, revolve around various definite matters which require deliberation and collective decision, and it is incumbent upon the members, one and all, to address themselves to the chairman on the subject under discussion and not introduce matters irrelevant to the subject.

Bahá'í principles of consultation and majority rule are requisite characteristics in Bahá'í Administration, and represent radical departures from the generally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure. In Bahá'í Assembly action, the chairman takes part in the discussion, and a majority decision becomes unani-

mous and binding upon all. There is no minority opinion in Bahá'í Administration; the decision of the majority is the decision of all.

Every subject or problem before an Assembly is most efficiently handled when the following process is observed:

First, ascertainment and agreement upon the facts;

Second, agreement upon the spiritual or adminstrative principle which is involved;

Third, full and frank discussion of the matter, leading up to the offering of a resolution; and

Fourth, voting upon the resolution.

A resolution, or motion, is not subject to discussion or vote until duly made and seconded. It is preferable to have such resolution clear and complete in itself, but when an amendment is duly made and seconded, the chairman shall call for a vote on the amendment first and then on the original motion. An amendment must be relevant to, and not contravene, the subject matter of the motion. Only one motion should be considered at a time. The procedure for handling motions is:

1. Statement of motion
2. Second
3. Discussion of the motion
4. Voting
5. Announcement of the result of the voting.

Amendments are to be voted on before the main motion. Motions can be amended only once, by one of the following actions: adding, striking out, inserting, striking out and inserting, substituting, dividing.

An action may be agreed upon by the Assembly without going through the formality of making a motion and voting upon it; however, if the agreement is not unanimous the question must be put to a vote.

The chairman, or other presiding officer, has the same right and responsibility as other members of the Assembly for discussing and voting upon all matters being considered by the Assembly.

Discussion of any subject before the Assembly may be terminated by a motion duly made, seconded and voted, calling upon the chairman to put the matter to a vote or to proceed to the next matter on the agenda. The purpose of this procedure is to prevent any member or members from unnecessarily prolonging the discussion beyond the point at which full opportunity has been given to all members to express their views.

A motion to adjourn is always in order and has priority over all other motions except the motion to fix the time of the next meeting. The motion to adjourn is not debatable and cannot be amended. It requires a majority vote. Before voting, however, the presiding officer should point out items of unfinished business on the agenda, so that the members will know whether to vote for or against adjournment at that moment.

A motion may be withdrawn by the mover, provided no one objects, and before a vote has been taken.

When the Assembly has taken action upon any matter, the action is binding upon all members, whether present or absent from the meeting at which the action was taken. Individual views and opinions must be subordinated to the will of the Assembly when a decision has been made. A Spiritual Assembly is an administrative unit, as it is a spiritual unit, and therefore no distinction between 'majority' and 'minority' groups or factions can be recognized. Each member must give undivided loyalty to the institution to which he or she has been elected.

Any action taken by the Assembly can be reconsidered at a later meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried. This reconsideration, according to the result of the consultation, may lead to a revision or the annulment of the prior action. If a majority is unwilling to reconsider the prior action, further discussion of the matter by any member is improper.

Vacancies on Assembly

The Assembly has a responsibility in filling a vacancy caused by the inability of any member to attend the meetings. 'It is only too obvious that unless a member can attend regularly the meetings of his Local Assembly, it would be impossible for him to discharge the duties incumbent upon him, and to fulfil his responsibilities as a representative of the community. Membership in a Local Spiritual Assembly carries with it, indeed, the obligation and capacity to remain in close touch with local Bahá'í activities, and ability to attend regularly the sessions of the Assembly.' Letter from Shoghi Effendi, 16 Feb. 1935.

When a vacancy on an Assembly involves

also one of its officers, the Assembly vacancy is filled in the usual manner by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community, after which the entire Assembly elects the new officer.

Minutes

The Spiritual Assembly, as a permanent body, is responsible for maintaining all minutes of its meetings, important records and correspondence, and financial records throughout its existence as a Bahá'í institution. Each officer, therefore, on completing his or her term of office, shall turn over to the Assembly all records and files pertaining to the business of the Assembly. A permanent record of minutes is of special importance and necessity when an Assembly is incorporated, because situations could arise which would make it necessary to produce the minutes for inspection by state authorities.

Other items which would be of historical interest in the future should be kept in the local archives.

It is vitally important that each Local Spiritual Assembly maintain a complete file of *Bahá'í News* and the *U.S. Supplement* for reference on various directives regarding laws and procedures, teaching suggestions, and other pertinent information. It should also maintain and keep up to date a file of all special instructions and statements from the National Spiritual Assembly dealing with matters of permanent value.

Minutes are the permanent official record of the meeting taken by a secretary. If the community is large and the Assembly handles a great amount of business, a recording secretary may be elected to record the minutes. The minutes should include all essential details, such as the election of the Assembly and its officers at the beginning of each year, by-elections for filling vacancies on the Assembly occurring during the year, attendance of all members at its meetings, new enrolments and transfers, marriages and deaths.

All carried motions are recorded in the minutes. The minutes should be written in such a way as to provide sufficient background to understand the reason for the motions and decision, but the entire discussion does not need to be recorded. It is not necessary to record names of individuals making and seconding motions or making comments during the discussion. Names are of importance, however, when the minutes record reports given on special assignments or situations, or when assignments are given to particular individuals.

If a decision is adopted by common consent without the formality of a motion, even this decision should be clearly stated by the chairman and recorded in the minutes so that there is no question as to what action was agreed upon by the group.

Correspondence should be listed in the minutes. Copies of important outgoing correspondence, in addition to the incoming letters, should be kept for the files.

Record should be made in the minutes of consultation with individuals meeting with the Assembly, whether requested by the individual or the Assembly.

Minutes should be written or typed legibly. They should be corrected and approved by the Assembly before they become a matter of permanent record.

Records of Nineteen-Day Feasts need include only the recommendations made by the community to be presented to the Local Spiritual Assembly, with the background necessary for understanding them.

Minutes of Assembly meetings are not read at the Nineteen-Day Feasts; only the actions taken by the Assembly which concern the community affairs are reported at Feasts. The judgement of what should be shared at the Feasts belongs to the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Legal Incorporation

Local Assemblies having fifteen or more active adult believers in the community are authorized to effect legal incorporation.

To do so the matter should be presented at a Nineteen-Day Feast and a recommendation adopted which expresses the desire of the community that the Spiritual Assembly be legally incorporated.

The Bahá'í World volumes reproduce many local Certificates of Incorporation which supply models for consideration by the Assembly's attorney. What is incorporated is the Spiritual Assembly, not the entire community. The community is associated with the instrument through the annual election of the Local Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly's author-

ity to enrol new believers and determine the membership list.

The Articles of Incorporation are to make proper reference to the Central Figures of the Faith and to the National Spiritual Assembly. If necessary, the National Assembly on request will provide an example of how this is to be done.

Before the Incorporation papers are recorded, a copy is to be sent to the National Spiritual Assembly for final approval. After recording, three photostatic copies of the recorded Articles are to be sent to the National Spiritual Assembly, together with a photograph of the nine Assembly members.

Incorporation must be preserved in accordance with the manner prescribed by state law.

THE NINETEEN-DAY FEAST

The institution of the Nineteen-Day Feast provides the recognized and regular occasion for general consultation on the part of the community, and for consultation between the Spiritual Assembly and the members of the community. The conduct of the period of consultation at Nineteen-Day Feasts is a vital function of each Spiritual Assembly.

From words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *The Nineteen-Day Feast was inaugurated by the Báb and ratified by Bahá'u'lláh, in His Holy Book, the* Aqdas, *so that people may gather together and outwardly show fellowship and love, that the Divine mysteries may be disclosed. The object is concord, that through this fellowship hearts may become perfectly united, and reciprocity and mutual helpfulness be established. Because the members of the world of humanity are unable to exist without being banded together, co-operation and helpfulness is the basis of human society. Without the realization of these two great principles no great movement is pressed forward.* B.W., Vol. XII, p. 298.

The Nineteen-Day Feast has been described by the Guardian as the foundation of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. It is to be conducted according to the following programme: the first part, entirely spiritual in character, is devoted to the reading of Bahá'í prayers and selections from the Bahá'í sacred Writings; the second part consists of general consultation on the affairs of the Cause; the third part is the material feast and social meeting of all the believers, and should maintain the spiritual nature of the Feast.

In selecting the readings for the devotional part of the Feast the friends may be guided by the instructions printed in *Bahá'í News* quoting the following excerpt from a letter to a believer from the Guardian through his assistant secretary dated 27 April 1956, 'The Writings of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh can certainly be read at any time at any place; likewise the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are read freely during the spiritual part of the Feast. The Guardian has instructed that during the spiritual part of the Feast, his own writings should not be read. In other words, during the spiritual part of the Feast, readings should be confined to the Writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and to a lesser extent, of the Master; but during that part of the Feast the Guardian's writings should not be read. During the period of administrative discussion of the Feast, then the Guardian's writings may be read. Of course, during the administrative part of the Feast there can be no objection to the reading of the Writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh or 'Abdu'l-Bahá.' *Bahá'í News*, Jan. 1959.

Bahá'ís should regard this Feast as the very heart of their spiritual activity, their participation in the mystery of the holy utterance, their steadfast unity one with another in a universality raised high above the limitations of race, class, nationality, sect, and personality, and their privilege of contributing to the power of the Cause in the realm of collective action.

Attendance

Only members of the Bahá'í community and visiting Bahá'ís from other localities may attend these meetings. Young people between fifteen and twenty-one years of age, who have declared their acceptance of the qualifications of membership in the Faith are considered as members although they are referred to as Bahá'í youth. Children up to age fifteen, of Bahá'í parents, may also attend the Nineteen-Day Feasts.

Regular attendance at the Nineteen-Day Feast is incumbent upon every Bahá'í, illness or absence from the city being the only justification for absence. Believers are expected to arrange their personal affairs so as to enable them to observe the Bahá'í calendar.

Order of Business for the Consultation Period

The chairman or other appointed representative of the Spiritual Assembly presides during the period of consultation.

The Spiritual Assembly reports to the community whatever communications have been received from the World Centre and the National Spiritual Assembly, as well as other correspondence of concern to all believers of the community. This does not necessarily mean that all communications must be read in full at the Feast.

A matter of vital importance at this meeting is consideration of national and international Bahá'í affairs, to strengthen the capacity of the community to co-operate in promotion of the larger Bahá'í interests and to deepen the understanding of all believers concerning the relation of the local community to the Bahá'í world community.

The Assembly likewise reports its own activities and plans, including committee appointments that may have been made since the last Feast, the financial report, arrangements made for public meetings, and in general shares with the community all matters that concern the Faith. These reports are to be followed by general consultation.

Provision is to be made for reports from committees, with discussion of each report.

The meeting is to be open for suggestions and recommendations from individual believers to the Local Spiritual Assembly on any matter affecting the Cause. Such recommendations must be adopted by majority vote of the community members present before constituting a resolution to be considered by the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Through this means individual Bahá'ís find in the Nineteen-Day Feast the channel through which to make suggestions and recommendations to the National Spiritual Assembly. These recommendations are offered first to the local community, and when adopted by the community come before the Local Assembly, which then may in its discretion forward the recommendations to the National Spiritual Assembly accompanied by its own considered view.

Upon each member of the community lies the obligation to make his or her utmost contribution to the consultation, the ideal being a gathering of Bahá'ís inspired with one spirit and concentrating upon the one aim to further the interests of the Faith.

Bahá'í visitors attending a Feast do not take part in the consultation of the community unless invited to do so.

The secretary of the Assembly records each resolution adopted by the community, as well as the various suggestions advanced during the meeting, in order to report these to the Spiritual Assembly for its consideration. Whatever action the Assembly takes is to be reported at a later Nineteen-Day feast.

It should be borne in mind that the consultation period of the Nineteen-Day Feast is not the time for the Local Spiritual Assembly to consult and make decisions.

Matters of a personal nature should be brought to the Spiritual Assembly and not to the community at the Nineteen-Day Feast. Concerning the attitude with which believers should come to these Feasts, the Master has said, *You must free yourselves from everything that is in your hearts, before you enter.*

CONSULTATION

In this Cause, consultation is of vital importance, but spiritual conference and not the mere voicing of personal views is intended . . . Antagonism and contradiction are unfortunate and always destructive to truth . . . The purpose is to emphasize the statement that consultation must have for its object the investigation of truth. He who expresses an opinion should not voice it as correct and right but set it forth as a contribution to the consensus of opinion, for the light of reality becomes apparent when two opinions coincide. . . . 'Abdu'l-Bahá. P.U.P., p. 72.

'The principle of consultation, which constitutes one of the basic laws of the Administration, should be applied to all Bahá'í activities which affect the collective interests of the Faith for it is through co-operation and continued exchange of thoughts and views that the Cause can best safeguard and foster its interests. Individual initiative, personal ability and resourcefulness, though indispensible, are, unless supported and enriched by the collective experience and wisdom of the group, utterly incapable of achieving such a tremendous task.' Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í News*, Nov. 1933.

'Shoghi Effendi firmly believes that consultation must be maintained between the

National Spiritual Assembly and the entire body of the believers, and that such consultation, while the Convention is not in session, can best be maintained through the agency of the Local Assemblies, one of whose essential functions is to act as intermediaries between the local communities and their national representatives. The main purpose of the Nineteen-Day Feast is to enable individual believers to offer any suggestion to the Local Assembly which in its turn will pass it to the National Spiritual Assembly. The Local Assembly is, therefore, the proper medium through which local Bahá'í communities can communicate with the body of the national representatives.' Letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 18 Nov. 1933.

'Let us also remember that at the very root of the Cause lies the principle of the undoubted right of the individual to self-expression, his freedom to declare his conscience and set forth his views . . .

'Let us also bear in mind that the keynote of the Cause of God is not dictatorial authority but humble fellowship, not arbitrary power, but the spirit of frank and loving consultation. Nothing short of the spirit of a true Bahá'í can hope to reconcile the principles of mercy and justice, of freedom and submission, of the sanctity of the right of the individual and of self-surrender, of vigilance, discretion and prudence on the one hand, and fellowship, candour, and courage on the other.' B.A., pp. 63–64.

DECISIONS AND APPEALS

At this crucial stage in the history of our Faith it seems advisable to emphasize to each Local Assembly an important principle of administration which has been too frequently overlooked. This principle establishes the National Assembly as the court of appeal from decisions of Local Assemblies when protested by one or more members of the community as unjust or as not conforming to the actual facts.

A court of appeal is not responsible for determining the facts but only for reviewing the local decision based upon the facts assembled by the Local Assembly itself. On receiving an appeal the National Spiritual Assembly will send a copy of it to the Local Assembly and request its opinion. When this is received the case will be studied in the light of the facts presented to the National Assembly and a final decision made. The National Assembly can decide only upon the facts presented to it; therefore, when a matter is submitted to it, all obtainable facts, together with supporting documentary evidence should be included. The National Assembly's decision, whether approving or disapproving the original decision of the Local Assembly, will be communicated to both the Local Assembly and to the person or persons who made the appeal.

This procedure is in accordance with both the national and local By-Laws.

Any complaint received by the National Assembly from a member or members of a local community who have not first submitted their complaint to the Local Assembly will be returned to those making the protest, with a copy of the letter being sent to the Local Assembly for its information. In such a case the Local Assembly is to call the person or persons in for consultation and act upon the complaint.

An essential function of the Local Spiritual Assembly is the maintenance of unity and devotion among the believers. As 'Trustees of the Merciful' the Spiritual Assembly must be selfless and impartial, considerate of the rights of the individual, but firm and steadfast in upholding the vital truths of the Revelation and obedience to its institutions. Therefore, they must discriminate between situations which are transient and trivial and those which threaten to disrupt the community. A distinction is to be made between personalities who cause disturbances because they lack grounding in the basic Teachings and attitudes of the Bahá'í life, and those who deliberately cause trouble because in their hearts they do not accept the principle of authority as vested in the Manifestation, or in the institutions of the Bahá'í world community.

The Local Assembly is responsible for dealing with all local problems, but can call upon the National Spiritual Assembly for advice if necessary.

The National Assembly, in any case involving two or more local communities, however, acts directly and deals with the problems as the court of original jurisdiction, since no Local Assembly has authority outside its own civil area.

'The authority of the National Spiritual Assembly is undivided and unchallengeable in all matters pertaining to the administration of

the Faith throughout the United States, . . . therefore, the obedience of individual Bahá'ís, delegates, groups and Assemblies to that authority is imperative and should be wholehearted and unqualified. He is convinced that the unreserved acceptance and complete application of this vital provision of the Administration is essential to the maintenance of the highest degree of unity among the believers, and is indispensable to the effective working of the administrative machinery of the Faith in every country.' Letter from Shoghi Effendi through his secretary. *Bahá'í News*, July 1934.

THE BAHÁ'Í FUND

'As the progress and extension of spiritual activities is dependent and conditioned upon material means, it is of absolute necessity that immediately after the establishment of Local as well as National Spiritual Assemblies, a Bahá'í Fund be established, to be placed under the exclusive control of the Spiritual Assembly. All donations and contributions should be offered to the treasurer of the Assembly, for the express purpose of promoting the interests of the Cause, throughout that locality or country. It is the sacred obligation of every conscientious and faithful servant of Bahá'u'lláh who desires to see His Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund. The members of the Spiritual Assembly will at their own discretion expend it to promote the Teaching Campaign, to help the needy, to establish educational Bahá'í institutions, to extend in every way possible their sphere of service. I cherish the hope that all the friends, realizing the necessity of this measure will bestir themselves and contribute, however modestly at first, towards the speedy establishment and the increase of that Fund . . .' B.A., pp. 41–42.

'We must be like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by the fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good—this is the secret of right living.' Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í News*, Sept. 1926.

'As the activities of the American Bahá'í community expand, and its worldwide prestige correspondingly increases, the institution of the National Fund, the bedrock on which all other institutions must necessarily rest and be established, acquires added importance, and should be increasingly supported by the entire body of the believers, both in their individual capacities, and through their collective efforts, whether organized as groups or as Local Assemblies. The supply of funds, in support of the National Treasury, constitutes, at the present time, the lifeblood of these nascent institutions you are labouring to erect. Its importance cannot, surely, be overestimated. Untold blessings shall no doubt crown every effort directed to that end.' M.A., p. 5.

'In connection with the institution of the National Fund . . . I feel urged to remind you of the necessity of ever bearing in mind the cardinal principle that all contributions to the Fund are to be purely and strictly voluntary in character . . .' B.A., p. 101.

'Moreover, we should, I feel, regard it as an axiom and guiding principle of Bahá'í administration that in the conduct of every specific Bahá'í activity, as different from undertakings of a humanitarian, philanthropic, or charitable character, which may in future be conducted under Bahá'í auspices, only those who have already identified themselves with the Faith and are regarded as its avowed and unreserved supporters, should be invited to join and collaborate.' B.A., p. 182.

A statement from the National Treasurer is included in an issue of the *Bahá'í News* each year, setting out the various funds—international, national, and local—with instructions for making contributions to each of them.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS SECTION

B.A.	*Bahá'í Administration*
Bahá'í News	*U.S. Bahá'í News*
B.W.	*The Bahá'í World*
G.P.B.	*God Passes By*
M.A.	*Messages to America*
P.U.P.	*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*

2. BY-LAWS OF A LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

WE, the undersigned members of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . , desiring to incorporate this body do hereby adopt the following By-Laws:

ARTICLE I

The Trustees, i.e., the members of the Spiritual Assembly, recognize that this action has been taken in full unanimity and agreement. They acknowledge for themselves and on behalf of their successors the sacred meaning and universal purpose of the Bahá'í Faith, the teachings and principles of which fulfil the divine promise of all former revealed religions.

ARTICLE II

In administering the affairs of the Bahá'í religion under this Corporation for the benefit of the Bahá'ís of . . . in accordance with the religious teachings and administrative principles of this Faith, the Spiritual Assembly shall act in conformity with the functions of a Local Spiritual Assembly as defined in the By-Laws adopted by the National Spiritual Assembly and published by that body for the information and guidance of Bahá'ís throughout . . .[1]

ARTICLE III

The Spiritual Assembly, in the fulfilment of its obligations and responsibilities under this Corporation, shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the local activities and affairs of the Bahá'í community of . . . , including paramount authority in the administration of this Corporation. It shall be responsible for maintaining the integrity and accuracy of all Bahá'í teaching, whether written or oral, undertaken throughout the local community. It shall make available the published literature of the Faith. It shall represent the community in relationship to the National Spiritual Assembly, the Universal House of Justice, other local Bahá'í communities and the general public in . . . It shall be charged with the recognition of all applicants requesting membership in the local Bahá'í community. It shall pass upon the right of any and all members of the community whose membership is in question to retain their status as voting members of the community. It shall call the meetings of the community, including the Bahá'í Anniversaries and Feasts, the Meetings of consultation, and the Annual Meeting at which the members of the Assembly are elected. It shall appoint and supervise all committees of the Bahá'í community. It shall collect and disburse all funds intended for the maintenance of this Corporation. It shall have full and complete custody of the headquarters or meeting place of the Bahá'í community. It shall have exclusive authority to conduct Bahá'í marriage ceremonies and issue Bahá'í marriage certificates within the area of its jurisdiction. It shall report to the National Spiritual Assembly annually, or when requested, the membership roll of the Bahá'í community, for the information and approval of the National Assembly. The Spiritual Assembly, however, shall recognize the authority and right of the National Spiritual Assembly to declare at any time what activities and affairs of the Bahá'í community of . . . are national in scope and hence subject to the jurisdiction of the National Assembly. It shall likewise recognize the right of any member of the community to appeal to the National Spiritual Assembly for review and decision of any matter in which the previous decision of the Local Spiritual Assembly is felt by the member to be contrary to the explicit teachings of the Bahá'í Faith or opposed to its best interests. It shall, on the other hand, have the authority and right to appeal from the decision of the National Assembly to the Universal House of Justice for review and final decision of any matter related to the Faith in . . .

ARTICLE IV

The Spiritual Assembly, in administering this Corporation, shall ever bear in mind the ideals upheld in the sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith respecting the relationships of a Spiritual

[1] Name of country or region.

Assembly to its Bahá'í community, respecting the relations of Bahá'ís to one another in the community, and the relationships of Bahá'ís to all non-Bahá'ís, without prejudice of race, creed or nationality. The Assembly shall therefore above all recognize its sacred duty to maintain full and complete unity throughout the Bahá'í community, to relieve and comfort the sick and distressed, to assist the poor and destitute, to protect the orphans, the crippled and the aged, to educate the children of Bahá'ís according to the highest religious and intellectual standards, to compose differences and disagreements among members of the community, to promulgate the principles of Divine Civilization revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, and to promote in every way possible the Bahá'í aim of the oneness of mankind. It shall faithfully and devotedly uphold the general Bahá'í activities and affairs initiated and sustained by the National Spiritual Assembly. It shall co-operate wholeheartedly with other Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout . . .[1] in all matters declared by the National Spiritual Assembly to be of general Bahá'í importance and concern. It shall rigorously abstain from any action or influence, direct or indirect, that savours of intervention on the part of a Bahá'í body in matters of public politics and civil jurisdiction. It shall encourage intercourse between the Bahá'í community of . . . and other recognized Bahá'í communities, issuing letters of introduction to Bahá'ís travelling from . . . and passing upon letters of introduction issued by other Bahá'í Assemblies. It shall regard its authority as a means of rendering service to Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís and not as a source of arbitrary power. While retaining the sacred right of final decision in all matters pertaining to the Bahá'í community, the Spiritual Assembly shall ever seek the advice and consultation of all members of the community, keep the community informed of all its affairs, and invite full and free discussion on the part of the community of all matters affecting the Faith.

ARTICLE V

The Bahá'ís of . . . for whose benefit this Corporation has been established shall consist of all persons of the age of 15 years or over resident in . . . who are accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice required under the following standard set forth by the Guardian of the Faith:

Full recognition of the station of the Báb, the Forerunner; of Bahá'u'lláh, the Author; and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the True Exemplar of the Bahá'í religion; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of Bahá'í Administration throughout the world.

Upon attaining the age of 21 years, a Bahá'í is eligible to vote and to hold elective office.

ARTICLE VI

The Spiritual Assembly shall consist of nine Trustees chosen from among the Bahá'ís of . . . , who shall be elected by these Bahá'ís in a manner hereinafter provided and who shall continue in office for the period of one year, or until their successors shall be elected.

ARTICLE VII

The officers of the Spiritual Assembly shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may be found necessary for the proper conduct of its affairs. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Assembly taken by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VIII

The first meeting of a newly-elected Assembly shall be called by the member elected to membership by the highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent Chairman shall be chosen. All subsequent meetings shall be called by the Secretary of the Assembly at the request of the Chairman or, in his absence or incapacity, of the Vice-Chairman, or of any three members of the

[1] Name of country or region.

Assembly; provided, however, that the Annual Meeting of the Assembly shall be held on April 21, in accordance with the administrative principles recognized by all Bahá'í Assemblies.

SECTION 1. Five members of the Assembly present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and a majority vote of those present and constituting a quorum shall be sufficient for the conduct of business, except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, and with due regard to the principle of unity and cordial fellowship involved in the institution of a Spiritual Assembly. The transactions and decisions of the Assembly shall be recorded at each meeting by the Secretary, who shall have the minutes adopted and approved by the Assembly, and preserve them in the official records of the Assembly.

SECTION 2. Vacancies in the membership of the Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community duly called for that purpose by the Assembly. In the event that the number of vacancies exceeds four, making a quorum of the Spiritual Assembly impossible, the election shall be under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly.

ARTICLE IX

The sphere of jurisdiction of the Spiritual Assembly, with respect to residential qualification of membership, and voting rights of a believer in the Bahá'í community, shall be the locality included within the civil limits of . . .

ARTICLE X

SECTION 1. In the event that any decision of the Assembly is unacceptable to any member or members of the community, the Assembly shall, after endeavouring to compose the difference of opinion, invite the said member or members to make appeal to the National Spiritual Assembly and notify that body of the condition of the matter and the readiness of the Assembly to become party to that appeal.

SECTION 2. In the same manner, if any difference arises between the Assembly and another Local Assembly, or Assemblies, in . . .[1], the Assembly shall report the matter to the National Assembly and inform that body of its readiness to make joint appeal together with the other Assembly or Assemblies.

SECTION 3. If, however, the result of such appeal is unsatisfactory to the Spiritual Assembly, or the Assembly at any time has reason to believe that actions of the National Spiritual Assembly are affecting adversely the welfare and unity of the Bahá'í community of . . . , it shall, after seeking to compose its difference of opinion with the National Assembly in direct consultation, have the right to make appeal to the Universal House of Justice.

SECTION 4. The Assembly shall likewise have the right to make complaint to the National Spiritual Assembly in the event that matters of local Bahá'í concern and influence are referred to the national body by a member or members of the local community without previous opportunity for action by the Local Assembly.

ARTICLE XI

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation at which its Trustees shall be elected shall be held on April 21, at an hour and place to be fixed by the Assembly, which shall give not less than fifteen days' notice of the meeting to all members of the local Bahá'í community.

SECTION 1. The Assembly shall accept those votes transmitted to the Assembly before the election by members who by reason of sickness or other unavoidable reason are unable to be present at the election in person.

SECTION 2. The election of members to the Spiritual Assembly shall be by plurality vote.

SECTION 3. All voting members of the local Bahá'í community are eligible for election as members of the Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 4. The Assembly shall prepare an agenda for the Annual Meeting in which shall be included reports of the activities of the Assembly since its election, a financial statement showing all income and expenditure of its fund, reports of its committees and presentation of any other matters pertaining to the affairs of the Bahá'í community. The Assembly, both preceding and

[1] Name of country or region.

following the annual election, shall invite discussion and welcome suggestions from the community, in order that its plans may reflect the community mind and heart.

SECTION 5. The result of the election shall be reported by the Spiritual Assembly to the National Assembly.

ARTICLE XII

In addition to the Annual Meeting, the Assembly shall arrange for regular meetings of the Bahá'í community throughout the year at intervals of nineteen days, in accordance with the calendar incorporated in the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

ARTICLE XIII

The seal of the Corporation shall be circular in form, bearing the following inscription:
The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . .

ARTICLE XIV

Alternative 'A'

These By-Laws may be amended by majority vote of the Spiritual Assembly at any of its regular or special meetings, provided that at least fourteen days prior to the date fixed for the said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.

Alternative 'B'

These By-Laws may be amended only by majority action of the National Spiritual Assembly, which, in making amendments, does so for the By-Laws of all Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout . . . .[1]

[1] Name of country or region.



First Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of L'Aquila, Italy; 1981.

V

THE INSTITUTION OF THE MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR

1. FOREWORD

Blessed is he who directeth his steps towards the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at the hour of dawn, communing with Him, attuned to His remembrance, imploring His forgiveness. And having entered therein, let him sit in silence to hearken unto the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Say, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is in truth any House raised in towns or villages, for mention of Me. Thus hath it been named before His Throne; would that ye know it.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*

MANY discerning minds have testified to the profoundly significant change which has taken place during recent years in the character of popular religious thinking. Religion has developed an entirely new emphasis, more especially for the layman, quite independent of the older sectarian divisions.

Instead of considering that religion is a matter of turning toward an abstract creed, the average religionist today is concerned with the practical applications of religion to the problems of human life. Religion, in brief, after having apparently lost its influence in terms of theology, has been restored more powerfully than ever as a spirit of brotherhood, an impulse toward unity, and an ideal making for a more enlightened civilization throughout the world.

Against this background, the institution of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár stands revealed as the supreme expression of all those modern religious tendencies animated by social ideals which do not repudiate the reality of spiritual experience but seek to transform it into a dynamic striving for unity. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, when clearly understood, gives the world its most potent agency for applying mystical vision or idealistic aspiration to the service of humanity. It makes visible and concrete those deeper meanings and wider possibilities of religion which could not be realized until the dawn of this universal age.

The term 'Mashriqu'l-Adhkár' means literally, 'Dawning-place of the praise of God.'

To appreciate the significance of this Bahá'í institution, we must lay aside all customary ideas of the churches and cathedrals of the past. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár fulfils the original intention of religion in each dispensation, before that intention had become altered and veiled by human invention and belief.

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is a channel releasing spiritual powers for social regeneration because it fills a different function than that assumed by the sectarian church. Its essential purpose is to provide a community meeting-place for all who are seeking to worship God, and achieves this purpose by interposing no man-made veils between the worshipper and the Supreme. Thus, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is freely open to people of all Faiths on equal terms, who now realize the universality of Bahá'u'lláh in revealing the oneness of all the Prophets. Moreover, since the Bahá'í Faith has no professional clergy, the worshipper entering the Temple hears no sermon and takes part in no ritual the emotional effect of which is to establish a separate group consciousness.

Integral with the Temple are its accessory buildings, without which the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár would not be a complete social institution. These buildings are to be devoted to such activities as a school for science, a hospice, a hospital, an asylum for orphans. Here the circle of spiritual experience at last joins, as prayer and worship are allied directly to creative service, eliminating the static subjective elements from religion and laying a foundation for a new and higher type of human association.

HORACE HOLLEY

2. THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR

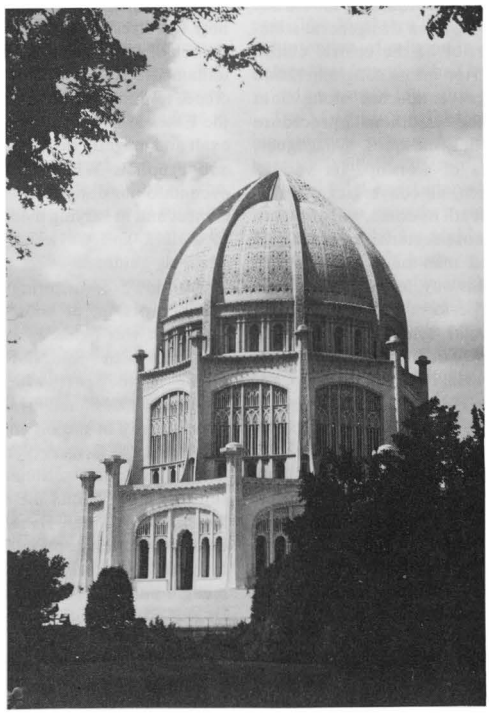
A LETTER FROM SHOGHI EFFENDI

IT should be borne in mind that the central edifice of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, round which in the fullness of time shall cluster such institutions of social service as shall afford relief to the suffering, sustenance to the poor, shelter to the wayfarer, solace to the bereaved, and education to the ignorant, should be regarded apart from these dependencies, as a house solely designed and entirely dedicated to the worship of God in accordance with the few yet definitely prescribed principles established by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. It should not be inferred, however, from this general statement that the interior of the central edifice itself will be converted into a conglomeration of religious services conducted along lines associated with the traditional procedure obtaining in churches, mosques, synagogues, and other temples of worship. Its various avenues of approach, all converging towards the central hall beneath its dome, will not serve as admittance to those sectarian adherents of rigid formulae and man-made creeds, each bent, according to his way, to observe his rites, recite his prayers, perform his ablutions, and display the particular symbols of his faith within separately defined sections of Bahá'u'lláh's Universal House of Worship. Far from the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár offering such a spectacle of incoherent and confused sectarian observances and rites, a condition wholly incompatible with the provisions of the *Aqdas* and irreconcilable with the spirit it inculcates, the central House of Bahá'í worship, enshrined within the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, will gather within its chastened walls, in a serenely spiritual atmosphere, only those who, discarding forever the trappings of elaborate and ostentatious ceremony, are willing worshippers of the one true God, as manifested in this age in the Person of Bahá'u'lláh. To them will the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár symbolize the fundamental verity underlying the Bahá'í Faith, that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that Divine Revelation is not final but progressive. Theirs will be the conviction that an all-loving and ever-watchful Father Who, in the past, and at various stages in the evolution of mankind, has sent forth His Prophets as the Bearers of His Message and the Manifestations of His Light to mankind, cannot at this critical period of their civilization withhold from His children the guidance which they sorely need amid the darkness which has beset them, and which neither the light of science nor that of human intellect and wisdom can succeed in dissipating. And thus having recognized in Bahá'u'lláh the source whence this celestial light proceeds, they will irresistibly feel attracted to seek the shelter of His house, and congregate therein, unhampered by ceremonials and unfettered by creed, to render homage to the one true God, the Essence and Orb of eternal Truth, and to exalt and magnify the name of His Messengers and Prophets Who, from time immemorial even unto our day, have, under divers circumstances and in varying measure, mirrored forth to a dark and wayward world the light of heavenly guidance.

But however inspiring the conception of Bahá'í worship, as witnessed in the central edifice of this exalted Temple, it cannot be regarded as the sole, nor even the essential, factor in the part which the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, as designed by Bahá'u'lláh, is destined to play in the organic life of the Bahá'í community. Divorced from the social, humanitarian, educational and scientific pursuits centring around the dependencies of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, Bahá'í worship, however exalted in its conception, however passionate in fervor, can never hope to achieve beyond the meagre and often transitory results produced by the contemplations of the ascetic or the communion of the passive worshipper. It cannot afford lasting satisfaction and benefit to the worshipper himself, much less to humanity in general, unless and until translated and transfused into that dynamic and disinterested service to the cause of humanity which it is the supreme privilege of the dependencies of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to facilitate and promote.

Nor will the exertions, no matter how disinterested and strenuous, of those who within the precincts of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár will be engaged in administering the affairs of the future Bahá'í commonwealth, fructify and prosper unless they are brought into close and daily communion with those spiritual agencies centring in and radiating from the central shrine of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Nothing short of direct and constant interaction between the spiritual forces emanating from this House of Worship centring in the heart of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, and the energies consciously displayed by those who administer its affairs in their service to humanity can possibly provide the necessary agency capable of removing the ills that have so long and so grievously afflicted humanity. For it is assuredly upon the consciousness of the efficacy of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, reinforced on one hand by spiritual communion with His Spirit, and on the other by the intelligent application and the faithful execution of the principles and laws He revealed, that the salvation of a world in travail must ultimately depend. And of all the institutions that stand associated with His Holy Name, surely none save the institution of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár can most adequately provide the essentials of Bahá'í worship and service, both so vital to the regeneration of the world. Therein lies the secret of the loftiness, of the potency, of the unique position of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár as one of the outstanding institutions conceived by Bahá'u'lláh.

25 October 1929.



The Mother Temple of the West, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A. The corner-stone was laid by 'Abdu'l-Bahá on 1 May 1912. On 23 May 1978 the structure was designated by the United States government 'one of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation' and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

3. THE MOTHER TEMPLE OF THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT

F. ṢAHBÁ

TO raise an edifice and create within it an atmosphere that will reflect the glory and majesty of the Greatest Name is indeed a challenging commission and a daunting task. This awesome responsibility devolves upon an architecture that in the fullness of time will be inspired from the ocean of Bahá'í art. At this embryonic stage of our acquaintance with a Dispensation divine in origin, how can we be so presumptuous as to even make mention of 'Bahá'í art' when we recognize that the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh will eventually draw forth from countless minds and hearts and hands art forms of such splendour as we cannot now even dimly imagine. We in this day have the same feeling as a beginner in primary school who, while struggling to learn the basic alphabet, views the shelves of books in the libraries and has a vague precognition that when he has mastered the alphabet he will discover a great new world. Nevertheless, the restive imagination of the child cannot be prevented from roaming this mysterious world. We may take comfort in the thought that one day in the distant future the true Bahá'í artists of the Golden Age of our Faith may look upon our efforts with understanding and recognize that although we had no share of the boundless ocean from which they may draw their inspiration yet we, with hearts throbbing with longing, were ardently seeking it.

I have not visited any of the existing Houses of Worship but one of the fondest memories of my childhood is listening to my mother's description of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of 'Ishqábád with its heavenly atmosphere—the light that filtered through the arched, latticed windows onto the lectern; the echo of the chanting of prayers all mingling together to ascend upwards towards a dome resplendent with engravings; and, in the centre of the dome, a star that reminded one of celestial palaces. Undoubtedly my mother had found beneath that majestic dome the spiritual comfort of which she spoke with so much feeling. This is how I first thought of a House of Worship.

There is no doubt that the interest which 'Abdu'l-Bahá expressed in the Taj Mahal of India had a significant influence on the designs of several of the Bahá'í Houses of Worship. In designing the House of Worship to be erected in India one could not forget that He had expressed admiration for this splendid historical monument. There is a symbolism in the Taj Mahal which speaks to the very hearts of the people: with its roots in the earth, it speaks of divinity. It is like a white dove soaring in the blue sky. In sunshine, in rain, at sunrise, at sunset, it manifests varied splendours. Although the architect has created a unique building that is magnificent in itself, undoubtedly it is the story of the monument and its bond with the culture of India that have played a major role in making it immortal in the hearts of the people of that country. Therefore, with the House of Worship of India, beauty and symmetry of architecture would not in themselves be sufficient: the edifice must speak in a meaningful way to the hearts of the people. Perhaps nowhere else in the world is this matter of greater importance. India is a land of secrets and mysteries. Every shape and form has its own myth and legend and is a symbol of a cherished belief, and such beliefs are an inseparable part of Indian life. The little shrub growing in a corner of a temple court, the paint on the courtyard walls, the engravings visible on its façade—all are bound with inseparable ties to the temple. In India, if you were to lead a blind person to a temple he would, from the smell of the plants and by touching the walls, be able to tell you the religion to which that temple belongs.

The House of Worship of India could not be an inspiration from or a derivation of any of the existing examples or schools of religious architecture for this would have identified it in the minds of the people with structures held sacred by other religions—Hindu, Buddhist or

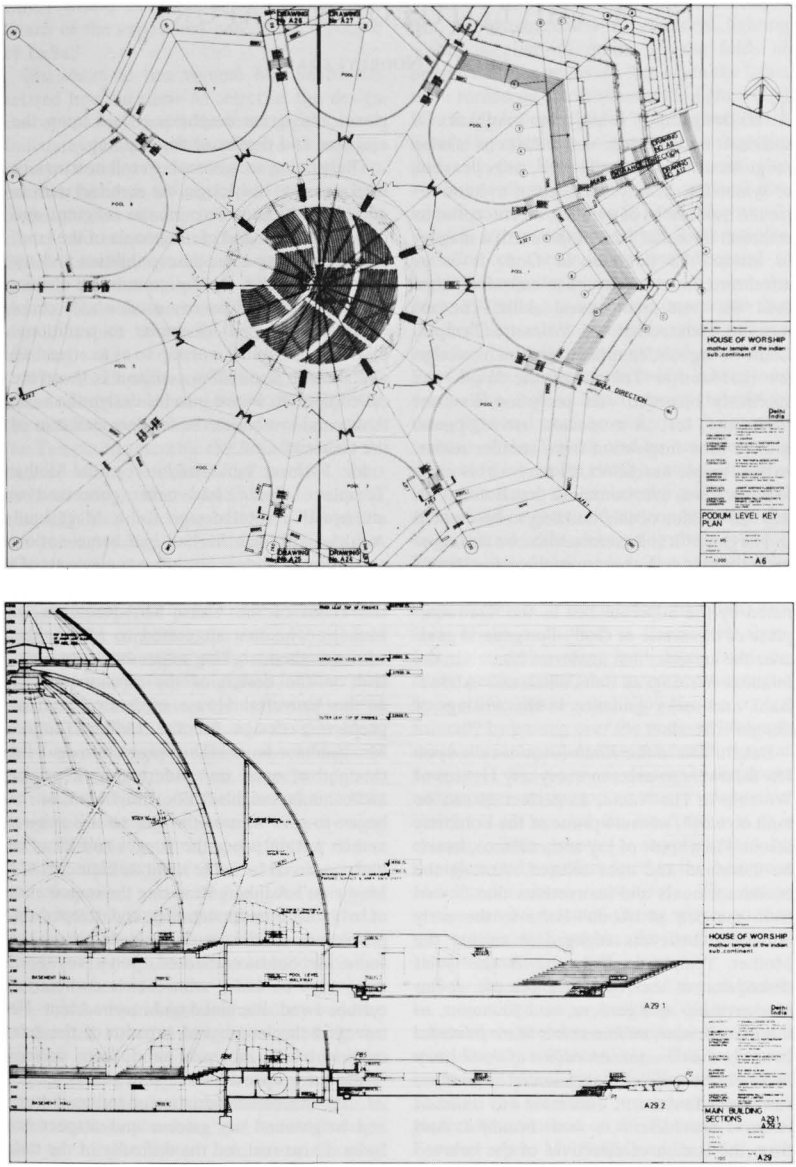
Muslim. Although the building must come to be recognized as being associated with the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, manifesting and symbolic of the Greatest Name, its design must be familiar to the people of India, creating a bridge to their own heritage, in much the same way as when the principles of the Faith are explained to one with a receptive spirit the listener feels that the words in all their freshness have a familiar strain, like a remembered dream that is now coming true. Such a concept could not be realized through instruments and capacities available to an architect regardless of the extent of his knowledge and experience. I am certain that it could only be confirmed through divine assistance.

Whenever it is asked how the idea of this design was conceived I realize with ever-increasing awe and wonderment that from the very first step I have been guided. However, it would be untrue to say that this was as a result of study and research or consultation with the learned and the accomplished. With excitement and anxiety and many questions in my heart I beseeched the prayers of the Universal House of Justice and set about travelling throughout India. I was attracted to people of diverse backgrounds and classes and am convinced that it was through the bounties of Bahá'u'lláh that these people were prompted to direct me. At the outset, in a small city of India, a simple and good-hearted teacher spoke spontaneously to me about the lotus. On that day his purity and friendliness, more than his ideas, attracted my heart, but from then on the image of the lotus seemed to grow in my awareness more and more persistently, however much I tried to resist this notion with its attendant danger of producing a design that would be merely a poor imitation of nature.

Wherever I went, whether to ancient Hindu temples or Buddhist caves, among all the carvings and symbols the lotus flower seemed to stand out and to capture my eye until, for the first time without reservation, I shared my idea with a friend who had wide experience and knowledge of the cultures and religions of India and who had come to guide me round the temples of a city in southern India. He listened to me with shining eyes and growing excitement and together we were prompted to find a growing lotus plant. All day we searched, undeterred by the realization that it was not the season, and at last we found a single blossom in a small pond. On that day I resolved to justify the lotus as a concept for the House of Worship. From then on, with each passing day, I became more strongly convinced that this was the only solution.

The lotus flower is rooted in slime and yet it speaks of a world of purity because it floats on the water's surface in the utmost purity and grace and remains untainted in the midst of filth. The loveliness and immaculacy of this flower, which sparkles everywhere like a star on the waters of India, have made it a symbol of spirituality and beauty in the mythology of all the religions of that country. In Hindu mythology Brahma, the Creator, is described as having sprung from the lotus that grew out of Vishnu's navel when that deity lay absorbed in meditation; hence one of the epithets of Brahma is lotus-born. In Buddhist and Jain temples all over Asia you will find idols of Buddha and of others always seated on the lotus flower. The lotus has been accorded the greatest importance in the decoration of temples of all religions throughout India and perhaps all countries in East Asia. The most sacred prayer of the Buddhists of Tibet extols a sanctified jewel in the lotus flower: 'O Jewel in the Lotus.' I learned that for centuries the people of India had conceived the lotus as a temple of light, a dream-thought which could now be realized. The glad-tidings of the 'Jewel in the Lotus' had been given to them and this Jewel could be none other than the Greatest Name.

When we made from crêpe paper the first model of the design for the House of Worship of the Indian sub-continent I observed it keenly with awe and a dawning realization that the essential element of that design had not come from me. With gratitude and humility I then became assured that Bahá'u'lláh had indeed answered my prayers.



Architectural drawings of the Indian Temple: above, Podium Level Key Plan; below, Main Building Section.

4. THE LOTUS OF BAHAPUR

SHERIAR NOOREYEZDAN

THE designing of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is a spiritual undertaking, an effort to clothe religious truth in material garb, an endeavour to symbolize divinity, an attempt to harmonize the aspirations of peoples, an enterprise to establish upon the face of the earth a magnet to attract the bounties of God. It is an adventure in creativity that calls for more than the best architectural skills. The renowned architect of the Wilmette Temple, Louis Bourgeois, commenting upon his design for the Mother Temple of the West, has succinctly recorded: 'Its inception was not from man, for, as musicians, artists, poets, receive their inspiration from another realm, so the Temple's architect, through all his years of labour, was ever conscious that Bahá'u'lláh was the creator of this building to be erected to His glory.' It is therefore with awe and reverence that an architect approaches the designing of a House of Worship, an edifice designated by the Supreme Pen as the 'Dawning-place of the praise of God'. For general guidance the architect first immerses himself in the infallible Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá and seeks guidance in the writings of Shoghi Effendi.

Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* calls upon His followers to erect in every city Houses of Worship in His Name, as perfect as can be built on earth, wherein praise of the Lord may resound in a spirit of joy and radiance, hearts be illumined and eyes solaced. Among the encouragements and instructions that flowed from the pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the early American believers engaged in raising the Mother Temple in Wilmette is this brief description of the 'Ishqábád Temple: *It has nine avenues, nine gardens, nine fountains, so it is nine on nine, all nines. It is like a beautiful bouquet. Just imagine an edifice of that beauty in the centre, very lofty, surrounded by gardens, variegated flowers . . . That is the way it should be . . . matchless . . . most beautiful.* And from the stream of directives of the beloved Guardian to National Spiritual Assemblies and individuals involved in the raising of different Houses of Worship the architect gleans that great emphasis is laid upon the elegance and dignity of the building.

These being the general overall instructions with regard to the design, the architect must in addition take into account the religious and cultural background of the people of the land, accommodating their susceptibilities and aspirations. Ideally, the design must be distinctive yet unrelated to any established school of architecture and dissimilar to traditional places of communal worship so as to attract all and exclude none. The architect is therefore called upon to weave into his design the basic tenets and symbolize the fundamental aim of the Cause of God.

Mr. Faríburz Ṣahbá, architect of the Mother Temple of India, had never conceived or attempted a total design for a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, although he had had some notions and innovative ideas on separate elements of a building with such spiritual significance. It was the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who first suggested to Mr. Ṣahbá, who was then working as an associate architect on the design of the permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice, that he prepare a design for the Indian Temple. Mr. Ṣahbá admits, 'This suggestion and the thought of such an undertaking kept me awake many nights.' For the first time he began to give serious thought to this subject and he put on paper the images and ideas he had conceived for some separate elements of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Realizing the importance of a greater understanding and deeper appreciation of the multi-faceted culture of India, Mr. Ṣahbá embarked upon a 'voyage of discovery' to India whose rich and varied culture awed, illumined and inspired him. He travelled the length and breadth of the subcontinent with an open mind, later stating: 'This journey provided me with a fresh insight into the boundless horizons of Indian culture and heightened my esteem and respect for India. I also realized the difficulty of the task of producing a design, a concept, a symbol that would transcend every barrier of region, religion, language, caste and culture and

which would be capable of attracting the hearts of the varied and pure-hearted people of India.'

Elsewhere in this volume Mr. Ṣahbá has related how he came to select as the design concept of the Temple the lotus, significant in Indian mythology and associated with worship in that country from time immemorial. It became his task to work this concept into a design that would reveal the simplicity, clarity, freshness and unifying power of the Bahá'í Revelation and be a constant reminder that all Revelation springs from one divine source. He was concerned that the building should inspire reverence and be spiritually uplifting.

With his thoughts crystallized, Mr. Ṣahbá returned to the drawing-board. Step by step the building took shape on paper. He wanted the Temple to resemble the lotus bloom in its natural habitat as closely as possible. Into such a design there had to be worked, naturally, the directives of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the general design of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Nine leaves were created which serve as entrances and give the appearance of the completely opened petals of the lotus. Nine inner leaves constitute the dome, the leaves converging at the apex and giving the appearance of petals just opening. And in order that the building resemble a natural lotus a third medial set of nine outer leaves was provided, these giving the appearance of semi-opened petals. Internally, thirty-six unopened petals, or the lotus bud, took the form of nine thin hemispherical shells of concrete criss-crossing each other and constituting the interior dome. A Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is to have nine pools and fountains, according to the wish of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, so nine pools were provided.

Administrative offices, conference and audio-visual rooms, residential accommodation for the caretaker and other facilities were provided in the two wings of an ancillary building landscaped into the design by exploiting the natural contours of the site. All this gave symmetry and shape to the building but many other factors needed to be considered such as electrification, plumbing and water drainage and a suitable system of air-conditioning that would make the temperature inside the auditorium equable and comfortable in the extreme temperatures of Delhi.

For the internal illumination of the Temple Mr. Ṣahbá concealed all electrical lighting within the interior dome, or the folds of unopened lotus petals, so that when the lights were turned on a soft translucent light would fill the auditorium giving the impression of natural light filtering from outside through the folds of the lotus bud. This would also symbolize divine bounties and spiritual illumination flowing through the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to worshippers within. External illumination of the building was designed to highlight only the superstructure against the dark skyline so as to give the impression that the Temple was not anchored to the earth like ordinary buildings, but appeared as a bright lotus bloom suspended between heaven and earth. The architect had always thought of using light and water to underline the characteristics of the Temple and he has effectively done so in his design. With a stroke of genius he has created an eminently practical and economical system of air-conditioning the large central auditorium using the pools and fountains already provided. The natural slope of the land is made use of in the creation of a large basement at the level of the pools. The floor of the auditorium is lowered by three feet so that five steps lead down from the outer podium and the spaces between the steps act like louvres that allow the air, cooled naturally by passing over the pools and through the fountain sprays, into the auditorium at floor level. The warm air rises up to the dome and escapes at the top so that a convection current is set up and the structure acts as a chimney. This process is supplemented by impellers and expellers fixed in the basement and interior dome respectively. The entire system can be reversed during winter so that the temperature within the auditorium is always equable.

Now the architect's inspired dream had to be objectified in a building of structural reliability to serve as a monument that would stand for several centuries. This important responsibility was given to Flint and Neill of London, the renowned firm of structural engineers who worked on the Panama Temple. For over a year Mr. Ṣahbá and Dr. Flint, with the assistance of specialist engineers and the use of computers, collaborated in working out all the details of the building's structure. A

great deal of research and study had to be undertaken in London and Delhi and voluminous data, not easily assembled, were collected. As no geological survey reports were available test bores were made in order to study the rock stratification of the area. Meteorological statistics of the past one hundred years were researched to note the highest and lowest temperatures recorded, the strongest winds, the severest earthquakes, the wettest monsoon and extremes of humidity. All these details, so critical in the designing of a monumental building, were painstakingly gathered and catered for in the final architectural and structural designs. All structural drawings and calculations were double-checked in Geneva through the good offices of Prof. Hushmand Naimi, lecturer and consultant in structural engineering.

Nor did the checking end there. Although the behaviour of reinforced concrete and that of its ingredients are well known, yet the determination of the type of concrete and its strength for each part of the structure became a study in itself and called for conferences with specialist concrete technologists and the specialists of the Concrete Association of England. Moreover, a scale model of the Temple was made by specialists in London and subjected to various tests not usually applied to building designs. Wind tunnel tests proved that the building could withstand the strongest wind forces and rotary movement of the high superstructure was well provided for. To study the efficiency of the natural air-conditioning system coloured smoke was injected from various points into the transparent plexi-glass model, and the movement as well as rate of evacuation of the smoke bore out the viability of the design.

While no efforts could be spared to create a building 'upon which depended the prestige of the Cause' and to design a structure that would conform to the general configuration prescribed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, that would be both symbolic and of aesthetic beauty and that would be of such structural integrity as to last several centuries, the designers laboured under a serious constraint. They did not have the freedom to employ the best materials and technology available in the world but were limited to the use of materials, skills and equipment available in India. At every stage the availability and quality of essential materials had to be verified and references continually made to the Code of Indian Standards for construction materials: the available diameters and grades of steel; the types and strengths of cement manufactured; availability of copper pipes for superstructure water drainage; of lead sheets for flashings; of galvanized reinforcement bars; of glass sheets of the required thickness for glazing; of cladding materials such as marble or special ceramic tiles for the petals, and hundreds of other items which are easily obtained in western countries. This major constraint notwithstanding, the design that finally emerged bears eloquent testimony to the inspiration and bounty that were bestowed upon the designers. Their dedicated efforts were crowned with the completion of a design that has already attracted the attention of the architectural and civil engineering worlds and has come to be considered among professionals as one of the outstanding designs of the century. The model of the House of Worship has been accorded a place of distinction in the construction department of the Science Museum of London and after completion of construction the model will be sent there.

Mr. Ṣahbá's three-year long odyssey of study and prayerful search was over at last and his chosen design was captured in some four hundred blueprints ready to be translated into an exquisite building. The final design and layout were presented to the Universal House of Justice in 1977. It was proposed that within the rectangular plot of land measuring about 450 metres in length in an east–west direction and 220 metres in width the Temple building would be located at the western end with its main entrance facing east. Entry to the Temple ground would be from the main road leading to a parking area at the east end of the estate. A 250-metre walkway would lead to the ancillary building between the two wings of which would rise the main entrance steps to the Temple. At a point some 50 metres from the ancillary building two corresponding paths would diverge to the south and north for access to other entrances of the Temple. The ancillary building, completely landscaped and almost concealed, would provide about 900 square metres of space for administrative and other services. The steps between the wings of

the ancillary building would lead to a bridge over the pools and onto the outer podium or walkway around the main building. Facing each of the nine bridges would be a doorway into the auditorium canopied by its entrance petal 7.5 metres high. Standing between the entrance petal and inner petals would be the outer petals, 22.5 metres in height, surrounding the external dome made up of the nine inner petals. The diameter of the dome would be 35 metres and its height 28 metres from the floor of the auditorium and 43 metres from the main entrance steps. All the petals that, with the interior dome, comprise the superstructure would be thin double curvatured toroidal shells of white concrete finish internally and clad externally with white marble. The doorways would lead into the auditorium down five steps under nine massive arches. The auditorium would be circular with a diameter of 36 metres and have a seating capacity of about 1,200, which could be increased by an additional 1,000 seats in the triangular balconies formed between the entrance and outer petals. The balcony and auditorium floors, as well as the steps and arches, would be covered with white marble, and the walkway around the central auditorium with red sandstone. The outer podium over the pools up to the bridges would be edged with specially designed and precast banisters in white concrete. There would be a walkway around the tops of all nine pools while steps would take visitor and worshipper to the lower walkway at basement level around four of the pools. These walkways and steps would also be covered with red sandstone. Thus a part of the outer basement area would be open to visitors and the remainder would be enclosed and used for various installations and equipment. The distance across the pools would be about 120 metres while the area of each pool would be 500 square metres. Fountains would jet water outwards across the one-metre deep pools. Water in the pools would be replaced periodically but would be continuously filtered and kept clean by filtration plants ensconced beneath the bridge abutments. The surrounding grounds would be suitably landscaped and beautified with decorative trees and flowering plants.

The concept and design met with the general approval of the Universal House of Justice which, on 3 August 1977, confirmed Mr. Ṣahbá's appointment, stating: 'We are profoundly impressed by the beauty of the concept you have presented.' When Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum was invited to view the model she summed up the appreciation of all. In her own words: 'When I was invited by the Universal House of Justice to see this design, I was apprehensive. Being an architect's daughter I know what a difficult problem it is to design a circular nine-sided building. But when I saw this beautiful model I was deeply impressed and I think that it will be a wonderful thing and very much loved in India.' On the symbolism of the lotus, Rúḥíyyih Khánum added: 'The lotus has not only an association with Buddhism and Hinduism, but, *par excellence*, it is the symbol of the Manifestation of God. The lotus is probably the most perfect flower in the whole world. It is symmetrical, it is exquisitely beautiful. And how does it grow? It grows in a swamp and it raises its head out of the slime absolutely clean and perfect. Now this is what the Manifestation of God is in the world: perfect. He comes out of the slime. He comes from the worst place in the planet. He appears amongst the worst people in the planet, so that nobody can say that we made Him. They say only God brings forth such a being from such an environment. This is perhaps the greatest symbolism of the lotus.'

Fund Raising

Those beacons of divine illumination, the majestic Houses of Worship standing in different continents of the globe beckoning the foundering ship of human society to the safe haven of the Cause of God, have been raised through the sacrificial outpourings of the world-wide community of the Greatest Name and are manifestations of the zeal and dedication of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is a divinely-ordained institution of the Cause of God and endowed with power and potency so great that the beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, has affirmed that its mystery cannot be understood. We have His assurance that *Some material things have spiritual effect, and the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, though outwardly a material foundation, is possessed of spiritual effect and causes the union of hearts and the gathering of souls.* In

their eagerness, therefore, to fulfil one of the injunctions of the Supreme Pen and to raise in the world institutions that can alter constructively the course of history and the spiritual destiny of nations and peoples, Bahá'ís everywhere rise spontaneously and make every sacrifice necessary, delighting to avail themselves of the priceless opportunity to share in such a glorious spiritual enterprise. The beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, has emphasized '. . . the greater the sacrifice, the greater the power of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár'.

During the Ten Year Crusade, after approval of Shoghi Effendi was received for the land, the National Spiritual Assembly entered into negotiations with the owners of the five separate plots that were comprised in the total area of about 92,000 square metres (22.5 acres) and settled for a price of Rs. 140,289. This was a considerable sum of money for the number of believers at the time, and the National Spiritual Assembly set about raising the sum. The amount was distributed among the communities of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, then under one jurisdiction, and members of the National Assembly set out in different directions to acquaint the believers with the need and to encourage them to raise this unprecedentedly large sum. The extraordinary response of a modest and devout believer, Mr. Ardashír Rustampúr of Hyderabad, Sind, is alluded to in the 'In Memoriam' article appearing elsewhere in this volume of the international record. As if he had waited a lifetime for this opportunity, he placed before the astonished members of the National Assembly, Mr. Isfandiar Bakhtiari and Mr. Abbas Aly Bhatt, his entire savings of Rs. 100,190 accumulated from the operation of his restaurant, remarking: 'It is not my money; all of it belongs to Bahá'u'lláh and I am happy to return it. I have been merely a trustee, a temporary keeper.'

When discreet enquiries by the representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly revealed that indeed Mr. Rustampúr had no other savings and had kept nothing whatever for any contingencies they expressed to him their concern, urging him to keep some amount for himself, and received his ready reply: 'What I have given to the Cause I cannot take back. If I deserve it, then Bahá'u'lláh will surely meet my future needs.' Only at the insistence of the National Assembly representatives, and as a token of obedience, did Mr. Rustampúr relent and agree to accept Rs. 190. His magnanimous contribution covered the total cost of the first and largest of five plots. Now, as long as the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár stands at Bahapur, will generations of Bahá'ís recall the generosity and be inspired by the devotion of this humble believer.

Fund-raising for the construction of the Temple began in a very strange way and in a most unexpected place. A Bahá'í serving a prison sentence in Mozambique had made some simple rings out of ivory and had sent one to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum when she was in Africa. At the time of the dedication of the Panama Temple in 1972 when Rúḥíyyih Khánum addressed the friends she expressed her thought that 'it would be lovely if we sent a little nest-egg from the dedication of this Temple for the next Bahá'í Temple that will be built' and she offered the ivory ring for sale. Present at that gathering was a young Bahá'í from Hawaii who was a jeweller. Though not a wealthy man he had, in the course of his business, come into possession of a very large emerald. Impetuously, and though he could ill-afford it, he offered the valuable emerald, worth at least $25,000 to $30,000, for the inexpensive ivory ring. Later the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama went to Hawaii especially to take charge of the emerald which had, in the meantime, been set in a large gold setting and she delivered it to Rúḥíyyih Khánum during the International Convention in Haifa in 1973. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum entrusted the beautiful gem to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán, also present at the Convention, instructing them to auction it, accept the highest bid and contribute the proceeds as the first contribution to the cost of constructing the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to be erected during the next teaching Plan. The emerald fetched the handsome sum of approximately $100,000. Mysterious indeed are the ways of God! The simple ivory ring made in an African prison and worth perhaps one dollar, but offered with complete sincerity and love, became the largest single contribution and the nest-egg from the Panama Temple to the

Indian Temple. Nor was this the end of it, for when Rúḥíyyih Khánum narrated this touching story at the time the foundation stone of the Indian Temple was laid at Bahapur on 17 October 1977 the participants in that historic gathering were so moved that many divested themselves of their gold jewellery for the Temple fund, made cash offers on the spot and pledged contributions. Thus the simple restaurateur of Hyderabad, the prisoner of Mozambique and the Hawaiian jeweller became the foremost benefactors of the Mother Temple of the Indian sub-continent and their example would be emulated by a host of equally dedicated believers throughout the Bahá'í world.

This befitting beginning of fund-raising was followed by a more sustained and continuous process. Interestingly, after the Indian Temple fund was announced internationally, among the first contributions to be received from abroad was from the Bahá'í children's Moral Class of Samoa where another House of Worship was concurrently under construction. As reports of progress of construction were disseminated throughout the Bahá'í world community the slow trickle of contributions swelled to a steady flow from both east and west. All at once it appeared as though the Bahá'í world had taken the lotus Temple to its heart. Each envelope received at the Temple office brought a token of love and devotion to the Cause. The heartwarming messages that accompanied the contributions were so touching as to bring tears to the eyes. Those servants of Bahá'u'lláh from the far-flung corners of the world ceased to be faceless believers but were seen as partners with us in a great spiritual enterprise. The participation of the Bahá'ís in achieving a common spiritual goal formed a bond that linked continents and countries with Bahapur. Repeated and regular contributions were received from many individuals and communities, strengthening the bond. Was this part of the mystery of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár spoken of by 'Abdu'l-Bahá? Indeed, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, when completed, would symbolize the unity and strength of the Bahá'í community, would manifest the potency and divinity of the Supreme Pen and would disseminate the divine fragrances—as assured by the Universal House of Justice—not only among the multitudes in the Indian sub-continent but throughout Asia. Whereas the believers in all lands, territories and islands of the globe have contributed their mite to the Temple fund, it is significant that the beleaguered and oppressed community of the Greatest Name in Írán have been at this time deprived of this privilege and bounty. However, the very news of the progress of construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár must assuredly bring to their hearts a measure of cheer. Within India itself the believers have responded with great generosity and self-sacrifice. One anonymous village Bahá'í, for example, dropped into the Temple fund box at an area teaching conference all the money he had, a two-paise coin (one-fifth of a cent) for which another believer offered Rs. 100). Their efforts to date have resulted in the community being able to meet twenty-three per cent of the construction cost incurred thus far.

Construction

One of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade was the acquisition of sites for Houses of Worship in three Asian capitals, including New Delhi. The National Spiritual Assembly of India, Pakistan and Burma (as it was known from 1947 to 1957) set about locating a suitable site, their choice falling upon a large tract of hilly land in a totally undeveloped area of south Delhi. The site, which, as has been stated, comprised five plots collectively and measured about 92,000 square metres, was approved by the beloved Guardian. When the land revenue officials visited the site to demarcate the boundaries, their records revealed that the land was part of an ancient village named Bahapur, the 'Abode of Baha'. Bahá'ís see in this the mysterious hand of Providence. This hillock, they feel, was destined to become the footstool of God and the location of the Mother Temple of the Indian sub-continent. The area was marked off by a low brick wall and a plaque was mounted designating the property as the site of a Bahá'í Temple. This accomplished, the Bahá'í community looked forward to the next development which took place in August 1977 when the Universal House of Justice approved the Temple design and appointed Mr. Ṣahbá as architect. On 17 October 1977 Amatu'l-Bahá

Rúḥíyyih Khánum laid the foundation stone of the Temple amid prayers and recitations of praise and gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh.

An excavation contractor was appointed and work got under way at a steady pace. The site being on the brow of a hill its topsoil had been eroded and the foundation pits had to be carved out of granitic rock, weathered and soft in some places but mostly hard and difficult to excavate. During a period of almost twelve months a huge bowl approximately 150 metres in diameter was cut out of the hillside and, within the bowl, seven sets of nine foundation pits in concentric circles for the sixty-three columns and abutments that support the building. Meanwhile the contract and tender documents were drafted in England and in September 1979 tenders were invited. Six of the largest and most experienced companies in India made bids for the contract which, after exhaustive study and comparison, was awarded to Engineering Construction Corporation Ltd. on the first day of Riḍván 1980. Mobilization of the site took about two months, during which period the contractor brought engineers, surveyors, men and equipment to the area and the next month saw the growth of a little township at Bahapur including site offices, storage facilities, accommodation for labourers, etc.

When trimming and preparation of the pits began it was discovered that in many of the pits soft and dangerous micaceous strata existed. This called for further excavation until hard base-rock was reached in all pits, some at depths of thirty feet. The pits from which would rise the load-bearing columns of the main building were enlarged and deepened to ensure the consistency of hard-rock strata. A total quantity of about 6,000 cubic metres of rock was excavated, enough to build a stone wall five feet high and one foot thick extending over twelve kilometres. The excavation was completed without any mechanical equipment and all excavated rock and earth was carried in head-loads.

30 July 1980 marked the day of the structural 'birth' of the House of Worship. While the sun played hide-and-seek among the dark monsoon clouds Mrs. Golnar Ṣahbá poured the first trowelful of concrete into the first pit of the innermost circle of columns. Prayers were offered and, following tradition, coconuts were broken and sweets were distributed to the gathering which included representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors, the National Spiritual Assembly, the Delhi Bahá'í community and visiting Bahá'ís. On that momentous occasion the Universal House of Justice inspired all with its cable: REJOICE NEWS COMMENCEMENT CONSTRUCTION MASHRIQULADHKAR HEART INDIAN SUBCONTINENT. THIS ACHIEVEMENT IS IN SHARP CONTRAST SAD HAPPENINGS CRADLE FAITH AND WILL BE SOURCE DELIGHT BELIEVERS ALL LANDS. SUPPLICATING SACRED THRESHOLD THAT TEMPLE OF LIGHT WILL SOON BECOME INSTRUMENT RADIATE DIVINE GUIDANCE ILLUMINE HEARTS OF THE MULTITUDES. MAY BAHAIS OF INDIA ARISE TO MEET RESPONSIBILITIES RENDER UTMOST ASSISTANCE RAISING THIS BEAUTIFUL EDIFICE IN THE NAME OF BAHAULLAH.

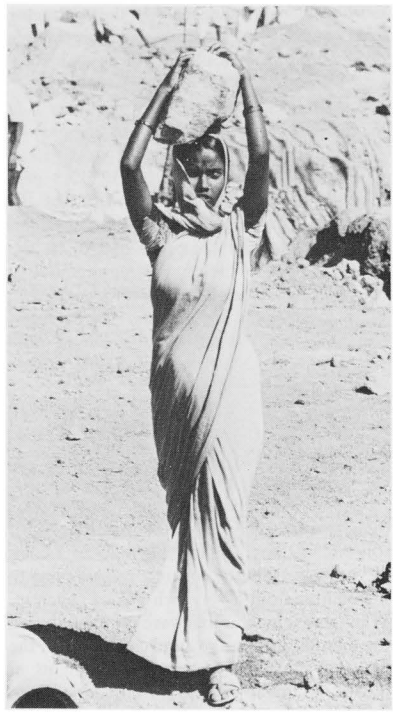
Then came the pouring of concrete to the required levels into the readied pits from which the column footings would rise. Soon the site was alive with the staccato sound of pneumatic drills, chugging and puffing of diesel-driven concrete mixers, whining of concrete vibrators, shouts of supervising foremen and the sing-song of women carrying head-loads of concrete from the mixers. By December 1980 all the yawning foundation pits were filled and the columns began to rise, while the general areas between the columns making up the basement of the main building and floor of the ancillary building were levelled. Now the outlines of the building were discernible.

By January 1981 when the Hand of the Cause Paul Haney visited the site, many columns stood, like silent sentinels, and others were in various stages of construction. The site took on a colourful look as work progressed. The required concrete was churned out, under the watchful eyes of supervisors, by four mixers working in tandem at two convenient locations. Male workers mixed the concrete and filled pressed-steel vessels which their womenfolk carried on their heads, walking back and forth between mixers and site like an endless human conveyor belt.[1] The women, clad in their traditional saris of many

[1] Approximately ninety families were among the 500 workers at the site. They were provided with living facilities, and a nursery and primary school were set up at the site to care for and educate the infants and children while their parents were working.

hues and marching sedately in tune to their own singing, worked cheerfully in two groups, vying with each other. Thus all the columns of the main building were raised, as were also those of the ancillary building and its reinforced concrete walls.

9 May 1981 marked the commencement, amid prayers and the distribution of sweets, of concreting of the podium which was completed by 16 September. Day and night the site during this period presented a picture of feverish activity with each team of skilled workers discharging its allotted responsibility and moving on to the next podium section while another team took over in rapid succession to carry out its part of the operation. In addition to the normal supervision and precautions usual in the Indian construction industry consideration had to be paid to the extremely high temperatures in Delhi. When feasible, concreting was programmed to take place during the cooler summer nights under floodlights, and when concrete temperatures rose above the stipulated maximum, tons of ice had to be added to the concrete mix to lower the temperature. During the podium concreting, a new element—the contractor's giant tower crane—was introduced. One of the two concrete batching plants was assigned to the crane and the second remained the preserve of the labourers. Whereas earlier two labour crews had vied with each other in concreting footings and columns, now humans pitted themselves in high spirits against a machine. While the crane scooped up hopper-loads of concrete, swinging into position and emptying 1,000 kilograms of concrete with a giant hiss, the women who made up the human conveyor belt rushed from mixer to site and back with 25-kilogram head-loads of concrete—and they invariably won. It was estimated that during the nineteen weeks devoted to the concreting of the podium each woman worker carried some 7,500 kilograms of concrete in 25-kilogram head-loads over 21 kilometres in an eight-hour working day! The quantity of material making up the podium with its columns—40,000 bags of cement, 3,600 cubic metres of aggregate (making 4,000 cubic metres of concrete) and 450 metric tons of reinforcement bars—would have been sufficient to have raised a solid concrete block 25 feet square and 225 feet high, the height of a twenty-storey building. While podium concreting progressed, the rise of the ancillary building kept pace and rose to join the main building over the main entrance bridge that connects the two structures.



Construction worker at Temple site; 1983.

Construction of the substructure and podium, being of the normal column-beam-slab type, presented no special technical problems. However, construction of the superstructure with its thin double-curvatured shell elements was something that had never before been attempted in India and necessitated almost eighteen months' study, discussion, resort to computer facilities and the making of full-scale mock-ups. Designing of the temporary steel staging and support system for the superstructure construction alone, involving the planning, fabrication and erection of some 1,200 metric tons of structural steel, presented

more technical challenges than the contractor had ever faced before. Time and perseverance resolved all problems and overcame all challenges.

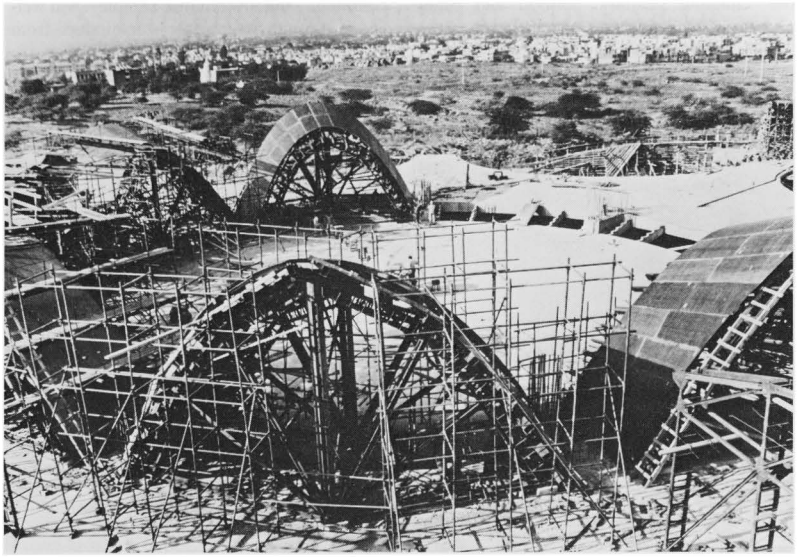
The exquisite beauty of the lotus design is in the perfect symmetry and sheer lines of the 'petals'. Hence, in the construction of the superstructure adherence to the exact geometry of the design was most critical and the error tolerance virtually nil. Checking systems that were virtually foolproof had to be devised. The degree of accuracy required had to be achieved, especially in the formwork, with age-old traditional implements. Any oversight or error would be magnified a hundredfold and completely destroy the symmetry and beauty of the building.

The first elements of the superstructure to be constructed had to be the nine massive arches, 8 metres high and 10 metres wide, that give entry into the central auditorium of the House of Worship. That happy day when all the check-list and pour cards were signed off for the first arch concreting was 26 March 1982. Once again the concrete mixers came to life churning out a very rich mix of concrete. When day temperatures were too high during the months of May and June concreting of the arches was carried out under floodlights at night, and under waterproof tarpaulins when monsoon clouds threatened. There was something special about the second arch to be constructed. This was the arch that faced the Qiblih of the Bahá'í world, and in its crown, which from the centre of the auditorium exactly faces 'Akká, were embedded on 3 April 1982, the foundation stone and a brick from the Síyáh-Chál, as directed by the Universal House of Justice. The ninth arch was completed on 26 July 1982. The total quantity of materials that went into the arches was sufficient to build a reinforced concrete bridge half a kilometre long and twenty feet wide. Upon completion of this phase of construction another inspiring message was received from the House of Justice: NEWS COMPLETION FIRST PHASE SUPERSTRUCTURE TEMPLE NEW DELHI CAUSED MUCH JOY. CONGRATULATE APPRECIATE EFFORTS DEVOTED SOULS DIRECTLY INVOLVED THIS MAGNIFICENT PROJECT. ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS SUCCESS FURTHER STEPS.

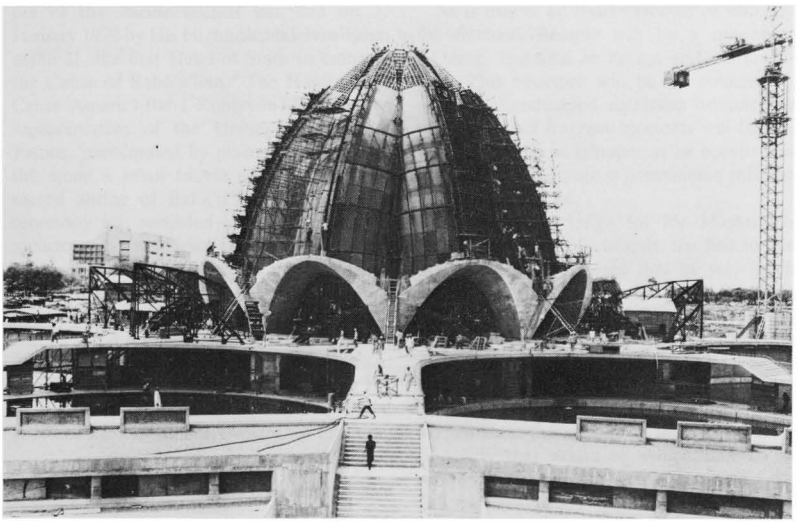
The unique characteristic of the superstructure is that it contains no element with even a single straight line. Such structures cannot be described in the ordinary plan-and-section drawings. Extraordinary measures had to be adopted including the building of full-scale sections of different superstructure elements in timber for use as templates. The most practical method of ensuring accuracy of geometry was found to be to check the curvatures in both directions of every formwork panel with the special templates, then completely assemble, at ground level, all the panels constituting the complete formwork or mould of each element, rechecking the overall geometry with other templates, number and dismantle the panels and reassemble them in their respective positions in the structure. Indeed, construction of the superstructure is so difficult that a well-known British architect, having glanced over the drawings, opined: 'To construct such a building in Europe will be difficult; in India, impossible.' The complexity of the structure was also underscored by a senior Italian engineer of the firm supplying marble for the external shell cladding who remarked, after studying the drawings and the mock-ups: 'I cannot sleep at nights for thinking how to cover these leaves with marble.' One wonders, therefore, how those persons can sleep who are charged with the responsibility of supervision and construction of such a complex structure.

Another unique feature of the superstructure construction is that it is in white concrete, and galvanized reinforcement bars are used, both for the first time in India. Special efforts were made to locate sources for the best quality white aggregate and white sand to be used with white cement for the superstructure concreting operation.

With the gigantic staging erected upon the auditorium floor to support the formwork of the inner leaves, the checked and numbered panels were raised to their respective positions and fastened in place. Panel by panel each inner leaf took shape reaching 30 metres into the sky and was subjected to a final geometry check-out with sensitive instruments. The next phase of work will be the tying of reinforcement bars before the back shutters are erected and the 'sandwich' is completed. Then each leaf will be concreted, non-stop over twenty-four hours to completion, using

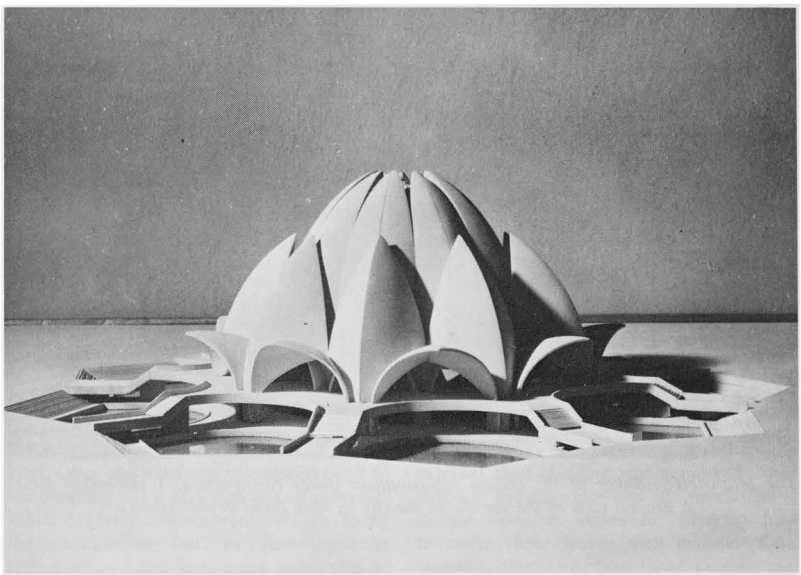


The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Indian sub-continent under construction; 1 December 1981. A general view of the site shows the city of New Delhi in the distance.



Construction work in progress on the Mother Temple of the Indian sub-continent near New Delhi, India; 19 April 1983.

the 'climbing shutters' method and other phases of construction will proceed, step by step, until that longed-for day when the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Indian subcontinent—the lovely lotus Temple—will welcome through its portals worshippers from every part of the world.



Architect's model of completed Temple.

5. THE FIRST MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

NO crisis besets the Bahá'í Faith, Shoghi Effendi observed, that does not bring with it 'the release of a fresh outpouring of celestial strength' which, among other effects, provides 'an instrument for the fulfilment of age-old prophecies . . . an impetus for the enlargement of its limits and the propagation of its influence, and a compelling evidence of the indestructibility of its cohesive strength.'[1] Thus the triumphant emergence of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific islands even while the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in Írán endures an onslaught of 'cruel, systematic oppression'[2] of an intensity unprecedented in recent years, provides cogent testimony of the resistless onward march of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, calling to mind His words, concerning His Revelation, that *should they attempt to conceal its light on the continent, it will assuredly rear its head in the midmost heart of the ocean, and, raising its voice, proclaim: 'I am the life-giver of the world!'*[3]

The foundation stone of the Mother Temple of the Pacific islands was laid on 27 January 1979 by His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, the first Head of State to embrace the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.[4] The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the representative of the Universal House of Justice, participated by placing in a niche in the stone a small casket of Dust from the sacred Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.[5] The moving ceremony was recorded in a colour motion-picture, with sound track, which bears the title 'Blessed is the Spot', words from a prayer of Bahá'u'lláh's.

Already the building has made an impact in Samoa and it is expected to attract even more attention as it nears completion. It is situated at an elevation of 1,800 feet overlooking the city of Apia, Western Samoa, on a plot of land purchased in November 1975. Since that time additional adjoining lots have been acquired to permit direct access to the Temple from the main road.

At Riḍván 1978 Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat was appointed architect and in September of that year his design for the Temple was approved by the Universal House of Justice. Following soil testing and engineering studies, tenders for the construction of the House of Worship were let in June 1980. Soil investigation had revealed the need for the injection of considerable quantities of grouting in lava cavities under the foundation pads, a process occupying the better part of four months. A contract was signed with a New Zealand contractor and a building permit was issued in August. In September work started on the site and on 18 December 1980, in the presence of the Malietoa, the first concrete was poured for the foundations. Construction is now progressing to the architect's satisfaction, and if ideal circumstances obtain, the building is scheduled for completion by Riḍván 1984.

As is true of all Bahá'í Houses of Worship the Samoan Temple will be a nine-sided building, beautiful in design and workmanship. This structure will be surmounted by a dome. Landscaped entrances ornamented with trees and fragrant blossoms will rejoice the eyes of the worshipper as he approaches the building to engage in communion with the Creator of his soul.

In creating a design for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific islands, the first to rise there, Mr. Amánat said that he was much influenced by two factors, the simplicity of life of the Samoan people and the extremely lush, verdant quality of the landscape. Samoa is one of the most beautiful islands of the Pacific. The variegated tropical scenery, so filled with bright colour and busy pattern, suggested to Mr. Amánat the need for a building of great simplicity that would be sympathetic to its setting, with white predominating against the natural background of blue sky and green verdure.

The local residential units indigenous to the island, called *fales*, are built on a round or

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 61.
[2] Universal House of Justice, letter 19 November 1982, to all National Spiritual Assemblies.
[3] Shoghi Effendi, 'America and the Most Great Peace', in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*.
[4] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 180.
[5] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 371.

elliptical plan, with ornamented timber posts serving as columns, supporting a thatched roof that has a delicately curved pitch. The most distinctive aspect of a *fale* is its openness to light and air. Beautiful timber beams support the roof, the beams often handsomely carved and lashed with hemp rope. Lovely, intricate patterns are created by the lashing. Between the posts woven screens are suspended which may be lowered or raised, permitting maximum flow of air and providing privacy and shelter when needed. The *fale* is the most significant man-made form found on the island, and its contour or silhouette is seen everywhere.

Mr. Amánat has created for the House of Worship a design that reflects the harmonious relationship of the *fale* to its setting. His design utilizes nine portals, reminiscent of the posts supporting the roof of the *fale*, and creating the same openness in the Temple. The dominant white dome is supported by buttress walls which, like the parapet, are of a rough granite of coral hue. The aesthetic balance the architect desired to maintain was achieved through the arrangement of the structural elements and particularly the ribs of the dome. From the exterior the dome is seen to be made out of nine separate sections which are unified into one visual effect through the ribs. The core of each rib will be inset with a special glazing to reduce the effects of tropical heat and to admit light, so that gazing up to the dome from inside the eye will behold a pattern of a nine-pointed star. To avoid maintenance problems the interior of the dome will be of white concrete, thus eliminating the use of paint and plaster and reinforcing the theme of simplicity which governed the architect in creating his design. The exterior of the dome will be covered with white mosaic tile. The building will be approximately thirty metres high; the height from the floor to the top of the dome will be approximately twenty-seven metres.

Materials for the construction of the Temple have been brought from various parts of the Pacific: white aggregate was imported from Niue Island, white sand from New Zealand, granite from Australia, and cement and steel from New Zealand and Japan.

At mezzanine level wooden carvings and *tappa* designs adapted from the traditional bark cloth patterns used throughout the Pacific provide simple but effective ornamentation that embellishes but does not overwhelm the entrance portals. Words of Bahá'u'lláh will be carved above the portals. The building combines in its component elements the effect of warmth and nobility to which Mr. Amánat was so attracted in the Samoan people, and the grandeur that befits a Bahá'í House of Worship, yet the scale and proportion are in harmony with the setting.

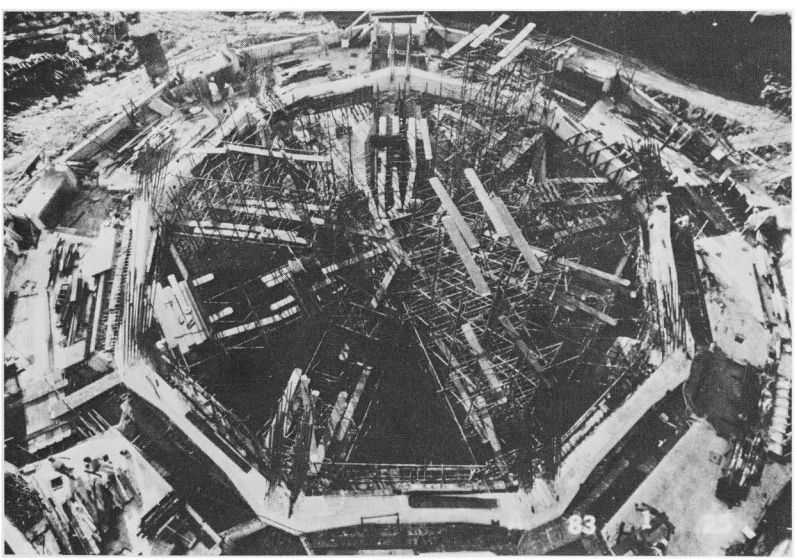
The visitor to the Temple is admitted through a low approach. The overhanging mezzanine successfully protects him from feeling dwarfed or intimidated by the height of the dome. The entire effect is one of being gently enfolded in an atmosphere which invites worship without distractions caused by ornate elements in the interior design. Raising his glance to trace the ribs of light that rise softly all about him the visitor's eyes will rest upon the symbol of the Greatest Name in the centre of the dome—the Name of Bahá'u'lláh truly raised aloft *in the midmost heart of the ocean*.

ROGER WHITE

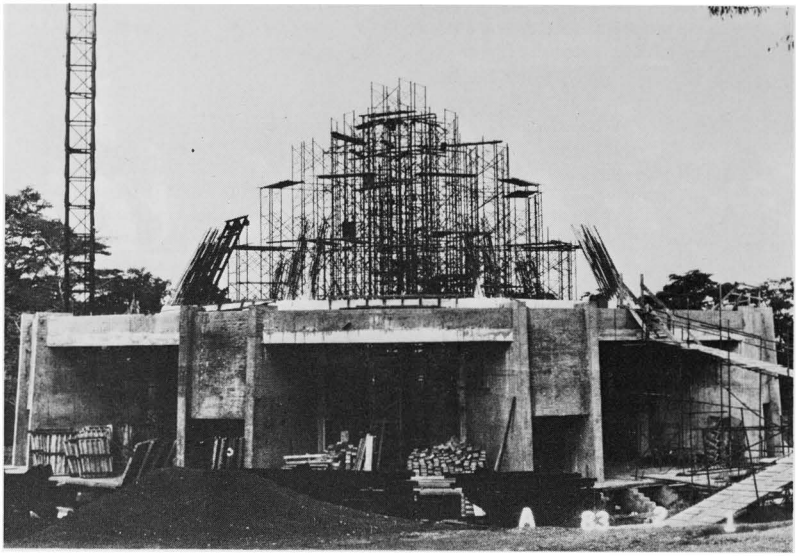
(Based on an interview with Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat)

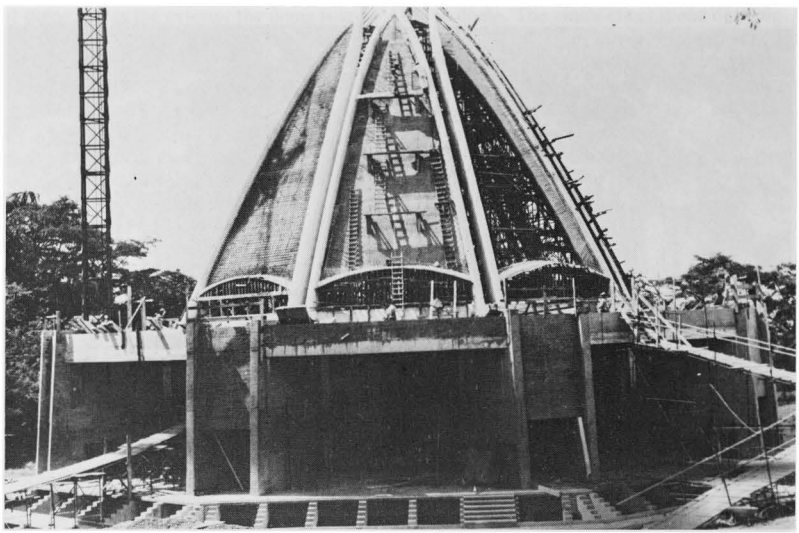


His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II visits the Samoan Temple site at Apia, Western Samoa, on 18 December 1981, the day of the first concrete pour. He is shown here accompanied by Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í, member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia.



An aerial view of the Samoan Temple under construction on 15 January 1983.





Two views of the construction work on the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands at Apia, Western Samoa; above, February 1983; below, May 1983.

VI

THE NON-POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

THE Bahá'í principles clearly define and explain the non-political character of the Faith, and serve as a guide for conduct in the relations of Bahá'ís with one another, with their fellow men, and in their relations with different departments of the civil government. A brief summary of excerpts from the Bahá'í Writings will show that non-participation in political affairs is one of the basic axioms of Bahá'í action.

The keynote to this theme may be found in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. He has stated:

That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. In another passage He hath proclaimed: It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.[1]

Sow not the seeds of discord among men, and refrain from contending with your neighbour . . . Open, O people, the city of the human heart with the key of your utterance . . .

That which beseemeth you is the love of God, and the love of Him Who is the Manifestation of His Essence, and the observance of whatsoever He chooseth to prescribe unto you, did ye but know it.

Say: Let truthfulness and courtesy be your adorning. Suffer not yourselves to be deprived of the robe of forbearance and justice, that the sweet savours of holiness may be wafted from your hearts upon all created things. Say: Beware, O people of Bahá, lest ye walk in the ways of them whose words differ from their deeds. Strive that ye may be enabled to manifest to the peoples of the earth the signs of God, and to mirror forth His commandments. Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind, for the professions of most men, be they high or low, differ from their conduct. It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth . . .[2]

The aim of the Faith is to produce the reality of virtue in souls and evolve institutions capable of dealing with social matters justly, in the light of the revealed truths. This is entirely distinct from the province filled by partisan civil institutions.

'Abdu'l-Bahá counselled the Bahá'ís from the early beginnings of the American Bahá'í community not to discuss political affairs.

. . . *All conferences* (i.e., all consultation and discussion) *must be regarding the matters of benefit, both as a whole and individually, such as the guarding of all in all cases, their protection and preservation, the improvement of character, the training of children, etc.*

If any person wishes to speak of government affairs, or to interfere with the order of government, the others must not combine with him because the Cause of God is withdrawn entirely from political affairs; the political realm pertains only to the Rulers of those matters; it has nothing to do with the souls who are exerting their utmost energy to harmonizing affairs, helping character and inciting (the people) *to strive for perfections. Therefore no soul is allowed to interfere with* (political) *matters, but only in that which is commanded.*[3]

With the development of a world-wide administrative structure within the Bahá'í Faith, institutions have been set up in national and local areas which assure the unity and integrity of the Faith. In unfolding these

[1] *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 250.

[2] ibid., pp. 303–305.

[3] *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 407.

administrative institutions Shoghi Effendi has reiterated the importance of the non-political character of the Bahá'í teachings in a letter written 21 March 1932, to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada:

'I feel it, therefore, incumbent upon me to stress, now that the time is ripe, the importance of an instruction which, at the present stage of the evolution of our Faith, should be increasingly emphasized, irrespective of its application to the East or to the West. And this principle is no other than that which involves the non-participation by the adherents of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, whether in their individual capacities or collectively as Local or National Assemblies, in any form of activity that might be interpreted, either directly or indirectly, as an interference in the political affairs of any particular government. Whether it be in the publications which they initiate and supervise; or in their official and public deliberations; or in the posts they occupy and the services they render; or in the communications they address to their fellow-disciples; or in their dealings with men of eminence and authority; or in their affiliations with kindred societies and organizations, it is, I am firmly convinced, their first and sacred obligation to abstain from any word or deed that might be construed as a violation of this vital principle. Theirs is the duty to demonstrate, on one hand, their unqualified loyalty and obedience to whatever is the considered judgement of their respective governments.

'Let them refrain from associating themselves, whether by word or by deed, with the political pursuits of their respective nations, with the policies of their governments and the schemes and programmes of parties and factions. In such controversies they should assign no blame, take no side, further no design, and identify themselves with no system prejudicial to the best interests of that worldwide Fellowship which it is their aim to guard and foster. Let them beware lest they allow themselves to become the tools of unscrupulous politicians, or to be entrapped by the treacherous devices of the plotters and the perfidious among their countrymen. Let them so shape their lives and regulate their conduct that no charge of secrecy, of fraud, of bribery, or of intimidation may, however ill-founded, be brought against them. Let them rise above all particularism and partisanship, above the vain disputes, the petty calculations, the transient passions that agitate the face, and engage the attention, of a changing world. It is their duty to strive to distinguish, as clearly as they possibly can, and if needed with the aid of their elected representatives, such posts and functions as are either diplomatic or political from those that are purely administrative in character, and which under no circumstances are affected by the changes and chances that political activities and party government, in every land, must necessarily involve. Let them affirm their unyielding determination to stand, firmly and unreservedly, for the way of Bahá'u'lláh, to avoid the entanglements and bickerings inseparable from the pursuits of the politician, and to become worthy agencies of that Divine Polity which incarnates God's immutable Purpose for all men.

'It should be made unmistakably clear that such an attitude implies neither the slightest indifference to the cause and interests of their own country, nor involves any insubordination on their part to the authority of recognized and established governments. Nor does it constitute a repudiation of their sacred obligation to promote, in the most effective manner, the best interests of their government and people. It indicates the desire cherished by every true and loyal follower of Bahá'u'lláh to serve, in an unselfish, unostentatious and patriotic fashion, the highest interests of the country to which he belongs, and in a way that would entail no departure from the high standards of integrity and truthfulness associated with the teachings of his Faith.

'As the number of the Bahá'í communities in various parts of the world multiplies and their power, as a social force, becomes increasingly apparent, they will no doubt find themselves increasingly subjected to the pressure which men of authority and influence, in the political domain, will exercise in the hope of obtaining the support they require for the advancement of their aims. These communities will moreover, feel a growing need of the good-will and the assistance of their respective governments in their efforts to widen the scope, and to consolidate the foundations, of the institutions committed to their charge. Let them beware lest, in their eagerness to further the aims of their beloved Cause, they should be led unwittingly to bargain with their Faith, to compro-

mise with their essential principles, or to sacrifice, in return for any material advantage which their institutions may derive, the integrity of their spiritual ideals. Let them proclaim that in whatever country they reside, and however advanced their institutions, or profound their desire to enforce the laws, and apply the principles, enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh, they will, unhesitatingly, subordinate the operation of such laws and the application of such principles to the requirements and legal enactments of their respective governments. Theirs is not the purpose, while endeavouring to conduct and perfect the administrative affairs of their Faith, to violate, under any circumstances, the provisions of their country's constitution, much less to allow the machinery of their administration to supersede the government of their respective countries.

'It should also be borne in mind that the very extension of the activities in which we are engaged, and the variety of the communities which labour under divers forms of government so essentially different in their standards, policies, and methods, make it absolutely essential for all those who are the declared members of any one of these communities to avoid any action that might, by arousing the suspicion or exciting the antagonism of any one government, involve their brethren in fresh persecutions or complicate the nature of their task. How else, might I ask, could such a far-flung Faith, which transcends political and social boundaries, which includes within its pale so great a variety of races and nations, which will have to rely increasingly, as it forges ahead, on the good will and support of the diversified and contending governments of the earth—how else could such a Faith succeed in preserving its unity, in safeguarding its interests, and in ensuring the steady and peaceful development of its institutions?

'Such an attitude, however, is not dictated by considerations of selfish expediency, but is actuated, first and foremost, by the broad principle that the followers of Bahá'u'lláh will, under no circumstances, suffer themselves to be involved, whether as individuals or in their collective capacities, in matters that would entail the slightest departure from the fundamental verities and ideals of their Faith. Neither the charges which the uninformed and the malicious may be led to bring against them, nor the allurements of honours and rewards, will ever induce them to surrender their trust or to deviate from their path. Let their words proclaim, and their conduct testify, that they who follow Bahá'u'lláh, in whatever land they reside, are actuated by no selfish ambition, that they neither thirst for power, nor mind any wave of unpopularity, of distrust or criticism, which a strict adherence to their standards might provoke.'[1]

And again: 'The Bahá'í Faith as it forges ahead throughout the western world and particularly in lands where the political machinery is corrupt and political passions and prejudices are dominant among the masses, should increasingly assert and demonstrate the fact that it is non-political in character, that it stands above the party, that it is neither apathetic to national interests nor opposed to any party or faction, and that it seeks through administrative channels, rather than through diplomatic and political posts to establish, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the capacity, the sane patriotism, the integrity and high-mindedness of its avowed adherents. This is the general and vital principle; it is for the National representatives to apply it with fidelity and vigour.'[2]

These instructions raised the question whether Bahá'ís should vote in any public election. A Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Mr. Thornton Chase was sent to the Guardian, and the following reply was received, dated 26 January 1933:

'The Guardian fully recognizes the authenticity and controlling influence of this instruction from 'Abdu'l-Bahá upon the question. He, however, feels under the responsibility of stating that the attitude taken by the Master (that is, that American citizens are in duty bound to vote in public elections) implies certain reservations. He, therefore, lays it upon the individual conscience to see that in following the Master's instructions no Bahá'í vote for an officer nor Bahá'í participation in the affairs of the Republic shall involve acceptance by that individual of a programme or policy that contravenes any vital principle, spiritual or social, of the Faith.' The Guardian added to this letter the following postscript: 'I feel it incumbent upon me to clarify the above statement, written

[1] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 64–67.
[2] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, December 1932.

in my behalf, by stating that no vote cast, or office undertaken, by a Bahá'í should necessarily constitute acceptance, by the voter or office holder, of the entire programme of any political party. No Bahá'í can be regarded as either a Republican or Democrat, as such. He is, above all else, the supporter of the principles enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh, with which, I am firmly convinced, the programme of no political party is completely harmonious.'[1]

In a letter dated 16 March 1933, the Guardian sent these further details:

'As regards the non-political character of the Bahá'í Faith, Shoghi Effendi feels that there is no contradiction whatsoever between the Tablet (to Thornton Chase, referred to above) and the reservations to which he has referred. The Master surely never desired the friends to use their influence towards the realization and promotion of policies contrary to any of the principles of the Faith. The friends may vote, if they can do it, without identifying themselves with one party or another. To enter the arena of party politics is surely detrimental to the best interests of the Faith and will harm the Cause. It remains for the individuals to so use their right to vote as to keep aloof from party politics, and always bear in mind that they are voting on the merits of the individual, rather than because he belongs to one party or another. The matter must be made perfectly clear to the individuals, who will be left free to exercise their discretion and judgement. But if a certain person does enter into party politics and labours for the ascendancy of one party over another, and continues to do it against the expressed appeals and warnings of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the right to refuse him the right to vote in Bahá'í elections.'[2]

That this principle, as do all Bahá'í principles, has world-wide application is made clear by Shoghi Effendi in a letter dated 11 March 1936.

'The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has assimilated, by virtue of its creative, its regulative and ennobling energies, the varied races, nationalities, creeds and classes that have sought its shadow, and have pledged unswerving fealty to its cause. It has changed the hearts of its adherents, burned away their prejudices, stilled their passions, exalted their conceptions, ennobled their motives, co-ordinated their efforts, and transformed their outlook. While preserving their patriotism and safeguarding their lesser loyalties, it has made them lovers of mankind, and the determined upholders of its best and truest interests. While maintaining intact their belief in the Divine origin of their respective religions, it has enabled them to visualize the underlying purpose of these religions, to discover their merits, to recognize their sequence, their interdependence, their wholeness and unity and to acknowledge the bond that vitally links them to itself. This universal, this transcending love which the followers of the Bahá'í Faith feel for their fellow-men, of whatever race, creed, class or nation, is neither mysterious nor can it be said to have been artificially stimulated. It is both spontaneous and genuine. They whose hearts are warmed by the energizing influence of God's creative love cherish His creatures for His sake, and recognize in every human face a sign of His reflected glory.

'Of such men and women it may be truly said that to them "every foreign land is a fatherland, and every fatherland a foreign land." For their citizenship, it must be remembered, is in the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. Though willing to share to the utmost the temporal benefits and the fleeting joys which this earthly life can confer, though eager to participate in whatever activity that conduces to the richness, the happiness and peace of that life, they can, at no time, forget that it constitutes no more than a transient, a very brief stage of their existence, that they who live it are but pilgrims and wayfarers whose goal is the Celestial City, and whose home the Country of never-failing joy and brightness.

'Though loyal to their respective governments, though profoundly interested in anything that affects their security and welfare, though anxious to share in whatever promotes their best interests, the Faith with which the followers of Bahá'u'lláh stand identified is one which they firmly believe God has raised high above the storms, the divisions, and controversies of the political arena. Their Faith they conceive to be essentially non-political, supranational in character, rigidly non-partisan, and entirely dissociated from nationalistic ambitions, pursuits and purposes. Such a Faith knows no division of class or of party. It sub-

[1] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, April 1933.
[2] ibid., January 1934.

ordinates, without hesitation or equivocation, every particularistic interest, be it personal, regional, or national to the paramount interests of humanity, firmly convinced that in a world of interdependent peoples and nations the advantage of the part is best to be reached by the advantage of the whole, and that no abiding benefit can be conferred upon the component parts if the general interests of the entity itself are ignored or neglected.'[1]

The unity of Bahá'í action throughout the world is further emphasized in a letter from Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of Vienna, written in 1947 through his secretary, in which he said in part:

'We Bahá'ís are *one* the world over; we are seeking to build up a new world order, divine in origin. How can we do this if every Bahá'í is a member of a different political party—some of them diametrically opposite to each other? Where is our unity then? We would be divided because of politics, against ourselves and this is the opposite of our purpose. Obviously if one Bahá'í in Austria is given freedom to choose a political party and join it, however good its aims may be, another Bahá'í in Japan or America, or India, has the right to do the same thing and he might belong to a party the very opposite in principle to that which the Austrian Bahá'í belongs to. Where would be the unity of the Faith then? These two spiritual brothers would be working against each other because of their political affiliations (as the Christians of Europe have been doing in so many fratricidal wars). The best way for a Bahá'í to serve his country and the world is to work for the establishment of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order, which will gradually unite all men and do away with divisive political systems and religious creeds . . .'[2]

In the *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá the Bahá'ís are instructed to *obey and be the well-wishers of the governments of the land, regard disloyalty unto a just king as disloyalty to God Himself and wishing evil to the government a transgression of the Cause of God.*[3] In explanation of this statement the Guardian wrote, in a letter dated 3 July 1948:

'Regarding your question about politics and the Master's Will: the attitude of the Bahá'ís must be twofold, complete obedience to the government of the country they reside in, and no interference *whatsoever* in political matters or questions. What the Master's statement really means is obedience to a duly constituted government, whatever that government may be in form. We are not the ones, as individual Bahá'ís, to judge our government as just or unjust—for each believer would be sure to hold a different viewpoint, and within our own Bahá'í fold a hotbed of dissension would spring up and destroy our unity. We must build up our Bahá'í system, and leave the faulty systems of the world to go their way. We cannot change them through becoming involved in them; on the contrary, they will destroy us.'[4]

Another application of this principle concerns the right, propriety or usefulness of exerting Bahá'í influence for the enactment of legislative measures reflecting more or less the purpose of some Bahá'í principle or teaching. For example, should a Bahá'í community, local or national, lend the name of the Bahá'í Faith to support legislation which seeks to abolish race and religious discrimination in matters of industrial employment, or intervene when measures concerning military training of youth are before a legislature?

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States has stated that, 'as a general policy subject to the Guardian's specific direction in special cases, Bahá'ís and their administrative institutions should not feel obligated to adopt a "Bahá'í" attitude or course of action on matters of civil legislation. Our teachings and basic principles speak for themselves. These we can always declare and set forth with all possible energy whenever occasions arise. But a truth which is sundered from its sustaining spiritual Source, lifted out of its organic relationship to the Bahá'í community, broken off from the other truths, and made subject to the storm and stress of secular controversy, is no longer a truth with which we can usefully have concern. It has become an enactment to be carried out by institutions and groups committed to other enactments, other aims and purposes and methods not in conformity with the "Divine Polity" entrusted to those alone who give full loyalty to Bahá'u'lláh. Far better for us to strive to mirror forth radiantly the individual and community virtues of a new era than to hope that others than

[1] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 197–198.
[2] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, April 1949.
[3] *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 ed.), p. 4.
[4] U.S. *Bahá'í News*, January 1949.

believers will achieve the holy mission of the Faith. We Bahá'ís have in reality accepted a world order and not merely a new decalogue of truths or commands. On the other hand, obedience to civil government is an obligation laid by Bahá'u'lláh upon every Bahá'í.'[1]

Shoghi Effendi points out, as a guiding principle of Bahá'í conduct, that 'in connection with their administrative activities, no matter how grievously interference with them might affect the course of the extension of the Movement, and the suspension of which does not constitute in itself a departure from the principle of loyalty to their Faith, the considered judgement and authoritative decrees issued by their responsible rulers must, if they be faithful to Bahá'u'lláh's and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's express injunctions, be thoroughly respected and loyally obeyed. In matters, however, that vitally affect the integrity and honour of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and are tantamount to a recantation of their faith and repudiation of their innermost belief, they [the Bahá'ís] are convinced, and are unhesitatingly prepared to vindicate by their life-blood the sincerity of their conviction, that no power on earth, neither the arts of the most insidious adversary nor the bloody weapons of the most tyrannical oppressor, can ever succeed in extorting from them a word or deed that might tend to stifle the voice of their conscience or tarnish the purity of their faith.[2]

'Small wonder if by the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh these pregnant words, written in anticipation of the present state of mankind, should have been revealed: *It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.* And again, *That one indeed is a man who today dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. Through the power released by these exalted words*, He explains, *He hath lent a fresh impulse, and set a new direction, to the birds of men's hearts, and hath obliterated every trace of restriction and limitation from God's Holy Book.*'[3]

[1] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X, pp. 278–279.

[2] *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 ed.), p. 162.

[3] *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 198.

VII

RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT

1. LOYALTY TO GOVERNMENT

WHEN a great social crisis sweeps through a civilization, moral values become impaired and moral issues confused. In the crisis of our time, members of the Bahá'í Faith go on record as firmly upholding the principle of loyalty to government.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, laid upon His followers this sacred obligation: '*In every country where any of this people* (Bahá'ís) *reside, they must behave towards the government of that country with loyalty, honesty and truthfulness.*'[1] The Bahá'í Writings state further, '*The essence of the Bahá'í spirit is that in order to establish a better social order and economic condition, there must be allegiance to the laws and principles of government*'[2] Should a Bahá'í act contrary to the laws of the government his conduct would be considered reprehensible before God, for members of this community '*should at all times manifest . . . truthfulness and sincerity*' and '*be constant in . . . faithfulness and trustworthiness.*'[3]

In elucidation of this cardinal spiritual and social principle 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the authorized Interpreter of the Faith, has written: '*According to the direct and sacred command of God we* (the Bahá'ís) *are forbidden to utter slander, are commanded to show forth peace and amity, are exhorted to rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and harmony with all the kindreds and peoples of the world. We must obey and be the well-wishers of the governments of the land . . .*'[4]

The followers of Bahá'u'lláh are exhorted to be 'good citizens'.[5] The Bahá'í teachings foster in the individual adherent an appreciation of authority and an intelligent and balanced patriotism. The Bahá'í is encouraged to 'serve in an unselfish, unostentatious and patriotic fashion, the highest interests of the country to which he belongs, and in a way that would entail no departure from the high standards of integrity and truthfulness associated with the teachings of his Faith.'[6]

Allegiance to government, far from being a concept to which the Bahá'í gives lip service, is a spiritual obligation reinforced by and inseparable from those teachings of Bahá'u'lláh's on which His followers pattern their individual spiritual development. '*Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts,*'[7] Bahá'u'lláh enjoins.

Without integrity of character in its citizens and without loyalty to government, a nation will find itself torn asunder and unable to function as an organic society. Not only do the Bahá'í teachings obligate members to be loyal to their government—they also specifically forbid them from taking part in subversive political and social movements.

[1] **Bahá'u'lláh: Bishárát**, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 22–23.
[2] **'Abdu'l-Bahá**: *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 233.
[3] **'Abdu'l-Bahá**: *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 294.
[4] **'Abdu'l-Bahá**: *The Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Bahá* p. 8.
[5] **'Abdu'l-Bahá**: *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 319.
[6] **Shoghi Effendi**: *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 65.
[7] **Bahá'u'lláh**: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 285.

2. THE BAHÁ'Í VIEW OF PACIFISM

IN a letter published in U.S. *Bahá'í News*, January 1938, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith wrote through his secretary:

'With reference to the absolute pacifists or conscientious objectors to war: their attitude, judged from the Bahá'í standpoint, is quite anti-social and due to its exaltation of the individual conscience leads inevitably to disorder and chaos in society. Extreme pacifists are thus very close to anarchists, in the sense that both of these groups lay an undue emphasis on the rights and merits of the individual. The Bahá'í conception of social life is essentially based on the subordination of the individual will to that of society. It neither suppresses the individual nor does it exalt him to the point of making him an anti-social creature, a menace to society. As in everything, it follows the "golden mean." The only way society can function is for the minority to follow the will of the majority.

'The other main objection to the conscientious objectors is that their method of establishing peace is too negative. Noncooperation is too passive a philosophy to become an effective way for social reconstruction. Their refusal to bear arms can never establish peace. There should first be a spiritual revitalization which nothing, except the Cause of God, can effectively bring to every man's heart.'

3. SUMMARY OF THE GUARDIAN'S INSTRUCTIONS ON THE OBLIGATIONS OF BAHÁ'ÍS IN CONNECTION WITH MILITARY SERVICE

IMMEDIATELY prior to World War II the Bahá'í position on military training and service, and the obligation of individual Bahá'ís to apply for and maintain a non-combatant status when this is possible under the laws of their country, were clearly stated by the Guardian of the Faith. On 27 November 1938 he instructed his secretary to write to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles: 'He has noted your Assembly's request for his advice as to what forms of national service the friends may volunteer for in times of emergency. While the believers, he feels, should exert every effort to obtain from the authorities a permit exempting them from active military service in a combatant capacity, it is their duty at the same time, as loyal and devoted citizens, to offer their services to their country in any field of national service which is not specifically aggressive or directly military. Such forms of national work as air raid precaution service, ambulance corps, and other humanitarian work or activity of a non-combatant nature, are the most suitable types of service the friends can render, and which they should gladly volunteer for, since in addition to the fact that they do not involve any violation of the spirit or principle of the Teachings they constitute a form of social and humanitarian service which the Cause holds sacred and emphatically enjoins.'

A further query from that National Spiritual Assembly dated 9 May 1939 evoked the following reply on 4 June 1939, in amplification of the above principles:

'His instructions on this matter, conveyed in a letter addressed to your Assembly during last

November, were not intended for that particular occasion, but were meant for present conditions, and for any such emergencies as may arise in the immediate future.

'It is still his firm conviction that the believers, while expressing their readiness to unreservedly obey any directions that the authorities may issue concerning national service in time of war, should also, and while there is yet no outbreak of hostilities, appeal to the government for exemption from active military service in a combatant capacity, stressing the fact that in doing so they are not prompted by any selfish considerations, but by the sole and supreme motive of upholding the Teachings of their Faith, which make it a moral obligation for them to desist from any act that would involve them in direct warfare with their fellow-humans of any other race or nation.

'The Bahá'í Teachings, indeed, condemn, emphatically and unequivocally, any form of physical violence, and warfare in the battlefield is obviously a form, and perhaps the worst form which such violence can assume.

'There are many other avenues through which the believers can assist in times of war by enlisting in services of a non-combatant nature—services that do not involve the direct shedding of blood—such as ambulance work, anti-air raid precaution service, office and administrative works, and it is for such types of national service that they should volunteer.

'It is immaterial whether such activities would still expose them to dangers, either at home or in the front, since their desire is not to protect their lives, but to desist from any acts of wilful murder.

'The friends should consider it their conscientious duty, as loyal members of the Faith, to apply for such exemption, even though there may be slight prospect of their obtaining the consent and approval of the authorities to their petition.'

After the war, on 20 July 1946, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States enquired of the Guardian whether the existence of the United Nations in its present form changed the attitude of the Bahá'ís toward military duties which might require the taking of human life. The Guardian's reply, written by his secretary, was:

'As there is neither an International Police Force nor any immediate prospect of one coming into being, the Bahá'ís should continue to apply, under all circumstances, for exemption from any military duty that necessitates the taking of life. There is no justification for any change of attitude on our part at the present time.'

The Guardian therefore has made it clear that it is obligatory and not an optional matter for all Bahá'ís to apply for and maintain a non-combatant status if this is possible under the law. Where such a law exists, Bahá'ís cannot voluntarily enlist in any branch of the armed forces in which they would be subject to orders to engage in the taking of human life.

The Universal House of Justice amplified this later statement:

'There is no objection to a Bahá'í enlisting voluntarily in the armed forces of a country in order to obtain a training in some trade or profession, provided that he can do so without making himself liable to undertake combatant service.

'There is likewise no objection to a Bahá'í seeking or continuing a career in the armed forces, provided that he can do so without making himself liable to undertake combatant service.'

VIII

BAHÁ'Í CALENDAR, FESTIVALS AND DATES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

1. FOREWORD

Excerpt from Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era *by Dr. J. E. Esslemont*

AMONG different peoples and at different times many different methods have been adopted for the measurement of time and fixing of dates, and several different calendars are still in daily use, e.g., the Gregorian in Western Europe, the Julian in many countries of Eastern Europe, the Hebrew among the Jews and the Muḥammadan in Muslim countries.

The Báb signalized the importance of the dispensation which He came to herald by inaugurating a new calendar. In this, as in the Gregorian Calendar, the lunar month is abandoned and the solar year is adopted.

The Bahá'í year consists of 19 months of 19 days each (i.e., 361 days), with the addition of certain 'intercalary days' (four in ordinary and five in leap years) between the eighteenth and nineteenth months in order to adjust the calendar to the solar year. The Báb named the months after the attributes of God. The Bahá'í New Year, like the ancient Persian New Year, is astronomically fixed, commencing at the March equinox (21 March), and the Bahá'í era commences with the year of the Báb's declaration (i.e., 1844 A.D., 1260 A.H.).

In the not far distant future it will be necessary that all peoples in the world agree on a common calendar.

It seems, therefore, fitting that the new age of unity should have a new calendar free from the objections and associations which make each of the older calendars unacceptable to large sections of the world's population, and it is difficult to see how any other arrangement could exceed in simplicity and convenience that proposed by the Báb.

2. BAHÁ'Í FEASTS, ANNIVERSARIES AND DAYS OF FASTING

Feast of Riḍván (Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh), 21 April–2 May 1863.
Feast of Naw-Rúz (New Year), 21 March.
Declaration of the Báb, 23 May 1844.
The Day of the Covenant, 26 November.
Birth of Bahá'u'lláh, 12 November 1817.
Birth of the Báb, 20 October 1819.
Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 23 May 1844.
Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, 29 May 1892.
Martyrdom of the Báb, 9 July 1850.
Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 28 November 1921.
Fasting season lasts 19 days beginning with the first day of the month of 'Alá', 2 March—the Feast of Naw-Rúz follows immediately after.

3. BAHÁ'Í HOLY DAYS ON WHICH WORK SHOULD BE SUSPENDED

The first day of Riḍván,
The ninth day of Riḍván,
The twelfth day of Riḍván,
The anniversary of the declaration of the Báb,
The anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh,
The anniversary of the birth of the Báb,
The anniversary of the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh,
The anniversary of the martyrdom of the Báb,
The feast of Naw-Rúz.

NOTE: 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in one of His Tablets addressed to a believer of Nayríz, Persia, has written the following: *Nine days in the year have been appointed on which work is forbidden. Some of these days have been specifically mentioned in the Book. The rest follow as corollaries to the Text . . . Work on the Day of the Covenant* (Fête Day of 'Abdu'l-Bahá), *however, is not prohibited. Celebration of that day is left to the discretion of the friends. Its observation is not obligatory. The days pertaining to the Abhá Beauty* (Bahá'u'lláh) *and the Primal Point* (the Báb), *that is to say these nine days, are the only ones on which work connected with trade, commerce, industry and agriculture is not allowed. In like manner, work connected with any form of employment, whether governmental or otherwise, should be suspended.*

As a corollary of this Tablet it follows that the anniversaries of the birth and ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are not to be regarded as days on which work is prohibited. The celebration of these two days, however, is obligatory.

Bahá'ís in East and West, holding administrative positions, whether public or private, should exert the utmost effort to obtain special leave from their superiors to enable them to observe these nine holy days.

4. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL GLEANED FROM NABÍL'S NARRATIVE REGARDING THE BAHÁ'Í CALENDAR

THE Badí' Calendar (Bahá'í Calendar) has been taken by me from the *Kitáb-i-Asmá'*, one of the works written by the Báb. As I have observed in these days that certain believers are inclined to regard the year in which Bahá'u'lláh departed from Baghdád to Constantinople as marking the beginning of the Badí' Calendar, I have requested Mírzá Áqá Ján, the amanuensis of Bahá'u'lláh, to ascertain His will and desire concerning this matter. Bahá'u'lláh answered and said: 'The year sixty A.H.[1] (1844 A.D.), the year of the Declaration of the Báb, must be regarded as the beginning of the Badí' Calendar.' The Declaration of the Báb took place on the evening preceding the fifth day of Jamádíyu'l-Avval, of the year 1260 A.H. It has been ordained that the solar calendar be followed and that the vernal Equinox, the day of Naw-Rúz, be regarded as the New Year's Day of the Badí' Calendar. The year sixty, in which the fifth day of Jamádíyu'l-Avval coincided with the sixty-fifth day after Naw-Rúz, has accordingly been regarded as the first year

[1] (i.e., 1260 A.H.)

of the Badí' Calendar. As in that year, the day of Naw-Rúz, the vernal Equinox, preceded by sixty-six days the date of the Declaration of the Báb, I have therefore, throughout my history, regarded the Naw-Rúz of the year sixty-one A.H. (the Naw-Rúz immediately following the Declaration of the Báb) as the first Naw-Rúz of the Badí' Calendar. I have accordingly considered the Naw-Rúz of this present year, the year 1306 A.H., which is the 47th solar year after the Declaration of the Báb, as the 46th Naw-Rúz of the Badí' Calendar.

Soon after Bahá'u'lláh had left the fortress of 'Akká and was dwelling in the house of Malik, in that city, He commanded me to transcribe the text of the Badí' Calendar and to instruct the believers in its details. On the very day in which I received His command, I composed, in verse and prose, an exposition of the main features of that Calendar and presented it to him. The versified copy, being now unavailable, I am herein transcribing the version in prose. The days of the week are named as follows:

Days	*Arabic Name*	*English Name*	*Translation*
1st	Jalál	Saturday	Glory
2nd	Jamál	Sunday	Beauty
3rd	Kamál	Monday	Perfection
4th	Fiḍál	Tuesday	Grace
5th	'Idál	Wednesday	Justice
6th	Istijlál	Thursday	Majesty
7th	Istiqlál	Friday	Independence

The names of the months, which are the same as the days of each month, are as follows:

Month	*Arabic Name*	*Translation*	*First Days*
1st	Bahá	Splendour	March 21
2nd	Jalál	Glory	April 9
3rd	Jamál	Beauty	April 28
4th	'Aẓamat	Grandeur	May 17
5th	Núr	Light	June 5
6th	Raḥmat	Mercy	June 24
7th	Kalimát	Words	July 13
8th	Kamál	Perfection	August 1
9th	Asmá'	Names	August 20
10th	'Izzat	Might	September 8
11th	Mashíyyat	Will	September 27
12th	'Ilm	Knowledge	October 16
13th	Qudrat	Power	November 4
14th	Qawl	Speech	November 23
15th	Masá'il	Questions	December 12
16th	Sharaf	Honour	December 31
17th	Sulṭán	Sovereignty	January 19
18th	Mulk	Dominion	February 7
19th	'Alá'	Loftiness	March 2

Ayyám-i-Há (Intercalary Days) 26 February to 1 March inclusive—four in ordinary and five in leap years.

The first day of each month is thus the day of Bahá, and the last day of each month the day of 'Alá'.

The Báb has regarded the solar year, of 365 days, 5 hours, and fifty odd minutes, as consisting of 19 months of 19 days each, with the addition of certain intercalary days. He has named the New Year's Day, which is the day of Naw-Rúz, the day of Bahá, of the month of Bahá. He has ordained the month of 'Alá' to be

the month of fasting, and has decreed that the day of Naw-Rúz should mark the termination of that period. As the Báb did not specifically define the place for the four days and the fraction of a day in the Badí' Calendar, the people of the *Bayán* were at a loss as to how they should regard them. The revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* in the city of 'Akká resolved this problem and settled the issue. Bahá'u'lláh designated those days as the Ayyám-i-Há and ordained that they should immediately precede the month of 'Alá', which is the month of fasting. He enjoined upon His followers to devote these days to feasting, rejoicing, and charity. Immediately upon the termination of these intercalary days, Bahá'u'lláh ordained the month of fasting to begin. I have heard it stated that some of the people of the *Bayán*, the followers of Mírzá Yaḥyá, have regarded these intercalary days as coming immediately after the month of 'Alà', thus terminating their fast five days before the day of Naw-Rúz. This, notwithstanding the explicit text of the *Bayán* which states that the day of Naw-Rúz must needs be the first day of the month of Bahá, and must follow immediately after the last day of the month of 'Alá'. Others, aware of this contradiction, have started their fasting on the fifth day of the month of 'Alá', and included the intercalary days within the period of fasting.

Every fourth year the number of the intercalary days is raised from four to five. The day of Naw-Rúz falls on the 21st of March only if the vernal Equinox precedes the setting of the sun on that day. Should the vernal Equinox take place after sunset, Naw-Rúz will have to be celebrated on the following day.

The Báb has, moreover, in His Writings revealed in the Arabic tongue, divided the years following the date of His Revelation into cycles of nineteen years each. The names of the years in each cycle are as follows:

1. Alif	A.
2. Bá'	B.
3. Ab	Father.
4. Dál	D.
5. Báb	Gate.
6. Váv	V.
7. Abad	Eternity.
8. Jád	Generosity.
9. Bahá	Splendour.
10. Ḥubb	Love.
11. Bahháj	Delightful.
12. Javáb	Answer.
13. Aḥad	Single.
14. Vahháb	Bountiful.
15. Vidád	Affection.
16. Badí'	Beginning.
17. Bahí	Luminous.
18. Abhá	Most Luminous.
19. Váḥid	Unity.

Each cycle of nineteen years is called Váḥid. Nineteen cycles constitute a period called Kull-i-Shay'. The numerical value of the word Váḥid is nineteen, that of Kull-i-Shay' is 361. Váḥid signifies unity, and is symbolic of the unity of God.

The Báb has, moreover, stated that this system of His is dependent upon the acceptance and good-pleasure of 'Him Whom God shall make manifest'. One word from Him would suffice either to establish it for all time, or to annul it forever.

For instance, the date of the 21st of April, 1930, which is the first day of Riḍván, and which according to the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* must coincide with the 'thirteenth day of the second Bahá'í month,' and which fell this year (1930) on Monday, would, according to the system of the Badí' Calendar, be described as follows:

'The day of Kamál, the day of Qudrat, of the month of Jalál, of the year Bahháj, of the fifth Váḥid, of the first Kull-i-Shay'.'

5. HISTORICAL DATA GLEANED FROM NABÍL'S NARRATIVE REGARDING BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

	Works Revealed During This Period	*Houses Occupied During This Period*
A. BAGHDÁD Arrival latter part Jamádiyu'th-Thání, 1269 A.H. 12 March–10 April 1853 A.D. Departure for Sulaymániyyih on Wednesday, 10 April 1854 A.D.—Rajab 12, 1270 A.H.	Kullu'ṭ-Ṭa'ám	House of Ḥájí 'Alí-Madad (in old Baghdád) House of Sulaymán-i-Ghannám
B. SULAYMÁNÍYYIH Before reaching Sulaymániyyih, He lived for a time on the Saṛ-Galú mountain. During His absence from Baghdád His family transferred their residence from House of Ḥájí 'Alí-Madad to that of Sulaymán-i-Ghannám. Nabíl arrived at Baghdád 6 months after Bahá'u'lláh's departure for Sulaymániyyih.	Prayers Qaṣídiy-i-Varqá'íyyih Sáqí-Az-Ghayb-i-Baqá	
C. BAGHDÁD Arrived from Sulaymániyyih on Wednesday, 19 March 1856 A.D.—Rajab 12, 1272 A.H. Departure from Baghdád for Constantinople, Wednesday afternoon (first day of Riḍván), 22 April 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 3, 1279 A.H. Short stay in Mazra'iy-i-Vashsháh during above period to celebrate Naw-Rúz ended with departure on Thursday, 26 March 1863 A.D.—Shavvál 5, 1279 A.H.	Tafsír-i-Ḥurúfát-i-Muqaṭṭa'ih Ṣaḥífiy-i-Shaṭṭíyyih Haft-Vádí (Seven Valleys) Tafsír-i-Hú Lawḥ-i-Ḥúríyyih Kitáb-i-Íqán Kalimát-i-Maknúnih (Hidden Words) Subḥána-Rabbíya'l-A'lá Shikkar-Shikan-Shavand Ḥúr-i-'Ujáb Halih-Halih-Yá Bishárat Ghulámu'l-Khuld Az-Bágh-i-Iláhí Báz-Áv-u-Bidih-Jámí Malláḥu'l-Quds (Holy Mariner)	

C. BAGHDÁD—*continued*	*Works Revealed During This Period*	*Houses Occupied During This Period*
Arrival at Garden of Najíbíyyih (Garden of Riḍván), 22 April 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 3, 1279 A.H.	Súriy-i-Ṣabr revealed on first day of Riḍván	
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh's Family at Garden of Riḍván on eighth day after first of Riḍván.		
Departure from Garden of Riḍván for Constantinople last day of Riḍván at noon on Sunday, 3 May 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 14, 1279 A.H.		
Length of overland journey from Garden of Riḍván to Sámsún on Black Sea: 110 days.		

Firayját (arrived early afternoon—stayed seven days) arrived on Sunday, 3 May 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 14, 1279 A.H. (Firayját is about 3 miles distant from Baghdád)
Judaydih,
Dilí-'Abbás,
Qarih-Tapih,
Saláḥíyyih (stayed 2 nights),
Dúst-Khurmátú,
Táwuq,
Karkúk (stayed 2 days),
Irbíl,
Záb River,
Barṭallih,
Mosul (stayed 3 days),
Zákhú,
Jazírih,
Nuṣaybín
Ḥasan-Áqá,
Márdin,
Díyár-Bakr,
Ma'dan-Mis,
Kharpút (stayed 2 or 3 days),
Ma'dan-Nuqrih,
Dilík-Tásh,
Sívas,
Ṭúqát,
Amasia (stayed 2 days),
Iláhíyyih (while approaching Sámsún, 'Lawḥ-i-Hawdaj' was revealed), (last day of overland journey),
Sámsún (stayed 7 days), Black Sea port; sailed in a Turkish steamer about sunset for Constantinople,
Sinope (arrived next day about noon), Black Sea port: stayed few hours,
Anyábulí (arrived next day).

D. CONSTANTINOPLE	*Works Revealed During This Period*	*Houses Occupied During This Period*	*Duration*
Arrival at noon on Sunday, 16 August 1863 A.D.—Rabí'u'l-Avval 1, 1280 A.H.	Subḥánáka-Yá-Hú Lawḥ-i-'Abdu'l-'Azíz Va-Vukalá	House of Shamsí Big (near the mosque of Khirqiy-i-Sharíf	1 month

D. CONSTANTINOPLE—*continued*	*Works Revealed During This Period*	*Houses Occupied During This Period*	*Duration*
Length of sea voyage from Sámsún to Constantinople: 3 days. Length of journey from Constantinople to Adrianople: 12 days.		House of Vísí Páshá (3-storey, near Sulṭán Muḥammad Mosque)	3 months

1. Kúchik-Chakmachih (3 hours from Constantinople—spent one night)
2. Búyúk-Chakmachih (arrived about noon)
3. Salvarí 4. Birkás 5. Bábá-Iskí

E. ADRIANOPLE	*Works Revealed During This Period*	*Houses Occupied During This Period*	*Duration*
Arrival on Saturday, 12 December 1863 A.D.—Rajab 1, 1280 A.H.	Súriy-i-Aṣḥáb	1. Khán-i-'Aráb (caravanserai, two-storey, near house of 'Izzat-Áqá)	3 nights
	Lawḥ-i-Ḥajj I		
Length of stay: 4 years, 8 months, 22 days.	Lawḥ-i-Ḥajj II		
Length of overland journey from Constantinople to Adrianople: 12 days.	Kitáb-i-Badí' Súriy-i-Mulúk (Tablet of the Kings)	2. House in Murádíyih quarter, near Takyiy-i-Mawlaví	1 week
Departure from Adrianople on Wednesday, 12 August 1868 A.D.—Rabí'u'th-Thání 22, 1285 A.H.	Súriy-i-Amr Súriy-i-Damm Alváḥ-i-Laylatu'l-Quds Munájátháy-i-Ṣiyám (Prayers for Fasting)	3. House in Murádíyih quarter, near house 2 4. Khániy-i-Amru'lláh (several storeys, near Sulṭán-Salím Mosque)	6 months
	Lawḥ-i-Sayyáh	5. House of Riḍá Big	1 year
	Lawḥ-i-Nápulyún I (First Tablet to Napoleon III)	6. House of Amru'lláh (3-storey, north of Sulṭán-Salím Mosque)	3 months?
	Lawḥ-i-Sulṭán (Tablet to the Sháh of Persia) Lawḥ-i-Nuqṭih	7. House of 'Izzat-Áqá	11 months

1. Uzún-Kuprí
2. Káshánih (arrived about noon. Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís [Tablet of Ra'ís] was revealed in this place)
3. Gallipoli (length of journey from Adrianople to Gallipoli about 4 days)
   (after a few days' stay sailed before noon in Austrian steamer for Alexandria, Egypt)
4. Madellí (arrived about sunset—left at night)
5. Smyrna (stayed 2 days, left at night)
6. Alexandria (arrived in the morning, trans-shipped and left at night for Haifa)
7. Port Said (arrived morning, left the same day at night)
8. Jaffa (left at midnight)
9. Haifa (arrived in the morning, landed and after a few hours left on a sailing vessel for 'Akká)

F. 'AKKÁ	*Works Revealed During This Period*	*Houses Occupied During This Period*	*Duration*
Arrival on Monday, 31 August 1868 A.D.—Jamádíyu'l-Avval 12, 1285 A.H.	Kitáb-i-Aqdas Lawḥ-i-Nápulyún II (Second Tablet to Napoleon III)	1. Barracks	2 years, 2 months 5 days
	Lawḥ-i-Malikih (Tablet to Queen Victoria)	2. House of Malik 3. House of Rábi'ih	3 months
Purest Branch died on Thursday, 23 June 1870 A.D.—Rabí-'u'l-Avval 23, 1287 A.H.	Lawḥ-i-Malik-i-Rús (Tablet to the Czar) Súriy-i-Haykal Lawḥ-i-Burhán Lawḥ-i-Ru'yá Lawḥ-i-Ibn-i-Dhi'b (Epistle to Son of the Wolf)	4. House of Manṣúr 5. House of 'Abbúd (where Kitáb-i-Aqdas was revealed) 6. Mazra'ih	2 or 3 months
Passed away 29 May 1892 A.D.	Lawḥ-i-Páp (Tablet to the Pope)	7. Qaṣr (Mansion, where He passed away)	

6. DATES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE RISE OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh .....12 November 1817
Birth of the Báb .....20 October 1819
Declaration of the Mission of the Báb in Shíráz .....23 May 1844
Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá .....23 May 1844
Departure of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca .....September 1844
Arrival of the Báb in Máh-Kú, Ádhirbáyján ..... Summer 1847
Incarceration of the Báb in Chihríq, Ádhirbáyján .....April 1848
Conference of Badasht .....June 1848
Interrogation of the Báb in Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján .....July 1848
Martyrdom of the Báb in Tabríz, Ádhirbáyján .....9 July 1850
Attempt on the life of Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh ... .15 August 1852
Imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh in the Síyáh-Chál of Ṭihrán .....August 1852
Banishment of Bahá'u'lláh to Baghdád ....12 January 1853
Withdrawal of Bahá'u'lláh to Kurdistán ....10 April 1854
Return of Bahá'u'lláh from Kurdistán ....19 March 1856
Declaration of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh ... .22 April 1863
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Constantinople ....16 August 1863
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Adrianople ....12 December 1863
Departure of Bahá'u'lláh from Adrianople .. ..12 August 1868
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká ....31 August 1868
Death of the Purest Branch ...23 June 1870
Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh .....29 May 1892
First public reference to the Faith in America ..... 23 September 1893
Establishment of the first Bahá'í centre in the West .....February 1894
Arrival of the first group of Western pilgrims in 'Akká .....10 December 1898
Arrival of the Báb's remains in the Holy Land ..... 31 January 1899
Reincarceration of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akká ..... 20 August 1901
Commencement of the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of 'Ishqábád ....28 November 1902
Release of 'Abdul-Bahá from His incarceration .....September 1908
Interment of the Báb's remains on Mt. Carmel ..... 21 March 1909
Opening of the first American Bahá'í Convention .....21 March 1909
'Abdu'l-Bahá's departure from Egypt ....September 1910
'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in London ....4 September 1911
'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in America ....11 April 1912
Laying of the corner-stone of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette, Ill., by 'Abdu'l-Bahá ..... 1 May 1912
Second visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Europe and tour through the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Hungary and Austria ....December 1912 to June 1913
'Abdu'l-Bahá's return to the Holy Land ....5 December 1913
Unveiling of the Tablets of the Divine Plan ..... April 1919
Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 28 November 1921
Verdict of the Islamic Court in Egypt pronouncing the Faith to be an independent religion .....10 May 1925
Martha Root's first interview with Queen Marie of Romania .....30 January 1926
Resolution of the Council of the League of Nations upholding the claim of the Bahá'í community to the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád .....4 March 1929
Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf July 1932
Inception of the First American Seven-Year Plan .....April 1937
Celebration of the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb .....23 May 1944
Inception of the Second American Seven-Year Plan .....April 1946
Centenary of the Martyrdom of the Báb ....9 July 1950
Completion of the Arcade and Parapet of the Shrine of the Báb on Mt. Carmel ....9 July 1950
Inauguration of the Centenary Celebrations of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Prophetic Mission ..... October 1952
First Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Kampala, Uganda, Africa ....12–18 February 1953

Inauguration of the Ten-Year International Bahá'í Teaching and Consolidation Plan .. ..Riḍván 1953

Bahá'í dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette, Illinois .....1 May 1953
Public dedication .....2 May 1953

All-American Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Chicago ...3–6 May 1953

Third Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Stockholm, Sweden ....21–26 July 1953

Fourth Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, New Delhi, India ....7–15 October 1953

Completion of the construction of the Shrine of the Báb .....October 1953

Expansion of the Faith to 100 additional countries and islands by settlement of the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh 1953–1954

Completion of exterior of International Archives Building 1957

Passing of Shoghi Effendi 4 November 1957

The holding of five Intercontinental Teaching Conferences successively in Kampala, Sydney, Wilmette, Frankfurt, Djakarta/Singapore 1958

First dependency of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, the Bahá'í Home for the Aged, opened in Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A. ....January 1959

Dedication of the Mother Temple of Africa, Kampala, Uganda .....14 January 1961

Dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, Sydney, Australia ....16 September 1961

Completion of the Ten Year Crusade ....Riḍván 1963

Election of the Universal House of Justice .. ..21 April 1963

Celebration of the Most Great Jubilee, in London .....April 1963

Launching of the Nine Year Plan ....April 1964

Dedication of the Mother Temple of Europe, near Frankfurt, Germany .....4 July 1964

Celebration of the Centenary of the Revelation of the *Súriy-i-Mulúk* ....September/October 1967

Opening of period of proclamation of the Cause, inaugurated by the presentation by the Universal House of Justice to 140 Heads of State of a special edition of *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* .....October 1967

The holding of six Intercontinental Conferences ..... October 1967

His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, of Western Samoa, embraced the Faith ....19 February 1968

Establishment by the Universal House of Justice of the Continental Boards of Counsellors ..... 21 June 1968

First Oceanic Conference, Palermo, Sicily ..... 23–25 August 1968

Commemoration of 100th anniversary of arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land ... .31 August 1968

The Bahá'í International Community accredited with consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council ....27 May 1970

Commemoration of 100th anniversary of the death of Mírzá Mihdí, 'The Purest Branch' ..... 23 June 1970

The holding of eight Oceanic and Continental Conferences ....14 August 1970–5 September 1971

Commemoration of 50th anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá ....26–28 November 1971

Completion of erection of Obelisk, Mt. Carmel ..... 19 December 1971

Dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America, Panama .....29 April 1972

Adoption by the Universal House of Justice of its Constitution .....26 November 1972

Publication by the Universal House of Justice of *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* ....Riḍván 1973

Establishment by the Universal House of Justice of the International Teaching Centre . .....5 June 1973

Launching of the Five Year International Teaching Plan .....April 1974

His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa, visits the resting place of Shoghi Effendi .....12 September 1976

The holding of eight Intercontinental Conferences between July 1976 and January 1977

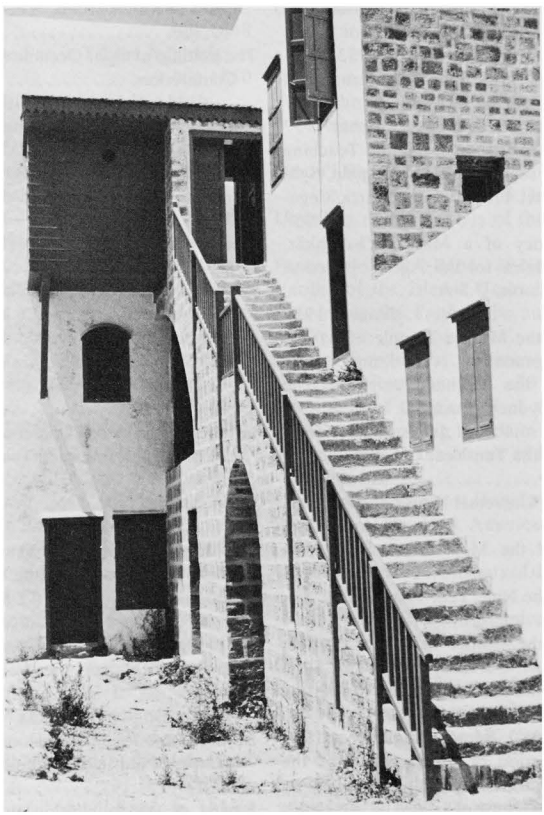
Commemoration of the Centenary of the termination of Bahá'u'lláh's Confinement in the prison-city of 'Akká .... June 1977

Laying of the foundation stone of the Mother Temple of the Indian sub-continent ....17 October 1977

Laying of the foundation stone of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands .. ..27 January 1979

Launching of the Seven Year International Teaching Plan .....April 1979

Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the passing of Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf ..... July 1982
The holding of five International Teaching Conferences between June and September 1982
Occupation by the Universal House of Justice of its Permanent Seat ..... January 1983
Opening of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásha to pilgrims ..... April 1983



Stairs leading to the main rooms of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pásha; 1983.

PART FIVE

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

ADELBERT MÜHLSCHLEGEL
1897–1980

On 16 October 1920 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed the following Tablet to Adelbert Mühlschlegel:

O thou son of the Kingdom! Thy letter hath been received. It was like unto a bag of musk. When I opened it, the fragrance of the love of God was perceived. It is my hope that thy rivulet may develop into a sea and surge with the breezes of divine guidance, casting a wave to the East and another to the West.

Be thou deeply thankful to thy teacher and show unto her heartfelt and spiritual gratitude, because it was she who caused thee to hear the divine call and it was through her that thou didst attain to eternal grace. Thou wert earthly and thou becamest heavenly; thou wert in darkness and thou didst attain illumination; thou wert of the world of matter and thou becamest divine, and thou didst obtain a portion and share of the eternal bestowal. Be filled with happiness and derive joy from the melody of the Supreme Concourse!

It is my hope that thou wilt follow in the path of Bahá'u'lláh. Thine honoured wife will be favoured at the threshold of Oneness and looked upon with the eyes of the merciful Lord. Upon thee be the Glory of the All-Glorious.

This hope of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that Adelbert Mühlschlegel would walk in the path of Bahá'u'lláh came true and he continued in this path devotedly to the end of his life. He was born on 16 June 1897 in Berlin. His father was a military doctor in the service of the King of Württemberg, which influenced young Adelbert's choice of profession. His mother was the daughter of the pastor of Biberach, and she passed on to her son the longing for spiritual values. Adelbert described his childhood, part of which was spent in Stuttgart, as a cheerful one. He lived for many years in a house with a large garden. His parents gave him much love and attention. He had the example of his mother's pious and radiant soul as well as his father's discipline and encouragement in sports. In addition, he had a charming little sister who later emigrated to eastern Europe and accepted the Faith there.

During World War I Adelbert served in the medical corps and struggled to harmonize within himself the hard facts of medicine with the longing for spiritual enlightenment. His medical studies took him to Freiburg, Greifswald and Tübingen. He grew increasingly convinced that a new era was coming into being and he became a true seeker. In 1920 he received a letter from his mother in which she said that she had found a new and universal Cause, the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. He studied the few texts which were available at that time, realized that it was the truth he had been searching for, and accepted the Faith.

In 1922 he opened his first medical practice, in Stuttgart. There followed a time of inner struggle to harmonize his profession and his private life with the Teachings. He participated in the community life of Stuttgart, gave talks and wrote a melodrama for the third 'Bahá'í Congress', held in September 1924. Two years later he married Herma Weidle. They had two girls and three boys of whom one died in early childhood. Herma was a radiant mother and Adelbert's close companion in all his Bahá'í activities until she was called to the Abhá Kingdom in 1964.[1] They had the great privilege of making a pilgrimage together in 1936 and of being in the presence of Shoghi Effendi who walked alone with Adelbert for a quarter of an hour in the gardens.

Then came the time in 1937 when the Faith was prohibited in Germany. Throughout the years of the Second World War Adelbert remained with his family in Stuttgart, as a doctor. Their apartment was bombed. In 1945, in their new home, Adelbert and Herma created a true centre for Bahá'í activities and, in addition, a place to which many young Iranian Bahá'ís turned upon their arrival in Germany. A warm atmosphere full of humour enveloped everyone. If any material difficulty arose, as was not unusual in those post-

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 367.



Adelbert Mühlschlegel

war years, Adelbert would compose a song making light of the problem. He continued to provide translations of Bahá'í literature and widened his working knowledge of a number of European languages. He wrote many articles on Bahá'í subjects that appeared in various publications. For many years—and until January 1958—he served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany and Austria, and was often its chairman.

In February 1952 Adelbert Mühlschlegel was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God and from 1959 devoted his entire time. to service to the Faith. In 1957 a profound spiritual experience deeply affected him, preparing him for a life of complete dedication to service to Bahá'u'lláh. In that year, when the beloved Guardian passed away, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum asked Adelbert to wash the body of Shoghi Effendi before interment. This experience is best described in his own words:

'Something new happened to me in that hour that I cannot, even after a few days, speak of, but I can mention the wisdom and love that I felt pour over me. In that room—which to worldly eyes would have appeared so different—there was a tremendous spiritual force such as I have only felt in my life in the holy Shrines. My first impression was the contrast between the body left behind and the majestic, transfigured face, a soul-stirring picture of the joyous victory of the eternal over the transient. My second impression, as I prayed and thought and carefully did what I had to do, was that in this degree of consecration to the work of God I should work all my life, and mankind should work a thousand years, in order to construct "the Kingdom" on earth; and my third thought was, as I washed each member of his body and anointed it, that I thanked those beloved hands which had worked and written to establish the Covenant, those feet that had walked for us, that mouth that had spoken to us, that head that had thought for us, and I prayed and meditated and supplicated that in the short time left to me, the members of my body might hasten to follow in his path of service; and my last thought was of my own distress because I felt how unworthy my hands were to anoint that blessed brow with attar-of-rose as the Masters of old were wont to do to their pupils; and yet what privileges, what duties fall to us, the living, to watch over what is past and mortal, be it ever so exalted. A great deal of mercy, love, and wisdom were hidden in this hour.'[1]

The Hand of the Cause Adelbert Mühlschlegel was one of the Chief Stewards of the Cause who guided it through the dark corridor from 1957 to 1963 when the Universal House of Justice was elected. During this time he visited many European countries, assisting in increasing the number of National Spiritual Assemblies there from three, in 1953, to sixteen, in 1963. In 1958 Dr. Mühlschlegel and his wife pioneered from Stuttgart to various centres and finally to Tübingen where Herma passed away in 1964 following a long and severe illness during which she was cared for by her husband. A shining light had left this world to continue her services in another realm, and to assist her dear husband in this one.

After the death of his wife in 1964 Dr. Mühlschlegel moved to Vienna to help consolidate this still struggling national com-

[1] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, pp. 218–219.

munity. The secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly was Ursula Kohler who, a year later, became his wife and close collaborator. Then in 1970, when Switzerland needed help to open one of its French-speaking cantons, Dr. Mühlschlegel registered in the University of Fribourg in order to obtain his residence permit. Soon a healthy community was established in Fribourg with his help and that of his wife. From Austria and Switzerland his travels in Europe continued. When, in 1968, the Hands of the Cause were freed to serve on a world-wide basis through the establishment of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, Dr. Mühlschlegel made his first trip to other continents. In 1969, at the request of the Universal House of Justice, he journeyed to Asia, visiting Persia, India, West Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Nepal.

Having achieved his purpose in Switzerland, Dr. Mühlschlegel and his wife moved in 1974, at the suggestion of the House of Justice, to Hofheim, Germany, very close to the Mother Temple of Europe. Again their home became a centre of Bahá'í hospitality enriched by the great wisdom of Dr. Mühlschlegel who shared his knowledge with the visiting friends. In addition, he travelled to Africa in 1971 and 1972, and to South America in 1975. During these long trips he was accompanied by his wife, and although his heart was beginning to fail, he yet felt that he could render still another service by moving to a new country—the source of the classical tradition so dear to his heart, namely Greece. And so in 1977, at the age of eighty, he settled, with Ursula, in their last pioneer post, Athens. The first National Spiritual Assembly of Greece was elected that year.

Now came a time of spiritual maturity for Dr. Mühlschlegel. The harmony of his home attracted friends from near and far, and all drew benefit from his combination of love and wisdom. Restricted in his travels, this faithful servant of the Cause devoted his time to study and to the preparation of a book concerning the achievement of maturity in the Cause. God took the pen from his hand before this work could go to the printer. However, his wife, Ursula, intends to complete for him this last effort of service. On 29 July 1980 the Hand of the Cause of God Adelbert Mühlschlegel joined his Beloved and his loved ones in the Abhá Kingdom, leaving his wife, Ursula, to continue serving, assisted by him from on high. He is buried on the shores of the Mediterranean whose waters lap his resting-place and the shores of the Holy Land, which he so often visited to pray at the holy Shrines. Dr. Mühlschlegel had delighted a great number of friends with his poems; in 1977 a collection of these was published by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Germany, commemorating his eightieth birthday. His last poem describes his dedication to the essence of life. A copy appears in the original German in the poetry section of this volume of the international record.

The Universal House of Justice informed the Bahá'í world of his passing in its cable of 29 July:

> WITH SORROWFUL HEARTS ANNOUNCE PASSING BELOVED HAND CAUSE ADELBERT MUHLSCHLEGEL. GRIEVOUS LOSS SUSTAINED ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD PARTICULARLY FELT EUROPE MAIN ARENA HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICES CAUSE GOD. SERVING FOR MANY YEARS NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY GERMANY HE BECAME AFTER ELEVATION RANK HAND CAUSE ONE OF CHAMPION BUILDERS EMERGING EUROPEAN BAHAI COMMUNITY CONSTANTLY TRAVELLING ENCOURAGING RAISING SPIRITS FRIENDS RESIDING WHEREVER SERVICES MOST NEEDED FINALLY PIONEERING GREECE AND SURRENDERING HIS SOUL PIONEER POST. HIS CONSTANT WILLINGNESS SERVE HIS ABILITY ENDEAR HIMSELF BELIEVERS AND OTHERS ALIKE BY HIS LOVING GENTLENESS SERENE HUMILITY RADIANT CHEERFULNESS HIS NEVER CEASING PURSUIT KNOWLEDGE AND TOTAL DEDICATION BLESSED BEAUTY PROVIDE WONDERFUL EXAMPLE BAHAI LIFE. ADVISE FRIENDS COMMEMORATE HIS PASSING AND REQUEST BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICES ALL MOTHER TEMPLES.

ANNELIESE BOPP

PAUL EDMOND HANEY
1909–1982

In every dispensation the Manifestation of God, after His ascension, has raised up special individuals for the service of His Cause, men

and women who have given their lives to promoting the new Message and who have become stars in the new heaven, second only in brilliance to those original Companions, Apostles, Letters, attendant upon the Prophet Himself during His earthly sojourn. Such a one was Paul Haney.

He was born of Bahá'í parents on 20 August 1909, during the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his mother confided in writing to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, 'I was carrying him when we were in the presence of the Master in the Most Great Prison in 'Akká in 1909—and I have always felt he was destined for the Cause.' Paul always maintained that this was his first pilgrimage.

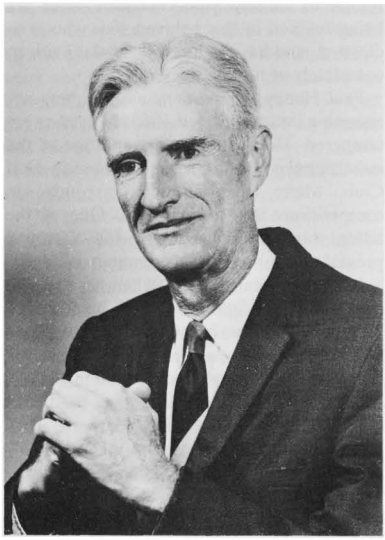
Mary Ida Parkhurst and Charles Freeborn Haney were married in 1893 and became Bahá'ís in 1900. They were both of true, God-fearing, religious stock, Charles's father having been a well-known Methodist minister in Illinois, and one of the six founders of Northwestern University, in Evanston. His grandson, Paul, benefited from the provision in perpetuity of scholarships for descendants of the six. Not until nine years after their recognition of Bahá'u'lláh, and in the seventeenth year of their marriage, was Paul born, the only child of parents already immortalized as among the handful of first believers in the American continent. From the day they embraced the Faith, the whole life of the Haneys revolved about 'Abdu'l-Bahá; to serve Him, to consult Him, to be sure they were fulfilling His wishes, to receive His good pleasure, was their all in all. It was 'Abdu'l-Bahá Who called Mary Haney 'Mariam', a name she henceforth used all her life. This complete orientation to the Centre of the Covenant became for Paul—indeed for all that generation of Bahá'í children—the primary relationship in life.

We know little of the effect of pre-natal influences on the soul and not enough about those of childhood, but the indications are that it would be hard to overstate them. Paul's entire environment, from that first embryonic visit to the Master, was entirely Bahá'í, focused on the Centre of the Covenant and later on the Guardian. Mariam wrote, 'Almost immediately after he was born . . . the Master gave him His own name—Abdul Baha—He also gave him the name Paul', and Corinne True confirmed, in a letter to Mariam from Alexandria on 19 November 1919, that she had asked the Master 'if He had given the name Abdul Baha to Paul as had been reported to you and He confirmed what you were given. Paul for the outside world. His real name is Abdul Baha.'

Many Tablets from the Master to Mariam refer to Paul. *The newly born babe is blessed, and acceptable in the Divine Kingdom. He is a servant of the Blessed Perfection and belongeth to Him. Thank God for having been confirmed to attain such a blessing . . . I ask God that my namesake, Abdul-Baha, may grow and develop day by day and that his radiant face may be illumined with the light of the greatest bestowal . . . It was also noted that . . . thy dear son, Paul, feeleth greatly attracted to the Kingdom of Abhá. This news imparteth the utmost joy and happiness . . . Send Paul to school; I hope he will become a verdant and fresh plant in the Abhá Paradise . . .*

With such showering of grace from the Centre of the Covenant and with such spiritual antecedents it was natural to expect great things from him. Paul fulfilled those hopes—even as a child. He was a charming boy. His red hair—inherited from his mother—his blue eyes, frank and open countenance and cheerful disposition, even his unusual height and gangling gait, delighted people and endeared him to them. May Maxwell wrote to Mariam as Paul's fifteenth birthday approached, '. . . tell me if Paul has a tennis racquet because I would like to give him one on his birthday. I have a peculiar love for that dear, blessed boy.'

His mother adored him. She referred to him in her letters as 'beloved Paul', 'pure-hearted Paul' who 'loves everyone'; '. . . he is not mine any more for I have given him to the Most Great Cause.' The boy's father died when Paul was barely ten years old and Mariam raised him within the aura of her own single-minded devotion to the Master. She raised him alone and under great financial stress, but surrounded him with such tender care and infused into him such complete dedication to the Centre of the Covenant, and to the Covenant itself, that service to the Great Cause became the one purpose of his life. The loss of his father undoubtedly helped to develop in him that sense of responsibility



Paul E. Haney

which was so marked a feature of his character. There is a touching story from his early youth demonstrating this feeling in relationship to his beloved mother. On Paul's entering Central High School, one of Mariam's neighbours said to her, 'Your lovely son will not come out of school as good as he is now.' Shortly after that Paul assured his mother that she need never worry about him; he was not attracted by the wild life which so many youth feel to be a necessary proof of their manliness. There was no trace of sanctimoniousness in this attitude; he was just not attracted. There was a pure-heartedness about him which seemed an essential, unforced part of his nature. He enjoyed being decent and spiritually-minded and concerned with others. The Master's bestowal and his mother's loving education caused him to flourish spiritually. It would be hard to over-estimate Mariam's influence, not only upon the development of his character but upon his chief interest in life, for she was totally involved in the work of the Cause in North America, being secretary of the National Teaching Committee from 1920 —when Paul would have been eleven—for several years onward, and took an active part in the conferences, Conventions and summer schools. In fact the first Convention for Amity between the Coloured and White Races was held in Washington, D.C., in May 1921, where the Haneys lived. Mariam had asked the Master where she and her son could best serve the Cause, and He sent her a message through Corinne True to go to Washington, where she found a small apartment, of which she wrote, '. . . we are both very happy and our one room apartment is a haven of rest for us both . . .' As a youth Paul formed a close friendship with Mary Maxwell—later Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum—whom he met with other Bahá'í children at the Green Acre Summer School, Conventions, and on other Bahá'í occasions.

Before going to Northwestern University, Paul obtained work in a government office in Washington, and attended night school. When he was twenty-two years old he was appointed to the National Teaching Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada, an appointment which drew forth from May Maxwell the following note: 'As for you dear Paul I feel that you bring to the National field of teaching not only the steadfast faith, the spirit of devotion and sacrifice which so characterized the older generation of Bahá'ís and on which foundation our beloved Cause has been established in America, but the forward vision, the world-wide horizon, the thrilling life and motion of which our youthful Guardian is the Head and Source . . .'

The Bahá'í Magazine of January 1934 contains an article entitled 'The Economic Organization of Society in the New World Order' by Paul Edmond Haney, M.B.A., and is described as 'written by a young Bahá'í student of economic problems . . .' Paul was by now a professional economist, having graduated from Northwestern University. At this time his life revolved around his professional duties and active service to the promotion of the Cause in North America. He was a member of the first National Youth Committee in the United States and was constantly active in the work of the Cause. In 1946 he was elected to membership of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada. Canada established its own National Spiritual Assembly in 1948 and

Paul remained a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, serving as its chairman from 1950 to 1957. During these years he served the National Spiritual Assembly in innumerable ways. He was chairman of the Temple Trustees Construction Committee for the completion of the interior of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette; he represented the National Spiritual Assembly at the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada; in 1951 he represented the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States at the formation of the Regional National Spiritual Assembly of South America, and in 1953 at the formation of the Regional National Spiritual Assembly of Italy and Switzerland. Paul's Bahá'í background, his deep knowledge of the Cause, his upright and distinguished character lent prestige to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, while at the same time his services as its chairman increased his own distinction in the Bahá'í world. It therefore came as no surprise when, on 19 March 1954, the following cable came to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States: ANNOUNCE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES ELEVATION PAUL HANEY RANK HAND OF THE CAUSE. The Guardian's cable to Paul himself read: ANNOUNCE YOUR ELEVATION HAND CAUSE CONFIDENT DIVINE BLESSINGS FUTURE SERVICES. Paul's reply to the Guardian was: OVERWHELMED OUTPOURING BELOVED GUARDIAN'S BOUNTY BESEECH PRAYERS DIVINE ASSISTANCE RENDER ACCEPTABLE SERVICES RISE ABOVE FEELING COMPLETE UNWORTHINESS DEVOTED LOVE PAUL HANEY.

For the next three years Paul Haney's life was one of constant service in many parts of the world. In April 1956, on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, he attended the Convention of South and West Africa; in April 1957 he represented the Guardian at the first Alaskan Convention in Anchorage, where he read the message from the Guardian to that Convention. A letter from the Guardian to Mariam, during these years, contained the following passage in the section written by the Guardian's secretary: 'He [Shoghi Effendi] hopes that dear Paul will ever-increasingly be able to render the Cause important services. Surely you and his father in the Abhá Kingdom must rejoice to see how your cherished hopes are being fulfilled in this beloved son, who is so devoted, and has the interests of the Faith so completely at heart.'

Paul Haney, in his personal life, was unassuming, warm-hearted, friendly and even-tempered. He was a founder and one of the most popular members of the Caesaria Golf Club, where he often acted as judge in competitions and tournaments. One of the latter was an annual event for a trophy presented by the Bahá'í community of Haifa.

In the very early 1940s, when he attended the Green Acre Summer School, he delivered a message from his beloved mother to Helen Margery Wheeler, a Bahá'í from Worcester, Massachusetts. They were married in 1942 on 15 July, at Worcester, and went to live in Washington, not far from Mariam. They remained there until their removal to the Holy Land in 1958. On 1 September 1965 beloved Mariam Haney passed to the Abhá Kingdom. An account of her life may be read in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, pp. 346 ff.

The year 1957 brought to all the Hands of the Cause of God the greatest crisis—and the climax—of their lives. The sudden passing of the beloved Guardian, in London, on 4 November of that year, brought instant tragedy and dismay to the heart of every Bahá'í. But it was the Hands of the Cause who bore the main brunt of that bludgeon stroke, for they had been nominated, in the last message penned by Shoghi Effendi, 'Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth'. Upon them fell the burden, while bearing the stress of their own unendurable heartache, of preserving the unity of the Bahá'í world, reassuring the friends everywhere and encouraging them to maintain, unabated, the magnificent forward march of the Cause of God which had been built up during the first four years of the beloved Guardian's World Crusade. Their story is told in other places.[1] But that was their day of immortality, when they rendered historic and effective service to the whole of humanity. After the funeral in London they gathered in Haifa, and in the Mansion at Bahjí, to take up their glorious labours. One of their decisions

[1] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, pp. 431–435; see also Hofman, *A Commentary on the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, Epilogue, Rev. ed. (1982).

was to elect nine of their members to remain in the Holy Land and serve at the World Centre of the Faith to continue the Guardian's work and bring to a successful conclusion his World Crusade with the election, in 1963, of the Universal House of Justice. Paul Haney was one of the nine elected; they were known as Hands of the Cause of God Residing in the Holy Land.

The great change for Paul entailed considerable sacrifice. Not only would he be separated from his beloved mother, but, in his professional life he was within sight of appointment to a very high and well-paid position. It is recorded that when requested to serve in the Holy Land he bowed his head and immediately agreed. A letter from Mariam to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum dated 12 April 1958 reads as follows: 'The beloved Paul is so pure-hearted, so conscientious, so noble a soul that when this great blessing and honor came to him—that is, of being one of the nine Hands of the Bahá'í Cause to abide in Haifa—he said he could not live with himself had he not accepted this tremendous spiritual bounty . . . naturally I miss Paul—the pure-hearted—but I believe I am with him daily in his service. Distance is no real separation when there is understanding and love.'

From now on Paul's entire life and total energies were concentrated on service to the Cause of God. He prepared the definitive statement on the Hands of the Cause of God and their activities during the interregnum between the passing of the Guardian and the election of the Universal House of Justice, which forms one of the most important items in the monumental vol. XIII of *The Bahá'í World*, and he played his part in composing the messages of explanation and encouragement which flowed from the Custodians, as the nine Hands of the Cause Residing in the Holy Land became known. He travelled the world as representative of the Custodians, attending National Conventions in long-established Bahá'í communities and those inaugurating new National Spiritual Assemblies. At the great Jubilee in London's Albert Hall in 1963, celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh and the victorious culmination of the World Crusade, he presented a significant paper on the importance of the World Centre of the Faith.

One of the first actions of the Universal House of Justice was to invite five Hands of the Cause to remain in the Holy Land for certain specified duties and as advisers to the House of Justice. Paul Haney was one of the five. One of his first appointments was to the Editorial Committee responsible for gathering information from the entire Bahá'í world and rewriting and editing it for distribution to all National Spiritual Assemblies. At Riḍván 1965 he attended the fifty-sixth Annual Convention of the United States Bahá'í community as the official representative of the Universal House of Justice. And thereafter, Paul Haney, Hand of the Cause of God, distinguished, incorruptible, adamantine in his defence of the Covenant, sound in his judgement and greatly loved by Bahá'ís everywhere, travelled throughout the world as representative of the Universal House of Justice, visiting Bahá'í communities and their institutions to advise, encourage and instruct. He attended diplomatic and governmental functions in Jerusalem as representative of the Bahá'í World Centre. Together with other Hands of the Cause he played a great part in the development of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, and later the International Teaching Centre, representing the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural gathering of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Asia, held in New Delhi in 1981. He took part in all four International Conventions held during his lifetime, and was chairman at the opening session of the 1968 event.

In August 1982 he represented the House of Justice at the Continental Conference in Quito, Ecuador, followed by a meeting with the Board of Counsellors for the Americas and attendance at the satellite conferences in Costa Rica and Panama. On his return to the Holy Land he delighted the Bahá'ís at the World Centre with his characteristically jovial, spiritually uplifting and informative account of the journey.

On 3 December 1982 he met death suddenly and instantly in an automobile accident. The Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to the Bahá'í world:

WITH STRICKEN HEARTS ANNOUNCE SUDDEN IRREPARABLE LOSS THROUGH AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT 3 DECEMBER HIGHLY DISTINGUISHED

GREATLY PRIZED HAND CAUSE GOD STAUNCH DEFENDER COVENANT PAUL HANEY. THIS DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BAHAULLAH WAS BLESSED CHILDHOOD THROUGH ATTAINMENT PRESENCE ABDUL-BAHA. HIS NATURAL GENTLENESS GENUINE HUMILITY UNAFFECTED UNBOUNDED LOVE HIS UPRIGHTNESS INTEGRITY HIS SINGLE-MINDED DEVOTION CAUSE SINCE YOUTHFUL YEARS HIS UNFAILING RELIABILITY METICULOUS ATTENTION DETAIL CHARACTERIZED HIS HISTORIC SERVICES BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS. SPANNING MORE THAN HALF CENTURY HIS TIRELESS LABOURS INCLUDED LONG-TIME MEMBERSHIP AMERICAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. SINCE 1954 HE CONSECRATED HIS ENERGIES AS MEMBER UNIQUE COMPANY CHIEF STEWARDS FAITH AND LATER AS MEMBER BODY HANDS CAUSE RESIDING HOLY LAND AT ONE OF MOST CRITICAL PERIODS BAHAI HISTORY. LAST DECADE HIS EARTHLY LIFE WAS FULLY DEDICATED DEVELOPMENT NEWLY FORMED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE. GENERATIONS YET UNBORN WILL GLORY IN HIS IMPERISHABLE ACHIEVEMENTS AND BE INSPIRED BY HIS UNIQUE FORTITUDE. ARDENTLY SUPPLICATING HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. ADVISE HOLD THROUGHOUT BAHAI WORLD INCLUDING ALL MASHRIQUL-ADHKARS MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING HIS HIGH RANK AND HIS MERITORIOUS SERVICES.

AMATU'L-BAHÁ RÚḤÍYYIH KḤÁNUM
DAVID HOFMAN

ENOCH OLINGA
1926–1979

Enoch Olinga came from a family of devout Christian converts taught by the Church Missionary Society, now the Native Anglican Church of Uganda. His people lived in the Teso north-eastern part of the country and belonged to the Atesot tribe, of the clan of Aatekok or Iraraka. His father, Samusan Okadakina, of the village of Tilling in Ngora County, volunteered in 1920 to take Christianity to Soroti County where he became a catechist in the church, and where, in 1921, he married, according to church ritual, Eseza Iyamitai, who gave birth on 24 June 1926, in



Enoch Olinga

the village of Abaango, to her second son, Enoch. In 1927 Enoch's father returned to his permanent home in Tilling—a name which will forever be associated not only with Africa's only native Hand of the Cause, but with the first substantial conversion of the African people to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, an event which was a source of immense joy and pride to the heart of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.

Enoch's stature must be seen against a unique period in Bahá'í history, for he accepted this new Faith of God shortly after its introduction into black Africa through a vast planned drive to carry Bahá'u'lláh's message to its people. During the last thirty years of Bahá'u'lláh's ministry a few of His followers living in Egypt and the Sudan were the recipients of His praise and encouragement; during 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ministry the Faith had reached Tunis, and for the first time some of its occidental supporters, greatly encouraged by the Master, were spreading its message in southern Africa; it remained, however, for the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, at the time of the British National Spiritual Assembly's two-

year interim plan in 1950–1952, to truly inaugurate the spiritual conquest of Africa through the strong support and guidance he gave to Persian, British and American believers to pioneer there. This initial step he followed up on a grand scale through the provisions of his World Crusade, inaugurated in 1953—a Ten Year Plan which, among other objectives, was to open to the Faith 131 virgin territories in the five continents of the globe; many of its objectives concerned the work in Africa, whose pioneers were responsible for the phenomenally rapid spread of the Teachings amongst a race whom Bahá'u'lláh Himself had compared to 'the black pupil of the eye' through which 'the light of the spirit shineth forth'—a statement fraught with profound implications, for the sight of the eye is in the pupil.

The current of Enoch Olinga's destiny carried him towards a fixed point; for the ten years after his father returned to Tilling in 1927, Enoch received his schooling locally and at Ngora, a small town not far from his home; later he went to high school in Mbale; during World War II, in 1941, he joined the British Army Education Corps and went to Nairobi in Kenya, later serving in the East African King's Rifles Corps in South East Asia, visiting Burma, East Pakistan, Ceylon and India. By 1946 he had returned to Uganda, a young man of twenty, and joined the Government Department of Public Relations and Welfare. For a time he was stationed in Soroti and Mbale, producing two books in his own language, Ateso, which were of assistance to the Government Education Department in the Teso district; later he moved to Kampala, the capital of Uganda.

By the time Enoch came in contact with the Faith in 1951 his personal life had assumed an entirely new aspect; he was now married and had his first children; he was a gifted translator working for the government, but also a somewhat disillusioned man who had become a very heavy drinker, a fact of which the government service that employed him had become aware and which led to his dismissal, in spite of his marked capacity and relatively long record of service. Unfortunately the reports on this serious impairment to the discharge of his duties had already gone through when Enoch accepted the Faith and upon his enrolment gave up all alcohol immediately.

Enoch was the third Ugandan to accept Bahá'u'lláh, but the first of the Teso tribe; he heard about the Faith from a friend who introduced him to 'Alí Nakhjavání, the son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Banání who had left Persia to pioneer, in response to the wishes of Shoghi Effendi, had proceeded to Africa and settled in Uganda with their daughter Violette, her husband 'Alí, and their daughter, aged three, arriving there in 1951; Mr. Banání purchased a home in the heart of Kampala, at 3 Kitante Road; events were to take place there, of both joy and grief, which are inextricably interwoven with the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan in that continent.

Once Enoch had met 'Alí a friendship began to unfold and Enoch attended the regular evening meetings held for enquirers in the Banání home, where the warmth of this Persian Bahá'í household greatly attracted him. In February 1952 Mr. and Mrs. Banání left on their pilgrimage to the World Centre, and it was agreed that during this time the pioneers in Kampala would hold a special meeting for all the Africans who were interested in the Faith and that this would coincide with the time in Haifa when the Guardian usually visited the Shrines; Mr. Banání would inform him of this and ask for special prayers. Shoghi Effendi was happy to comply with this request, and he and Mr. Banání visited the Shrines together at that hour. Enoch attended that meeting in Kampala—but nothing happened! The three pioneers—the Nakhjavánís and Philip Hainsworth—felt very discouraged. Later that night, however, he returned, posed many questions and ended up by asking 'How does one become a Bahá'í?' Early the following morning he appeared with a letter requesting to be accepted as a believer; from the very beginning Enoch had avidly read every Bahá'í book he could get, and this laid the foundation for his deep knowledge of the Teachings. Mrs. Olinga, making no secret of the fact that it was the remarkable transformation in her husband's conduct since he had become a Bahá'í that influenced her decision, also embraced the Faith. Gradually others swelled its numbers in Kampala so that by 21 April 1952, the first, historic Local Spiritual Assem-

bly of Uganda, of which Enoch was a member, could be elected in that city. Some months later Enoch returned to his Teso home in Tilling to spread the glad tidings of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings and aroused such interest that he returned to Kampala and persuaded 'Alí to visit Tilling, as the people there wanted to see with their own eyes the white man who had converted Enoch to this new doctrine. 'Alí, first with Enoch as interpreter, later with Enos Epyeru, one of the first Teso believers, travelled and taught in the Teso district for several weeks, where regular enrolment now began, one of the first being Enoch's own father, who became a very staunch Bahá'í.

In the beginning of January 1953—eight months after the Local Assembly of Kampala was formed—the Guardian cabled the Bahá'í world: SHARE BAHAI COMMUNITIES EAST WEST THRILLING REPORTS FEATS ACHIEVED HEROIC BAND PIONEERS LABOURING DIVERS WIDELY SCATTERED AFRICAN TERRITORIES PARTICULARLY UGANDA, and went on to liken these feats to episodes related in the Book of Acts in the Bible and to the rapid and dramatic propagation of our own Faith by the Dawn-Breakers of its Heroic Age. He stated that what was happening in Africa eclipsed even the marvellous accomplishments in Latin America and surpassed the exploits which immortalized the European Crusade. Shoghi Effendi attached great importance to the identity of people; the believers were never an amorphous mass who accepted Bahá'u'lláh; they were individuals, interesting, like the coloured pieces that make up a beautiful mosaic picture. It was at this moment that the spotlight went to Uganda and was held there till the end of Shoghi Effendi's life. In that same cable he went on to say: NUMBER AFRICANS CONVERTED CAUSE LAST FIFTEEN MONTHS RESIDING KAMPALA OUTLYING DISTRICTS PROTESTANT CATHOLIC PAGAN BACKGROUNDS LETTERED UNLETTERED BOTH SEXES REPRESENTATIVE NO LESS SIXTEEN TRIBES PASSED TWO HUNDRED. This was the first blast on the trumpet of 'entry by troops' predicted and so much hoped for by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In that same cable the Guardian announced that no less than nine localities would be qualified in Riḍván to form their Local Assemblies; still more significant, however, was his announcement that he would send to the first of the four Intercontinental Conferences to be held in 1953—which was the African one held in Kampala—a copy of the portrait of the Báb, the showing of which he was confident would bring the new African believers CLOSER SPIRIT MARTYR-PROPHET FAITH and BESTOW EVERLASTING BENEDICTION ALL GATHERED MEMORABLE SESSIONS EPOCH-MAKING CONFERENCE. It was Enoch, the new Bahá'í, who found himself on the Kampala Local Assembly, caught up with veteran believers in making plans for this unique and historic gathering. When Enoch had been disheartened over losing his job, Mr. Banání, in a flight of prophecy, had rallied his spirit, assuring him he would get an even better job—which he later did. The Conference was to be held from February 12th to 18th and the Guardian himself had placed a sum of money in charge of Mr. Banání to be used exclusively to bring some of the new Bahá'ís as his guests. As the 'mass conversion' was taking place in Teso, this meant that about 200 people would be brought down by bus from this north-eastern province, which was a trip of over 200 miles. 'Alí Nakhjavání went to escort the friends and invite them to be Shoghi Effendi's guests. When the men got on the buses many of the women wept and wailed because they were afraid their men were being taken off to be slaves!

In his greeting and message to this 'epoch-making' Conference, which the Guardian hailed with a 'joyous heart', he said 'welcome with open arms the unexpectedly large number of the representatives of the pure-hearted and the spiritually receptive Negro race' and pointed out that their continent had retained its primitive simplicity and 'remained uncontaminated' by what he characterized in scathing terms as the evils of 'a gross, a rampant and cancerous materialism undermining the fabric of human society alike in the East and in the West' and 'threatening to engulf in one common catastrophic convulsion the generality of mankind'. Weighty words containing a weightier warning. In this message Shoghi Effendi outlines the vast amount of work lying ahead for the six sponsoring National Assemblies, the indigenous believers themselves, and their pioneer helpers. No less than thirty-three virgin territories are to be opened to the Faith and three giant National—really

regional in nature—Assemblies are to be formed, embracing the continent: Central and East Africa with its seat in Kampala, South and West Africa with its seat in Johannesburg, and North-West Africa with its seat in Tunis. Amongst other additional objectives, the Hand of the Cause for Africa, Mr. Banání, is to nominate during the following Riḍván, 1954, an Auxiliary Board of nine members to assist in the tasks that lie ahead.

Every one of these points touches on Enoch's own life: it was his people, the Tesos, numbering many tens of thousands, who formed the vast majority of Bahá'ís in Uganda before the civil war; he responded to the appeal for pioneers to open the thirty-three territories and himself became a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh; he was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of North-West Africa; he was appointed a Hand of the Cause in the last contingent of eight elevated to that rank by Shoghi Effendi just before he passed away. Enoch thus became the colleague of Músá Banání, in whose home he had accepted the Faith. There can be no doubt, as we look back on his life as a Bahá'í, that the experience of Enoch, when he saw the portrait of the Martyr-Prophet of his Faith, did indeed bestow an 'everlasting benediction' upon him.

Enoch was now established in his new job and his reformed way of life—but a strong wind was blowing, the wind of God calling the souls of the receptive Bahá'ís to arise and hear the call of their Lord and carry His Message to far places. As Enoch's father had once arisen to carry the Christian Faith to another territory, so now Enoch and two other new Ugandan believers arose to leave family, home, job and country to carry the glad tidings of Bahá'u'lláh across the continent to West Africa, to some of those waiting, unopened countries. Mr. Banání, the Spiritual Conqueror of Africa, as Shoghi Effendi called him, had recently bought a small Peugeot station-wagon which he placed at their disposal. Originally the trip had been planned to take Violette to visit a Bahá'í family in the Congo, but now its character entirely changed when the ever-faithful and ever-enthusiastic 'Alí volunteered to drive the three would-be pioneers across the continent in his capacity of spiritual pilot and physical chauffeur. The five set off, on 27 August 1953, with not too much money and almost no information about the route that lay ahead, on probably the most abominable roads in the world, in a passenger car certainly not equipped to cope with them. Their consolation then, and throughout the entire journey, was a cable received from their beloved Guardian on the eve of their departure: LOVING, FERVENT PRAYERS ACCOMPANYING YOU.

About a week later Samson Mungono was dropped off in Kamina, in what was then the Belgian Congo (now Zaïre), which already had two non-African believers living in different parts of the country; by 26 September Max Kenyerezi, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for French Equatorial Africa (now Congo Republic), had been established in Brazzaville. The longest and hardest part of the journey, however, still lay ahead through the deep tropical jungles of Gabon: passing through a disease-decimated area, plagued by insects, constantly getting stuck in the mud, 'Alí or Enoch had to walk many miles to get help from villagers to lift their car out of the bog; so difficult was the road that in one day, during sixteen hours, they progressed only 100 kilometres. On the next day they made only 25 kilometres in fourteen hours; finally the car really broke down; Enoch volunteered to walk ahead 50 miles, with a villager as a guide, to get help from a town that reputedly had a garage; separating from Enoch distressed the Nakhjavánís even more than their own plight; 'Alí—no mechanic—at last succeeded in repairing the car's clutch sufficiently to limp along on Enoch's trail, constantly breaking down, but eventually managing to overtake him the following day after Enoch had walked 35 miles; he was exhausted from bad dysentery, in pain and very worried over them; on reaching the town 'Alí, who had been badly bitten by tsetse flies—the dread carrier of sleeping sickness—and Violette, who had also been bitten by them, went to the hospital for tests and treatment, but Enoch was so ill he was hospitalized for two days and could not travel for a week. When they had overtaken Enoch he told them that the night before, when he was alone with only strange Africans around him with whom he could not talk, afraid for his safety and the money he was carrying, full of misgivings and doubt, asking himself why he had left home and family on

such a mad undertaking, he dreamed of Shoghi Effendi, who took him in his arms and held him close, and into him had poured comfort and reassurance; this dream restored his strength and affected him so profoundly he cried out in his heart to the Guardian that he was willing to go through such hardships for him every day of his life!

Finally, on 10 October, the little party crossed into French Cameroons, but Enoch's objective was British Cameroons, a goal which he was to fill on behalf of the British National Spiritual Assembly. The main bridge between the two countries was down; by a long and agonizing detour the party at last drove into Mamfe—rushing for the post office there to cable the Guardian that British Cameroons was now opened by Enoch's arrival. It was 4 p.m. and the postmaster was closing up, but 'Alí begged him to re-open so that this important cable could get off before the Holy Year ended on that very night of 15 October. On the 16th they arrived in Victoria, on the coast, where Enoch was to live for the coming ten years before returning permanently to his homeland in East Africa.

The Africa of those days was still under colonial administration; reluctantly the Nakhjavánís and Enoch agreed that their association might place in jeopardy the object of so much effort and sacrifice because Victoria was only a small town and two white orientals and a black Ugandan were far too conspicuous a combination. The first problem was where to find lodging for Enoch; tribalism, even today, makes one group very suspicious of any other; no one wanted to take in a man from another people 3,000 kilometres away, the other side of Africa. Finally, through the familiar odd series of circumstances which seem so often to open doors for Bahá'í pioneers, a young man working in the local library got into conversation with Violette, found she was worrying over how to find accommodation for a 'young Ugandan we know', and asked to meet Enoch. The upshot was Enoch became a lodger in the home of David Tanyi, who not only accepted the Faith through him, becoming the first believer in the entire Cameroons, but later became the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for French Togoland. The Nakhjavánís removed to nearby Douala, in the French Cameroons, where they could still be close to Enoch without arousing the suspicions of the local authorities in Victoria because they wanted to be sure he would get his residence visa and was safely settled in his pioneering post before they returned to Uganda. Enoch himself discreetly but eagerly began to teach new friends.

The period of the Guardian's World Crusade was indeed a time of flame. A holy enthusiasm to teach the Cause of God to humanity spread far and wide. Shoghi Effendi, greatly encouraged by the remarkable trek across Africa which had already led to the opening of two new countries, now encouraged Enoch to do the seemingly impossible and raise up, from among his new converts, pioneers to go forth and open other virgin territories. When one realizes that Enoch himself was a new Bahá'í and a recent pioneer, his success was almost miraculous. In a letter addressed to Leroy Ioas dated 15 April 1954—exactly six months after his arrival in the British Cameroons—Enoch wrote: 'Praised be to God that our Beloved Guardian's admonition to assign and get pioneers settled in the five virgin territories has through Beloved's Boundless Grace been fulfilled. We prayerfully raise up our suppliant hands and voices of praise to Bahá'u'lláh for His guidance and confirmations, and I believe very firmly that He will assuredly assist and guide these new and young soldiers in His triumphant Army, and render them victorious for, according to my little understanding and belief, they have in them such a rare spirit of love and devotion to His Best Beloved Cause.'

At first, he wrote, it looked almost impossible to get any of the new believers to leave their homes and move to foreign lands: '. . . but I knew very well that the Beloved Guardian, who is actually watching the world and all the believers, could not have asked for the impossible. As soon as the news reached their attentive and sensitive ears the believers reacted in such a manner that a spectator could take them for drunkards . . . they really became intoxicated with the choice wine of His love and of submissiveness and obedience to the call of their Best Beloved. Pioneering offers poured in like locusts and clear signs of obedience to move the next minute were made manifest, forgetting their property and loving relatives and families.' Indeed, so many

offers to pioneer were made that in the end they had to draw lots to see which five would be chosen to go.

'Alí flew back to Victoria to help make the arrangements for visas and transportation—in those days a much more complicated matter than today in independent Africa. 'When 'Alí arrived', Enoch wrote, 'not a single moment was wasted. Off they flew like very mighty eagles in the heavenly sky. Such are the soldiers of Bahá'u'lláh. O! How I wish I accompanied them! May Bahá'u'lláh sustain them and guide their footsteps along the glorious path of spiritual understanding and selfless sacrifice so that they may grow into trees whose fruits will be the food for the hungry ones. My constant prayer is that they may find means of settlement. I know the Beloved Guardian's fervent prayers are with them.'

Enoch also reports that the letter of Shoghi Effendi to David Tanyi, received on the eve of his departure to pioneer, was indeed a remarkable coincidence and that David had said he was going to frame it. At the airport, while relatives dissolved in tears, the pioneers cheerfully marched to the plane, a contrast which to Enoch crowned 'the pioneering of these gallant and stalwart soldiers of the Ancient Beauty'.

In answer to his letter Enoch was assured that the Guardian 'was deeply moved by the reports which you sent and the manner in which the friends received his call to pioneer in the virgin areas. He feels this is truly historic, because it means that people who have been Bahá'ís for only a short period, have arisen to carry the Glad Tidings to peoples of new lands. The manner in which the Faith has spread in Africa is truly remarkable, and overshadows the manner it has spread in other parts of the world. It indicates how glorious will be the future of the Faith in that great continent.'

The names of these precious and distinguished spiritual children of Enoch, who received each the title, like himself, of Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, are as follows: David Tanyi, French Togoland; Edward Tabe, British Togoland; Samuel Njiki, French Cameroons; Benedict Eballa, Ashanti Protectorate; Martin Manga, Northern Territories Protectorate.

Two months later, on 14 June 1954, Enoch wrote his first letter to Shoghi Effendi; as far as records go it seems this was his only one, hence I will quote it in full as it well reflects his love, his respect, his obedience to the Head of his Faith and the one who had become the focal point of his life:

My Well-Beloved Guardian,

I must first thank my Well-Beloved Guardian for continually praying for my spiritual welfare as well as of those who are now serving the Ancient Beauty, and for the Beloved Guardian's guidance, without which the present spiritual achievements of our beloved Faith would have not been possible.

Furthermore, I very humbly beg to assure my dearly loved Guardian of my unreserved loving devotion to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and my submissiveness to every one of the Guardian's admonitions in the way of promoting the fundamental interests of our Faith, which is now overshadowing the entire world. May I also be permitted to express the joy and delight which the letters received by the individual Bahá'ís from the Beloved Guardian have brought to the hearts of all the believers of this nascent community. These letters, like the fervent prayers of the Beloved Guardian, do wonders here. Our daily prayer and hope is that God, the All-Compelling, the All-Protecting may prolong the days of our Beloved Guardian's unbroken service to His Cause and mankind.

As my Beloved Guardian may be aware, an Assembly was elected here last Riḍván, and through Beloved's Grace the coming Riḍván may bring us a number of local Assemblies. I have just returned from a two weeks' teaching trip which took me right inside the country where I had quite thrilling and exciting experiences; especially when I had to live among the villagers who believe in witchcraft and potency of 'Juju' (fetish, I think) practices. Quite terrifying it was to hear very frightful stories told by 'Juju' adherents, but with much confidence in Bahá'u'lláh I was never deterred. Fortunately enough a few of them were enabled to see the Truth of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh—may my life, soul and spirit be a

sacrifice unto the lowliest of His servants!

It may please my Beloved Guardian to know that ten new centres have been opened to the Faith, making a total of twelve centres in British Cameroons. We want to develop all the eleven towards Assembly status before the next Riḍván. We really need our Well-Beloved Guardian's special prayers for success in this somewhat ambitious project.

We receive very encouraging letters from all our five pioneers who have gone to open virgin territories. They all seem very happy there and are waiting for the doors of success to be opened for them. We all hope and pray that in time they will find jobs they can do. This is not only because they will thereby be able to support themselves, but also because they will feel so much more happy and settled when they have jobs of work to do. They will take root and feel they belong. We always encourage them to remain there as much as we can when we write to them.

My Well-Beloved Guardian may be interested to know that the number of believers is increasing very rapidly in British Cameroons. The present situation is: accepted believers, up to 30; declarations, up to 40; centres now opened to the Faith, 12.

Please, my Beloved Guardian, I know how much busy you are, therefore I shall not dwell on inconsequentialities.

I very reverently beg to send my loving greetings and best wishes to my Beloved Guardian and all members of family.

With warmest Bahá'í Love from Victoria believers,

I beg to remain,
my Beloved Guardian,
Your devoted servant,
Enoch Olinga

It was not the custom of the Guardian to keep copies of his wide correspondence; we do know, however, that this letter was answered by him on 9 August but, unfortunately, the original has not been found.

In those days the Bahá'ís throughout Africa were few and far between but part of the great Ten Year Plan of Shoghi Effendi was to create not only Local Spiritual Assemblies but bodies to fulfil the functions of National Spiritual Assemblies; he solved the problem of too few believers in any one country to justify an independent National Assembly by constituting, in 1956, a number of giant administrative units so that the Bahá'ís could learn to think and function in an administrative manner. The biggest group—united under the umbrella of the National Spiritual Assembly of North-West Africa, with its secretarial seat in Tunis, Tunisia—comprised no less than 25 territories, namely, Algeria, Ashanti Protectorate, British Cameroons, British Togoland, Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, French Cameroons, French Morocco, French Togoland, French West Africa, the Gambia, Gold Coast, Liberia, Madeira, Morocco (International Zone), Nigeria, Northern Territories Protectorate, Portuguese Guinea, Rio de Oro, St. Thomas Island, Sierra Leone, Spanish Guinea, Spanish Morocco, Spanish Sahara and Tunisia. In spite of this impressive list there were only about 1,000 Bahá'ís in this vast area and the National Body rested on 38 Local Assemblies; thanks to Shoghi Effendi, however, Tunis had its own National Bahá'í Headquarters, and Bomi Hills, in Liberia, was the proud possessor of the only endowment; Enoch Olinga was elected chairman of this new Body. It seems unbelievable that in the brief space of three years, of the thirty-three virgin territories throughout Africa to be opened to the Faith, twenty-nine had already received pioneers.

In the heart of Enoch burned the great desire to make the pilgrimage to the World Centre and meet his beloved Guardian in person. Permission was finally asked and granted by Shoghi Effendi who, as was his custom, set a date by week, in other words Enoch was informed he would be welcome as a pilgrim in the first week of February 1957. Dr. Ugo Giachery, Hand of the Cause and member-at-large of the International Bahá'í Council in Haifa, was residing in Rome; he has given us this endearing image of Enoch: he arrived from Tunis the morning of 1 February 1957, 'he was young, lean, lovable at first sight and believing that this Hand of the Cause could perform miracles. He had an old English passport that had expired some years before, and practically not a penny (of any currency) in his pocket. I took him to the

British . . . Consulate. The wax-moustached Consul, for a solid twenty minutes, denied the possibility to renew the passport. I had told Enoch not to say anything but recite the Remover of Difficulties . . . When I said that Mr. Olinga had been called by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, to Haifa, the Consul opened a drawer of his desk, took a voluminous dossier with blue pages, leafed them with great attention and then said: "I think I can do it." With the valid passport in hand we rushed to the Israeli Embassy for the visa, which was granted immediately. Then I thought that Enoch could be hungry and asked him if he was. "Yes", he said; he had not eaten from the night before . . . Dear, dear Enoch, he had stolen our hearts!'

Enoch, in his wide travels all over the world, often had recourse to the 'Remover of Difficulties'. I remember once his telling me that at the end of a long trip, as he went to embark for Uganda, the air company employee who was weighing him in said he was overweight and must pay so and so much excess baggage; Enoch said he was on his way home after a long trip and just did not have the money; she said he must either pay or leave his luggage behind. Whereupon, standing there in the airline queue, he drew out his prayer book and began to read a prayer to himself. The girl said, 'What are you doing!' Enoch said: 'I am praying, what else can I do?' She was so non-plussed by this she waved him and his baggage on with no extra payment.

On 3 February Enoch arrived in Haifa and left on the 13th; he stayed in the Oriental Pilgrim House near the Shrines on Mount Carmel, which meant Shoghi Effendi was going to treat him as an oriental pilgrim; the men who stayed there had the privilege of not only taking walks in the gardens with the Guardian but the great blessing of always visiting the Shrines with him and hearing him chant the Tablets of Visitation in his wonderfully melodious voice; to add to this privilege Enoch was most of the time alone; naturally Shoghi Effendi spoke to him in English. Sometimes Enoch would recall his first impressions, how anxiously he waited to be called to the presence of his Guardian, how he could not imagine what Shoghi Effendi would be like or how he would look but then discovered with what majesty he spoke and that when he saw him walking 'he walked like a king' and one knew it was his to command, that he held the authority. Enoch told his children Shoghi Effendi was like a lion, but at the same time very gentle; he reported an experience common to a great many pilgrims, that he found before he had a chance to ask his questions, Shoghi Effendi had answered them. Unlike most pilgrims, however, when the Guardian said goodbye to him he kissed him on both cheeks.

Few pilgrims, indeed, left the Holy Land without their visits to the Shrines and their meetings with the Guardian beginning to work a change in them; Enoch was no exception; the love showered upon him by Shoghi Effendi, the illuminating quality of his conversation, profoundly affected Enoch's whole life; whereas before he was a needle jumping about in the direction of north, he now became like an adjusted compass oriented firmly to the Centre of his Faith, his Guardian, his true king. He went back to West Africa enkindled, reassured, more mature. Excerpts from two of Enoch's letters to me, written in 1956 and 1957, vividly reflect the depths of his attachment to Shoghi Effendi: 'Please, will you remember me to the beloved Guardian and tell him how much we all love him'; 'Having visited and prayed in the Blessed Shrines, gazed on the holy face of our Guardian and heard his melodious voice, I am sure a new day has dawned upon me!'

A letter written on 15 February 1957, on behalf of the Guardian to Músá Banání, expressed 'his pleasure with the visit on his pilgrimage of the first African Bahá'í of the Ten Year Crusade—in fact, the first Negro Bahá'í from Africa. Enoch Olinga has achieved many victories for the Faith; first in his work in Uganda; then by pioneering in the British Cameroons, becoming a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh there. Five of his spiritual children went from the Cameroons, to virgin areas of the Ten Year Crusade, thus becoming themselves, Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. He himself has confirmed 300 souls, with five Assemblies. The Guardian considers this unique in the history of the Crusade, in both the East and West; and he has blessed the one who so selflessly served, and won these victories for

the Cause of God, by naming him "Abu'l-Futúḥ", the "Father of Victories". The Guardian felt you and Ali would be pleased to know this, as he was Ali's spiritual child.

For various reasons, economic and otherwise, Enoch's wife and children had remained in East Africa; now, however, with his election to the North-West African National Spiritual Assembly and his ever-increasing teaching activities, it seemed he was permanently settled in West Africa, and shortly after his return from pilgrimage he went back to Uganda to fetch them. It was on 2 October 1957, at the time of this visit, that Mr. Banání received a cable from Shoghi Effendi requesting him to inform Enoch Olinga, as well as two pioneers serving in Africa—John Robarts and William Sears—of their ELEVATION RANK HAND CAUSE, adding FEEL CONFIDENT HIGH DISTINCTION WILL ENABLE THEM ENRICH RECORD THEIR MERITORIOUS SERVICES. Enoch was summoned to that same home where he had accepted the Faith and the Guardian's cable placed in his hands; he read it and then prostrated himself flat on the floor, a mark in Africa of deep submission to one's Liege.

It must be remembered that for Enoch and the seven other Hands of the Cause appointed by Shoghi Effendi at the same time, his death, one month later, coming as it did so swiftly upon the already stunning news of being raised to the rank of a Hand, was a tremendous shock; before they could do more than acknowledge this new station conferred upon them, their guide and 'true brother' was gone! Enoch cabled Shoghi Effendi on 4 October, BELOVED'S HOLY MESSAGE JUST RECEIVED BENUMBED MY FACULTIES. WITH MUCH SUBMISSIVENESS AND HUMBLENESS I ACCEPT DIVINE FAVOUR FEEL DEEPLY GRATEFUL BELOVED'S SACRED WISHES FOR OUR PROGRESS BESEECH HIS PRAYERS FOR CONFIRMATION GUIDANCE AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT. DEVOTEDLY ENOCH OLINGA.

Returning to live in Victoria with his family, Enoch's teaching activities throughout West Africa continued on an ever-wider scale; all the British territories in that region were controlled and administered from Nigeria and many new converts were brought into the Faith by him in that country, which he frequently visited, as well as in the Cameroons. His oldest son, George, recalls that during those West African years his father was often absent on very long teaching trips outside the country; Enoch himself mentions Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia 'to mention', he says, 'but a few', where he was 'instrumental in guiding many souls to the Cause of God'. The vivid stories he told his family when he returned stimulated the children's interest in the Faith; sometimes, if he was only on a week-end trip in the Cameroons, he took George with him. Not only was his service to the Faith a special thing for Enoch but in his home there was always a special place for his treasured photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and places with sacred associations. All this implanted in the hearts of his children a similar love and respect; all of them grew to be staunch Bahá'ís.

Although the formalities required to attend the beloved Guardian's funeral in London prevented Enoch from being present, he was able to join his fellow Hands at their first Conclave held immediately after Shoghi Effendi's passing, in Bahjí, on 18 November 1957, and to be present at all the others. In spite of the fact that Enoch had the gift of words and was a brilliant public speaker, he was remarkably silent, I remember, during our meetings, following carefully the long hours and days of discussion in two languages, English and Persian, keeping his own counsel deep in his heart, making up his own mind. When one remembers he was a new Bahá'í of only four years' experience, that he was a young man only thirty-one years old—our baby Hand—one must realize that these were years of great stress for him; they were terrible years of stress for his much older peers, many of whom were born Bahá'ís!

One of Enoch's most endearing qualities was his laugh, a great, joyous, consuming and contagious laugh. His fellow Hands were not slow to appreciate this and went so far as to save up funny stories the whole year so they could tell them to Enoch at the next Conclave; God knows our hearts and minds were weighted down enough with our responsibilities and problems so the laughter at our dining table was a welcome relief for often sad and exhausted minds, but sometimes they made Enoch laugh so much that I scolded them, saying they would make him ill; of course others laughed too—but not like Enoch,

who would begin by chuckling and end up convulsed.

Ever since his pilgrimage Enoch and I had become very close; some of the Hands slept in Bahjí while others returned for the night to Haifa; Enoch and I were among those who always remained in Bahjí during the entire Conclave; I remember once, when we had a regular plague of snails devouring the gardens, I insisted that the Hands come out and pick snails, giving them buckets and bowls to put them in: in the bright moonlight about eight of us started down the borders in front of the Shrine; eventually when I turned around I found everyone had sneaked off, only faithful Enoch and I were still gathering snails!

Those years from 1957 until 1963—when Enoch returned to live in East Africa—were in many ways very difficult for him; his relations with Eunice, his first wife, were going from bad to worse; finally, after about three years, she returned to East Africa, but the children remained with him; a divorce was obtained in 1961 and in 1963 Enoch went to Nairobi with his second wife, Elizabeth, by whom he had two children, Lennie and Tahirih.

While still resident in West Africa Enoch returned to Kampala to attend the historic occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the Mother Temple of Africa on 14 January 1958; he took part in the African Teaching Conference held concurrently with that event, he and I sharing the platform of the public meeting; a week later the impressive Bahá'í African Intercontinental Conference, called by the Guardian, was held in Kampala—one of five similar conferences marking the midway point of his World Crusade; Enoch was chairman of one of its sessions and speaker at another, his theme: 'The Vital Process of Individual Conversion.'

All these events and pressures on Enoch's life were—as should be the case for each of us—shaping his character, helping him to grow spiritually into his own potentialities, maturing him into a truly great man, but not without suffering, anxiety and descending into valleys as well as scaling mountains. In a letter to me on 13 October 1963 Enoch wrote from Nigeria: 'I am now on my way to Nairobi where I intend to make my home', and where he says he will have 'to overcome many difficulties which are bound to come my way'; he asks for prayers for his 'weak, frail and helpless self . . . the pain I experience these days is big . . . pray for me that I may rise above the present mental and soul-destroying condition in which I sadly find myself . . .' He always supplicated his beloved Blessed Perfection, 'I know He will help me to disintegrate the wall which surrounds my entire being and which I am struggling to break.' Dark years of upheaval for Enoch.

He finally returned to live in his native village of Tilling in Teso, Uganda, and build a house there for his family. Gradually, through the loving guidance of the Universal House of Justice, he once again began to travel widely for the Faith. Like other Hands of the Cause, he often represented the House of Justice at International Conferences and inaugural Conventions of new National Spiritual Assemblies all over the world. His travels to these, as well as many long tours undertaken in all the continents of the globe, were a source of happiness to both Enoch and the thousands of believers who met him; he grew steadily into his maturity. He was a very intelligent man, a very eloquent, self-possessed speaker; he was both dignified and urbane in his handling of officials and the media. Enoch had presence; it is hard to describe because there was something very African about it, the 'presence' of a big chief, who is both a father-figure and rules. He was sincerely kind, loving and interested in other people and they felt this—high and low alike—and responded. That big, spontaneous laugh was also there, to carry others on with it in a great relaxing wave of sheer mirth.

The Hands of the Faith chose Enoch to be chairman of the opening session of the beloved Guardian's Bahá'í World Congress, held from 28 April to 2 May 1963, commemorating the end of his great Ten Year Plan, his World Crusade. About 7,000 Bahá'ís were present, from most of the territories and major islands of the world, gathered in the beautiful Albert Hall of London. The big, black Enoch was a befitting figure to stand before such a motley crowd on such an historic occasion!

Enoch met many heads of state as he visited different countries; one of the most interesting interviews he ever had was with the Dalai

Lama in October 1968, in his retreat at Dharamsala in India; the party were first thoroughly searched by the Lama's security people, and after some delays, received by His Holiness, the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people and to them the reincarnation of Buddha. He was surprised and interested to see these guests who included a black African, his wife and daughter, an Englishman and two Indians. Although he spoke through a translator, it was evident that he understood English; he commented that they were all different people, to which Enoch replied, 'Yes, but we are all of the same family', and went on to elaborate this theme and also to give an account of Bahá'u'lláh's exiles, imprisonment and sufferings, which struck a deep chord of sympathy in his host. Their visit lasted over an hour—which was unusual—and His Holiness showed them excessive courtesy; there was no doubt of the impression Enoch had made on him as he set forth many of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings.

The common sense and wisdom of Enoch are nowhere better exemplified than in the conversations his Persian daughter-in-law Forough Ehsani, a pioneer in Uganda, has recorded having with her much-loved father-in-law in connection with her marriage to his son George. In Tilling Enoch had a special office of his own, his 'prayer room', in which were his pictures of the Master and the Guardian and things that were dear to him; there he often spoke with her. It was in this room one day that he asked her if she was sure she wanted to marry George: ' "Do you like to marry him? . . . marriage is not so easy. You have to be careful. Have you thought of the future and how the difficulties will be? You are different, from different homes and country, do you in your heart accept that? Do you really like that?" Many times he asked and I said, "Yes, I do." So he hugged and kissed me and said, "The rest is with Bahá'u'lláh, He will solve the problems." ' A day came when a crisis arose; after her child was born, during the first year of her marriage, a serious misunderstanding between her and a member of the family took place; she was so distressed she took up the child and left the house. 'Enoch', she said, 'sent one of his sons after me with this message: "Tell Forough to come and leave the child in this house, and whenever she wants to go, she can go." ' When she confronted Enoch she said: 'But this child is mine!' Enoch replied, 'No, this child belongs to this family; if you have a misunderstanding you solve it with the members of the family. You cannot mix up the child with your problem and somebody else's problem. Leave the child and then we can solve it all together. Don't mix up the child with this problem.' She remembers that: 'When he said that I felt my knees shaking! I put the child down and said, "But how can I go without my first child?", and then he told me, "When your anger has dropped, you come to my office. I want to see you, not with George, you only." ' George remained quiet throughout, praying inwardly that all would resolve itself. She went to Enoch's office, in what must have been a terrible upheaval for all of them; he reminded her how, before her marriage, he had warned her there would be problems; earnestly, looking into her eyes he said: 'Forough my dear, your behaving as you did, taking the child out and not solving the problem, does not help you, does not help me, and especially does not help the Faith. You know that whatever you are doing from today should help the Faith, the name of the Faith. And you know the slightest problem between you and George, how it can damage the Faith. Will you please think this way and forget the rest!' Forough recalls: 'He completely changed me. He said a prayer, he hugged me, and he cried. He cried and I felt the wetness of his crying, and he said, "Please, please help the Faith!" ' She rejoined the family, was completely reconciled, and from then on harmony prevailed. Enoch had impressed on her the greatest lesson of all—the Faith comes first.

There followed many years of active service; Enoch, often accompanied by his wife Elizabeth—herself a devoted and active believer—travelled widely, visiting and stimulating the Bahá'ís, meeting high officials, bringing the Faith before the public and the media. His children grew up, two daughters married Bahá'í pioneers, George and Forough had two more children. Although the Olinga home was in Teso, after the death of Mr. Banání, Enoch purchased the historic house in which the Banání-Nakhjavání family had lived for so many years in Kampala, the home in

which he himself had accepted the Faith and learned of his elevation to the rank of Hand of the Cause.

To enumerate in detail his services and travels from 1958 until his death in 1979 is impossible; long and authoritative biographies are required to recount the exploits of the Hands of the Cause appointed by Shoghi Effendi; only a glance at Enoch's major activities during those years is included here. He attended three of the 1958 mid-way point of the World Crusade continental conferences called for by Shoghi Effendi, namely, that of Africa, held in Kampala; Europe, held in Frankfurt; and Asia, held in Singapore. After the latter he made a tour of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa and Pakistan, it being the policy of the Hands to make as wide and economic use as possible of the visit of a fellow Hand to attend conferences or conventions by visiting, going and coming, as many centres as possible throughout the area. In 1960 Enoch visited many places in West and North Africa, Sicily and Italy; in 1961, after representing the Hands of the Cause at the inaugural Bahá'í Conventions in Jamaica, Dominican Republic and Cuba, he toured the Greater Antilles and Central America for four months; in 1962 he travelled extensively in East Africa, the Sudan, Ethiopia and the Congo (now Zaïre); in 1964 he represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural Conventions of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Indian Ocean, in Mauritius, and South Central Africa, in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe); in 1967 he represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural Convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland, Lesotho and Mozambique; in 1968 Enoch attended the large Mediterranean Bahá'í Conference held in Palermo, Sicily, and—like most of his fellow Hands—was present at the glorious celebration in Bahjí of the one hundredth anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in 'Akká as a prisoner; also in 1968 when Enoch was received by the Dalai Lama at his headquarters in India he visited many Bahá'í centres in that vast subcontinent; in 1969 Enoch represented the Universal House of Justice at the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Burundi and Rwanda; in 1970 he represented the Universal House of Justice at the formation of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa, making later that same year an extensive tour of South America, Central America and the Antilles, passing through the United States and visiting many centres there; he then proceeded to the Pacific where he visited the Solomon Islands and Japan, attending in January 1971, as representative of the Universal House of Justice, the South China Seas Oceanic Conference in Singapore, and later that same year fulfilling the same function at the inaugural Convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Chad; in 1971 Enoch represented the Universal House of Justice at the first Convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Iceland and afterwards exhaustively toured the Bahá'í communities in Scandinavia, Britain and Italy, visiting Persia with Elizabeth in July to pay his homage to the House of the Báb in Shíráz and other Bahá'í historic sites. Enoch was becoming increasingly preoccupied with Africa as the problems of that continent steadily augmented: in 1973–1974 he went on a five-month teaching trip to twelve countries of West Africa; 1975 saw him back in that area to attend, as the representative of the Universal House of Justice, three inaugural Conventions during the Riḍván period—not an unheard of event as other Hands on occasion duplicated such efforts—for the election of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, and Upper West Africa; during this same year Enoch again toured twelve West African countries, assisting them to win their goals, and, returning to Uganda, spent the remainder of that year as well as the opening months of 1976 intensively working amongst the Bahá'í communities there. During the summer of that year Enoch also revisited eight countries of West Africa before representing the Universal House of Justice, in January 1977, at the International Teaching Conference held in Brazil and later attending a similar conference in Mérida, Mexico, visiting some other countries in the western hemisphere, and returning from the New World to Africa in time to represent the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural Convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper Volta. Having revisited various neighbouring countries, Enoch returned to Uganda to devote the

remaining two years of his life to protecting, comforting, stimulating and preserving the endangered Bahá'í community of his native land, in the bitter throes of a terrible civil war, the aftermath of which eventually led to his own death.

News of the banning of the Faith in September 1977—the official dissolution of all its administrative bodies and activities—reached Enoch in Kampala; he is reported to have said: 'No! No one can ban the Faith of God . . .' For the Bahá'ís it was a shocking and heartbreaking experience, the more so because the first Temple of Africa stood on Kikaya Hill, on the outskirts of Kampala, and the Ugandan believers had always been a distinguished and thriving community. Enoch drafted a letter to the President, which he and the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly delivered to the President's office, calling his attention to the nature and status of the Faith and the respect it had always enjoyed in Uganda. This and other petitions had no effect whatsoever.

Enoch's deep study of the Teachings and wide experience made him an ideal shield for the Cause of God during that crucial period; realizing the hopelessness of protest and petition, he set himself to do three things: to ensure that the believers obeyed the government implicitly; to encourage them and keep alive their faith; to protect the Bahá'í properties and remove to a safe place its sacred and irreplaceable archive materials, which he stored in Tilling. Immediately following the edict Enoch and Mr. Isimai, the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, had closed the National Headquarters at the Temple site, refusing even to sell Bahá'í books. There can be little doubt that this complete obedience to the government decree, conforming as it did with the explicit instructions of Bahá'u'lláh Himself that Bahá'ís must obey their governments, was the best possible way of protecting the precious Temple, which was never confiscated, occupied or damaged, but left in the custody of the Bahá'ís.

Following upon the banning of the Faith, the Universal House of Justice made the Hand of the Cause and the two Counsellors, Oloro Epyeru and Kolonario Oule, responsible for the guidance and protection of the Ugandan community, a duty they discharged with great devotion until the Universal House of Justice was able to re-establish an administrative body in August 1979.

As the months went by Uganda sank ever deeper into bitter civil war, terrorism and chaos, in the tide of which Enoch and his family were eventually so tragically engulfed. It should be remembered that Enoch was not only a famous Bahá'í—the first African Hand of the Cause and one of the only two Negro Hands, the other being Louis Gregory of the United States—but also a well-known, capable, prosperous business man, with relatives and friends in high positions. As a consequence of this prominence he was a target for subversive elements. His son George recalls his father's telling him, even before the war broke out, that he had discovered his name was on a list due for 'elimination' in Teso. During those crucial times Enoch often said he would never leave Uganda, never run away.

In March 1979, when the war of liberation was gaining momentum day by day, he decided to motor from Tilling to Kampala, a distance of some 300 kilometres; his uncle came to remonstrate with him, pointing out the dangers, and urging him not to go, but Enoch was not dissuaded and said: 'What do I have to fear? Did the Báb run away? Did Bahá'u'lláh run away? Did 'Abdu'l-Bahá run away?', and described how wonderful it was to die a true believer, that if the veil were lifted between this world and the next we would yearn to die.

On the way to Kampala he met with a terrible automobile accident when an army lorry struck his car, knocking it off the road into a gorge, where it rolled over and over; he was also robbed of a large sum of money. This occurred on the 25th; that night, as Enoch and his family prayed together in their Kampala home, he assured them that were it not for Bahá'u'lláh, he would most certainly have died from such an accident. As if this were not enough shock for the family to bear, two days later Enoch's son Badi vanished without a trace; a week later, however, he returned unscathed; it seemed soldiers had hijacked him and his pick-up for a job out of town, later releasing him. After Badi disappeared, as the situation in the city became increasingly dangerous, the Olingas went up to the Temple

property, about 10 kilometres away, a long and exhausting walk for Enoch, who was still in great pain after his accident. By 6 April he decided to send his youngest child, Tahirih, with her mother back to Tilling—which they were fortunate to reach alive as the train was strafed by bullets many times on the way. Miraculously Badi returned safely at this time and Enoch promptly sent him and his brother Patrick after them. He himself was too weak as a result of the accident to make the arduous trip back to Tilling.

Enoch now returned alone to his home on Kitante Road. By 10 April thousands of people were in flight from Kampala, which was being heavily bombarded; once again Enoch was persuaded to seek refuge on the Temple property and made his painful way there, on foot, struggling against the frightened crowds of people leaving the city. All that night a fierce artillery battle raged around Kikaya Hill; he spent the night praying and wondering what was happening to the House of Worship and if he would ever see the dawn. The next day, however, the Temple still stood unscathed and the longed-for news was broadcast that Amin's government had been defeated. Enoch and another believer hastened to the Mother Temple of Africa, opened all the nine doors and offered prayers of thanksgiving to Bahá'u'lláh. How appropriate, how mysterious, that dear Enoch, who had been present at the cornerstone-laying of the Temple in 1958, should with his own hands throw open those doors!

The following day Enoch went to Kampala, anxious for the safety of his house, as both the soldiers and the local population were extensively looting the city; he arrived to see it being stripped bare and narrowly escaped being shot as he was accused of being one of Amin's men—an accusation which fortunately he successfully refuted! There being nothing he could do, he returned to the Temple where his protection was essential during those wholly lawless days of transition. Elizabeth and his children were eager to rejoin him, so he decided to restore and refurnish his home.

Although the ban on the Faith was not officially lifted for some months, the situation had entirely changed and the Universal House of Justice decided to appoint an interim administrative body to gradually reorganize Bahá'í activities and take charge of Bahá'í properties in preparation for the time when the National Spiritual Assembly could be re-elected. The first meeting of this Uganda Administrative Committee would take place on 25–26 August in the National Headquarters; the derelict state of this and other buildings at the Temple site distressed Enoch very much and with few to help him, he set about preparing the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, cleaning it up, arranging the offices and files, even going so far as to himself assist in washing the floors. For Enoch service always meant doing what needed to be done. He was radiantly happy over this event; when the Committee members gathered, each was presented with the gift of a new prayer book, with passages marked to be read, for Enoch had a 'well-worked-out and soul-stirring devotional programme'; the group then proceeded to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár for the solemn inauguration of their historic function, and afterwards visited the grave of the Hand of the Cause Músá Banání, who is buried in its vicinity. Enoch was invited to chair the first meeting and read the letter of the Universal House of Justice appointing the Committee and outlining its functions; he then observed that they were now 'an arm of the Universal House of Justice stretched over Uganda' and called upon them at all times to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to assist them. On the second day Enoch again was invited to act as chairman; he outlined their duties, stressing the crying needs of the Bahá'í community throughout the country and the serious condition of the Temple property, which had perforce been neglected and suffered depredations—telephone connections, water supply, lawn mowers, office equipment, all required urgent attention.

Enoch's son George, recalling his father's last days, says he spent most of his time on Kikaya Hill; he was happy, the formation of the new Uganda Administrative Committee had lifted a great burden; after all the years of frustration and anxiety, at last the administrative edifice of the Faith was again raised and he told some of the friends that this was such a relief, he was ready to die. He loved serving the Temple, cleaning and sweeping it out on Saturdays so it would be ready for the Sunday morning public service; many times he himself would slash away at the overgrown

lawns surrounding it with the heavy panga knife, working to the point of exhaustion. When he heard the lawn mowers had at last been procured in Nairobi for this work he was delighted as now the much-neglected, beautiful gardens could be gradually restored.

The strain and horror of the months of violent war had particularly affected the health and spirits of Enoch's youngest child, Tahirih, who was approaching her fifteenth birthday. It was the family custom of the Olingas to gather together on holidays and special occasions, and Elizabeth and Enoch decided a reunion should take place around the week-end of Sunday, 16 September, which they hoped, in addition to all being together again, would cheer Tahirih up. Forough was in her late pregnancy and had been badly beaten and kicked when soldiers broke into her home in Fort Portal; she did not know if the baby still lived, and after this attack she and George and the children went to Enoch's home in Kampala, where Forough saw a doctor; Elizabeth, however, was not satisfied and insisted that George must take her to a Bahá'í doctor in Mombasa, Kenya, for examination and treatment, and gave her some money to purchase while there a skirt and blouse for Tahirih as there was nothing to be obtained in Uganda. Enoch told them he would be expecting them back for the family reunion; all of this took place about three weeks before his death.

Enoch did not attend the second meeting of the Uganda Administrative Committee, which was held on 15 September in the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, the Counsellor, Mr. Kolonario Oule having specially come from Teso to discuss certain matters with them. In the Kitante Road house only Tahirih, Lennie and Badi were with their parents that week-end; George and his family were still in Kenya, Patrick was delayed on a job in Teso and Godwin was also late in getting home. The arrival of these three sons of Enoch was delayed, seemingly by trivial circumstances, yet thus their lives were saved, for had they returned earlier they would surely have been murdered with the rest. It was the custom of the family in those disturbed times to always leave someone inside the home to protect it, in addition to the houseboy who also acted as gardener and lived next to the house in a separate building. On that Sunday, however, 16 September, Forough reports, Enoch insisted they should take a picnic lunch and all of them go to Kikaya Hill for the day.

Mrs. Catherine Kabali, an Auxiliary Board member, was an eyewitness to the events of those days. The friends were going to the Temple grounds earlier than usual because the Hand of the Cause was going to brief them on the situation of the persecuted Bahá'ís in Írán. She describes Enoch, in his white suit, with his 'brilliant and dignified face', joyfully joining the singing in the Temple service of a Swahili offering, 'Be happy, be happy, because it is the day of oneness today!' Some Bahá'í young people had come down from Teso with Mr. Oule to help clean up the Temple property and later in the day they provided music; Enoch and Elizabeth joined in the dancing; when Tahirih hung back shyly her parents swept her into the dance too and all danced and danced. Mrs. Kabali writes: 'I remember Elizabeth dancing, waving her hands, not knowing yet she will leave this world tonight. She waved and waved, saying goodbye.'

When the family returned home, neighbours later mentioned, Mr. Olinga had seemed in a very good mood, walking about his garden, waving to them and saying 'hello'. After the terrible events of that night the Counsellor, Mr. Peter Vuyiya arrived in Kampala from Nairobi a few days later. His report conveys an accurate observation of the situation in the city at that time, the background against which the terrible drama of Enoch's murder took place: 'Staying in the middle of the town, I had the full effect of the state of anarchy in Kampala at night . . . it was impossible to tell the police Kombis from any other that might have been responsible for murders in the city and its environs. Every night, however, brought with it the murder of yet another family.' He wisely adds: 'With so much speculation regarding what may have been the motive of the murders, I have thought it more safe to steer clear of the questions why, when and how the murders took place.' With surety we will never know—as with all evil deeds, unwitnessed, in nights of terror and chaos throughout history.

From many first-hand accounts, however, the following events of that terrible crime

seem clear: the family had its evening meal together—the houseboy had seen them about to serve it; the dishes were neatly stacked in the kitchen sink as usual, where they were found the next day; the houseboy stated that he was in his room when, about 8.30, he heard someone shaking the gate to the compound and, looking through the window, saw five armed men walking towards the back door leading to the kitchen (it is believed a sixth man was left to guard the gate). They shouted 'Open' and banged on the door. Lennie opened the door and there was a sound of shots; the houseboy fled over the fence to hide in the neighbour's bushes and remained there in terror all night, seeing nothing but hearing shooting and other sounds going on for about two hours; at dawn he ventured out of hiding, went to the house, seeing the body of Enoch lying in the courtyard and inside, all in an inner bedroom, the bodies of Elizabeth, Tahirih, Lennie and Badi, heaped on the floor where they had fallen when shot to death. People were beginning to gather outside and they told him he should inform the police, which he did, and then, with singular loyalty to Enoch and his family, went to Kikaya Hill to give the news. Mr. Oule from Teso, who was sleeping on the Temple property, was informed of the unbelievable tragedy which had taken place; it was only because he wished to go at dawn to the Temple for prayers—not having been in Kampala for some time—that he was not killed also for he invariably stayed in Enoch's home. Mr. Oule, the Board member Catherine Kabali, and her sister Edith Senoga—who both lived on Kikaya Hill—then rushed to the home of Enoch. Their horror and grief at what they found was indescribable. It is greatly to the credit of the African friends in Kampala that, crushed and overwhelmed as they were by this truly staggering tragedy—a tragedy which shocked the Bahá'í world to its furthest corners—they went into action immediately and efficiently in spite of their personal, heart-rending grief.

The oldest pioneer, Claire Gung, frail and in her seventies, was at once informed and was able to telephone Nairobi and give the news. George and his family had motored up on the 16th from Mombasa to Nairobi and at the National Headquarters found a telegram from Enoch giving a list of spare parts for his car he wished them to bring in addition to a number of other things he had ordered. Planning to buy these things and then proceed to Kampala—an eight-hour drive—George and Forough went shopping in the city. It was while they were absent the news came from Kampala; the Counsellor, Peter Vuyiya was there and was able to telephone the Universal House of Justice, which was in session at the time, and speak to Enoch's spiritual father, 'Alí Nakhjavání. If anything could be considered fortunate during so much calamity it was this, that the House of Justice was in a position to immediately instruct the friends that the Counsellor Kolonario Oule, together with the Uganda Administrative Committee, whose members were already gathered in Kampala, should take charge of the situation, make all necessary arrangements and ensure that a befitting funeral for the Hand of the Cause and his family would take place.

The problem facing the Bahá'ís in Nairobi was how to break the news to George and Forough. To blurt it out was beyond the capacity of these loving friends, so the National secretary wrote a short, most tender letter of condolence, explaining what had occurred and it was handed to George and Forough when they came back to the Centre. George's one desire was to reach his father and do everything necessary. In spite of remonstrances, the family left for Kisumu that same afternoon and that night George, to his great comfort, was able to talk to 'Alí Nakhjavání in Haifa. The next morning, well knowing nothing was available in Uganda, they bought the material for the five shrouds and left for Kampala. In the midst of lamentation and shock, the surviving sons, Patrick and Godwin, joined George; Enoch's two older daughters, Grace and Florence, married and living abroad, hastened to Kampala with their husbands, as did Forough's brother; already friends and relatives had arrived from Teso on the night of the 17th, including the Counsellor, Oloro Epyeru, who had been prevented by illness from coming to Kampala for the meetings of the Uganda Administrative Committee; everyone shared the grief of the children, everyone came to be present at the funeral; the harassed family, for over a week, fed from eighty to one hundred and fifty

people a day in the Kitante Road home. The bodies of the slain Olingas had been removed to a hospital pending arrangements for the burial. During the hours of curfew every night the city was still racked with gunfire and acts of terrorism, including the murder of many other entire families. Indeed, during that week Enoch's home was subjected one night to heavy gunfire, everyone in the house lying on the floor for protection; fortunately no one was injured and the police put a guard on the building. To make all the arrangements, procure suitable coffins, dig five graves on Kikaya Hill, get the authorities to provide police escort for the funeral cortège, find transportation for the coffins, the family and the large throng of mourners—it all required truly herculean efforts.

In the world press the murder of Enoch received wide notice: 'A world leader of the Bahá'í religious sect, his wife and three children were murdered in the Ugandan capital Kampala on Sunday', it spread like wildfire; the Ugandan radio, on 17 September, broadcast the news in six vernacular languages so that the Bahá'ís throughout the country might be informed of the fate of the 'Father of Victories'.

On the morning of 24 September—which coincided with Tahirih's birthday—the five coffins were removed from the mortuary of the hospital and taken to Enoch's home where, flower-draped, they were placed in the sitting-room; prayers were read, and many people came to pay their last respects; by 12.15 the funeral procession was ready to leave for Kikaya Hill, two motorcycle policemen preceding it, then a car carrying the Counsellors, followed by the car carrying the coffin of the Hand of the Cause which was followed by another one carrying Elizabeth's coffin and a third carrying the three coffins of the children. It was only through the co-operation of many non-Bahá'í friends that this transport had been procured. Followed by cars bearing the family, the cortège went slowly along Gayaza Road towards the Temple; hundreds of people lined the streets, some wept while some were heard to cry: 'Look at the bodies! Eh, eh, another one! Oh, another one!' A wave of public sympathy swept the crowd. With great respect the five coffins were placed in a row in the hall of the National Headquarters, flowers laid upon them, and a beautiful and uplifting funeral service held; a number of prominent Ugandan officials, friends of Enoch and admirers of the Faith, attended it. In a burial plot not far from the Temple on Kikaya Hill Enoch Olinga was laid to rest next to Músá Banání, his fellow Hand; the one designated the 'Spiritual Conqueror of Africa' was joined in death by the 'Father of Victories'. Nearby Elizabeth and Tahirih, Badi and Lennie were placed in their graves.

To the Bahá'ís of the world the Universal House of Justice announced Enoch's passing:

> WITH GRIEF-STRICKEN HEARTS ANNOUNCE TRAGIC NEWS BRUTAL MURDER DEARLY LOVED GREATLY ADMIRED HAND CAUSE GOD ENOCH OLINGA BY UNKNOWN GUNMEN COURTYARD HIS KAMPALA HOME. HIS WIFE ELIZABETH AND THREE OF HIS CHILDREN BADI, LENNIE AND TAHIRIH HAVE ALSO FALLEN INNOCENT VICTIMS THIS CRUEL ACT. MOTIVE ATTACK NOT YET ASCERTAINED. HIS RADIANT SPIRIT HIS UNWAVERING FAITH HIS ALL-EMBRACING LOVE HIS LEONINE AUDACITY IN THE TEACHING FIELD HIS TITLES KNIGHT BAHAULLAH FATHER VICTORIES CONFERRED BELOVED GUARDIAN ALL COMBINE DISTINGUISH HIM AS PREEMINENT MEMBER HIS RACE IN ANNALS FAITH AFRICAN CONTINENT. URGE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING TRIBUTE HIS IMPERISHABLE MEMORY. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL AND SOULS FOUR MEMBERS HIS PRECIOUS FAMILY.

Enoch had an example he used to give to the Bahá'ís: he said all of us are like guitars; when a guitar hears of a great Divine Musician he hopes to be played upon by this Musician. He offers himself to the Supreme Musician. The Musician accepts him, takes the guitar close to Himself, plays upon it. But soon He finds the strings are out of tune. The Musician starts tuning one, winding the string tighter. The pressure is painful to the guitar, it resists the winding. Then instead of yielding, the string breaks. As it is the wish of the guitar to give forth the divine melody, the great Musician plays upon the strings that remain. But the tune is still wrong. So the Musician starts tuning another string. It resists and finally breaks. Still the guitar wishes to be played upon. The Musician plays upon these



Enoch Olinga with some members of his family; September 1979. The Hand of the Cause is third from the left, third row; to the right, his wife, Elizabeth; front row, left to right, his children, Badi and Tahirih, and daughter-in-law, Forough. In the second row, far left, is seen Counsellor Kolonario Oule. The photograph was taken approximately two weeks before the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Olinga and three of their children.

fewer strings. Again and again a string needs tuning. Again and again the guitar refuses to yield to the winding, the pressure. At last only one string is left and to be faithful to the offer of the guitar the Divine Musician says, 'I will play on this one string.' But that too is out of tune. Again the winding, the terrible pressure, and this one string also breaks. Then the Musician has no choice but to lay the guitar aside. Thus are tests given by God to perfect us, not to destroy us. The destruction comes only from our resistance to the tuning. The purpose is not punishment but the intention to fulfil the desire of the guitar to be played upon.

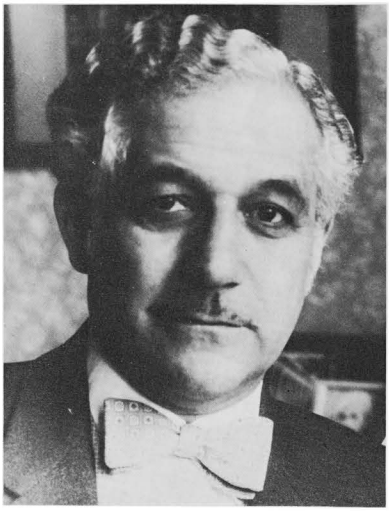
How many tests Enoch surmounted, submitting in the Hands of his beloved Bahá'u'lláh, to the tuning of the Divine Musician, until finally the guitar was laid aside for good—but the music remains.

RÚḤÍYYIH

HASAN M. BALYUZI
(ḤASAN MUVAQQAR BALYÚZÍ)
1908–1980

WITH BROKEN HEARTS ANNOUNCE PASSING DEARLY LOVED HAND CAUSE HASAN BALYUZI. ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD ROBBED ONE OF ITS MOST POWERFUL DEFENDERS MOST RESOURCEFUL HISTORIANS. HIS ILLUSTRIOUS LINEAGE HIS DEVOTED LABOURS DIVINE VINEYARD HIS OUTSTANDING LITERARY WORKS COMBINE IN IMMORTALIZING HIS HONOURED NAME IN ANNALS BELOVED FAITH. CALL ON FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS. PRAYING SHRINES HIS EXEMPLARY ACHIEVEMENTS HIS STEADFASTNESS PATIENCE HUMILITY HIS OUTSTANDING SCHOLARLY PURSUITS WILL INSPIRE MANY DEVOTED WORKERS AMONG RISING GENERATIONS FOLLOW HIS GLORIOUS FOOTSTEPS.

Universal House of Justice
12 February 1980



Ḥasan M. Balyúzí

Ḥasan Muvaqqar Balyúzí was loved and honoured both in his native Írán and his adopted England, and by virtue of his consistent services in the British Bahá'í community for nearly fifty years earned a central role in its history. A student from his youth, he became in the last decade of his life and in the sight of all the Bahá'í world, its pre-eminent scholar, yielding place only to Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, by whose learning Mr. Balyúzí was himself astonished. He seemed, from his earliest years, a mature and balanced person, as though his gentle yet remarkable qualities were his by birth—an innate courtesy and kindliness, an easy yet dignified bearing, a delightful wit and humour, an appreciation of every effort or service offered by others for the Faith, understanding of apparent frailties of behaviour, seeing beyond these to the longings and pain of human souls, quiet perseverance in fulfilling his own responsibilities, untarnished steadfastness in his loyalty to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, complete and heartfelt obedience to the Central Figures of the Faith and its Guardian, staunch and knowledgeable support of all the institutions of the Administrative Order—these give but an incomplete portrayal of one whose presence conveyed to those who knew him a sense of well-being, tranquillity and hope.

At the moment of his first meeting, in his youth, with Shoghi Effendi, his inmost being was quickened to the reality of the Guardian's servitude at the Holy Threshold, and his sensitive, receptive spirit became, and ever remained, centred upon the greatness and glory of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. His life can be understood in no other terms than his striving to serve that Revelation, in whatever course events might take, in health or in sickness, to his closing days in this world, when his utmost longing was to lay his head on the threshold of the Most Holy Shrine and offer to the King of Glory with his own hand the gift of his last, heroic labours.

I. *Family and Youth*

Ḥasan Balyúzí shared with the Guardian of the Faith descent from the same great-grandfather, Ḥájí Mírzá Abu'l-Qásim—one of the two brothers of Khadíjih-Bagum, the wife of the Báb—whose daughter, Fáṭimih-Sulṭán-Bagum, was Mr. Balyúzí's paternal grandmother. His paternal grandfather was Muḥammad-Ḥasan, a merchant of a Bushire family, whom Bahá'u'lláh accepted as of the family of the Báb, and a son of this union was Mírzá 'Alí Áqá, later entitled Muvuqqari'd-Dawlih, the father of Ḥasan Balyúzí. His mother, Munavvar Khánum, traced her descent from both brothers of the wife of the Báb, and thus Mr. Balyúzí's 'illustrious lineage' had a twofold bond with Khadíjih-Bagum for whom he had a particular love and esteem.

Abu'l-Qásim Afnán, close relative of Mr. Balyúzí and Custodian of the House of the Báb in Shíráz, has stated that during his pilgrimage the Guardian of the Faith referred to three outstanding members of the Afnán family. The most distinguished was Khadíjih Bagum, the wife of the Báb, then Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí, the uncle of the Báb and one of the Seven Martyrs of Ṭihrán, while, 'at the present moment', the most distinguished was Ḥasan Balyúzí, and 'all the Afnán should follow in his footsteps'.

Ḥasan Balyúzí was born on 7 September 1908 in Shíráz where, at the age of four, he began to acquire his mastery of the English

language. Most of his early years, however, were spent in Bushire where his father—diplomat and later Governor of the Persian Gulf Ports and Islands—resided, and he entered school when about five. When, in the First World War, Bushire was occupied by British Forces, his father was exiled to India where the family lived in Bombay and then for four years in Poona. They were accompanied by two outstanding scholars, friends of his father, who tutored him in Persian, Arabic and history until he entered Bishop's College in Poona, an English high school where he perfected his English. He also learned Urdu, and is remembered as translating, at about the age of nine, for Abbas Dehkan who first met him there. When his father returned to Ṭihrán after the War to become a member of the Cabinet (Vazír) as Minister of Interior, Ḥasan attended the Cyrus School, whose headmaster was Prof. Ṣadíq-A'lam, later Persian Ambassador in London and Minister of Education. A year or so after his father's death in May 1921, he accompanied his mother to Shíráz, but as educational opportunities for him were lacking at that time, in 1925 his uncle addressed Professor Browne to ask him to take charge of his nephew's education in England, whence Ḥasan's mother desired to send him. In his reply 5 May 1925 Browne referred to Ḥasan's father, 'my old friend 'Alí-Muḥammad Khán, Muvaqqari'd-Dawlih, whom I became acquainted with about 1885 in London under the name of Mírzá 'Alí Áqá and of whom I saw so much in Shíráz in the Spring of 1888', and added: 'I need hardly say how glad I should be to do anything I could for his son. But I am afraid that my health makes it impossible for me to take charge of his education here . . .' Browne had suffered a severe heart attack some months before and died 5 January 1926. In recounting this incident Ḥasan comments: 'However I was then not old enough or qualified to enter a university in Britain. Thus it was that I went to Beirut, and to the Preparatory School of the American University there. My journey to England in pursuit of education had to wait for several years when I could come to take up higher studies.'

'A Personal Note', written by Mr. Balyúzí in May 1969, continues with an account of his journey to Beirut and his memorable welcome in Haifa, at the age of seventeen, by Shoghi Effendi, the young Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. At that time Ḥasan knew little about the Faith as a religion, although aware of family relationships with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the visits of distinguished Bahá'ís such as Mírzá Maḥmúd-i-Zarqání, and social occasions to which their neighbour in Shíráz had invited him. He had, it is true, found *Some Answered Questions* among his father's books and had begun to read it with the intention of rebuttal, but unable to find fault he was left frustrated although interested. On asking for further books he was given a manuscript of the *Táríkh-i-Jadíd*. Nonetheless, writes Dr. Moojan Momen, 'had it not been for his meeting with Shoghi Effendi, he would probably have recorded himself as a Muslim at the University', and this is confirmed by Farhang Afnan's comment that 'prior to going to Haifa, in his heart of hearts he could not reconcile himself one hundred per cent that there could be any prophet after Muḥammad . . .'

This is Ḥasan's own description: 'My route to Beirut was through the Red Sea, Port Said, Haifa. It was in the latter part of November 1925 and John Ebenezer Esslemont, the immortal author of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, lay mortally ill in the old Pilgrim House. His illness greatly occupied the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith.

'During my stay of one night (November 21st–22nd) on Mount Carmel two eminent Persian Bahá'í physicians who were there, Dr. Yúnis Khán Afrúkhtih and Dr. Arasṭú Khán Ḥakím, were called in the early hours of the morning to Dr. Esslemont's bedside. Shoghi Effendi sat up with him through the night.

'The next day I left for Beirut in the company of Dr. Afrúkhtih and Dr. Ḥakím.

'It was that bounty of meeting Shoghi Effendi and all that I saw in him, which confirmed me in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The course of my life was changed.'

Dr. Momen has supplemented this account with notes taken during various conversations with Mr. Balyúzí: 'He was taken to the house of the Master and put into a drawing-room all by himself. He did not know what was going to happen. Suddenly Shoghi Effendi entered the room. Balyúzí rose and wanted to kiss his hand [as was the Persian custom], but Shoghi Effendi would not allow this and instead

embraced him. Then Shoghi Effendi sat him down and talked with him for more than an hour. What particularly impressed Ḥasan was the way in which Shoghi Effendi would answer a problem or a question by drawing the answer out of the questioner . . .

'And so it was that his Faith was confirmed and when he went on to Beirut and at the University he was asked his religion for the official forms, he said "Bahá'í".'

In the words of Mrs. Balyúzí, 'Ḥasan was so struck by the kindness and courtesy of the Guardian, at such an anxious time, to a boy of seventeen, that from that time he became confirmed in the Faith.'

Ḥasan spent seven years, 1925–1932, in Beirut, reading for a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry after a preparatory year, and then turning to a study of Diplomatic History for an M.A. 'He took a full part in University life,' writes Mrs. Balyúzí, 'playing football and tennis, and engaging in the activities of the Dramatic Society, the Debating Society and of course the Bahá'í Society.'

In his brief time with the Guardian he had accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh with his whole heart and at once became one of its most active supporters. According to the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi, the 'beloved Guardian encouraged the Persian youths [to] continue their studies in the American University of Beirut, rather than going straight from Persia to the European countries . . . Gradually it became a centre of attraction', the 'number of Bahá'í students increased, and this large community needed a brotherly leadership. This mantle suited' Ḥasan Balyúzí, who had been one of the first of the Bahá'í students there. 'With great wisdom and heartfelt affiliation to the Cause of God', he gathered the students together, arranged weekly programmes in the home of the Iqbál family, encouraged every student to prepare a talk in English on an aspect of the Faith, and reported to Shoghi Effendi the details of an annual meeting. He also sought permission from the Guardian for the Bahá'í students to visit Haifa during their Easter holiday, and Mr. Faizi recalled that Shoghi Effendi advised them to come in small groups at Easter and other holidays as well. It was Ḥasan who planned the prayers and readings whenever his and Mr. Faizi's group met the Guardian. 'That was the happiest period of our lives when dear Ḥasan put all of us on a path conducive to the approval and appreciation of the beloved Guardian.' And after he had departed to study in London, 'he kept us happy and uplifted us by his beautiful letters'.

In February 1932, because of work on his thesis at Easter, he obtained permission to visit Haifa in the mid-term break. He was accompanied by his brother and Mr. Faizi, 'and Ḥasan believed that it was the first occasion on which pilgrimage had included a visit to the newly-restored Mansion of Bahjí. He never met Shoghi Effendi again'. (Moojan Momen)

II. *The British Isles*

In September 1932, following his studies in Beirut, 'Ḥasan came to London armed with a letter of recommendation from his professor', Dr. Roger H. Soltan, to Prof. Harold Laski at the London School of Economics, and was accepted as a post-graduate student. He read Diplomatic History, with special reference to the relations of the European Powers to the Persian Gulf States, and in 1935 received his M.Sc.(Econ.). He pursued his studies in the field of British Public Opinion on Franco-German Relations after World War I, but his thesis for a doctorate was delayed by the difficulty of finding a suitable supervisor and the outbreak of the Second World War cut short his university career.

Within months of his arrival in London, Ḥasan was elected at Riḍván 1933 to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles and also to the London Spiritual Assembly. Administration was little past its infancy in Britain at the time of Ḥasan's arrival. An editorial note in *Unfolding Destiny*, a collection of the Guardian's letters to the British Bahá'í Community, states that from the end of 1930 until early 1934 only five or six short meetings a year were recorded in the 'scanty Minutes of the National Assembly' and no records exist of messages from the Guardian.

It was at this juncture that Ḥasan was faced with a decision that would change the pattern of his life. He had published in a Persian newspaper an article on the current political

situation in Europe, but on 8 February 1934 the Guardian addressed him through his secretary, expressing astonishment, after his own 'repeated and emphatic warnings to the friends that they should refrain from participating whether directly or indirectly in any political activity . . .' We cannot know what thoughts and emotions may have disquieted this young scholar, standing at the threshold of a beckoning career, but the nature of his reply to the Guardian is attested in a long and significant letter from Shoghi Effendi dated 2 March:

'. . . He was much impressed by your immediate response . . . , and he has deeply appreciated the firm decision you have taken not to enter any political or diplomatic career. He is fully conscious of the sacrifices you have accepted to undergo for the sake of maintaining the integrity of the Teachings. For the field of work which your parents wanted you to enter was one in which you had great possibilities of progress, and you might have even had a chance to attain the position which your father had occupied in the ministry. But you can be certain that the example you have set before the friends by refusing to meddle in any sort of political activity is one which all of them will appreciate and through which they will be encouraged to suffer even greater sacrifices. The Cause, indeed, can progress only through the continued and whole-hearted sacrifices of the believers. And it is on young, intelligent and well-educated Bahá'ís like yourself that has been laid the chief responsibility of demonstrating to the friends and to the non-believers alike, that the spirit of heroism, of loyalty and of unqualified devotion to the Faith is more than ever animating the faithful and is moulding and shaping their lives . . . And I am sure you fully realize that nothing short of such an attitude can effectively maintain the unity of the Faith and insure the stability and the efficient working of its new-born institutions.' (through his secretary)

A plan then in Ḥasan's mind, to work in the offices of the League of Nations in Geneva, was fully approved by Shoghi Effendi provided the work would be 'purely administrative', but his closing advice was to retain his membership 'both in the N.S.A. and in the London Assembly. Your cooperation has been greatly appreciated by all our English friends, and it is hoped that this will encourage you to continue working with them.' (through his secretary) Many years later, when Ḥasan's handsome inheritance of properties and wealth in Írán offered him every comfort and ease of living in that country, he explained to Dr. Iraj Ayman why he did not take this up. 'I am only interested in serving the Cause wherever the beloved Guardian wants me to serve and I am not a bit interested in all that belongs to me in Írán.' For a quarter of a century he would devote himself to the progress of the Faith in the British Isles, until his responsibilities as a Hand of the Cause would call him to wider fields. Already by 1935 his presence in London was 'a tremendous and unique help to the friends' and he had 'indeed, contributed a valuable share towards the expansion and consolidation of the Movement not only in London but in some other parts of England as well.' (secretary of the Guardian, probably writing personally)

The year 1936 signalled a marked increase of Bahá'í activities, when a young English Bahá'í, David Hofman, arrived in the spring from America where he had experienced various aspects of the evolving Administrative Order. He became secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly at Riḍván of that year and Ḥasan assistant secretary. For a good many years these two co-operated in manifold services to the Cause they both loved, together with others whose names are now part of Bahá'í history in the British Isles.

In rapid succession during the few years before the outbreak of war in September 1939, a teaching campaign throughout England was inaugurated (1936), the first official Bahá'í Summer School was held, the *Bahá'í Journal* was initiated, an annual mid-winter National Teaching Conference began, the Publishing Trust was established and issued its first two publications in 1938, a monthly magazine, *New World Order*, was founded (1939), and the long-sought legal incorporation of the N.S.A. was achieved in August 1939, Ḥasan being one of the nine signatories as a 'research student'. In all of these national activities Ḥasan took an active part, not only as an officer of the N.S.A., but often as Convention chairman, Summer School organizer and teacher, a member of the Reviewing Commit-

tee, an active participant at Teaching Conference, a contributor to *New World Order*, and a travelling teacher in England both north and south. At the same time he was a member of the London Assembly and the London Bahá'í Youth Group which earned the congratulations of the Guardian for its 'splendid achievements' and he was 'acclaimed as a first-rate speaker'. He has been described in those early years by several who knew him. 'He was young, attractive and very courteous . . .' 'Nobody was more patient, considerate, informative and humorous . . . He was both gentle and wise . . . His temperament was quiet and conciliatory.' '. . . on a boy of nine his absolute calm, and the love that poured out when he spoke . . . made an indelible impression . . . One grew up under his patience, kindliness, wisdom and love . . .' (Ursula Samandarí, Louis Ross-Enfield and Hugh McKinley in that order)

Often he and Molly Brown, his future wife, came to Bahá'í firesides and social occasions, including evenings at the home of Lady Blomfield. 'On every occasion Ḥasan and Molly brought out the best in everyone.' He 'had a deep love and respect for the early believers in the British community, such as beloved Lady Blomfield, dear old and gallant Miss Gamble, Mme Scaramucci, Mrs. George and Mrs. Slade, and they in turn had a deep affection for him. Another very touching relationship was with darling Mr. Azgarzadeh . . . He used to give Persian Feasts, and Ḥasan was always the honoured guest.' (Louis Ross-Enfield, Ursula Samandarí)

As war loomed on the horizon, Shoghi Effendi expressed his delight 'with the work which is being so energetically conducted, . . . and particularly by their national elected representatives whose magnificent efforts, courage and perseverance deserve the highest praise . . .' (10 February 1939) The Guardian's love and concern for the English Bahá'ís was never more evident than during the years of the Second World War, as his more than threescore messages during these years attest. The friends, for their part, prosecuted their teaching campaign with increasing vigour and in ever-widening circles despite 'the unprecedented calamities and confusion that now afflict their country'. (Shoghi Effendi, 22 November 1940) Ḥasan had become vice-chairman of the National Assembly at Riḍván 1940 and that summer moved with the newly-created Persian Section of the B.B.C., to which he had been appointed as a senior member, to Evesham in Worcestershire where broadcasting was carried on until August 1942 when the Department returned to London. His appointment had assured his continued residence in England when war began. We are indebted to Mrs. Balyúzí and Abbas Dehkan, whom he invited to join the B.B.C., for a description of his professional work, which included a great deal of original writing of special features such as talks on English writers and history, translating English poetry and short stories, giving talks on current affairs, translating and announcing routine news bulletins (later taken over by junior staff), writing plays and performing in them, assisting in productions of Shakespeare, and presenting a series of English by Radio. He resigned from the B.B.C. in 1958, but continued for some years with particular assignments. A three-month tour of duty in Írán in 1956 for the B.B.C. enabled him to attend to family affairs in and near Shíráz after the death of his mother, visit Iṣfahán and stay a few days in Ṭihrán where, as chairman of the British National Assembly, he made contact with its sister Assembly in Írán. It was his first visit since he had left his homeland as a youth, and it was to be his last.

Dr. Iraj Ayman has given the following fascinating glimpse of Ḥasan in his professional career. Among his colleagues were several distinguished Iranian scholars and writers, men such as Mujtabá Mínuví, Mas'úd Farzád and Gulchín. He himself produced more than a thousand radio programmes on Írán and its history and literature, and some of his translations of English literature have become part of modern Persian literature. He contributed to the development of the Persian language, as well, by coining many words now commonly used in Írán in the translation of modern terms, and he also 'made new and different uses of old words to convey new meanings'. Indeed, 'his style, his mastery of and his special approach to Persian were unique and highly appreciated' by Iranian writers.

It was during this period that Ḥasan wrote *A Guide to the Administrative Order* (1941)

and gave invaluable assistance to the editor of *The Chosen Highway* by Lady Blomfield, whose death on 31 December 1939 had 'robbed the Cause in England' of her 'ready and invaluable support'. (Shoghi Effendi through his secretary, 18 February 1940)

In June 1941 Ḥasan and Mary (Molly) Brown were married in the Bahá'í Centre in Torquay. The daughter of Kathleen Brown (later, Lady Hornell), who was one of England's most steadfast and active Bahá'ís, Molly had been a member of the Sadler's Wells Ballet before marriage. Their first son, Hushang, was born in Evesham in 1942 and during the next years there were four other sons, Robert, Felix, Richard and Simeon. 'A girl has not been born into our family for two hundred years,' Ḥasan told Alma Gregory.

Molly had many gifts and, on a number of occasions, assisted Ḥasan in the production of dramatic scripts about the Faith which he or Mary Basil Hall had written, creating 'performances of moving distinction'. (Hugh McKinley) And 'when he and Molly and their children came to Summer School they brought a joyous atmosphere'. (Ursula Samandarí) No doubt Ḥasan recognized the unequal share which fell to Molly, as she gave herself to the care and rearing of their young family. 'So gifted herself, she devoted her life to enable others to express their gifts.' (ibid.) But it was a willing choice, for Molly preferred, she has said, her role at home to a more public one. It can truly be said that they sustained and complemented each other throughout the nearly forty years of marriage. A friend who visited them in 1979 was 'much touched by the love and consideration which they showed for each other. I realized that he could not do his vastly important work without her devoted care.' (O. Z. Whitehead) And after his passing Molly described herself as fortified 'against any and every pressure' by 'his love, forethought, wisdom and discernment'.

Ḥasan, for his part, deeply cherished his sons, prayed for their spiritual progress, took pride in their scholarly achievements, but was prevented by his work schedule with the B.B.C. and his Bahá'í responsibilities from spending much time with them. 'What was I to do?' was his sad lament shortly before his death.

In 1942 Ḥasan became chairman of the N.S.A., a post to which he was elected annually for seventeen years (excluding 1943–1944). 'Who that ever served on the N.S.A. with him . . . can ever forget his unending, loving patience, his deep sympathy and his profound wisdom and his lovable hilarity? . . . Who can ever forget the lunch, tea and supper breaks of N.S.A. meetings with beloved Ḥasan entertaining us with his light-hearted stories and anecdotes? . . . He was such a perfect chairman,' wrote Ursula Samandarí, 'that I could never believe the British Community could be the same' when, in 1960, he retired from membership. And Philip Hainsworth has added: '. . . I can remember only the joy of those meetings, an eagerness and excitement which I never seem to have recaptured'; Ḥasan was 'a very great gentle man who influenced my Bahá'í life in a way he probably never suspected'.

Although the most demanding of Ḥasan's time and energy, his N.S.A. service was by no means all he was doing. Over the years he was often chairman of the Annual Convention and of the London Spiritual Assembly. When special committees were formed, whether to formulate publishing policy (1942) or plan press publicity for the completion of the exterior of the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette (1943), or prepare a history of the Faith in the British Isles for the 1944 Centenary, or examine how to promote the Six Year Plan (1944), Ḥasan was secretary or member. He accepted whatever needed doing, for years addressing and dispatching the *Bahá'í Journal* to the national community. And always he spoke, at Summer Schools, the annual Teaching Conferences, public meetings and firesides. 'I was once chairman at Summer School when he spoke about 'Abdu'l-Bahá; there was not a dry-eyed member of the audience.' (Ursula Samandarí)

Indeed, the record of his services on national committees, from 1943 to 1960, and often for several years, is daunting to the reader. Reviewing, *New World Order*, Literature (secretary), Archives (eleven years), National Contacts and Public Relations, National Scripts, Summer School Management and Programme, Assembly Development, Persian, Consolidation, National Centenary (1953, chairman), Visual Aids, European and Asian Teaching (chairman for four years), Instal-

lation and Maintenance plus Reception Committees for the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (1955–1956), Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (1956–1957)—the very names elicit memories of the development of the British Bahá'í community.

Although listed as a member of the newly-appointed Persian Committee only for four years (between 1950 and 1956), Ḥasan was always in close touch with the young Persians who came to Britain for education. 'It is clear that he exerted a most beneficial influence on all the Persian friends. He was beloved by them and he encouraged their participation in Bahá'í activities.' (Ursula Samandarí) At Summer Schools, which he regularly attended, 'he would either conduct sessions in Persian or would brief Persian friends after each session. On a number of occasions he mentioned that the frequency and amount of references to him by Persian believers' exceeded those of the N.S.A. 'Once I asked him how he could attend to all these different and almost contradictory engagements. He pointed to his chair and desk in the corner of the room in the old apartment' where they were living and said, '"many nights I sit there all night and do not go to bed". I specially verified this with Molly and Lady Hornell . . . I asked him how he could subject himself to such continuous hardship' and he replied, 'whenever I think of what our beloved Guardian is doing for us I am ashamed of how little we are doing in response and sleep escapes my eyes'. (Iraj Ayman) An English believer of early days remembered: 'I used to go with him and other Persian students on picnics . . . We had great times together. He was always witty with inborn gentleness, that shone from his eyes.' (Louis Ross-Enfield) And a Persian Bahá'í, Ḥabíb Hazari, who came to England in 1950 has described what he must have meant to them all: 'I was showered by his kindness, generosity and affection.' About 1951 'I wrote to the Guardian and said, "His inspiration in serving the Faith is this verse of the Aqdas: 'Observe My commandments for the love of My beauty.' . . . He is kind to everyone, and is the best and closest friend and counsellor to the Bahá'í friends . . ." A few weeks later I received a letter from Dr. Ḥakím, including "What you have said about the Afnán, Ḥasan Muvaqqar Balyúzí, was also noted by the Guardian, who said, 'Write [to Ḥabíb]: "Yes, you are right."' Then he said: 'I pray for him, he can be sure.'"'

As early as Riḍván 1943 the Guardian directed the thoughts of the British Bahá'ís to the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb. He was anxious that 'the British Bahá'ís should . . . demonstrate to the public and to their fellow believers, the vitality of their community and the marked advancement it has made of late.' (through his secretary, 17 June 1943) Ḥasan was chairman of the Centenary Committee and secretary of the committee which produced *The Centenary of a World Faith*, subtitled 'The History of the Bahá'í Faith and Its Development in the British Isles.' It was 'most excellently gotten out and not only well written but calculated to arouse the interest of the reader and impress him with the true stature of our World Faith'. (Shoghi Effendi through his secretary, 12 August 1944) During the week-long programme opened by Sir Ronald Storrs at the Centenary Exhibition, a review of Bahá'í history in dramatized form was presented by Ḥasan, who was also one of the speakers at the large public meeting on 23 May. The 'patient efforts and sacrifices of the members of the N.S.A., and all those who contributed to the marked success of the Centenary celebrations . . . brought happiness to his often heavily over-burdened heart,' wrote the Guardian's secretary in the same letter.

It was during the historic Convention of that week that the delegates resolved to inaugurate a Six Year Plan for teaching and turned to the Guardian to fix the goal. His reply on 25 May signalized a great new phase for the British community: WELCOME SPONTANEOUS DECISION. ADVISE FORMATION NINETEEN SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES SPREAD OVER ENGLAND WALES SCOTLAND NORTHERN IRELAND AND EIRE . . . At that time there were no believers in the British Isles beyond England except George Townshend!

Throughout the Six Year Plan Ḥasan's administrative burdens were in no way lessened; indeed, the claims on the N.S.A. and its officers multiplied as the Plan progressed and the challenge to the community intensified. At the Teaching Conference of February 1946, a turning-point for the Plan when the nine goal towns of the Initial Phase were chosen, the N.S.A. session lifted the friends to a 'realm of

dedication and spiritual resolution, which was immeasurably reinforced by Ḥasan Balyúzí's inspired message'. There are reports of his speaking in Northampton, Torquay, Exeter, Leeds, and he is on the 'honour roll' of travelling teachers, participating fully in the Summer Schools which were so crucial to winning the Plan, and chairing the 1949 Teaching Conference, attended by Mrs. Amelia Collins, when 'the very room seemed to vibrate with the power of the Cause'. And then, following a year of deep anxiety, at the victory Convention of 1950 'our dear, perennial Ḥasan Balyúzí read the cable, and so the whole tone of Convention was set'. HEART FLOODED JOY were the Guardian's opening words; it was a moment no one present will ever forget.

Never one to pause in his compelling vision of the ultimate triumph of the Faith, the Guardian in this same message called on the British community to BRACE ITSELF EMBARK AFTER ONE YEAR RESPITE YET ANOTHER HISTORIC UNDERTAKING, and he sketched the outlines of the Two Year Plan or African Campaign. It was the first stage in the Divine Plan in which several National Assemblies would march together, and the British N.S.A.'s trust was to be 'the consultative body for all African territories' with whom 'the other National Assemblies should keep in close touch . . .' The time was indeed short until the centenary in 1953 of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic mission in the Síyáh-Chál. Yet despite the brevity of the Two Year Plan it was laden with unimagined significances, first indicated by Shoghi Effendi on 16 January 1951 when in four score words he unveiled the events of the next thirty years and far beyond.

The African Teaching Conference, in which 123 African Bahá'ís of some thirty tribes participated with many other believers, was the first of four Intercontinental Conferences convened in 1953. It was the British N.S.A.'s responsibility to plan it, in co-operation with the five other National Assemblies of the Plan, and its chairman's responsibility to convene it. In the event, Ḥasan and John and Dorothy Ferraby, all N.S.A. officers, attended this unique Conference which, with the three to follow, launched the FATE-LADEN, SOUL-STIRRING, DECADE-LONG, WORLD-EMBRACING SPIRITUAL CRUSADE known as the Ten Year Plan. It was Ḥasan's first mission overseas, during which he presided over all sessions, spoke at the public meeting in Makerere University College, and participated in the two consultations of the N.S.A. representatives with the Hands of the Cause.

Once again the Guardian, in his long cablegram to the 1953 British Bahá'í Convention, after warmly congratulating the delegates ON MAGNIFICENT VICTORIES ACHIEVED AFRICAN CONTINENT EXCEEDING HIGHEST HOPES, announced his forward plans for the TRIUMPHANT RICHLY BLESSED BRITISH NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY [to] PARTICIPATE ELEVEN SISTER NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES EAST WEST IMPENDING WORLD SPIRITUAL CRUSADE . . . Their fourteen areas of responsibility beyond their ISLAND HOME were breathtaking, but without hesitation the Convention pledged TOTAL DEDICATION CONSECRATION UNWAVERING SERVICE CONFIDENT DIVINE HOSTS WILL REINFORCE OUR EFFORTS IN PROPORTION OUR STEADFASTNESS COVENANT . . .

We are grateful to the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery for a description of Ḥasan at this time: 'The first time I met him was in 1953 at the Stockholm Conference; he was young, elegant, soft-spoken, gentle and graceful. His luxuriant black hair enhanced the handsomeness of his countenance; to me he appeared the embodiment of the perfect Persian aristocrat. His linguistic ability was truly superb . . . In Stockholm he was happy and exuberant, and Angeline and I became his good friends.'

Ḥasan carried great responsibilities in the World Crusade for, apart from his chairmanship of the N.S.A. during the first seven years, he served on five national committees including chairmanship (1953–1957) of the European and Asian Teaching Committee which had under its wing the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh opening seven European goals and consolidation of the Faith in Eire and Hong Kong. Barbara Lewis, its secretary, recalls Ḥasan's chairmanship: 'I remember . . . how much I learnt about Bahá'í affairs, and how to handle them, from his loving and wise direction of the Committee . . . He was, I felt, a man of great stature, and of outstanding qualities, and these he brought to bear in his guidance to the Committee during consultation about the well-being of those Knights of Bahá'u'lláh

with whom we were concerned . . . His has been a lasting influence on me throughout the thirty years I've been a Bahá'í.'

One ought to remember as well his young family of five sons, the eldest eleven when the Ten Year Plan began. And for almost seventeen years he accepted into his home and care his young relative, Farhang Afnan. 'From the moment when I first saw him [September 1951], I was enraptured by his kindness, gentleness and understanding. As time passed, I came to realise more and more what a unique person he was . . . He was like a many faceted precious jewel.'

The first year of the Crusade elicited an expression of the Guardian's pride in the British community's RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS; all their overseas goals had been filled and their Local Assemblies at home maintained. At the same time a strenuous search was being pursued for a National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in London. Over thirty properties were considered and many viewed before success, hailed by the Guardian as a HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT. (16 October 1954) Ḥasan and two Hands of the Cause, Dr. Grossmann and Mr. Ioas, spoke during the Teaching Conference and Dedication held on 15 January 1955.

Ḥasan's next mission overseas occurred at Riḍván 1956 when as N.S.A. chairman he convened in Kampala, Uganda, the first Convention of the Bahá'ís of Central and East Africa, meeting for the election of their own Regional Spiritual Assembly only five years after the inception of the African Campaign. 'My heart brims with joy and my soul is uplifted with thankfulness', were the Guardian's words as he greeted the four African Conventions, paying a 'warm and heartfelt tribute' to all who had contributed to 'so colossal an enterprise', including the members of the six National Assemblies supporting the work, and appealing to them 'not to abandon these fledgling African Bahá'í communities . . .' Ḥasan performed other services in Kampala, including an introductory talk for the viewing of the cloak of Bahá'u'lláh, a press interview and radio broadcast. The following week-end in Leicester he described to the British Convention the exciting events of the African Convention, the 'staunchness and devotion' of the African Bahá'ís, the tremendous sacrifices of the pioneers, and some of the challenging problems confronting the new Regional Assembly. He had promised to raise their cry for assistance, and this he did most movingly in Leicester.

Ever since the appointment of the first contingent of the Hands of the Cause in December 1951, the British Bahá'ís had received the blessing and guidance of their own DEARLY LOVED MUCH ADMIRED GREATLY GIFTED OUTSTANDING HAND CAUSE GEORGE TOWNSHEND, thus extolled by the Guardian on the occasion of his death in March 1957. It was only five months later, in his last major letter to the National Assembly, that intriguing reference was made to their 'future Hands', a puzzle soon resolved in his message to the Bahá'í world, October 1957, in which eight more Hands were appointed. They included the chairman and secretary of the British National Assembly, Ḥasan Balyúzí, 'representing the Afnán', and John Ferraby. In reply to the N.S.A.'s cable of gratitude came these final words of the beloved Guardian to the British friends: CONFIDENT BRITISH COMMUNITY RICHLY DESERVES NEW HONOUR. SHOGHI. (11 October 1957)

III. *The Hand of the Cause*

Who could foresee at that joyous hour of the receipt of the October message from Shoghi Effendi, vibrant with his vision of the fourth phase of the World Crusade and the five Intercontinental Conferences to inaugurate it, that this would be his last call to action to the Bahá'í world, that the next messages would be from Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum announcing his passing on 4 November in London and his funeral a few days later? In her hour of indescribable shock and grief, with the need to convey this terrible news to the Bahá'ís, she thought, she has written, 'of the two British Hands of the Cause, so recently elevated to this high rank . . . She first turned to Ḥasan Balyúzí, an Afnán cousin of his . . .' who, on arrival, telephoned John Ferraby; the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery was also called and arrived that night. From 'the very day of his ascension', these four Hands 'became responsible for all the pressing matters that had to be attended to in such a short space of time . . .' The following afternoon Ḥasan and Dr. Giachery accompanied her 'to inspect possible sites for the grave . . .

within an hour's journey from London'. At twilight they found the spot we know, 'then proceeded to the undertaker's, to choose a suitable casket for the precious remains of the beloved Guardian'. The heart-rending details of these days, 4 to 9 November, a few lines of which are here quoted, have been recounted by Rúḥíyyih Khánum in *The Passing of Shoghi Effendi* (*The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, pp. 207–225). It remains only to record, for this memorial article, that beside the grave, after the believers had filed by for over two hours to pay their respects, a prayer was chanted in Persian and then 'the Afnán Hand of the Cause, Ḥasan Balyúzí, read the closing prayer in English'.

On 18 November, just a fortnight after the passing of the Guardian, twenty-six Hands of the Cause assembled in the Holy Land 'to consult together on the most tragic situation facing the Bahá'ís since the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá . . .' Next morning nine of them, including Ḥasan, were 'chosen by Rúḥíyyih Khánum to examine the Guardian's apartment'. Their 'thorough search' revealed 'that no Will or Testament of any nature whatsoever executed by Shoghi Effendi had been found', and this they 'reported to the entire body of the Hands assembled in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí . . .' (ibid. p. 341)

Stunned, bewildered, overwhelmed at this discovery that no Will had been left, no heir appointed, the Hands had no choice but to accept the fate which had befallen them. As 'Chief Stewards' they must guide the Bahá'ís of the world for almost six years in the knowledge that they were bereft of infallible divine guidance until the Universal House of Justice could be brought into being. For a week, in session in the Mansion, they considered this situation. During this time the two Hands of the Cause, Ḥasan Balyúzí and Abu'l-Qásim Faizi, alternated in translating their consultations, in itself a wearying task for men already bowed by the events just past. The outcome of their deliberations was reported in a Proclamation which outlined a number of actions including the constitution of 'a body of nine Hands to serve at the Bahá'í World Centre' whom they later designated 'the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith'; among the nine was Ḥasan Balyúzí. The imprint of these three weeks on Ḥasan has been noted by Dr. Giachery, referring to his elevation to the rank of a Hand of the Cause of God. 'His exultation, alas, was of very short duration. Twenty days later, the sudden demise of Shoghi Effendi dealt him a deadly blow, from which he never recovered.'

It was expected that Ḥasan, after settling his affairs in London, would come to Haifa to pursue this new and weighty responsibility, and preparation was made for him to share a room near the gate of the Master's House with his dear and old friend, Abu'l-Qásim Faizi, but at the last minute he was unable to return. He consulted his fellow Hands at the 1958 Conclave, hoping to find a solution to personal problems which prevented his service. It would seem that no path opened, for his replacement was announced in November 1959, but he continued as an alternate Hand in the Holy Land, spending weeks, sometimes months, in Haifa. Perhaps his outstanding contribution was in the preparation of archives for removal to the International Archives Building, when he assisted Rúḥíyyih Khánum for several months in 1959 and 1961. The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and Mr. Ian Semple—both of whom, with the Hand of the Cause A. Q. Faizi, participated in this work—have described the importance of Ḥasan's part, when his wide knowledge enabled him to identify Tablets and other materials. 'I had met many Bahá'í scholars in Írán,' Mr. Furútan told the writer, 'but he was to me one of the outstanding figures . . . I have never found in my life such a modest and humble man as Balyúzí . . . I loved him dearly.' And Dr. Giachery has written: 'As Custodian at the World Centre, for some months, I had the good chance to know him better and ever more admire his noble character and sterling qualities . . . His life of service and spiritual obedience and sacrifices remains an effulgent example to emulate.' Though work may have filled their days in Haifa, nights at the Eastern Pilgrim House were lightened by Ḥasan's humour. He would quote a Persian expression and then laugh and laugh, Mr. Furútan recalled; while Mrs. Furútan described him as 'such a delightful man', recounting stories of Persia at table; he was 'really wonderful'. He also attended the annual Conclaves of the Hands of the Cause at

the World Centre, including the one in 1963 which opened in Haifa in April before the election of the Universal House of Justice and closed in London in the week following the World Congress. As in 1957 he translated a great part of the sessions.

From the hour of his appointment as Hand of the Cause, he devoted his energies to the successful consummation of the Guardian's Crusade, then nearly half-way to its close. 'There is much that only the future can reveal,' he wrote on his return from the first Conclave. 'But still through this dark night of our souls, there beams powerful and luminous as ever, the floodlight of the Guardian's guidance . . . He has left us all that we need to carry us to the "Most Great Jubilee", and beyond to the day where once again the gates of Divine guidance will be opened and the Universal House of Justice . . . will come to be.' And he added this sentence, truly a key to his motivation as a Bahá'í, frequently mentioned by him and observed by others over the years: 'If only we live the words of the Master's prayer, *Make me as dust in the pathway of Thy loved ones*, our victory is secure.' (*Bahá'í Journal*, January 1958)

Within a week after receipt in Britain of the Proclamation of the Hands, Ḥasan met representatives from all Local Assemblies and major national committees in the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds to explain the situation in the Faith, and did so again in January at the Annual Teaching Conference in Leeds when his talk 'was moving beyond the power of words to describe'. (*Bahá'í Journal*, February 1958) He attended the opening of the Bahá'í Centre in Leicester in mid-February, spoke at week-end schools in Manchester, Cambridge and Brighton, and was elected an officer of Convention at Riḍván and once again to the National Spiritual Assembly.

Meanwhile, a Conference of the European Hands with their two Auxiliary Boards (the Protection Board but recently formed) was held in Berne in February 1958. For Ḥasan it was the first of ten such Conferences he attended between 1958 and June 1964, always contributing much wise and practical advice and sharing chairmanship with his fellow Hands. Concerning these Conferences, which often included members of the European National Spiritual Assemblies, the International Bahá'í Council noted their 'immense value to the work on that continent . . . the experience of a number of Bahá'í institutions consulting together in this way for the service of the Cause and their mutual help, is unforgettably moving.' (*Bahá'í Journal*, November 1961) Two of the Conferences coincided with greater events: the Frankfurt International Teaching Conference in July 1958 and the laying of the cornerstone of the European Temple in November 1960. Ḥasan participated in both events, so intimately related to the vision and instructions of the Guardian. 'His love for the Guardian was extraordinary,' Mr. Furútan has said of his fellow Hand. 'He was always speaking of him, quoting him. His main theme, when I was with him, was the Guardian.' And so it was at the close of the Frankfurt Conference when Ḥasan, with the other Hands of the Cause, bade farewell to the believers. 'What more can I say? There are many things I do not know, but one thing I do know. Now is the time to show our faithfulness to our beloved Guardian.'

Ḥasan's personal relationship with Auxiliary Board members in the British Isles, as a European Hand of the Cause, must also be mentioned. From the experience of two such members, it can be said that he was prompt and business-like in replying to their reports, shared these with his fellow Hands and took action as needed, dealt with their needs whether financial or for guidance, always encouraged them, trusted their judgement, and wrote in an unassuming spirit, at times signing himself 'Gratefully and lovingly in His Fellowship'.

Yet another aspect of Ḥasan's international service was his journey in April 1961 to Ecuador and Peru, where he represented the World Centre at the first Conventions of their national Bahá'í communities. A report from Peru expressed gratitude for his 'patient explanations, his dignified, loving manner and wonderful sense of humour . . .' (*Bahá'í News*, no. 364, p. 4) Following the first elections of these National Spiritual Assemblies, Ḥasan went north to cross Canada during May. Here, in addition to meeting the friends, he visited a number of Indian Reserves, including Indians of Ontario, the Poorman Reserve in Saskatchewan where he

was honoured by a pow-wow, the Muscowpetung Reserve, the Peigan Reserve in Alberta, and Indians of British Columbia. His talks were 'simple and direct', appealing 'to the hearts of the many who came to hear him'. (ibid. no. 366, p. 9) Later he described these meetings as 'very wonderful', commending to British Bahá'ís the initiative of individuals upon whom 'so much depends', and expressing his confidence in the rapid acceptance of the Faith by Indians. Again in 1962 Ḥasan attended first National Conventions, this time in Holland and Denmark, as representative of the World Centre.

Were one to analyse, year by year, Ḥasan's travels to three continents in his first six years as a Hand of the Cause, and couple his schedule with one detailing his continuous activities within the British Isles in accordance with his habitual pattern in past decades, his perseverance in service to the Guardian's Crusade would stand out brilliantly. Records show his attendance at the annual Teaching Conferences of 1959, 1960 and 1962; his visits in June and July 1960 to Bangor (Northern Ireland), Edinburgh and Manchester and his meeting with Bahá'ís of the Southern Region; his stirring review at the 1960 Convention of British Bahá'í history as bearing on present responsibilities; his course on the Covenant at the Harlech Summer School of 1960 when, with the Hand of the Cause Adelbert Mühlschlegel 'their radiant personalities filled our days'; his address for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Master's visit to England at the National Celebration in London, September 1961, sharing the platform with the Hand of the Cause Leroy Ioas; a similar Celebration in Edinburgh in January 1963 of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit there, addressed by Ḥasan and Dr. Mühlschlegel; and a number of important messages which he wrote to the British Bahá'ís in these years. Sadly, by 1960 the problem of recurring ill health frequently appears. For four months, March to June 1962, he was unable to meet the National Assembly as was his wont, following his resignation from this body in February 1960 in order better to contribute to the development of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, one of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade. In August 1962 he entered hospital for an operation on his right shoulder, and from 1963 he had to contend repeatedly with various kinds of illness and injury which greatly taxed his strength. Yet some of his finest contributions occurred in these years.

Ḥasan had served for twenty-seven continuous years as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and for seventeen years as its chairman, seven of these during the exacting claims of the World Crusade. To the regret but with the affection and gratitude of his fellow members, 'who felt truly bereft at losing him', he had withdrawn from the Assembly, offering however to consult with them as a Hand whenever he was in England. This he did when his health permitted, often discussing ten or twelve subjects at a meeting, or when absent sending his suggestions. In addition, he was ever ready to guide and advise the Assembly officers between meetings. In its 1962 report to Convention, the N.S.A. wrote that it 'has had the benefit of numerous consultations with Ḥasan Balyúzí and is deeply grateful to him for keeping so closely in touch with the work of the British Community'. Their close association with him is also mentioned in 1964, 1966, 1967 and 1969.

Counsellor Betty Reed, who became National Secretary in January 1961, has written: 'For there were two aspects of Ḥasan's assistance; one was his constant help to the National Assembly, and the other his invaluable guidance and advice to the Officers . . . He followed the work of the National Assembly carefully, and went to considerable trouble to help keep the Assembly on course . . . Ḥasan had taught us to study every single word in Shoghi Effendi's letters . . . and the National Assembly continued to give the same close attention to the letters of the Universal House of Justice, which was reflected in the Assembly's direction of the Nine Year Plan . . .' Mrs. Reed cites, in particular, as does John Long, then Chairman of the N.S.A., Ḥasan's guidance during the imprisonment of Bahá'ís in Morocco, when 'the Officers were constantly in touch' with him, as well as his encouragement to give priority to pioneering overseas despite needs on the Home Front, and this was done both for Europe in 1960 and Australia in 1961. And she continues, '. . . reflections over the last thirteen years of travel in Europe have convinced me of the great

debt the British Community owes to Ḥasan Balyúzí. We came through the Six Year Plan, the Africa Campaign, the Ten Year Crusade, and the Nine Year Plan in one steady, continuous upward curve, never doubting that goals set by the beloved Guardian or the Universal House of Justice could be won—we didn't talk about the Power of Bahá'u'lláh, we just experienced it, thought it a natural Bahá'í phenomenon, and *that* we had learned from Ḥasan.'

Counsellor Dorothy Ferraby, also an officer of the National Spiritual Assembly for many years until she joined her husband, the Hand of the Cause John Ferraby, in Haifa in 1960, came to the same conclusion after more than a quarter of a century in joint service with Ḥasan: 'We worked together, he as chairman and I as secretary of the Youth Group. Later we worked together closely and harmoniously on the London Assembly and the National Assembly . . . In all my association with him he was a tremendous support, a wise guide and counsellor about whatever we were involved in. Nobody will ever be able to estimate how much the Faith in England owes to him.'

Indeed, for many years he was 'rained under', in his own words, by the sheer volume of his correspondence, not only with institutions of the Faith but with the many believers who turned to him whether in the pursuit of their services to Bahá'u'lláh, or in test, difficulty or sorrow. His understanding, wise counsel and sympathy knew no bounds.

For most Bahá'ís their last sight of Ḥasan Balyúzí was in 1963, for after the World Congress in the Royal Albert Hall he rarely went among them. The beloved Guardian's Crusade seemed to have taken all his strength. Few will forget his closing address in the first session of the Congress and his opening triumphant words from the Master, *O Bahá'u'lláh, What hast Thou done? O Bahá'u'lláh, May my life be sacrificed for Thee!* In the compass of this one talk he recalled the entire history of the Faith, held out the vision of even greater crusades to come, and closed by extolling the Crusade whose victory the World Congress celebrated as most precious of all, for it was 'launched by our beloved Shoghi Effendi'.

IV. *Scholar and Writer*

From the time of his appointment as a Hand of the Cause in October 1957 Ḥasan had devoted himself to this high calling, bearing as well until Riḍván 1960 a great and continuous responsibility as chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly during the intensive activities of the Ten Year Crusade. With his fellow Hands he had borne the crushing blow of the death of the Guardian, followed by the heart-numbing shock that he had left no heir. He had served for the first two years thereafter as one of the nine Custodians of the Faith at the World Centre, and had travelled to Haifa whenever the claims of his family permitted. He had made other trips to Haifa to assist with the development of the International Archives, and had attended the annual Conclaves of the Hands at Bahjí. He had participated as a Hand in the European Conferences with Board members and National Spiritual Assemblies, unstintingly sharing his knowledge and wisdom and guiding, with other Hands, the proceedings of these important gatherings. He had represented the World Centre in 1961 and 1962 at the first Conventions in Ecuador, Peru, Holland and Denmark, and had travelled across Canada especially visiting Indian Reserves. He had been present in 1963 at the first World Convention in Haifa and in London a few days later had addressed the opening session of the World Congress. He had continued to pour out his love and guidance to the British Bahá'í Community and had consulted frequently with their National Assembly.

But these six crowded years had taken their toll. Exhausted, beset by dire financial problems, suffering almost continuous physical pain and mental and spiritual stress, always sensitive to the sufferings of others and to negative influences affecting the Faith, he could no longer endure the problems with which, as a Hand of the Cause, he was perpetually assailed. His only recourse in the period following the World Congress was to close the door on such problems, attend no more gatherings whether in Britain, Europe or Haifa, leave his letters unanswered and at times unopened, and receive but few of those who sought to meet him.[1] Such a drastic

[1] He did, however, continue to guide the National Spiritual Assembly and Board members and attended two sessions of the European Conference of the Hands with their Boards in London, June 1964.

course, although any other was beyond his strength, filled his mind with forebodings of guilt for his wasted days and abdication of his responsibilities as a Hand. Yet, all unrecognized, another path was about to open before him, another way of service as a Hand which the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá had delineated: 'to promote learning . . .'

As long ago as June 1938 his short biography of Bahá'u'lláh had been published, attracting the attention of Shoghi Effendi who expressed his hope 'that the two companion essays on the Báb and the Master . . . will be soon completed . . . , as he feels they can be of a valuable help to the friends in their teaching work'. (*Unfolding Destiny*, p. 122) Ḥasan has described how he 'set about organizing an outline for a book on the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá' and why this project was halted and 'not resumed until more than a score of years had passed'. (Foreword to *'Abdu'l-Bahá*) It was in 1960 that he took up this work again with the idea of a trilogy on the three Central Figures of the Faith. His original booklet, surely a literary gem, was amplified with an invaluable essay on the Manifestations of God and published at Riḍván 1963 as *Bahá'u'lláh*, the first of his trilogy. Perforce the project had suffered postponement in those overburdened years as the World Crusade drew to a close, and even after the Crusade had ended and his yearning to write his biography of the Master filled him with a kind of desperation, it was not until 1965 that he turned his full attention to writing. His last decade would see the publication of five major literary works in English and he would leave as well several manuscripts for posthumous publication. He had found at last, after those testing months when he felt himself burned out and impotent, yet never yielding his trust in Bahá'u'lláh's mercy and succour, a career for which all his study, experience and devotion had prepared him. From 1965 onwards his labours were ceaseless and his achievements enriched the literature of the Faith, inspired youthful Bahá'í scholars, and increased the knowledge of all who turned to his books.

Although he lived with pain to the end—angina, hiatus hernia and high blood pressure in his last five years—ill health endowed him with the need for retirement from public activities and gave him the privacy a writer requires. In 1971 and 1973, upon receiving signed copies of *'Abdu'l-Bahá* and *The Báb*, respectively, the Universal House of Justice addressed to Ḥasan two letters in which he 'took great pleasure', being 'enormously grateful' for their support and encouragement. (Molly Balyúzí through their son Robert) 'Your book is a splendid addition to the literature of the Cause', they wrote, 'and eloquent testimony to your wisdom in concentrating on such scholarly activity.' (5 December 1971) And later, 'We sincerely hope that nothing will prevent you from continuing your invaluable and devoted labours, whose results are of such infinite value in increasing the knowledge and deepening the understanding of the believers.' (22 April 1973)

Ḥasan has stated that the delay in completing the trilogy was the result of his strong conviction 'that Professor Edward Granville Browne's connections with the Faith of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh had to be explored and explained'. His first conception was to include this in his life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but realizing 'that a diversion of that magnitude was inappropriate' he prepared this material for separate publication, rewriting it three times, and it was published in 1970. The importance of this scholarly work, proving its value from the first, may well be fully recognized only in future, for, in the words of the Universal House of Justice, it 'will surely go a long way to fulfil the beloved Guardian's expressed wish that ". . . the mind of the intellectual world be freed of these wrong conceptions"'. (8 October 1969) In 1977 Ḥasan completed a Persian manuscript on the same theme, of greater length, quoting the text of the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and copied in his own handwriting. (Its publication has been postponed because of recent events in Írán.)

Ḥasan's method of writing, he has said, was to work on two or three books at the same time, thereby relieving the fatigue of long hours of concentration on a single manuscript. Often it was his habit to continue far into the night, and so he would turn for refreshment from writing, to research, to reading for background. It is probable that his mind dwelt on the work in hand almost constantly. He was meticulous in assembling his materials, was known to spend three days in the deter-

mination of a single date, and gave most careful thought to the transliteration of Persian, Arabic and Turkish names whose pronunciation could vary according to region. All his books were submitted in his own handwriting, and even quotations were copied by hand to ensure that his choice of deletions would be followed.

From the very beginning he had the invaluable assistance of his cousin, Abu'l-Qásim Afnán, Custodian of the House of the Báb, whose 'very generous aid in my research' Ḥasan acknowledged in his book on E. G. Browne. His diligence in obtaining and delivering materials to Ḥasan for each of his books is beyond all praise, as illustrated by this extract from a 1974 letter from Ḥasan: 'Afnán has brought me masses of photostats and original documents . . . there is enough material to make the book on the Báb double its present size, and for a massive book on the Life of Bahá'u'lláh.'

In his later years it was Ḥasan's dream to have a research assistant, one who could spend part of each day with him. This was not to be, but instead from 1972 a young scholar and medical student, Moojan Momen, served him with great devotion in such time as he could spare. His 'assiduous and able research' was acknowledged by Ḥasan with profound gratitude in his preface to *Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory*; his 'help and assistance to me have been of inestimable value'. By appointing him one of his three Literary Executors and Trustees of the Afnán Library, Ḥasan demonstrated his confidence in Dr. Momen.

Ḥasan's knowledge of the Faith, of Persian history, literature and culture, of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Írán and its leading figures, and of current developments in the world, whether political, artistic or literary, was remarkable. Here are a few passages from a letter from Dr. Iraj Ayman: although 'not personally known to the rank and file of the friends in Iran . . . [he] was much better known and respected amongst upper class intelligentsia, especially scholars and intellectuals either educated in England or engaged in Iranian studies. He was regarded as an authority . . . a leading scholar . . . Sitting in London he was more informed and well-versed in Persian studies than any other scholar I knew . . . His fluency in Persian, English, Arabic and French as well as familiarity with some other languages had made him . . . unique amongst orientalists . . . If he is not yet openly acknowledged as a leading figure in contemporary Persian literature it is only because he was a well-known and active Bahá'í . . .' Even while engaged in his English writing, three of his books in Persian were published in Írán: *The Story of Three Sisters* (the Brontes), *Half-Brothers* (a collection of short stories translated from English), and *Words in English Derived from Persian*, in which 'he traced the roots of more than seven hundred English words'. (Iraj Ayman; titles translated by Mr. Balyúzí)

'You know better than I', wrote Farhang Afnan, 'what an encyclopaedic mind he had . . . Whatever statement he made, he could substantiate it by not one but several independent and reputable sources.' And the Hand of the Cause A.-A. Furútan has said, 'Even when I met him in London at the end of his life, he was speaking of Iranians who were writing against the Faith, and I saw how wide was his knowledge of books published. But he made no mention of his own writings—so humble, modest and brilliant he was.'

Some have wondered why, after his trilogy was completed in 1973 and despite his plan for four volumes presenting the life and times of Bahá'u'lláh in their historical setting both in Írán and in the world at large, he should first write a volume entitled *Muḥammad and the Course of Islám* (1976). The closing paragraph of this book shows how essential it was as a bridge to the 'vast study' he was contemplating. More than this, an understanding of Islám based on full recognition of 'the God-given mission of Muḥammad' and free of sectarian bias, he felt to be an essential background for study of the Bahá'í Faith. And so he 'produced a monumental work on Islám which will eclipse most of the books written on this subject' (Professor Zeine N. Zeine)—'a subject which has never really received from western scholars and writers the objective and accurate treatment it deserves'. (The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi)

In the spring of 1979, when Ḥasan was striving to complete the first volume of his ambitious project, he said to a visitor, 'I hope that I will live long enough to finish it.' (O. Z. Whitehead) It had been a daunting under-

taking during the previous four years as his materials accumulated and he laboured with utmost care to bring into being this great and unique work. No other comprehensive biography of Bahá'u'lláh, whether in English or Persian, has so far been achieved. The writer recalls the enthusiastic comment of the Hand of the Cause Paul Haney in April 1980, on reading the published *Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory*: It's 'great, really great . . . There will never be anything like it.'

To study the work of Ḥasan Balyúzí is to realize his central motivation: to promote the highest interests of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, and to do so with truth and dignity in a manner befitting its indescribably high station. That he did not complete all he had in mind is a loss for which we have no compensation. But, in the words of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, his 'gem-like books will remain among the most outstanding writings to enlighten the paths of seekers for centuries to come'.

A year after Ḥasan's passing, a brief but moving essay by him entitled *Khadíjih Bagum, The Wife of the Báb*, was published to commemorate this first anniversary, and in a foreword his son Robert described 'his legacy to the Bahá'í World', his own books and documents as the nucleus of the Afnán Library which, when established, should be open 'to all students and scholars wishing to research the history of the Faith'. It was 'his most dear wish: that his work should continue and that the study of the history of the Faith should grow to its recognition as a major scholastic discipline'. Already this hope has been recognized in the Ḥasan Balyúzí Lectureship founded in 1980 by the Canadian Association for Bahá'í Studies, for which distinguished Bahá'ís have addressed the Annual Conferences of the past four years.

During the last months of Ḥasan's life, following a time in hospital in October 1979 after a heart attack, he seemed to become the Ḥasan we remembered, frail but as one rejuvenated. He had already written the major part of the second volume of his great project and was working on the third. On 4 November he had visited, after long absence, the grave of the beloved Guardian and a photograph at its gate records his happiness. On 26 November, having expressed a wish to do so, he spoke to Bahá'í friends at the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds on a theme close to his heart—'The Power of the Covenant'—hoping 'to be with you more often, my great privilege'. (This beautiful talk is recorded on tape.) He had also conceived, with utmost longing, a plan to carry to the Threshold of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh a leather-bound copy of his labour of love and praise for the One to Whom he had dedicated his life so long before. The first copy reached England early in February 1980, but instead of seeing it with his own eyes he had it delivered for this special binding. He was never to see it, for on 12 February, as the result of a stroke in the morning hours, he passed away quietly in his sleep. It fell to his son Robert to complete this precious mission in March, which he performed in deep humility, and now the volume is preserved in the International Bahá'í Archives.

On 15 February in the chapel of the New Southgate Cemetery, and then beside his grave near that of his beloved Guardian, large numbers of his family and friends paid their final tribute. 'His life of service and spiritual obedience and sacrifices remains an effulgent example to emulate . . . Dear, dear Ḥasan . . . In time, all humanity will treasure your memory.'[1]

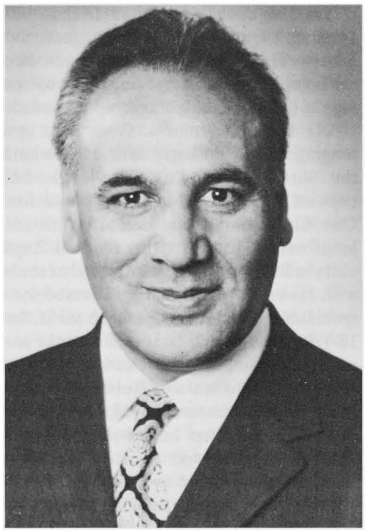
There are certain pillars which have been established as the unshakeable supports of the Faith of God. The mightiest of these is learning and the use of the mind, the expansion of consciousness, and insight into the realities of the universe and the hidden mysteries of Almighty God. 'Abdu'l-Bahá

MARION HOFMAN

RAḤMATU'LLÁH MUHÁJIR
1923–1979

PROFOUNDLY LAMENT UNTIMELY PASSING IN QUITO ECUADOR BELOVED HAND CAUSE RAHMATULLAH MUHAJIR FOLLOWING HEART ATTACK COURSE HIS LATEST SOUTH AMERICAN

[1] This and the previous quotations by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery are from an Appreciation, 23 October 1983. The quotation which follows is from *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, no. 97.



Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir

TOUR. UNSTINTED UNRESTRAINED OUTPOURING OF PHYSICAL SPIRITUAL ENERGIES BY ONE WHO OFFERED HIS ALL PATH SERVICE HAS NOW CEASED. POSTERITY WILL RECORD HIS DEVOTED SERVICES YOUTHFUL YEARS CRADLE FAITH HIS SUBSEQUENT UNIQUE EXPLOITS PIONEERING FIELD SOUTHEAST ASIA WHERE HE WON ACCOLADE KNIGHTHOOD BAHAULLAH HIS CEASELESS EFFORTS OVER TWO DECADES SINCE HIS APPOINTMENT HAND CAUSE STIMULATING IN MANY LANDS EAST WEST PROCESS ENTRY BY TROOPS. FRIENDS ALL CONTINENTS WHO MOURN THIS TRAGIC LOSS NOW SUDDENLY DEPRIVED COLLABORATION ONE WHO ENDEARED HIMSELF TO THEM THROUGH HIS GENTLENESS HIS LUMINOUS PERSONALITY HIS EXEMPLARY UNFLAGGING ZEAL HIS CREATIVE ENTHUSIASTIC APPROACH TO FULFILLMENT ASSIGNED GOALS. URGE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING HIS HIGH STATION UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENTS. MAY HIS RADIANT SOUL ABHÁ KINGDOM REAP RICH HARVEST HIS DEDICATED SELFSACRIFICING SERVICES CAUSE GOD.

Universal House of Justice
29 October 1979

Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was born, in 1923, into a distinguished Bahá'í family. Three of his forebears—the Dawlatábádí brothers—attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and later were recipients of a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá bearing the salutation *Ay Muhájirán*—'O Pioneers'—in which He exhorts them to thank God that they were able to meet the Blessed Beauty and prays for their success in rendering ever-increasing services to the Faith. The name Muhájir was adopted as their family name from that day.

The parents of Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, Ḥafíẓu'lláh Khán and Iṣmat Khánum, continued the family tradition of dedication and service. Raḥmat, his brothers and five sisters were brought up in a home that was a centre for many Bahá'í meetings and firesides attended by great Bahá'í teachers. Raḥmat participated in all these meetings from early childhood and brought many seekers to hear the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. If by chance there was no one to accompany him he would invite the corner shopkeepers, promising them a good Persian meal. He always remembered this period of his life as a very happy one during which he received a thorough Bahá'í training that had instilled in his heart the love of Bahá'u'lláh and devotion to His Faith. He chose the path of service early in his life and did not deviate from it. While in high school he was a member of the local and national youth committees and spent his summers visiting all the Bahá'í holy places in Írán.

His first experience of pioneering came following his graduation from high school when he postponed going to university and went to the province of Ádhirbáyján for two years. His remarkable planning skills were apparent even at that early age. He organized youth and children's activities, taught adults in the evenings and prepared lessons and taught Bahá'í classes. He is still remembered in that area for his kindness, love, knowledge of the Faith, humility and sense of humour. This sense of humour persisted throughout his life and was a saving grace in many difficult situations.

After this period of pioneering he entered medical school. His friends recall that he sustained and even increased his Bahá'í activities. When well-meaning friends advised him to concentrate more on his studies to avoid

failing, his reply was that Bahá'u'lláh would take care of his studies if he attended to His work. To the astonishment of all, a few months before graduation from medical school he suspended his studies and devoted three months to assisting in the accomplishment of the goals of the Forty-Five Month Plan of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán. He was secretary of the National Pioneering Committee and felt that it was not sufficient to do only administrative work. After the successful completion of the Plan he returned to his studies and graduated with honours from medical school.

We were married in 1951, just a few months prior to his graduation, and had the bounty of receiving a telegram from the beloved Guardian, sent to my father, the Hand of the Cause of God 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, conveying good wishes and saying 'praying blessings'.

In 1952 when the Ten Year World Crusade of the Guardian had been announced, it was our privilege to go on pilgrimage. Raḥmat had the blessing on several occasions of being alone with the Guardian who spoke to him about the Pacific Islands, the Malaysian Peninsula and the great potential of that part of the world. Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines and meeting the Guardian of the Cause of God increased the desire for sacrifice and service in Raḥmat's heart. On his return he was impatient and disinterested in his well-salaried job as a physician in the American Point Four hospital in Iṣfahán. He wanted to leave everything, forget the material world and carry out the wishes of his beloved Guardian. The Guardian had asked the Bahá'ís to undertake the spiritual conquest of the world. Raḥmat wanted to respond to this call immediately. He felt there was no time to lose. This attitude of absolute obedience to the Guardian and being guided by his words continued throughout his life; he devoured the writings of Shoghi Effendi and tried to follow and implement all the instructions. This was the motivating force of his life.

At the Asian Conference in New Delhi in October 1953 the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand announced that a physician was needed to fill their goal in the Mentawai Islands as doctors were the only ones who stood a remote chance of obtaining a visa. Raḥmat volunteered without hesitation. He resigned from his job and we sold all our worldly belongings. He had no idea what sort of place Mentawai was, whether or not he could get a job and, most important of all, whether a permit to stay in Indonesia would be granted us. Raḥmat was confident that by arising to carry out the behest of the Guardian all obstacles would be removed. In December 1953 we set out as pioneers to the Mentawai Islands. We arrived in the Island of Muara Siberut in February 1954 and were declared Knights of Bahá'u'lláh by the beloved Guardian. Raḥmat was employed by the Indonesian Ministry of Health, given a permanent residence visa and—miraculously—was assigned to Mentawai Islands.

Pioneering to Mentawai Islands—four small dots on the map in southern Sumatra in the Indonesian Archipelago—opened a vast and exciting field of service to Raḥmat. Although coming from a very different background and culture he felt very much at home in this new environment. He was joyful and constantly gave thanks to the beloved Guardian for this great opportunity and prayed to Bahá'u'lláh, day and night, not to take it away from him.

Muara Siberut is a former Dutch penal colony. Distant from the mainland, with no kind of development or comfort, and a constant climate of forty degrees Celsius, it was not a priority in the minds of the government officials. The native inhabitants were left to themselves, had no medical care, and practically all suffered from malaria and severe tropical skin diseases. Raḥmat, whose field of work was preventive medicine, began a systematic method of eradication of malaria and other diseases. He not only taught the people the Faith but also helped them to better their physical life. He respected the people of Mentawai and did not try to change their customs or their manner of dress. He had come to bring them a spiritual message and their appearance made no difference to him. He loved the tattooed natives as though they were his nearest and dearest kin. He never interfered with any of their traditional practices, especially if they did not affect their health. He very often participated in the native healer's dances and ceremonies, and allowed them to apply ritual paint to his face before examining a patient. He taught them how to use soap when they bathed in the river,

how to clean their hair, and how to take care of their babies. This genuine affection was reciprocated by the natives; they sought his advice and guidance in every matter.

As the number of Bahá'ís increased Raḥmat helped them to move their villages to new sites and gave them plans which included a Bahá'í Centre and a Bahá'í Cemetery. Separate shelters were built for their livestock which up to that time had shared their dwellings. The natives supplied the wood and roof thatching and Raḥmat gave them nails and assisted the many Bahá'í villages in the actual building of their houses. Perhaps the most important indication of the complete acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh by the natives of Mentawai was their willingness to depart from their ancestral burial ritual. It involved leaving the unburied corpse exposed until it decomposed and hanging the bare bones in their homes. After becoming Bahá'ís they buried their dead according to Bahá'í laws.

In all the years of his work in Mentawai, Raḥmat had very cordial relations with the Christian missionaries. Although very often they opposed him and disrupted his work, he was always kind to them, attended to their needs when they were sick, showed them every courtesy and did nothing to undermine the faith of those they had converted to Christianity. The natives, whether Christian, Bahá'í or pagan, adored him. Once when the Governor of Sumatra visited the islands to inspect Raḥmat's work many of the natives greeted him with shouts of *Alláh-u-Abhá*. When asked what this meant they referred him to Raḥmat saying, 'We are what the doctor is.' This resulted in a lengthy fireside with the Governor and other officials. The Governor was very impressed and for the duration of his term in office stayed on friendly terms with Raḥmat.

Although Raḥmat did not consider it so, all this was achieved with a great deal of physical hardship. Often when returning from his frequent trips to the remote interior, trips involving many days of walking through jungles and in waist-deep water, he would enter the wooden hut with tree bark walls that served as our home, covered in mud and blood from the leeches that had attached themselves to him while he walked in the rivers, happy and elated because a few people in the village he had visited had accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. He dismissed the leeches and the blood, saying God was helping him not to have high blood pressure. We were both afflicted with the severest kind of tropical malaria a few weeks after our arrival in the islands. In Raḥmat's case it was much more difficult as the shivers and very high fever came to him while he was walking in mud and torrential tropical rains and sleeping on a mat on the damp ground in the jungles.

The only means of communication with the outside world was a government mail-boat which visited Mentawai every six to eight months. When the mail included a message from the Guardian Raḥmat's spirit soared and his soul became aflame. These letters and messages sustained him for the next eight months. Illness, lack of food and exhaustion did not matter, as long as the Guardian was pleased.

The numerous letters and cables addressed by Shoghi Effendi to Raḥmat were left in Mentawai. The following extracts are quoted from the many letters of Dr. Ḥakím, the Persian secretary to the Guardian, which convey the Guardian's happiness with Raḥmat's efforts in the Mentawai Islands:

18 July 1955: 'Assure Dr. Muhájir and his wife that he prays for them and the success of their services to the Faith. The outstanding services that he and his wife have rendered have brought much happiness to his heart.'

18 May 1956: 'He said to convey his profound appreciation to Dr. Muhájir, who is a true pioneer, and also to his wife . . . He is very happy with Dr. Muhájir and his wife.'

Raḥmat was appointed to the rank of Hand of the Cause of God amongst the last contingent, in October 1957. The telegram of the beloved Guardian arrived when he was away in the villages of Java on a teaching trip. We had undertaken this rare trip to Djakarta on the instruction of the beloved Guardian to Raḥmat to assist in the purchase of the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds.

Raḥmat's great desire had been to remain in his pioneering post for the rest of his life. The sudden passing of the beloved Guardian a few weeks after the appointment of the last contingent of the Hands of the Cause made

this resolve even stronger. However, it was necessary for him to leave the islands. The affairs of the Faith were at a crucial point. The Ten Year Crusade was at its midway point and all the Hands of the Cause had to be involved in the world-wide development of the Faith. It was not possible for one of them to be incommunicado in a place that had no telegram or telephone service and was cut off from the rest of the world except by means of a boat which most of the time was out of service. It took months of persuasion by the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land, and lengthy nights and days of prayer, before Raḥmat, sadly and reluctantly, left the people he had loved so much and served so well.

We left Mentawai in 1958. In the four years of his work in the islands the number of Bahá'ís had increased to more than four thousand, three of the thirty-three Local Spiritual Assemblies had been incorporated, Bahá'í schools had been established, a Bahá'í endowment land had been purchased which was one of eight in the Bahá'í world, and a Bahá'í pamphlet had been translated and printed in the Mentawai language. This was a historic achievement as Mentawai was a spoken language that had never been recorded.

Raḥmat always believed that entire villages should be brought to the Faith as this prevented disunity and friction amongst the people and allowed them to progress much more in following the principles of the Faith. He put this idea into practice in Mentawai. He worked for the village as a whole and directed all aspects of the villagers' lives according to the teachings. Many of the children who sat at his feet on the damp ground learning Bahá'í prayers and the alphabet by the light of a small candle and sometimes the glow of the moon went on to live at the Bahá'í dormitory in Sumatra which Raḥmat had initiated and some became doctors and engineers. They remember him with love and affection and say they owe all to this gentle and kind man who sat them on his knees and chanted prayers and songs in his melodious voice.

A WHO Committee which visited Mentawai in 1960, in its report, after giving details of the beliefs of the Bahá'í Faith, devotes two long pages to Raḥmat's medical work in the islands and adds that he was the only representative among those of different religions who was concerned with the development of the islands, establishing schools, eradicating disease and bringing cleanliness and order to the villages.

Leaving Mentawai closed a phase of distinguished service in Raḥmat's life and opened a new one which continued for the next twenty years of his life. These twenty years are so entwined with the history of mass teaching and the development of the Faith, and his travels around the world are so extensive, that it is not possible to record all the events in the scope of this article. In the years between 1958 and 1979 he visited all the Bahá'í National Centres several times and in each country travelled to the interior visiting mass teaching areas and isolated believers. In the first three years of the Five Year Plan he had visited more than fifty countries. He travelled by sea and air, in buses and bullock carts, on foot and by hitchhiking. On one occasion he went from Afghanistan to Írán by oil tanker, and once, in order to visit a remote Pacific island, he signed on an oil tanker as a ship's doctor for two weeks. He told me later that he was seasick during that whole journey. He used utmost economy in all his travels, choosing the routes that would give him the most mileage on a plane ticket. He stayed at moderately priced hotels, in less expensive rooms, and chose meals that would not cost much. He very rarely went sight-seeing. To him, all cities and countries were the same. It was the quality of the teaching activities that made them different.

Raḥmat's extraordinary quality of recognizing the needs of an area made his advice valuable and practical. His vast experience and continuous travels enabled him to participate and contribute many ideas towards the formulation of the various plans of the World Centre. Co-operation between two neighbouring countries and the development of Bahá'í villages were ideas that were first introduced by him in Indonesia. He later implemented these ideas in the Philippines, Laos, Hong Kong, Korea, India and many countries of Africa and South America. He had the courage to advance suggestions and a talent for creating enthusiasm in those who would implement them. He had utter reliance on and submission to the will of God; hence

he was never discouraged. He offered his proposals selflessly with love and humility and did not insist on their acceptance.

Each new plan was an exciting challenge. He never tired of discussing the goals with the friends. Many of us looked on the formation of a new Assembly as a routine task, whether it was a goal of the Nine Year Plan or the Seven Year Plan. Not Raḥmat. Forming a new Assembly in 1979 was more exciting than the one formed in 1975.

His perception and deep interest in all areas of teaching, consolidation and proclamation of the Faith might be best illustrated by his work in the Philippines and India. Mass teaching in the Philippines started in 1960 when, accompanied by pioneers, he went to many villages and tribal areas. He cared for and nourished the new Bahá'ís of the Philippines with such love and understanding that it was as if the Philippines was the only country on his itinerary. He helped them with every aspect of their growth. He suggested books for translation into local languages, found the translators, selected a publisher, and even chose the paper and bargained for the price. He visited the new Bahá'ís and later the Local Assemblies over and over again, attended the first National Convention, spoke at universities and colleges, bought books on student exchange and presented them to the National Assembly. He later encouraged many Iranian Bahá'í students to enrol in the excellent universities in the Philippines. As the community grew in numbers and strength he called on the Bahá'ís to pioneer and took many of them with him and helped them to settle in Hong Kong, Laos, Malaya and many countries of Africa.

Raḥmat had travelled to India many times, encouraging the friends to realize that the time had come for entry by troops in that vast subcontinent. His visit in 1961 was endowed with the blessing of the start of mass teaching.

A report by Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam published in the October 1961 issue of *Bahá'í News* of U.S.A. describes the arrival in Bombay of 'the revered Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájir, whose encouragement and guidance had previously made the National Spiritual Assembly lay stress on the importance of teaching the masses'. Learning of his desire to hold a conference for the masses, word was sent to the Spiritual Assembly of Samagimanda and a conference was arranged there within forty-eight hours. In spite of severe cold the conference drew more than three hundred people and lasted until well past midnight. 'A group of Bahá'ís, organized by Dr. Muhájir, was . . . dispatched to various villages . . . So, from the beginning of February a process of chain reaction has set in. Every few days a conference would be organized . . . The result of each conference would be between one hundred and two hundred declarations.'

Thus the process of entry by troops in India had started. In 1961 there were 850 Bahá'ís and in 1963, 65,000.

Raḥmat's proposals as reported in the November 1979 issue of *Bahá'í News* included acquisition of village Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, establishment of schools for education of children. Many Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds were purchased and the village schools led to the establishment of the Rabbani school, the site of which was bought with Raḥmat's help. He urged, from the earliest days, the establishment of an education fund. This fund is now in operation. On his return to India later in 1961 he foresaw the need for continuous deepening and began immediately to look for a suitable building to house a teaching institute. Eventually he found the building that was purchased and is now the Faizi Institute near Indore.

In 1967 he brought the first pioneers from Malaysia to India; the following years he began the flow of student pioneers from Írán. Also in 1967 he proposed the convening of a press seminar and conference for newspaper editors, helped to arrange it and prepare the materials and hand-outs, and attended the seminar which was very successful.

At the time of the first West Asia Youth Conference in 1971, he arrived a few days earlier and asked the youth to disperse to colleges and universities and proclaim and teach the Faith. In three days the number of new believers reached seven hundred.

He encouraged the Bahá'í Publishing Trust to publish Bahá'í books in all Indian and other languages and disseminate low-priced books to the other mass teaching areas. Under his constant guidance the Publishing Trust of India grew into a giant enterprise which sent thousands of books to the rest of the world.

He conceived the idea of a simple 'infor-

mation folder', hundreds of thousands of copies of which are in use all over the world. The folder is still an important tool of proclamation. He proposed and helped prepare a Bahá'í correspondence course which was used very successfully in India, the Philippines and other mass teaching countries. He wrote a book on methods of Bahá'í education of children which is now being translated into English. These examples demonstrate that although remembered specifically for his devotion to mass teaching, he directed his energies towards all strata of society, and all the goals of various plans were of equal importance to him.

He appeared many times on television, gave radio broadcasts, had an audience with His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa, had interviews with many presidents, prime ministers, ministers and mayors in many of the countries that he visited. He gave talks in universities and at conferences in Europe and the United States, as well as talks in small villages. In addition to representing the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural conventions of many national communities he participated in teaching conferences, Summer Schools and local events all over the Bahá'í world. To teach while sitting on the floor of a small hut in Korea in sub-zero temperature was of the same importance to him as standing at the podium of a well-known university in the United States. His belief was that humanity was athirst for the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and that the Bahá'ís of the world had the capability of bringing millions to the Faith.

He very often chanted the Tablet of Visitation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá before going to any meeting and was convinced that the power of prayer would overcome all incapacities. Prayer was the core of his life. Very many nights he would spend in prayer till dawn for various projects in the Bahá'í world. He saw the Bahá'í world as one unit created by the Guardian through the Ten Year Crusade, and he believed that entry by troops should not be confined to the less developed countries of the globe. On numerous occasions he brought to the United States and Europe teaching materials used in India and South America, and urged the friends to use them. When they did, great results were achieved.

To give a glimpse of the effect on others of his services to the Faith I have selected the following passages from the countless letters and reports that make reference to him:

'He arranged the plans and bade us farewell. We are rich in the heritage of these visits . . . The fruits of his trips will continue to develop in the years to come.' Papua and New Guinea

'His mind was so keen, so alert, and he spoke quietly . . . his ideas were positive, progressive [so] that sometimes [they] pressed our imagination.' Guam

'The most striking aspect of Dr. Muhájir's personality seemed to be the rapidity with which he adapted his plans to a given situation and his humbleness when submitting these suggestions to the National Spiritual Assembly and then retiring.' Luxembourg

'Every time he met with our National Spiritual Assembly he had a different kind of theme. All revolved around teaching, but approaches were different. He had great humility and yet had the power to change individuals.' Japan

'He didn't ever seem angry when something was not possible. He had a strange acquiescence with obstacles.' Switzerland

'The insight and the depth of devotion which characterized his selfless example will continue to give impetus and commitment to the work . . . the vibrating influence of this champion teacher will reach beyond the imaginings of his admirers.' Gambia

'His devotion to the Cause, the encouragement he gave to so many Bahá'í communities, the seemingly endless energy he expended in carrying out his work and the uncounted other qualities he possessed combined themselves in a unique and mighty warrior of Bahá'u'lláh.' U.S.A.

'It is difficult to attempt to convey the depth and magnitude of the services which Dr. Muhájir rendered in bringing into existence this fledgling pillar of the Universal House of Justice. When he first came to the Philippines we had four Local Spiritual Assemblies and a Bahá'í population of two hundred. Twenty years later, after two decades of showering his love and guidance upon us, there were forty-five Local Spiritual Assemblies and 64,000 believers.' Philippines

'Dr. Muhájir is the only Hand of the Cause

ever to visit the interior of the country. His love for the indigenous people initiated teaching which has resulted in over half of the believers in Paraguay.' Paraguay

'One of our goals was the acquisition of a National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds . . . we had found four houses for sale. Dr. Muhájir asked us to show him these houses. When we reached the third one, the present National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, he immediately said, "This is it. I will pray that Bahá'u'lláh will assist you to acquire this property." He got out of the car and chanted prayers for some time. We did not even look at the fourth building. Of course Dr. Muhájir's prayers were answered.' Central African Republic

In all his life he never considered himself a worthy servant of Bahá'u'lláh. He prayed constantly and beseeched God's forgiveness and asked Him to assist him to overcome tests and tribulations. He sacrificed his all without thinking of it as a sacrifice. Whenever he had to leave our daughter, Gisu, who was born in 1961 in Germany while Raḥmat was teaching in South America, he said it was as if a thorn went through his heart, yet he accepted the separation with submission and prayer. He never complained about the hardships of his travels. He sought service to the Faith with eagerness and embraced adversity in the path of God as a great reward.

This verse from a prayer by 'Abdu'l-Bahá which Raḥmat chanted every day exemplifies his consuming desire to serve Bahá'u'lláh to the end of his days: *Shelter under Thy protection, O Thou spirit of purity, Thou who art the All-Bountiful Provider, this enthralled, enkindled servant of Thine. Aid him in this world of being to remain steadfast and firm in Thy love and grant that this broken-winged bird may attain a refuge and shelter in Thy Divine Nest, that abideth upon the Celestial Tree.*

His death came in the way he had always wanted, while serving the Faith, remote from home but amongst the Bahá'í friends. Despite extreme fatigue he had travelled to Quito, Ecuador, to participate in a special teaching conference arranged by the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America. On the second day of the conference he suffered a heart attack. Counsellor Ma'súd Khamsí, a close friend since the days of his youth who had shared many of the joys and hardships of his travels in South America, was with him until he came to his final rest. Raḥmat's last words were *Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá* and he was holding clutched in his right hand a silk purse containing a few strands of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's precious hair which he had carried near his heart for more than twenty years.

Quito, that jewel-like white city, set high in the Andes, with its towering green mountains, breathtaking valleys and radiant indigenous population, was one of Raḥmat's most loved cities. Ecuador, with its atmosphere pulsating with the power of the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, its masses responding in thousands to the call of the Faith of God, was an appropriate spot to embrace the earthly remains of one who had lived and died for the purpose of awakening the masses of humanity to the message of Bahá'u'lláh. His love and affection for the people of that land was deep and selfless. Bahá'ís of Ecuador felt this love and returned it in full measure by assisting him in his teaching work and continuing to carry out many of his suggested projects after his passing. Their mourning at losing this dear and trusted friend was genuine and their grief profound. When Gisu and I arrived in Quito for Raḥmat's funeral, we found gathered around his casket many friends in their colourful native clothing, men and women, praying and keeping an all-night vigil according to their custom. They had taken him to their hearts and considered him one of their own.

Raḥmat was a gentle, courageous, unassuming and kind man who served the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh with humility, self-sacrifice and absolute devotion. He was always ahead of his time, urging the friends toward a vision destined for them by the beloved Guardian. Those who knew him realized he could not stop; he was driven to fulfil his mission to the Faith until, like a meteor in flight, he burnt away his earthly frame on the southern horizon. He wore the spiritual mantle of a Hand of the Cause with dignity and humility and was a true example of the Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under*

all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words.

ÍRÁN MUHÁJIR

ABU'L-QÁSIM FAIZI
1906(?)–1980

HEARTS FILLED WITH SORROW PASSING INDEFATIGABLE SELF-SACRIFICING DEARLY LOVED HAND CAUSE GOD ABUL-QASIM FAIZI. ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD MOURNS HIS LOSS. HIS EARLY OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN CRADLE FAITH THROUGH EDUCATION CHILDREN YOUTH STIMULATION FRIENDS PROMOTION TEACHING WORK PROMPTED BELOVED GUARDIAN DESCRIBE HIM AS LUMINOUS DISTINGUISHED ACTIVE YOUTH. HIS SUBSEQUENT PIONEERING WORK IN LANDS BORDERING IRAN WON HIM APPELLATION SPIRITUAL CONQUEROR THOSE LANDS. FOLLOWING HIS APPOINTMENT HAND CAUSE HE PLAYED INVALUABLE PART WORK HANDS HOLY LAND TRAVELLED WIDELY PENNED HIS LITERARY WORKS CONTINUED HIS EXTENSIVE INSPIRING CORRESPONDENCE WITH HIGH AND LOW YOUNG AND OLD UNTIL AFTER LONG ILLNESS HIS SOUL WAS RELEASED AND WINGED ITS FLIGHT ABHA KINGDOM. CALL ON FRIENDS EVERYWHERE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERINGS HIS HONOUR, INCLUDING SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE MEETINGS HIS NAME IN HOUSES WORSHIP ALL CONTINENTS. MAY HIS SHINING EXAMPLE CONSECRATION CONTINUE INSPIRE HIS ADMIRERS EVERY LAND. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES HIS NOBLE RADIANT SOUL MAY BE IMMERSED IN OCEAN DIVINE MERCY CONTINUE ITS UNINTERRUPTED PROGRESS IN INFINITE WORLDS BEYOND.

Universal House of Justice
20 November 1980

As the news spread, thousands of Faizi's lovers wept in every part of the world. They had lost a selfless friend who had showered upon them the tokens of his boundless love through his visits to their homes in far-off corners of the earth, through the numerous little gifts he sent them, and through his



Abu'l-Qásim Faizi

wonderful, encouraging letters which uplifted their spirits, sustained them in times of sorrow, and enkindled in their hearts the longing to arise to greater heights in the service of the Cause of God. Among the hundreds of messages of grief which reached the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, there was one which expressed the feelings of all. It came from a fellow Hand who was closely associated with Faizi for many years, and it said, '. . . A special sweetness has gone out of the world and out of my heart . . .'

How can one write an adequate tribute to a man who, for over half a century, brought happiness and inspiration to all who crossed his path in life? How can one tell of the influence of his spirit on the countless children he held in his arms, the numberless young people whose talents he helped to develop, and the old men and women he visited with reverence and gratitude for what they had given to the world?

Faizi, as he wished to be called, did not like the celebration of birthdays, except those of the Manifestations of God, and did not know the exact date of his own birth which was

probably in 1906. Of his early days in the city of Qum he always spoke with a touch of sadness, for he was surrounded by fanatical people. One of the few happy memories of his childhood was the local gymnasium—the *zúr-khánih*—a traditional Persian establishment which is not only for the purpose of physical training, but also for inculcating human virtues such as chivalry, modesty and chastity in those who must bow in humility as they enter through its low door. Many fervent Muslims frowned upon the *zúr-khánih* and Faizi had to sneak away from home to watch the *pahlaváns* perform their feats of wrestling and weight-lifting to the beat of the leader's drum. The leader of the *zúr-khánih*, a man of dignity and great moral as well as physical stature, befriended Faizi and left a permanent mark on his character.

After a short period of rudimentary studies in Qum, Faizi moved with his parents to Ṭihrán. The atmosphere of his life completely changed, as though he had come out of a stifling room into fresh air. His father, who was a Bahá'í at heart, allowed him to go to the Tarbíyat School—one of many schools started by Bahá'ís throughout Írán. Here he excelled in studies and in sports. Faizi often spoke with deep love and reverence about his devoted, self-sacrificing teachers in the Tarbíyat School, such as the great poet 'Azízu'lláh Miṣbáh and the learned Fáḍil-i-Shírází, who influenced him beyond measure and showed him the path of true servitude.

His fellow students, many of whom became life-long friends, loved and respected him. It was a joy to be present at Faizi's reunion with a fellow student years later. They still spoke with awe about those wonderful teachers they had had; they remembered their classmates with affection; and how they laughed over old jokes!

One Friday, not long after Faizi had joined the Tarbíyat School, his Bahá'í classmates took him to their 'character training class'. He always remembered that day and the kind, radiant teacher to whom he was immediately drawn—Núri'd-Dín Fath-i-A'ẓam. He began to attend these Friday classes regularly but did not at first realize their connection with the Bahá'í Faith. Although Faizi had never known Bahá'ís before coming to Ṭihrán, he was attracted to his Bahá'í classmates and his acceptance of the Faith was quite natural as though he had been a believer all his life. When his mother realized her son was a Bahá'í, far from showing antagonism towards the Faith, as the rest of her relatives did, she encouraged him to observe the rules which his new beliefs prescribed. A devout Muslim herself, she would rise at dawn during the Bahá'í month of fasting to prepare his breakfast and make sure that he woke up on time. She was later to know that her only other child, older than Faizi and already married, had also accepted the Faith in another part of Írán. This saintly lady became a firm Bahá'í many years later.

In those days the Tarbíyat School taught only up to the ninth standard. After completing the school Faizi spent some time at the American College in Ṭihrán before going on to Beirut, in Lebanon, for higher studies in 1927. Beirut was only four hours away by car from Haifa and Faizi came on pilgrimage shortly after he left Írán. The climax of his life was the moment he met the Guardian of the Cause of God at whose feet he laid his whole heart—instantly, completely and forever. From that moment to the end of his days, Faizi had but one desire—to serve the Guardian. He became selfless in this servitude and sought no name or distinction. His tender love for the Guardian was the cause of his happiness, and his solace in times of sorrow. This great love, the source of his own inspiration, overflowed to fill other souls and set them, too, on the path of service.

The Bahá'í students in Beirut were permitted to come on pilgrimage and visit the Guardian during their Christmas or Easter holidays. Faizi came whenever possible and stayed as long as he could. It was the Guardian who nurtured the seed of faith in his heart until it became a mighty tree and bore choice fruit for all to share.

During his visits to Haifa, Faizi was usually accompanied by his close friend and fellow student at the American University of Beirut —Ḥasan Balyúzí. Faizi, always humble and faithful towards his friends, said he owed a great debt of gratitude to Balyúzí, who guided him through those turbulent years and set an example for him to follow. The two were kindred souls and stood out as shining stars among the rest of the students from Írán.

They had similar tastes, were both attracted to literature and the arts and sometimes worked together writing and producing plays for the Persian students' society in Beirut. They also took part in all Bahá'í activities, including a study class on the Faith organized by the students themselves.

The Guardian showered his favours on them when they came on pilgrimage and encouraged them in every way. Once he gave the two young men something to translate for him. At another time he sent them to visit the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí when it was still occupied by the Covenant-breakers and no other Bahá'ís were permitted to go there. Faizi would recount the terrible state in which they found the rooms where Bahá'u'lláh had once lived. Having witnessed how the enemies of the Cause had ruined the beautiful Mansion, the two friends were sent there again after the Guardian had renovated the building and furnished the rooms, restoring the dignity of the dwelling place of God's Manifestation on earth. Balyúzí and Faizi were the first Bahá'ís allowed to sleep in the Mansion after its restoration.

Another great honour was bestowed upon them and a few of their fellow students when they were invited to visit the daughter of Bahá'u'lláh, the Greatest Holy Leaf. Faizi has written about this unique privilege and the extraordinary effect that her celestial presence had on his sensitive soul.

Faizi had decided to go back to serve in the Tarbíyat School after finishing his studies in Beirut, and he was greatly encouraged by the Guardian's expressed hopes that Bahá'í youth consecrate their lives to the service of the Cause. The Guardian once asked him what he intended to do after his studies were completed, and expressed great satisfaction with his decision. At another time the Guardian enquired of him whether the Bahá'í schools in Írán were closed for the nine Holy Days. Faizi replied that he did not think they were, and the Guardian said they should not open on Bahá'í Holy Days even if this meant they would be permanently closed by the government. The words of the Guardian were significant, though Faizi did not realize their full import at that time.

On his last visit to the Holy Land the Guardian gave Faizi flowers from the Shrines to place on his behalf on the resting-place of the first American Bahá'í martyr, Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler, who had passed away in Iṣfahán.

The final parting with the Guardian, in 1933, would have been impossible for Faizi to bear had it not been for his great longing to start his work at the Tarbíyat School. Alas, he did not know that in 1934, less than three weeks before he could finish his compulsory military service in Írán, all the Bahá'í schools in the country would be permanently closed by the government because the National Spiritual Assembly had decided not to open them on Bahá'í Holy Days.

His dream now shattered, Faizi reluctantly accepted a post with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in Ṭihrán. He had a good salary and prospects of climbing to the top of an important career. But his heart was not in riches and high positions. Though he was serving on Bahá'í committees and had started deepening classes for youth, he yearned to dedicate his whole life to the service of the Cause. He remembered that the Guardian had once told him not to defile himself with this world and wondered how he could escape it. But he remembered, too, that the Guardian had assured him of his prayers, and this was what he relied on.

An opportunity came his way and he seized it with joy and determination. The Bahá'ís of the village of Najafábád, whose schools had been closed by the government, had asked for a volunteer to go to live among them and teach their children. To the great surprise of all and the dismay of his friends, Faizi decided to give up his job and become a teacher in an obscure corner of the country. This was probably the greatest decision he was to make, for it set the course of his life away from the glitter of the world. When the Guardian read about it in a general report sent to him by the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán, he wrote in reply, 'This spontaneous decision will attract divine confirmation and is a clear proof of the high endeavour, the pure motive, and the self-sacrifice of that favoured servant of the divine Threshold. I am extremely pleased and grateful to him and I pray from the depths of my heart for the success of that active, radiant youth . . .'

In Najafábád Faizi had about four hundred students, from kindergarten children to adults. He organized his classes in the homes of the Bahá'ís and went from house to house from morning till afternoon, sometimes starting at dawn to teach the youth who went to work in the fields after their lessons. Some of those who had previously taught in the two Bahá'í schools in the village helped him with the children, but Faizi had introduced Bahá'í lessons for all the students now that they were not obliged to follow the strict curriculum imposed on schools by the government, so the burden of the work fell on his shoulders. His mother gave him all her support. As his father had passed away while he was in Beirut, she had accompanied Faizi to Najafábád, and she helped him in every way she could. She loved the children who were always in and out of their modest home. She washed the faces of the little ones and combed their hair, and associated with their parents, serving them in many ways. She also supported Faizi financially in Najafábád with the little money left to her by her husband, for the nominal sum he himself received served only as pocket money, which he usually spent on the children. Their household at this time included a faithful old servant, a child Faizi had adopted before leaving Ṭihrán, and two other children belonging to a widowed relative. It was in Najafábád that Faizi's mother dreamed of the blessed Báb and became a firm believer. It was also during this period that Faizi chose his life's partner, someone he had known for many years.

Faizi's daily work in the village did not end with the classes in the afternoons. In the evenings, dressed in simple clothes woven and stitched in Najafábád, he would attend Bahá'í meetings or visit the friends in their homes, inspiring them with stories from Bahá'í history or sharing with them some of the rare Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh which he had transcribed in beautiful calligraphy. He loved to sit at the feet of the older generation and hear from them about the first courageous Bahá'ís of Najafábád in the days of Bahá'u'lláh. The lives of the early believers always fascinated him. All his life he gathered these stories and recounted them to other Bahá'ís, touching their hearts and giving them insight into the sacrifices that had laid the foundations of their Faith. Often he would encourage a youth to serve the Cause by telling him of the great deeds of one of his own ancestors of which he himself had not known before.

During his stay in Najafábád, Faizi's work extended to the neighbouring city of Iṣfahán where he held a regular deepening class for a large number of youth, and to the surrounding villages where he visited the Bahá'ís from time to time. In Najafábád itself he helped to build a strong, well-organized community with a library, which was named after Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín, the famous religious dignitary of Najafábád who became a Bahá'í and went to live with Bahá'u'lláh in exile. Faizi also encouraged the Bahá'ís to build a public bath as none of the villagers had baths in their homes and Bahá'ís were not allowed to step inside the public bath owned by Muslims. But, of course, his main work centred on the children and the youth. Years later, as he travelled around the world, he was to meet dozens of them scattered as pioneers in different countries, many with high academic degrees and important positions, but still looking up to him as their teacher and their example in life.

Faizi stayed in Najafábád for about five years until he had trained enough teachers to carry on his work. During this time he had travelled to other parts of Írán, meeting Bahá'í communities and translating for visitors from abroad. He had also translated into Persian some of the Guardian's letters to the West, and had prepared a condensation of *The Dawn-Breakers*. On these he based his notes when teaching Bahá'í administration and history at the newly-established Summer School on the outskirts of Ṭihrán.

The National Spiritual Assembly asked Faizi to go from Najafábád to the town of Qazvín where there was another large community of believers. In reply to the Assembly's report, dated 1940, the Guardian wrote that they 'should constantly encourage this distinguished youth . . . so that all his time may be spent in important service to the Cause because his services are very important and his travels to Bahá'í Centres produce beneficial results. I do not forget the ceaseless services of that active servant of the Cause in Najafábád, and it is my cherished hope that he will be graciously aided to render greater

services, accomplish more important undertakings and achieve higher and more distinguished victories. This is my earnest desire for him at all times and under all conditions . . .'

In Qazvín, as in Najafábád, Faizi endeared himself to young and old alike. His personal life, as well as his dedicated work, influenced everyone who came in touch with him. He organized Bahá'í classes for all ages and took the youth on outings to visit believers in neighbouring towns and villages. He went to people's homes, taking warmth and laughter wherever he went. He encouraged the community to closer association and helped to establish a beautiful library in the name of one of Qazvín's foremost Bahá'ís—Hakím-i-Iláhí. But his greatest accomplishment in that town was the training of over thirty youth who studied with him every day, preparing themselves for dedicated service to the Cause. These youth became ignited torches and later carried the light of Bahá'u'lláh to different villages and towns, and many of them rendered outstanding services as pioneers in other countries. Faizi's stay in Qazvín was no more than a year but the results of his work there were immeasurable.

When the Guardian asked the Bahá'ís of Írán to pioneer to the neighbouring countries, Faizi's response was immediate. In the winter of 1941 he set out with his wife for Baghdád, hoping to obtain a visa to one of the countries in the Arabian Peninsula. He was unable to get to his pioneering post for a year, during which time he brought a new spirit to the Bahá'í community in Baghdád. He started regular study classes for their youth, encouraged the new believers, made friends among the members of old Bahá'í families from the days before Bahá'u'lláh's declaration, and continued to collect his precious stories. To those who, like himself, had set out to pioneer to Arabia and were stranded in Baghdád during the war—whole families with young children and elderly people living under dire conditions—he was a symbol of patience, a ray of joy with his ever-ready humour.

Faizi and his wife were among the very few who were able to pioneer to Arabia after the long waiting. They had, by now, exhausted what little money they had, but Faizi was offered a job in the only secondary school in Bahrain at that time. Unfortunately, the job was withdrawn after it became known that he was a Bahá'í, and it was only through a miracle that he was not deported from the island. There followed test after test, too numerous to recount, but nothing could dampen his spirit. His beloved Guardian had asked the pioneers to remain at their posts, and neither the terrible heat, the lack of water, of proper food and every means of comfort, nor the hostility of fanatical people could shake his determination to stay in Bahrain.

Faizi, his wife, the two children born to them in Bahrain and one new believer were the only Bahá'ís in that part of the world for about seven years before a few other pioneers could settle in the countries along the coast of Arabia. They were not permitted to mention the Faith and strange rumours were circulated about their beliefs. But Faizi, in his sweet, gentle manner, slowly began to win the hearts of the inhabitants of Bahrain. His students at the school had been the first to be attracted to him, then gradually the neighbours, the shopkeepers around and, finally, nearly all those who had considered him a heretic and had tried to have him deported became his friends.

Faizi had a way of bringing out the good hidden in people's souls. Once he befriended a well-known thief in Bahrain who spent most of his time in prison. Whenever he met this man on the street he would do some shopping and send the purchases home with him so that he could give him a little money for his trouble. The man faithfully delivered everything. One day Faizi entrusted him with some expensive items and, when he reached home after a long while, saw that the shopping had not yet been delivered. It might have been natural to assume that this time the temptation had proved too much for the thief, but no such doubt entered Faizi's mind. 'He has probably stopped for a chat in the market place,' he said. 'He'll come.' And he did.

Slowly surmounting many barriers, other pioneers—usually young men who could bear the hardships—began to settle in Arabia. They were scattered in different territories, lived under extremely difficult conditions, and could seldom receive news from their homeland. Faizi strengthened them through his wonderful letters, uplifting their spirits, en-

couraging them to persevere at their posts and giving them what little news he himself received. He corresponded with their parents, assuring them that their sons were safe and rendering wonderful services to the Cause.

As the number of pioneers grew in Arabia, Faizi's correspondence increased. By this time he was also writing to other pioneers around the globe. He gave them news of the work in Arabia, sent them quotations from the Writings to inspire them, and anecdotes to make them laugh. To the end of his life Faizi corresponded with hundreds of friends, including many children. He loved to give people little gifts and he usually included in his letters quotations written in his own beautiful calligraphy and decorated by himself. These can now be seen framed in many homes in every corner of the world. Apart from his vast correspondence, Faizi wrote many articles and literary works and continued his translations.

The pioneers in Arabia adored Faizi. To them he was a father and a close friend. They looked up to him as their example, and from him they learned the lessons of true love and perseverance in the face of every worldly deprivation. Their only wish was to obey their beloved Guardian and cheer his heart. Even when, years later, Faizi had a good job and could afford to buy a few means of comfort for his home, such as a refrigerator, he refused to do so because other pioneers in Arabia could not afford such luxury. Everything he had was shared with others. When he was asked how he would be able to pay for his children's higher education, he said, 'There are so many children around me who need help now. How can I deprive them in order to save for an unknown future?' The children he assisted at that time are now grown up and serving their countrymen through the different posts they occupy.

The Guardian referred to Faizi as 'the Spiritual Conqueror of Arabia' and wrote concerning his work, 'The unceasing meritorious services of that radiant youth in these past years illumine the annals of the Cause of God and set an example for all to follow . . .'

The sacrifices of the pioneers yielded rich fruit in Arabia. Although unable to teach their Faith, they won the friendship and respect of others by their lives, thus making it possible for many Bahá'ís to settle throughout the Peninsula. Before Faizi left, in 1957, there was already a National Spiritual Assembly in Arabia, and he lived to see five others established in that area.

Faizi had gone to India to attend the Intercontinental Conference in 1953, and had then accompanied a Hand of the Cause to Australasia to translate for him. He was in Europe in 1957 when news reached him that he himself had been appointed a Hand of the Cause. Then, within only a few weeks, he was to receive the news which shattered his whole being. The Guardian had passed away. Grief-stricken and bowed with uncontrollable sorrow, he went to London to attend the funeral. Years before, the Guardian had praised his warm, resonant voice when he had chanted one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh for him in Haifa. It was now his destiny to chant the Prayer for the Dead before the Guardian's remains were laid to rest.

Faizi had no desire to live after his beloved had left this world. The only thing which kept him alive was the task which the Guardian had entrusted to him. He drowned himself in work and did not stop until the last day of his life. Though broken in health and in and out of hospital for many years, nothing could even slow him down.

He was one of the nine Hands chosen to remain at the World Centre of the Faith, and he went through much personal suffering during those first five fateful years as he remembered the days when he followed the Guardian through the gardens or heard him chanting in the Shrines.

In the Holy Land Faizi served as a link between his fellow Hands from the East and the West for he spoke and wrote both Persian and English fluently. He also knew Arabic and French very well, both of which were valuable to him in his work for the Cause.

Though the burden of work was heavy and his new tasks demanding, Faizi continued to reach out to his friends all over the world through his ever-increasing personal correspondence. Always a lover of people, he derived much happiness from meeting the groups of pilgrims and their children who came from different countries of the world. He showed them around the Holy Places, and prepared gifts for them to take away. Their

response to his warmth was touching as they eagerly awaited his coming each day and sat spellbound when he spoke to them, answering their questions or telling them some of his delightful stories. Many of these pilgrims, too, began to correspond with him after leaving the Holy Land.

It is impossible to recount here, even in brief, all the many valuable services Faizi rendered the Faith as a Hand of the Cause and as a member of the International Teaching Centre. He travelled extensively throughout the whole world, representing the Universal House of Justice at numerous conferences and Conventions; he defended the Cause against its Covenant-breakers, advised National Spiritual Assemblies, met heads of state and world dignitaries, gave public addresses and private talks, conducted study classes for Bahá'ís, visited the homes of pioneers in every continent, encouraged the youth to use their talents in the service of the Cause, inspired the hearts through his published writings[1] and translations, and never stopped sending out his valued letters even when he was too ill to receive visitors.

He had been confined to bed several times during his travels—once he had to be rushed to hospital in the middle of a talk—but he would not be persuaded to look after his health. He fell and rose again and again until his body could no more keep pace with his indefatigable soul. Though unable to travel, he continued to write letters and receive pilgrims in his home to the end of his life in 1980. Among the last papers he left on his desk were a few gifts he had prepared to give away—quotations from the Writings in his own calligraphy. At the bottom of each he had written, 'For the dear pilgrims.'

The Guardian, whose vision was not limited by time, had looked at this beautiful life in its entirety, and had written of Faizi in 1942: 'Blessed is he and those who like unto him aided the Cause of God by their words, their deeds, and all that was bestowed upon them by their Lord, and attained His good-pleasure.'

GLORIA FAIZI

[1] Some of Faizi's best known works in Persian and English are: *Payám-i-Dúst va Bahár-i-Ṣad-u-Bíst*—120 BE (1963–1964); *Dástán-i-Dústán*—121 BE (1964–1965); *The Priceless Pearl* translated into Persian—1969; *Three Meditations on the Eve of November the Fourth*—1970; *Explanation of the Emblem of the Greatest Name*—1970–1971; *Our Precious Trusts*—1973; *The Wonder Lamp*—1975; *Stories from the Delight of Hearts* translated into English—1980.

AMOZ EVERETT GIBSON
1918–1982

To assist Me is to teach My Cause . . .
Bahá'u'lláh

The promulgation of the divine teachings revealed by Bahá'u'lláh was the driving purpose which animated, directed and sustained Amoz Gibson throughout his Bahá'í life. This objective perhaps reached the peak of its force between the years 1976 and 1978 when he became so enamored with the publications of the Universal House of Justice—*Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Selections from the Writings of the Báb* and *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*—that he would arise before dawn to read and reread this storehouse of the knowledge of God which seemed to give him so much strength.

Inspired by the Writings, in 1976 he used his vacation period to travel-teach and stimulate the work of the friends in Holland, France, Italy, Mexico and the United States—particularly in the southern states and on the Indian reservations.

In countless verses, he pointed out, the friends are exhorted to teach the Faith but in the verse quoted above Bahá'u'lláh gives teaching the station of assistance to Him. This single verse galvanized Amoz into planning, for the summer of 1978, a two-month journey (less than eight weeks during the last nineteen years of his life were spent purely as vacation) which carried him first to the cradle of the Faith—to Ṭihrán, Shíráz, Iṣfahán, Najaf-Ábád, Ardistán, Tákur, Fort Ṭabarsí (viewed from outside), Sárí, Tabríz, Riḍá'iyyíh, the summer school and Temple land. In these revered spots Amoz was warmed by the outpouring of love by the friends and chastened and humbled by the miracle of seeing



Amoz Everett Gibson

with his own eyes these places he had read about and talked about and loved for so many years. Moreover, he was deeply moved to learn that the family who were our hosts in Ṭihrán had never had the privilege of visiting the House of Bahá'u'lláh until they were permitted to accompany us. Amoz gave freely of himself and of his time; his advice, wisdom and wit won the hearts of the friends. How he lamented when he learned later of the destruction of the precious House of the Báb and the martyrdom of his two hosts in Tabríz, Mr. Yadu'lláh Ástání and Dr. Farámarz Samandarí.

Amoz continued his journey that summer to the United States where he visited Columbia, Maryland; Washington, D.C.; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Dinnebito, Arizona on the Navajo Indian Reservation; Daly City, San Francisco, Placerville and Auburn, California; Reno, Nevada; Wilmette and Chicago, Illinois; Cleveland, Ohio, and Amherst, Massachusetts. Taxing his strength to the utmost he spoke at firesides, public meetings, meetings for Bahá'ís only, and had radio and television interviews as well as numerous private consultations. He urged the friends to concentrate their efforts, to select one person to pray for and to teach, to shower with love and gifts. He volunteered to take back to the Holy Land the names of these people and to pray for them in the Shrines. He pleaded for pioneers, named the countries where they were needed and entreated the friends to seize the bounty of assisting Bahá'u'lláh.

Amoz Everett Gibson was born on 3 August 1918 in Washington, D.C. to Deborah and William Gibson. His mother's grandfather was a full-blooded Creek Indian; his father's mother was a mulatto slave and his father's father was Scotch-Irish.

William Gibson had trained for the ministry at Howard University in Washington, had become a Christian Science healer, and in 1912, still searching, was attending spiritualist meetings when he was directed to a Bahá'í gathering which was meeting in the same building. At his first Bahá'í meeting, some time following the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Washington, after hearing Mr. Harlan Ober[1] speak for only five minutes, Mr. Gibson realized his search had ended. He embraced the Faith immediately and returning home related the Message to his wife who, that same evening, unhesitatingly accepted Bahá'u'lláh as the return of Christ and the Manifestation of God for this Day.

Amoz attended children's classes and went often to Feasts with his father; but as there were few activities arranged at that time for youth he did not enroll in the Faith until 1944. Meanwhile, he had received his education in the Washington public schools and in 1940 was graduated from Miner Teachers College (now the University of the District of Columbia) with a B.Sc. degree in education with a major in social studies. In 1941 he married a schoolmate, Mary Elizabeth Lane. Amoz was a government employee at the Washington Navy Yard when he was inducted into the United States Army in 1944. He served with the armed forces in Europe and in the Pacific on Okinawa.

Returning to his home in 1946 he soon became an active participant in the Bahá'í community of Washington, D.C. At various times he served as treasurer and chairman of the Local Assembly, was on regional com-

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 866.

mittees and was elected delegate to the national convention.

Using the benefits of the government educational program for veterans and rental income from his home as means of support while serving in the pioneer field, he traveled to Mexico with his wife and two children, William, seven years old, and Kenneth, two. Amoz fell in love with Mexico and its vibrant people and would have remained there permanently had he and his wife not made a commitment to return to their teaching posts in Washington for at least two more years. In 1951 he received his Master's Degree, summa cum laude, in geography from Mexico City College (now University of the Americas). Amoz continued his work in the educational field as a teacher at the Browne Junior High School where he had been appointed after his army service. One of his students there would one day become a pioneer to the Pacific and the son-in-law of a martyr of the Faith. Later Amoz was head teacher at the Blow School Annex to Browne; then he was a teacher of geography at Miner Teachers College.

His third son was born in 1952 and when Donald was three years old Amoz and his wife resigned from their jobs and pioneered with their three children to the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona and New Mexico. Having no employment, the family at first lived with Mr. James Stone, a pioneer to Gallup, New Mexico. While making every effort to secure a position on the reservation through the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Amoz got a job washing cars. One day one of his customers, noticing him as a newcomer to the small town of 14,000 inhabitants, began a conversation with him. Learning of Amoz's situation he immediately arranged an interview for him with the director of the Gallup office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Within a week, Amoz and his family (except for William who remained in Gallup with Mr. and Mrs. Stone so that he could attend school there) arrived at Piñon, Arizona, near the center of the Navajo Reservation and very close to the Hopi Reservation which it surrounds—an ideal spot for pioneers, 150 miles from town with two positions open because no one else wanted to fill them. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gibson taught there for four years.

The first months were spent making friends and adjusting to teaching older children who had never enrolled in school before and who spoke very little English. Soon, firesides were begun; then, at the close of the first school year, Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff and her daughter, Jyoti, came to visit. The Indian people were greatly attracted to Mrs. Munsiff and in a very marvelous way she set the stage for the first Bahá'í study class which was carried on by the Gibsons weekly. In 1957 Sadye Joe, who attended that initial class, became the first of the Navajo tribe to accept the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Sparked by the American Indian Service Committee, of which Amoz was a member, other pioneers settled on the Navajo-Hopi Reservations and in the towns bordering them. Though distances were great, the roads poor, and driving conditions always hazardous, there was a strong sense of unity and cooperation among the pioneers.

There were two outstanding events which Amoz worked very hard to support and bring to fruition. The first was the visit of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum to the reservation in 1960. Her visit cemented relations among the Bahá'ís and stimulated new activities. Also, it aroused the interest of the citizens of that area, making them aware of the international character of the Faith and its worldwide importance.

Meanwhile, other Navajos had entered the Faith, notably Chester and Franklin Kahn and their wives, whose desire to share the Message with their families and friends led to the second event—the large weekend gathering of a thousand or more souls at Pine Springs, Arizona, in 1962. They came from far and near, Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, and slept in clusters around campfires under a canopy of brilliant stars. The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem, who with his dignified, loving spirit brought everyone closer to Bahá'u'lláh, provided the stimulus which resulted in the entry of a great number of new believers, more than 100 in just two days. Mr. Khádem said frequently during that weekend, 'O God, increase my astonishment in Thee!' What joy and assurance this meeting brought to Amoz's heart. At last the work was moving forward.

In 1959 Amoz was appointed to the Auxiliary Board for protection; in 1960 he was

elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. As a Board member he traveled extensively throughout the western states and also made a trip to Jamaica and Haiti. He served as a member of the National Teaching Committee for Africa and represented the National Assembly at the dedication of the Bahá'í Temple in Uganda in 1961, taking this opportunity to teach in the villages near Kampala and making firm and lasting friendships among the African believers.

Amoz moved from Piñon, Arizona, to teach English in the secondary school at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, and resided in Gallup about 14 miles distant. In 1960, after the birth of his daughter, Nancy, he was appointed principal of the Bread Springs Day School in New Mexico, and the family were living there when Amoz, attending the first International Convention in Haifa, in 1963, was elected to the Universal House of Justice. As a small boy, holding his father's hand as he walked along to Feasts, Amoz had heard him speak about the institution of the Universal House of Justice in such glowing, lofty terms that Amoz never expected it to come into existence during his own lifetime. However, once that institution did come into being he supported it with a deep, unswerving loyalty, with complete obedience and respect, with a feeling of humbleness and awe, and regarded all the other members as his true and loving brothers. It was apparent that they held that same regard for him as they tenderly bore his casket to its resting place.

Just prior to his election to the House of Justice, the entire family, encouraged by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum was making arrangements to pioneer to Africa, so the process of breaking ties with the Navajo Reservation, which had become home, was already begun.

Arriving in Haifa in July 1963, Amoz took up his duties and responsibilities with the zest he was always enabled to summon when he found himself in a new and difficult situation. He was particularly pleased to be appointed convener of the Department of Holy Places as this gave him the opportunity to inspect every corner of these hallowed buildings and to assist in providing for their preservation, renovation and day-to-day care. He said he felt, when he stood on the ledge just outside the lantern as was necessary in the course of his duties, that he could stretch out his arms and almost embrace the Shrine of the Báb.

When a new roof had to be put on the Mansion at Bahjí, or new gardens laid out; when roads had to be built, or land purchased, or fences put up; when heavy wooden beams had to be secured from Turkey for the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá;[1] when additional office space had to be found at the temporary seat of the House of Justice on Haparsim Street; when the obelisk was to be erected on the Temple Land;[2] when a completely new electrical system was to be installed in the Shrine of the Báb (completed in October, 1980); when the Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice was being planned and built, Amoz was always there, alert, spotting problems and avoiding or correcting them, pacing off metres, measuring walls, writing letters to various companies, inspecting the marble cutting in Italy, visiting stone and gravel pits, signing contracts, restraining or complaining to or encouraging and praising the workers—and loving every minute of it. One of his true brothers remarked that he should have been an engineer.

Amoz became ill in San Francisco in August 1980, the evening before he was to fulfill his heart's desire to visit the Omaha Indian community of Macy, Nebraska, so dear to the Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins, and just after he had participated, in July, in the memorable Native Council of the indigenous believers of North America in Wilmette, Illinois.

Upon his return to Haifa his illness was diagnosed as acute lymphoblastic leukemia which usually attacks the young and is often curable in children. During his 'heroic struggle' against this disease Amoz lightened the hearts with his ready wit and open smile and won the admiration of doctors, nurses and patients whom he met at the clinic where he went periodically for treatment. He took their photographs and distributed them as gifts; he sent them flowers and generally showered them with love. He was able to enjoy about a year of complete remission.

When that period ended he decided to visit each one of his children whom he so dearly

[1] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 103.
[2] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 177.

loved and who, in turn, had given him so much devotion and appreciation throughout the years that often deprived them of his presence. This journey to Australia where Amoz had the bounty of his first visit to the Mother Temple of the Antipodes; to New Zealand to see Nancy and her husband, Jonathan; to Oakland, California, where Diane, Kenneth and Chehreh live; to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to visit Cheryl, Don, Lanya and Marla; and to Washington where he was joined by Bill who had braved snowy roads on his trip from Massachusetts and New York to see his father—this journey Amoz was able to accomplish by the grace of God, the loving consideration of Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike, and by his own strong will and determination.

When he was no longer able to fulfill his duties, to actively serve the Cause, to assist Bahá'u'lláh by teaching, it seemed he had little desire to remain on this plane of existence. Despite this, out of compassion for those around him, he compelled his spirit to shine brightly and gladly till the very end.

He passed away in Haifa on 14 May 1982, having had the bounty just three weeks before of praying in the three Holy Shrines with his wife, four children, one of his daughters-in-law and two of his three grandchildren. As his daughter Nancy so lovingly expressed, he was a dearly-loved husband, father and grandfather whose whole life-work was devoted to the service and promulgation of this blessed Cause, whose laughter and radiance were an inspiration to all and whom we love with all our hearts.

The Universal House of Justice, on 15 May, sent the following cable to the Bahá'ís of the world:

WITH SORROWFUL HEARTS LAMENT LOSS OUR DEARLY-LOVED BROTHER AMOZ GIBSON WHO PASSED AWAY AFTER PROLONGED HEROIC STRUGGLE FATAL ILLNESS. EXEMPLARY SELF-SACRIFICING PROMOTER FAITH ACHIEVED BRILLIANT UNBLEMISHED RECORD CONSTANT SERVICE FOUNDED ON ROCKLIKE STAUNCHNESS AND DEEP INSATIABLE LOVE FOR TEACHING WORK PARTICULARLY AMONG INDIAN AND BLACK MINORITIES WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AFRICA. HIS NOTABLE WORK ADMINISTRATIVE FIELDS NORTH AMERICA CROWNED FINAL NINETEEN YEARS INCALCULABLE CONTRIBUTION DEVELOPMENT WORLD CENTRE WORLD EMBRACING FAITH. PRAYING SHRINES BOUNTIFUL REWARD HIS NOBLE SOUL THROUGHOUT PROGRESS ABHA KINGDOM. EXPRESS LOVING SYMPATHY VALIANT BELOVED WIDOW PARTNER HIS SERVICES AND BEREAVED CHILDREN. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERINGS EVERYWHERE BAHAI WORLD AND COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES ALL MASHRIQUL ADHKARS.

MARY GIBSON

BERNARD LEACH C.H., C.B.E.
1887–1979

My first breath of air was a cry of pain;
Will my last be a smile?
Bernard Leach

6 May 1979. He was sitting by the window in his hospital room talking with his daughter Eleanor, a friend and two nurses, about where they were born. It was Bernard's turn to contribute: 'I was born in Hong Kong'—[on 5 January 1887]—but the words wouldn't come. He put his hand to his chest, drew his last breath and was gone.

I have made death a messenger of joy . . . How these much-quoted words of Bahá'u'lláh applied to Bernard Leach himself. He had done in his earthly life what he had to do and died happily in that knowledge. Now it is up to us to use what he has left.

Bernard Leach was the son of a colonial judge. His mother died when he was born and the first four years of his life were spent with grandparents in Japan.

As a potter, artist and writer he is internationally known. The importance of his work was his liaison between East and West—he connected artistically, culturally and spiritually. He wrote: 'As far back as 1913 it began to become apparent how that which we call fate lay behind my original intuition to return to the East where I was born. My own work as a potter and draughtsman was inextricably becoming rooted in two hemispheres and I began to find myself in the position of a courier between East and West. By one way or another I bore witness to a growing vision



Bernard Leach

of a future unity of mankind. Agnosticism of many years' standing gave way to an expanding faith in the maturity of man on this planet . . .'[1]

It was in 1914 that he first heard about the Bahá'í Faith, from Agnes Alexander[2] in Japan. The seeds were sown. That same year in a privately published small book, *A Review*, he wrote: 'I have seen a vision of the marriage of East and West, and far off down the Halls of Time I heard the echo of a child-like Voice. How long, how long? . . . The books which remain to be written, first and foremost, and greatest, *The Bible of East and West* . . . a love-union of the two hemispheres; a mystic ring on the finger of the world.'

From 1909 until 1920 he lived in Japan and the Far East, making many friends, and becoming known not only as a gifted artist-craftsman but for his spiritual perception of Japanese values. He went many times to Japan and, in 1966, for his cultural service to that country he received the highest honour to be conferred upon a British commoner by the Japanese government: The Order of the Sacred Treasure, second class.

It was Mark Tobey,[3] with whom he made friends in the early thirties when at Dartington Hall in Devonshire, who deepened his interest in the Bahá'í Faith. Mark was resident art teacher; Bernard taught pottery, as well as keeping in touch with the St. Ives Pottery. Reg Turvey,[4] Bernard's friend from the early years they spent together at the Slade School and the London College of Art, also came to Dartington to paint, bringing his family. He and his wife went to Bahá'í gatherings and accepted the Faith before Bernard did. It was after Mark returned to America and Bernard delved more deeply into the books he left him, that he became convinced.

As they had hoped to do, these three Bahá'í artists met again at the Bahá'í World Congress in 1963 in London. Reg, who had been referred to by the Guardian as 'the father of the Bahá'ís of South Africa', died in Durban in 1968. Before Mark passed away in Basle, Switzerland, in April 1976, he was so happy to receive a cable from Bernard, MARK I AM WITH YOU IN SPIRIT NOW AND FOREVER. I remember hearing Bernard shouting, during the last stages of his earthly life, 'Reg, it won't be long!' Now the three are reunited.

When Bernard travelled to Japan after becoming a Bahá'í he fitted in Bahá'í talks with his work as a potter. He spoke fluent Japanese and became much loved by the people of that country. In 1953 his pamphlet *My Religious Faith* was printed both in English and Japanese, on Japanese paper, and reached many people. Prior to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum's visit to Japan in 1978 he wrote introducing her to some of his acquaintances there, including Princess Chichibu, who afterwards wrote to Bernard to say how much she had enjoyed her visit. Towards the end of her nine-week travels around Japan, Rúḥíyyih Khánum wrote to Bernard: 'wherever anyone knows our contact with you, we are received with special honours . . .'

When Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip travelled to Japan in 1975 they

[1] From *Drawings, Verse and Belief*, Adams and Dart, Bath, Somerset. Now Jupiter Books (London) Ltd.
[2] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 423.
[3] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 401.
[4] Reginald Turvey, 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 385.

took with them, as gifts for the Emperor and Empress, a pilgrim plate made by Bernard and an etching he did in Japan in 1918. Previous to that, in 1973, in a private audience with the Queen at Buckingham Palace, he became the first craftsman ever to be made a Companion of Honour; he had been made a C.B.E.[1] in 1962 and over the years received many professional awards. The recent book *The Art of Bernard Leach*[2] was a tribute by the Victoria and Albert Museum following his retrospective exhibition there in 1977. The editor, who was the exhibition organizer, ends his foreword by referring to Bernard as 'the greatest artist-potter-writer of this age'. A book review of Bernard's *Beyond East and West*[3] goes further '. . . perhaps one of the greatest men of our time'.

But Bernard never wanted to be put on a pedestal; his humility was one of his most endearing qualities. 'When you're young it's difficult to get rid of the ego—it wants to see the shine and the colour of butterfly wings,' he said in an interview.[4] 'But as you get older you are gradually freed of pride.' The blindness which in the latter years of his life prevented his continuing his gifted work as a craftsman and artist he accepted as the will of God: 'Losing outer sight, I gained far greater inner vision.'

Bernard Leach's books, particularly *Drawings, Verse and Belief* and *Beyond East and West*, have been instrumental in attracting many people to the Bahá'í Faith. Press reviews of the latter in various countries, as well as articles—even as far away as Australia—have mentioned his Bahá'í belief.

Bernard welcomed visitors from all over the world and received letters of appreciation from them as well as from readers of his books, the last from a potter in the United States a few days before Bernard died, from which I quote: 'I wanted to write to tell you what a great deal you have taught me—not only about pots but about life. I hope some day to be able to teach just one small thing to another, to show one person something new. With your guidance, perhaps I shall . . .'

[1] Commander (of the Order) of the British Empire.
[2] Edited by Carol Hogben; Faber and Faber Ltd., Publishers.
[3] Faber and Faber Ltd., Publishers. See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 646.
[4] *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 7 January 1979.

On receiving the news of his passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled on 7 May 1979:

> KINDLY EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY RELATIVES FRIENDS PASSING DISTINGUISHED VETERAN UPHOLDER FAITH BAHAULLAH BERNARD LEACH. HONOURS CONFERRED UPON HIM RECOGNITION HIS WORLDWIDE FAME CRAFTSMAN POTTER PROMOTER CONCORD EAST AND WEST ADD LUSTRE ANNALS BRITISH BAHAI HISTORY AND HIS EAGER WILLINGNESS USE HIS RENOWN FOR SERVICE FAITH EARN ETERNAL GRATITUDE FELLOW BELIEVERS. ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

TRUDI SCOTT

CLEMENTINA MEJÍA DE PAVÓN
1900–1979

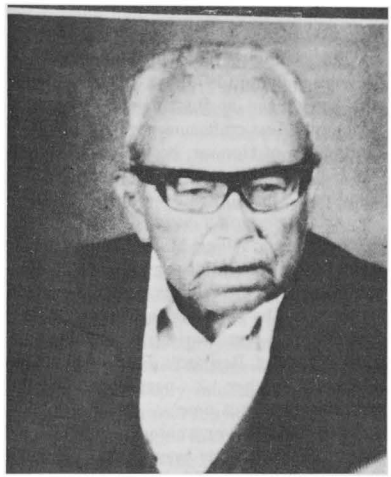
SEGUNDO PAVÓN BARRERA
1894–1979

Clementina de Pavón preceded her husband Segundo Pavón into the Faith by a few months in 1960, and in 1979 she preceded him, again by a few months, into the Abhá Kingdom. They had spent nineteen years serving together the interests of the Cause, of their children and of the Bahá'í community of Ecuador, especially the indigenous believers of the Otavalo and Cachaco areas.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Pavón were the 'spiritual children' of their own son, Raúl Pavón, who became a Bahá'í during the Ten Year Crusade and is now a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas. He purposely left the Bahá'í books lying about his parents' house hoping his mother would read them to 'see what he was mixed up in'. The result of her investigation was that Doña Clementina embraced the Cause in July of 1960. In December of the same year, her husband Segundo wrote a perceptive letter to the National Teaching Committee explaining that he had made a thorough investigation of the Faith, having studied *The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh* and *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* as well as the communications his wife had been receiving from Assemblies and



Clementina Mejía de Pavón



Segundo Pavón Barrera

committees. He related that through his study he had come to recognize Bahá'u'lláh. 'I have found the light with which the Lord our God has deemed to inspire his Divine Messengers to spread true faith in God, and being convinced of this reality, I desire to be accepted as a new believer in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.' The light he found at that time was to guide his life until the end of his time on earth.

The Pavóns were both born in Otavalo, a small Ecuadorian city in the Province of Imbabura, the province that holds the largest concentration of indigenous Bahá'ís in that country. As this century opened, they were children growing up among the native people, learning Quechua, the lingua franca of the Andes, and learning also to appreciate the qualities and the culture of a greatly underestimated and disparaged people. They acquired those humane qualities and that spiritual nature that distinguished their years as Bahá'ís and gave them the unique ability to identify with the Quechua-speakers they served.

They married in 1920 and had nine children, two of whom died young. They lived to see all their surviving children and a number of grandchildren accept the Faith. Their lives were, even before their exposure to the Faith, devoted to humanitarian objectives. Mr. Pavón was a civil servant, who well understood the needs of the Indians, and his wife, a loving mother to her own children, was also widely known as Mother Pavón, a beloved 'mater familias' for all who needed her.

Early in their marriage they purchased a farm in Cachaco, miles from any city, so that their children could be raised in a healthy and spiritual environment. It was in a jungle-like area with no transportation, not even roads. An undependable train which ran at irregular intervals at some distance from their home was the only means of travel in or out. They could not have foreseen at this time that the farm would become a school under Bahá'í auspices and a training institute for the native believers of Ecuador. Seeing the needs of the children of Cachaco, who were without educational facilities, they opened a school in their home, supporting it from the proceeds of their farm insofar as possible.

When the National Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador was formed in 1961, the Pavóns gave it their whole-hearted support, and began sending frequent detailed reports of their

activities. In an early letter to the Assembly Doña Clementina wrote that she was teaching the principles of the Faith to the children of their school so that they would grow up to be true Bahá'ís. A few weeks later she sent notice that four of her pupils who ranged in age from six to sixteen years, had accepted the Faith. In August 1962 they shared with the National Assembly their happiness over the acclaim they received from the Ministry of Education for their efforts in educating *campesino* children. Unfortunately, a few months later Mrs. Pavón was greatly tested when she heard from the provincial director of education that she could not be considered a teacher as she had no degree in teaching. He wanted to send a young graduate with a degree to the area. Mr. Pavón wrote to say 'The truth is, the priest and his followers have offered to open a school in the area . . . and take away our school'. In spite of the machinations against the school, their faith never wavered. Doña Clementina wrote asking for prayers for guidance, her words reflecting her undaunted spirit: 'I always have confidence in the help of Bahá'u'lláh and the prayers of our fellow-Bahá'ís' and that 'God is greater than every great one'. The school continued, with daily classes for twenty children and literacy classes for adults in the evenings and on Sundays. Through their work enrolments in the Faith continued month after month. Reflecting on the lives of Segundo and Clementina Pavón from this vantage point in time, it appears that their independent effort to provide schooling to *campesino* children and literacy classes to adults, might well be regarded as one of the earliest of the 'tutorial schools' called for many years later in the Nine Year Plan.

When the National Spiritual Assembly needed a couple to work with the indigenous people in the areas of mass conversion, they knew they had in the Pavóns two capable believers with an innate respect for the Indians, and who were well-versed in their language and culture. They were asked by the Assembly to move from Cachaco to serve as pioneers in Otavalo, their natal city. The Pavóns, in agreeing to the task assigned to them in Otavalo, were able to happily inform the National Assembly that the children of Cachaco would continue to receive education, for through Mr. Pavón's efforts a public school had been established and a road into the area had been opened.

In Otavalo the two worked tirelessly together on many projects. Señora Pavón was inspired to write songs, poetry and translations, while Señor Pavón spent many hours at the typewriter acting as her secretary, recording her work, meticulously and precisely, as was his nature.

The songs of Clementina Pavón, based on Bahá'í texts and set to the haunting Andean melodies she had heard from childhood, are played daily on 'Radio Bahá'í of Ecuador' and are sung in villages and international conferences around the world. One of them was sung by a choir in the Mother Temple of Latin America in Panama. They are songs that teach and instruct, that rejoice in the joy of being a Bahá'í, that bring the Manifestation close to the believer and that strike a responsive note in the hearts of children and adults alike. 'Radio Bahá'í' in its early years would have been musically impoverished without the contributions of Doña Clementina de Pavón. And her translations of the Writings into Quechua made possible the Quechua programming of the station.

In Otavalo, too, the Pavóns taught indigenous people to read and write. They helped to engender respect for the Quechua language, and to revive and restore its use among Quechua-speakers themselves, who were losing vocabulary from their language along with the self-respect of which they had been deprived by a Spanish-language culture. Mrs. Pavón helped to train the Quechua-speakers who were the first radio announcers to speak about the Faith in their mother tongue to their own people.

Their story would not be complete without the story of José Manuel. When they learned that a mother was in the market-place trying to sell her partially paralysed four-year-old child who was also mute, they immediately took the child, disregarding the fact that they had a houseful of their own children. They feared that someone would take him who would not give him love. José Manuel grew up with the Pavón children as one of their brothers. Through their love and unwavering faith they were able to teach him many things, including the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and the

ability to utter a few words. José Manuel is now a man, a Bahá'í, devoted and ready to serve the Faith and the friends at all times. When their success with José Manuel was noted, they were offered another unwanted child who was totally deaf and mute. They accepted it and gave it the same loving care. Both are today loved and cared for by the Pavóns' children.

As the years passed and the health of the Pavóns began to fail, they moved, at the urging of their children, to a warmer climate at a lower altitude to live with a daughter. While they enjoyed being with their family, they soon felt restless at being far from the heart of Bahá'í activities, and in time returned to Otavalo and became engaged in the work of the Bahá'í Institute. Over the years they were mother and father to many pioneers who had the privilege of working with and learning from them. Pioneers and others relied on the herbal remedies Mother Pavón dispensed. Particularly in Cachaco, where there had been no doctors and no telephones, the sick would often turn to the Pavóns for help. Both served in countless ways on Assemblies and committees, national and local, as teachers, administrators and collaborators with conventions, institutes and every Bahá'í event of the busy years during which the Faith dramatically increased both its numbers and its activities in Ecuador.

Segundo Pavón's deep love for Bahá'u'lláh, his ardent desire to serve the Cause, and his complete devotion to his wife were all demonstrated at the time of her passing. While she was in hospital, Mr. Pavón, himself ill and quite fragile, was busy correcting her translation into Quechua of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* in order to be sure that her last work would be complete and well-done. It seemed at that time that his sole desire was to complete this mission and join her.

Their staunch and unyielding faith in Bahá'u'lláh was the cohesive influence that welded this inseparable couple together in service to the Cause. They were richly rewarded in this life by seeing their son Raúl named to the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas, two daughters, Isabel Pavón de Calderón and Clemencia Pavón de Zuleta named to the Auxiliary Board, and all their other surviving children enrolled as devoted Bahá'ís. They are: Rafael Pavón Mejía, Aida Pavón de Espín, Cecilia Pavón de Wilson and Teresa Pavón de Narvaez.

On the passing of Clementina Mejía de Pavón, on 17 May 1979, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> GRIEVED PASSING BELOVED CLEMENTINA DE PAVON OUTSTANDING INSPIRING TEACHER FAITH WORTHY EMULATION ALL BELIEVERS. OFFERING LOVING PRAYERS DIVINE THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL.

Only two months later, following the passing of Segundo Pavón Barrera on 14 July, the House of Justice again cabled Ecuador:

> PRAYING PROGRESS KINGDOMS GOD SOUL SEGUNDO PAVON. CONVEY FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY.

And to Counsellor Pavón, on 15 July, it joined the International Teaching Centre in cabling:

> HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES YOURSELF FAMILY. ASSURE PRAYERS SHRINES BOUNTIFUL REWARD DEVOTED SERVANT FAITH SEGUNDO PAVON.

(Adapted from articles written by HELEN HORNBY)

HELEN EGGLESTON
1892–1979

Helen Latimer Whitney was born in Portland, Oregon, on 1 June 1892, the daughter of Kate Latimer Whitney and Edwin D. Whitney. Whitney, Marzieh Gail advises, was a prominent Lansing, Michigan, businessman, and owned one of America's most complete private gun collections, its oldest item being an Arab firearm, very light, for cavalry, dating back about three hundred years. His other avocation was making birdhouses.

Helen, *The American Bahá'í* of July 1979 reports, became a Bahá'í in Portland 'some seventy years ago after learning of the Faith from a relative of hers, George Orr Latimer [who died in 1948]', and 'will be best remembered for her pioneering work in Bahá'í education through the establishment [with her husband, Lou (1872–1953)] of the Louhelen



Helen Eggleston

School near Davison, Michigan', whose first session was held 'in August 1931 with the approval of Shoghi Effendi'.

Helen met Lou Eggleston[1] in the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois; they were married on 24 December 1930. Marzieh Gail in an unpublished reminiscence gives us a vivid picture of the couple set against the background of the creation and development of the school which was to bear their names: 'Helen was thirty-eight at the time of her marriage, slender and youthful in appearance, and she stayed that way throughout her life. Lou was fifty and had other family, Helen being his third wife. They produced two children of their own, first a daughter, Louhelen, and later a son, "Buzzie." Although a recent Bahá'í at the time of their marriage, Lou then dedicated his life, as did Helen, to an enterprise which would be of value to the Faith. Searching the rural area near Davison, a few miles out of Flint they discovered a large property which had outbuildings and a deserted farm house. The house was fifty years old, built for the ages, with that confidence in the future, those self-respecting lines, that American architects can apparently no longer reproduce. It had oak timbers; the rest was of white pine lumber throughout. No plumbing, only a cistern under the kitchen and a pitcher and pump at the sink. Four porches, rotting away. It had last been painted forty years before. Lou, a genius-level, self-taught engineer who had been obliged to leave school at eleven, went to work on the house and its 280 acres. On 1 August 1931 was held the first session ever of the first Bahá'í Summer School in the central part of the United States. (There were only two other Bahá'í schools in America at that time, Green Acre in Maine, and Geyserville in California.)

'Names associated with that first nine-day session were Dorothy Baker, Louis Gregory, Harlan and Grace Ober, Howard and Mabel Ives, May Harvey Gift, Christine McKay, Fanny Knobloch and Mary Collison. Those in attendance met on the porch of a log cabin on Kersley Creek, which ran through the property, or sat on bleachers at the water's edge. The Guardian was very pleased with that first success and urged the friends to "do even more next season." The Egglestons toiled to plan the courses and expand the facilities . . . From the beginning, with continuous guidance from the Guardian and served by national committees, the school was youth-oriented. It stressed Bahá'í administration and also the study of Islám and the Qur'án, for on 2 December 1935 the Guardian wrote: "The knowledge of this Sacred Scripture is absolutely indispensable for every believer who wishes adequately and intelligently to read the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh."

'In 1939, a handsome, official library was opened to the public, while Helen's private collection of Bahá'í books and rare pamphlets was becoming perhaps the best in the country. Her knowledge of the Faith was well organized, so that if you had a question, you would often turn to her for a documented reply.

'In 1949, a nine-acre tract, including the main residence and all the other buildings and recreational grounds, was deeded by Helen and Lou to the National Spiritual Assembly. Meanwhile, with the help of a tenant farmer, varied activities were constantly going on: goats were raised; a special kind of flour was developed; additional dormitories were constructed; a tennis court, outdoor grill for wiener roasts and a craft center were provided;

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 712.

a conservatory was established upstairs in the residence; and the Louhelen Bahá'í Choir was created by Esther Wilson of Bradley College.

'Helen was known for developing new talent and many a teacher, crowded out by established talent elsewhere, got a start at Louhelen and found that he or she had abilities previously undiscovered. What Helen contributed throughout was to rule her domain with the proverbial rod of iron; but unlike most "dictators" she had a sense of the ridiculous. When you watched her carefully you noticed a barely perceptible tic, a small twitch to her lips. Whether the humor came first, or the tic, we do not know; but in any case they matched. Her custom when she first met a person was to test him out: she would stare at him out of round brown eyes, her mouth twitching just a bit, and make some outrageous statement, and watch to see how the individual responded. She once greeted a new arrival at the school with: "Your room is in such-and-such a building; bed-time is ten o'clock; all the mail is read before we deliver it to you; good night!"'

The operation of running Louhelen, Marzieh Gail continues, 'involved administering thousands of people, over the years, and it was Helen's continuous, invaluable, personal supervision, reinforced by Lou, that made Louhelen School the unique institution it was . . . Helen had small, delicate hands, and I doubt that she ever cooked anything or wielded a broom in her life, but she collected and closely supervised a fine staff. Not everyone was enthusiastic over the goat's milk and kelp which formed part of the Louhelen menu—and you were not allowed to escape to the city of Flint for a meal. Nor did Helen care for the individual's private ideas of what to eat. "The worst part is having to deal with all their special diets," she once confided. "You take today. Mrs. X has just informed me that she cannot possibly eat veal. So . . . —dead-pan stare and slight twitch of the lips—"she's going to get some *lovely chicken*." I once asked her how, with all those buildings, she warded off a long succession of self-invited guests. "I explain that there's lots of work for them to do around the ranch," she said. "Lots of weeding, painting, driving the tractor, milking the goats . . ." To prevent cliques, she made each one sit by a different person at each meal. As for circumventing budding romances, she said: "Takes about two weeks to get 'em started. Then we send 'em home and schedule a different study course."

'Basically egalitarian in spite of her Junior League background, she was as real as a sack of potatoes. She neither wanted nor accepted adulation for herself . . . Shy and vulnerable at heart, when confronted with formal guests she would have someone else present to manage the conversation. Nevertheless, even though it involved facing unfamiliar people, she was so anxious to have good relations between the school and the inhabitants of the area that she would go out of her way to make friends. One autumn she and Lou arranged for me to give talks on some forty platforms in surrounding towns—at schools, in churches, at men's service clubs, Rotary, Lions, the Kiwanis (the entire peas-and-chicken-à-la-king circuit)—they themselves driving me in the overheated car (Helen couldn't stand the cold) through the bare, wintry fields. Practical, the two would combine other errands along with getting to the lecture . . . It was Helen who arranged the lecture engagements . . . In those days religion was a taboo subject on most platforms of the kind I have mentioned; you walked on eggs, and the relevance of the Bahá'í Faith to the world situation was not understood. (Neither in fact was the world situation.) Lou was a member of Rotary himself, and as the years went by, the school gained in local prestige, and clubs in the area would often ask for Bahá'í speakers. One summer the Civitan Club of Flint used Bahá'í speakers for three successive meetings, the Zonta Club featured a staff speaker from Louhelen School, and the Flint radio station interviewed another. Winning this type of recognition was a considerable achievement for the time and place. Various groups would also make use of the public library on the grounds, and sometimes rent the school for conferences of their own . . .

'The home Helen shared with Lou and her children and thousands of Bahá'ís, and others, taught its own message and imparted its own memories that still linger in the mind. As for the budding romances nipped in the bud, we think there must be many a couple who still turn back, over the years, to their days in that lovely place.'

Though best remembered for her association with Louhelen School, Helen served the Cause faithfully in various capacities throughout her lifetime and until her last breath maintained an active interest in its world-wide development and expansion. The gift of a copy of the new publication *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* sent to her by Lois Goebel elicited a happy response dated 17 April 1979, a month before her passing: 'O Lois! How can I thank you for this precious, priceless *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*! It arrived yesterday. The power of His Word shakes one, and is overwhelming, and I've only read a few pages! Thank you, my dear, so very, very much for your thoughtfulness and kindness. Do you know that section 167, page 198, is a Tablet that I had the blessing of receiving from the Master?'

The National Spiritual Assembly of the United States in its cable announcing the passing of Helen Eggleston on 9 May 1979 paid tribute to this 'stalwart, generous-hearted handmaiden Bahá'u'lláh whose name along with husband's will be associated with development Bahá'í education United States for generations to come'. From the Universal House of Justice on 11 May came this accolade:

> GRIEVED PASSING VETERAN DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT CAUSE HELEN EGGLESTON WHO WITH HER LATE HUSBAND ESTABLISHED CENTRAL MICHIGAN SUMMER SCHOOL IN EARLY THIRTIES EARNING HIGH PRAISE BELOVED GUARDIAN. CONVEY FAMILY FRIENDS OUR CONDOLENCES AND ASSURANCE LOVING PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL.

(Adapted from a memoir by MARZIEH GAIL)

ELIZABETH KIDDER OBER
1902–1979

ALICE G. KIDDER
1902–1981

O ye handmaids of the merciful Lord! How many queens of this world laid down their heads on a pillow of dust and disappeared. No fruit was left of them, no trace, no sign, not even their names . . . Not so the handmaids who ministered at the Threshold of God; these have shone forth like glittering stars in the skies of ancient glory, shedding their splendours across all the reaches of time. 'Abdu'l-Bahá

These words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá call to my mind the lives of dedication to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and of service to the world of humanity, of our dearly loved twins, Dr. Alice Gertrude Kidder and Dr. Elizabeth Meriel Kidder Ober.

Born on 22 September 1902, in Beverly, Massachusetts, to Arthur Harvey Kidder, pattern-maker, and Gertrude Maria Glines, schoolteacher, Alice and Elizabeth were raised, with their brother Harold, two years older than they, in a loving and spacious rural home.

By the time they reached age eleven, the spirit of dedication to the service of mankind that was to characterize their lives was born. Their mother, active in the Congregational Church, often arranged visits from missionaries home on furlough from various countries. Many times Alice and Elizabeth, as children, were sent to the railroad station in their pony-cart to welcome and bring home those missionary speakers. Learning about mission life abroad decided the young girls that the only hope for the masses was education in physical hygiene and the acquisition of spiritual virtues.

Their father taught them to look always with a searching eye for the truth in every situation. These parental influences set the pattern of their lives. They pursued studies in osteopathic, homeopathic and naturopathic medicine. Elizabeth became an osteopathic physician first, graduating in 1927. Alice graduated a decade later and in the interval looked after their parents and carried on their father's flourishing greenhouse business.

When, in 1934, Elizabeth learned of the Bahá'í Faith from Lorna Tasker, a patient and later dear friend of hers, she knew in an instant that she would become a Bahá'í. At precisely the same time in another city, Alice first heard the name of Bahá'u'lláh. The twins hastened to share their momentous discovery, only to find the other already knew. Taught by other prominent Bahá'í teachers, including Helen Archambault, Alice's spiritual mother, and Grace Robarts Ober and her husband



Elizabeth Kidder Ober



Alice G. Kidder

Harlan Ober, patients of Elizabeth's, the twins became Bahá'ís in Boston in 1939 and served the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the end of their earthly lives.

Harlan and Grace Ober had been married by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1912. Harlan was devastated by Grace's death in 1938 but learned to find comfort in an awareness of her continuing influence in his life. He never doubted that part of her legacy to him was yet another extremely happy marriage. On 21 June 1941 he married Dr. Elizabeth Kidder. A postscript in the handwriting of Shoghi Effendi appended to a letter written on his behalf on 20 June 1941 conveyed the Guardian's 'heartfelt congratulations' and the assurance of his 'best wishes'.

Grace Ober's dearly loved nephew, the Hand of the Cause John A. Robarts, gives a glimpse of his great affection and esteem for the twins:

'My Aunt Grace's death was a shock. We all loved her very much, but three years later Harlan married Elizabeth Kidder, and as she had a twin sister, Alice, this meant that while I had lost one aunt, I acquired two new almost-aunts. They were delightful people, devoted Bahá'ís, skilled osteopaths, and with Harlan were Bahá'í pioneers in Southern Africa near where my wife, Audrey, and I lived with two of our children, Patrick and Nina. They kept us all in good health. In describing their dedication to serving others, Harlan said, "They are like two fire-horses; come back to the firehall after standing for hours at a fire, exhausted, but ready to dash out to another fire without a murmur of complaint."'

Anyone who knew Elizabeth and Alice will recall with awe and amusement their extraordinary relationship as identical twins. As children they delighted in confusing their teachers and classmates; as doctors in practice together, they could substitute for each other when necessary, some patients never knowing the difference. They had telepathic communication: while one wrote a letter, the recipient was already sending the answer before having received the question. Whenever one was ill, the other came immediately to the rescue with medical expertise and that loving spirit of service for which they were both famous. They shared an uncanny ability to perceive and rise to the needs of others—physical, emotional or spiritual needs—and in the

process, those who opened themselves to their care discovered such qualities as Alice's self-effacing efficiency, her resourcefulness, tenderness and wisdom; or Elizabeth's sense of humour and determination to explore alternatives, overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

Elizabeth and Harlan were elected to the Spiritual Assembly of Beverly in 1942. They held regular firesides, travel-taught, gave public talks. For a time Elizabeth served on the Regional Teaching Committee. Alice was elected to the Spiritual Assembly of Greenwich. All three were, at different times, delegates to national conventions and speakers at Louhelen Bahá'í School; Elizabeth and Harlan also at Green Acre.

In May 1953 at the Mother Temple of the West, Alice responded at once to the launching of the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Crusade by offering to pioneer to the Union of South Africa. In March 1954, after correspondence had been delayed in the committee, Shoghi Effendi advised her to go immediately. Within two days she was on her way. Elizabeth and Harlan deputized her. During her pilgrimage, *en route* to South Africa, Shoghi Effendi directed her to Pretoria, the capital city, where she arrived in April 1954. It was during this pilgrimage that she first drew close to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Shoghi Effendi's wife, through treating her and spending some time in her company—a bond which was later to develop and mean so much in both their lives.

Alice's life, alone in her pioneer post, was an example of complete faith and courage as she quietly went about finding and furnishing a downtown office, and building up a medical practice among the white population in accordance with the prevailing racial restrictions of the land. With discretion she used the office also as a place of contact for teaching and held classes there each week. Dedicating every day to the service of Bahá'u'lláh, she remained steadfast through many difficulties.

Her joy knew no bounds when, in March 1956, she was joined by Elizabeth and Harlan who also made their pilgrimage to the Holy Land before reaching South Africa. Alice and the first Tswana Bahá'í woman, Dorothy Senna, had laid a foundation, in Lady Selbourne, for the formation of the first all-African Local Spiritual Assembly in the Pretoria area and in April 1956, following the expressed wish of the Guardian, the Obers brought the institution into being. Aided by Alice they also raised up a Spiritual Assembly in Atteridgeville in 1958.

The twin doctors were greatly loved by their patients. Their practice grew.

Functioning as a team with Harlan in their Bahá'í work they taught at every opportunity and conducted study classes twice weekly. Harlan's stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá welded together the hearts of pioneers and local believers and difficulties often melted into joy and laughter. Alice, Elizabeth and Harlan will long be lovingly remembered for their vital service of deepening the knowledge of the friends in the Pretoria area, many of whom are today serving the Faith with exemplary capacity and devotion.

The pinnacle of Alice's life was the six years she served Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum as physician and companion from 1958 to 1964. Amatu'l-Bahá's own words, cabled at the time of Alice's passing, best describe this achievement:

> . . . DOCTOR ALICE KIDDER OUTSTANDING OLD BELIEVER CONSECRATED DEVOTED PIONEER BOTH SOUTH AFRICA MEXICO . . . PRECIOUS LINK MY OWN LIFE AGONIZING PERIOD FOLLOWING PASSING BELOVED GUARDIAN WHEN FOR SIX YEARS SHE LIVED WITH ME CARED FOR ME SERVED AT WORLD CENTRE FAITH WITH UNIQUE SELFLESS DEVOTION . . .

During Alice's six-year absence, Elizabeth maintained the medical practice alone, and she and Harlan continued their Bahá'í work, including teaching trips to Mozambique, Swaziland, Zululand, Basutoland and Rhodesia. They served on the National Teaching Committee of South and West Africa for some years. On 20 July 1962 Harlan died. Urged to do so by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Alice returned to South Africa in 1964. Ever since Harlan's death Rúḥíyyih Khánum had felt it was not right to separate the twins and that Elizabeth needed her more than she did. The sisters remained another five years in South Africa, continuing their practice together.

Elizabeth went to the United States in 1967

and spent four dusty months carefully sorting through and distributing to the International, American and Canadian Bahá'í archives an enormous collection of historical and other papers dating back to 1905 which had belonged to Harlan, and to Grace and Ella Robarts. While there, Elizabeth traversed the country from coast to coast and gave twenty-five well-received Bahá'í talks.

In 1969 Alice and Elizabeth made their farewell teaching trip to Cape Town, an unforgettable feast of love among their Bahá'í friends of all races. Returning to the United States, they settled in St. Petersburg, Florida. They longed to pioneer again, but were plagued by incredible mishaps. Both sisters were constitutionally prone to breaking their bones. Each suffered a severe hip fracture. Alice never really walked again. With heroic determination and fortitude, still imbued with their passionate desire to pioneer and not merely to rust out and die in their homeland, Elizabeth arranged their final move, this time to their pioneer post in Guadalajara, Mexico, where they arrived, Elizabeth in May 1975, Alice the following month. At Riḍván 1978 they were elected to the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Zapopan, Elizabeth serving as chairman.

Despite difficulties arising from not speaking Spanish, Elizabeth participated in brief teaching trips in Jalisco and Nayarit, and she and Alice both made valiant efforts to deepen the friends, their home a centre of Bahá'í activity, frequent firesides, their Bahá'í library available to all who came to study there.

The twins were taken to hospital following a car accident in November 1978 and shortly thereafter it became evident that they could not return to their home. After a lifetime of serving others, they were now surrounded by what seemed to be a band of angels who attended to their every need. Foremost among these were the Sala family, Emeric, Rosemary, Ida and Paul, who, respectively and collectively, looked after their financial affairs, their correspondence and voluminous historical papers, the disposal of their possessions, their daily needs; and Jack Jacobs, a gifted Bahá'í medical student whose visits each day brought laughter and assurance of the best medical attention, and somehow, sometimes, a favourite treat: chocolate ice cream. All who were privileged to be near the sisters in their final months were touched by their detachment from worldly things, their courage, steadfastness and humour in the face of overwhelming difficulties and suffering.

In March 1981, when she was in Mexico during a tour of Central America, Rúḥíyyih Khánum made a special trip to Guadalajara to see Alice in her nursing home and stayed long enough to visit her on three different occasions. This brought great joy to both of them, Alice brightening up to very much her old self and, with child-like pleasure, eating the ice cream brought as a gift.

Elizabeth left this world on 1 June 1979, and Alice followed her on 26 November 1981. The following excerpts from cables sent by the Universal House of Justice and by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum upon the passing of Elizabeth and of Alice point to some of their sterling qualities and unforgettable services to the Cause of God:

From the Universal House of Justice on 5 June 1979:

> GRIEVED PASSING ELIZABETH OBER HER SERVICE PIONEER FIELDS WARMLY REMEMBERED . . .

From Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum:

> . . . HEROIC PIONEER ELIZABETH OBER SHE ALICE SHINING EXAMPLES FUTURE GENERATIONS COMPLETE DEDICATION CAUSE GOD.

And from the Universal House of Justice on 29 November 1981:

> . . . RADIANT HANDMAID BAHAULLAH ALICE KIDDER. HER SARIFICIAL EFFORTS FOREIGN PIONEERING FIELDS HER DEVOTED LABOURS WORLD CENTRE ABOVE ALL HER PERSONAL SERVICES AMATULBAHA DURING POIGNANT PERIOD AFTER BELOVED GUARDIANS PASSING LOVINGLY TENDERLY REMEMBERED . . .

The twins' remains are buried together in the Cemeterio Municipal de Guadalajara, and their radiant souls are surely soaring upwards together through all the worlds of God.

NINA GRACE ROBARTS TINNION



Jean Hutchinson-Smith

JEAN HUTCHINSON-SMITH
1886–1979

Jean Hutchinson-Smith was the Australian-born daughter of John and Margaret Lauder who, with a young family, left Scotland about 1880 to seek a new life in a new land, and settled in Sydney, Australia. Jean was born in 1886 and was educated at Sydney Girls' High School—at that time, 1900, the only girls' high school in the State of New South Wales—and at the University of Sydney. She passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 20 July 1979, in her ninety-third year.

Jean was fifty-five when she found the Bahá'í Faith and had been widowed for eight years, but her daughter, Alicia, feels that if they had both heard of the Faith at an earlier time her father would undoubtedly have embraced it, for breadth of thought was always apparent in the family.

Jean's life as a young, educated matron was filled with the difficulties caused by living for many years in backward country towns where her classically-educated husband was posted as a teacher. Some of her receptivity to the spiritual life must have been born of the combined effects of education and harsh living conditions. She had a truly international outlook and was a sincere seeker after Truth. Her introduction to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh through Stanley and Mariette Bolton, and subsequently 'Father and Mother Dunn', was the climax of this long search. She became a Bahá'í in March 1941. A letter from the beloved Guardian dated 22 January 1944 was her most cherished possession. In his own hand he had written: 'May the Beloved bless your devoted efforts, guide every step you take in His service, remove all obstacles from your path and fulfil every desire you cherish for the furtherance of the interests of His Faith.'

After she became a Bahá'í she travelled extensively in the British Isles and Europe from 1948 until the early 1960s, neglecting no opportunity to meet with the friends in the many countries she visited. Her gift for languages, particularly German and French, was a tremendous advantage. She was an able speaker and will long be remembered gratefully in Edinburgh where significant newspaper publicity on the Faith followed a public meeting she addressed in that city. The Bahá'ís there had been trying for years to break into the press. Marion Hofman recalled this when she visited Jean in Sydney in 1977, so many years after the event, which must have taken place in 1948, the same year in which Jean and Alicia served as tellers when the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Dublin was formed in the home of George Townshend. Wherever Jean's ship called she made contact with the believers. In 1959 she and Alicia visited Tokyo, the first Australian Bahá'ís to visit the Japanese Bahá'í community. On two visits to Europe and the United Kingdom in the early 1960s Jean was tireless in promoting the Faith in company with Alicia. 'I wish to assure you of my loving and deep-felt appreciation of your constant and manifold services to our beloved Faith,' the Guardian wrote in a postscript to a letter written on his behalf on 18 February 1950. 'I will supplicate the Beloved to bless continually your high endeavours, to remove every obstacle from your path, and enable you to win great victories for its institutions.'

The erection of the Bahá'í Temple at

Ingleside was the great thrill of Jean's Bahá'í life. She had seen the Faith grow in numbers and strength to a degree that in the early days of rented meeting halls would have seemed a dream. She rejoiced in hearing prayers recited in her home in languages other than English, as testimony to the universality and growth of the Cause. During Marion Hofman's visit in 1977 Jean remarked how deeply she regretted not having had the privilege of making the pilgrimage to the World Centre due to the dates being fully booked when she applied, and was comforted by Marion's reply, referring to words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in which He expressed the thought that to be engaged in teaching the Cause is equivalent to having attained the Threshold (Tablet to Mariam Haney dated 18 October 1903).

(Reprinted from *Australian Bahá'í Bulletin*, July 1980, and based on information supplied by ALICIA HUTCHINSON-SMITH.)



Fu'ád Aḥmadpúr

FU'ÁD AḤMADPÚR (FU'ÁD AḤMADPÚR MÍLÁNÍ) 1922–1979

Fu'ád Aḥmadpúr Mílání (known as Fu'ád Aḥmadpour) was born in 1922 in Tabríz, Írán. He was the eldest son of 'Ináyat'u'lláh Aḥmadpúr Mílání. The family, which was devoted, steadfast, deeply-rooted in the Bahá'í Cause and of distinguished lineage, moved to Ṭihrán while Fu'ád was still in his childhood.

Fu'ád's paternal grandfather, Ḥájí Aḥmad Mílání, was one of the early believers who recognized the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. Following the martyrdom of the Báb, His remains were taken to Mílán and kept for a time in the silk mill of Ḥájí Aḥmad.[1] Fu'ád's maternal grandfather, Ibráhím Ádhar Munír, was an outstanding Bahá'í teacher who, for a while, served 'Abdu'l-Bahá as a scribe.

From childhood Fu'ád Aḥmadpúr manifested courage, pioneering while still a youth to the remote town of Maḥallát where he bravely proclaimed the Faith publicly from inside a mosque. As he left the building he was attacked by fanatics who beat him with sticks and chains until he fell wounded and unconscious and was believed to be dead. He was taken to a hospital in Ṭihrán where his recovery was effected, though traces of his injuries remained on his face throughout his life. He studied at Ṭihrán University and completed his education in Paris and Geneva, receiving a Ph.D. in Law. He made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and would often repeat what the Guardian said to him about his having followed in his father's footsteps in serving the Faith.

Fu'ád Aḥmadpúr's service to the Cause was characterized by fearless courage. He pioneered to Morocco in 1955, setting an example of sacrifice and self-denial. He opened his home to the friends and tirelessly travelled to visit the believers in every corner of the country. Not satisfied with ordinary feats or small achievements, he always sought perfection and excellence. He was determined to win important goals in the administrative

[1] See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 54.

affairs of the Faith. His fame grew: Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, the élite and layman alike, would go to him for solutions to their problems. He dealt with ease with people from all walks of life both within and without the Bahá'í community. The services of the friends aroused his deep admiration: a poor Bahá'í giving a contribution or an illiterate friend teaching the Faith successfully would inspire him. Nothing was capable of frightening him for he knew that all was worthless compared with the Cause, and in the light of its greatness he did not consider himself or his services of any significance.

He served on the National Spiritual Assembly for almost twenty years and as an officer for many of these and, with his vast personal ability, carried the great responsibility of serving as liaison between the National Spiritual Assembly and those who wished to contact it from inside or outside. He arranged the meetings and carried out the decisions. In the incident of al-Náḍúr, when several Bahá'ís were imprisoned, he did everything in his power to exonerate them.

The name of Fu'ád Aḥmadpúr, whose services are an integral part of the achievements in Morocco, will be recorded in letters of light in the history of the Faith in that region. It is sufficient here to quote a passage from a letter written by Counsellor Muḥammad Kebdani to commemorate the passing of Mr. Aḥmadpúr:

'To my dear servant-friend, the lion of God, Mr. Fu'ád Aḥmadpúr: God's decree is that he be unexpectedly hidden from the eyes of the Bahá'í friends in Morocco, the friends who loved him wholeheartedly. He ascended to the Kingdom of God following a heart attack suffered on 2 August 1979 in London, and was buried close to the grave of his beloved Guardian whom he would frequently mention with tearful eyes.'

The following cablegram was received from the Universal House of Justice praising his glorious services:

DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING FUAD AHMADPOUR HIS DEVOTED PIONEER SERVICES EXTENDING OVER PERIOD SEVERAL DECADES HIS SPIRIT DEDICATION COURAGE IN PROMOTING VITAL INTERESTS FAITH WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED. ASSURE MEMBERS BEREAVED FAMILY LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

SAMI DOKTOROĞLU
1901–1979

GRIEVED LOSS OUTSTANDING SERVANT BAHAULLAH SAMI DOKTOROGLU WHOSE UNINTERRUPTED DEVOTED SERVICES OVER SEVERAL DECADES SHED LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH TURKEY WON HIM ADMIRATION CONFIDENCE BELOVED GUARDIAN AND GRATITUDE ALL BELIEVERS. HIS WORTHY ACHIEVEMENTS ACQUISITION HOLY PLACES TURKEY HIS LEADERSHIP INFANT COMMUNITY TIME NEED HIS SERVICES INSTITUTIONS FAITH IN MANIFOLD FIELDS WILL BE ALWAYS REMEMBERED. WE EXTEND SYMPATHY RELATIVES FRIENDS DEPARTED CO-WORKER AND ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL. ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS.

Universal House of Justice

Salih-bey, the grandfather of Sami Doktoroğlu, was a distinguished and well-respected medical doctor who was employed at the palace of the Ottoman Sulṭán in Istanbul. He was known for his kindness and help to the poor. His wife was related to the family of the Sulṭán. The family belonged to the Turkish Dervish order Bektáshiyya Taríqat (Baktáshí Taríqat). Their son, Halit-bey, an army officer, was sent to Birecik where he met and married Emine Kháanum, a native of the town. In 1901 Sami was born to them. His parents moved back to Istanbul where he attended Robert College—a missionary school—and from his many Greek schoolmates acquired a mastery of their language. His education was interrupted at the outbreak of World War I. Not old enough to serve in the army, Sami was employed by the government as a translator, remaining in Istanbul until the end of the war. When civil unrest swept the country in 1920, the family moved back to Birecik where Sami again found work as a translator in a government office.

The Bahá'ís of Birecik were attracted to Sami's upright character and sought his assistance in providing translations of Bahá'í newsletters and articles written in English which had been sent to them by friends abroad.

Thus, Sami-bey was introduced to the Faith which he frequently discussed with 'Abdu'l-Qadir Diriöz and eventually accepted.

In 1930 he married Behiye Khánum, the daughter of a well-known Bahá'í family of Ghazi Antab. Five children were born of the union: Süheyla, Süreyya, Erol Badí', Halde and Semura. The couple settled in Mardin for two years and then moved to Diyarbakir, engaging in commerce in both places. While they were in Mardin the Bahá'í friends in Urfa, Adana and Ghazi Antab were arrested and put on trial; some were imprisoned and their books were destroyed or confiscated. Sami-bey was also called to the police station but after being detained overnight and interrogated he was set free. In 1938 he returned to Istanbul. Although the Local Spiritual Assembly could not meet because the Faith was under proscription, the friends used to meet among themselves and share news of Bahá'í activities around the world. In Istanbul he started a travel agency and in a short time was loved and admired for his trustworthiness, honesty and good character.

Sami-bey was the sole heir to the Bektáshiyya endowment, as well as other properties belonging to his grandparents, but he refused them all. He loved the Bahá'í Faith and had nothing to do with the administration of the Taríqat, though he would have gained a considerable income.

After the second World War he was invited to be the general representative of Pan American Airways which was extending its service for the first time to Turkey. Soon other airline companies offered him an agency. His was the first and only firm to be given such an offer. In Turkish history books he is mentioned as the founder of travel agencies in Turkey. He was hard-working and determined. Through his business he became well known to the authorities and the general population.

The visit to Istanbul in the winter of 1951 of Mrs. Amelia E. Collins (appointed a Hand of the Cause on 24 December of that year) at the request of Shoghi Effendi marked the turning point in Sami's Bahá'í life. He had been requested to make the necessary arrangements. He made hotel reservations and greeted her at the airport with a large group of friends. Mrs. Collins's visit infused new life into the community. Several meetings were arranged at which she could meet the friends and a large banquet was given in her honour. She conveyed messages from the beloved Guardian and extended his love. While she was in Istanbul Sami received a cablegram from Shoghi Effendi inviting him to visit the Holy Land. Thrilled and astonished, he proceeded to Haifa, and returned filled with renewed spirit and enthusiasm, his devotion to the Faith reinforced by his having been in the presence of the Guardian for whom he had great admiration and love. After his return a letter dated 14 December 1951 written on behalf of the Guardian reached the believers in Istanbul encouraging the friends to establish a Local Spiritual Assembly and to pursue other tasks concerning which he had given instructions to Sami.



Sami Doktoroğlu

In April 1952 the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Istanbul was formed with Sami as one of its members. He began to deepen his knowledge by reading Bahá'í books in English, many of these as yet not available in Turkish, and making a special study of Shoghi Effendi's

God Passes By. Under the guidance of the Guardian with whom he was in frequent correspondence he implemented the delicate negotiations for the identification and purchase of the Holy Places in Istanbul and Edirne associated with the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. At a later time, writing of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1951, he said of Shoghi Effendi, 'I never imagined his bestowing upon me so many bounties, even one of which would be sufficient to make me happy throughout eternity. I am still unable to realize the blessings bestowed upon me, none of which I have deserved.'

Many pioneers arose in 1952, settling in all parts of the world, in answer to the call of the Guardian. Sami was of great assistance to the Persian friends, many of whom knew of his travel agency, and he tendered practical help in their relocation. In 1953 he took delight in attending the International Conferences held in Stockholm, Kampala and New Delhi, and was present at the dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette. At these gatherings he met many believers from all parts of the world and experienced a fuller appreciation of the reality of membership in the Bahá'í world community. Later he was privileged to attend the World Congress in London and to participate in the first International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice.

He served as a member of the Auxiliary Board and was the trustee of the Ḥuqúqu'lláh in Turkey. In 1957, not long before the passing of Shoghi Effendi, he conducted the long search which resulted in the acquisition of the site for the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. When the friends in Ankara were jailed in 1960 and questioned about their beliefs, and had their books taken from them, Sami contacted high-ranking government officials and addressed a letter to the President of Turkey explaining that the Bahá'í Faith is an independent religion and not a sect of Islám. The friends defended themselves admirably in court and were released. He was the author of *Dñya Medeniyetinin doguşu* (Dawning of a World Civilization), and of an introductory pamphlet entitled *The Bahá'í Religion*, and he compiled and translated a book called *Beklenen Çag*. His works were popular among the friends. He sent copies of his works to the then Prime Minister, Mr. Nihat Erim, from whom he received a warm letter of acknowledgement, as well as to other high-ranking officials. He was successful in obtaining permission to search the government archives for various documents related to the Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh. Among his findings was an indication, hitherto unknown, that Mulla 'Alíy-i-Basṭámí, one of the Letters of the Living, the first martyr of the Bábí Dispensation, who was put to death in 'Iráq, had in his travels reached the city of Bolu, east of Istanbul.

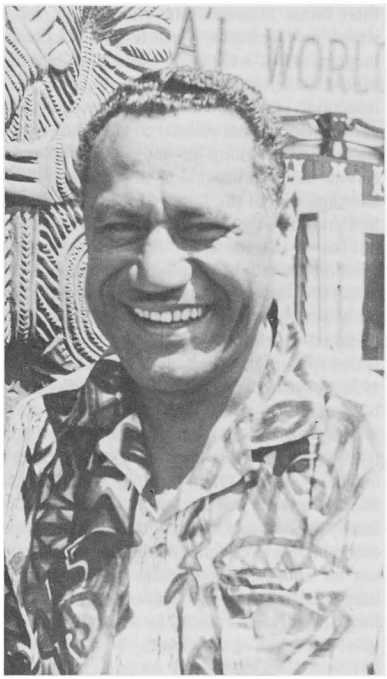
In 1977, despite his age and the condition of his health, he accepted an invitation from the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia to spend two months teaching in that country. In 1978 he visited Cyprus twice as a travelling teacher.

The death of his dearly loved sister, Hayriye Khánum, who had married his Bahá'í teacher, 'Abdu'l-Qadir Diriöz, affected him deeply, as she was the only member of his family who accepted the Faith. Indeed, the others considered him an infidel. Although not an educated woman she had immersed herself in the teachings, gained a great knowledge of the Faith and was an excellent and valued teacher of the Cause.

The Universal House of Justice had requested Sami to make inquiries about the possibility of shipping lumber from Turkey for the restoration of Holy Places in 'Akká. The last letter from the House of Justice reached him late in July of 1979. On 31 July, while giving instructions to his daughter, Süheyla, to accomplish the instructions of the Supreme Body, he partially lost consciousness. Three days later he was taken to the hospital and on 4 August he passed to the Abhá Kingdom.

A letter of consolation addressed to the family in October 1979 by the beloved Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum brought the sweet solace of these words: 'Our beloved Guardian esteemed your father very highly and I am sure his reward in the Abhá Kingdom is very great. He will be much missed by the believers in Turkey and indeed in many countries where the friends were a witness to his many services to the Faith.'

(Adapted from a memoir by SÜREYYA GULER)



Mosese Hokafonu

MOSESE HOKAFONU
1927–1979

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH MOSESE HOKAFONU HIS SERVICES FAITH OUTSTANDING ASSURE FAMILY FRIENDS ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

It was in the early years of the Ten Year Crusade that Mosese Hokafonu, who lived on the island of Tongatapu in the Kingdom of Tonga, first heard of the Bahá'í Faith. He became deeply attracted, readily embraced it, and for the remainder of his life was one of its staunch supporters and outstanding teachers. The flame of love that was ignited in his heart never dimmed. He brought knowledge of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh to many hundreds of people on tiny atolls and larger land masses scattered throughout the Pacific.

For many years Mosese served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Nuku'alofa and he travelled the length and breadth of Tonga in search of waiting souls. He donated for the site of the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds half of the small piece of land he owned in the centre of Nuku'alofa and lived with his family on the other portion. His home was always open to the local Bahá'í friends and to the many visitors from overseas: all found a warm welcome there.

In July 1968, when he was appointed to the Auxiliary Board, he wrote to the Continental Board of Counsellors: 'I am very happy indeed to accept your call and I am praying that the Blessed Beauty will lead me and guide me to teach His Cause in this field and to win many victories for our glorious Faith.' Mosese joined Gina and Russ Garcia on board their vessel *Dawnbreaker* for an extensive teaching trip which took them through the islands of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. They visited a number of outer islands and called at many villages. Mosese was the first Pacific Islander to undertake teaching trips of long duration. His wife and children saw him but rarely as he journeyed, under the guidance of the Counsellors and various National Spiritual Assemblies, to Kiribati and Tuvalu; Niue; the Solomon Islands; New Guinea; the Marshall, Mariana and Caroline Islands; Nauru; Australia and New Zealand, to name but some of his destinations. His gentle and enthusiastic soul always attracted listeners, and to many a lonely and isolated believer he brought love and a renewed spirit. In New Zealand he spearheaded teaching among the Maoris, walking countless miles to meet them, staying on their *maraes*, and often working with them on their farms. He visited, as well, Hawaii, Alaska and the continental United States.

Mosese's luminous spirit, happy personality and enthusiastic manner of teaching endeared him to friends and strangers alike. He had a ready smile and a deep and natural sense of hospitality. He was always positive in his approach, respecting the views of others and encouraging and supporting them. To him the Faith was sublime and when the demands on his time became too great he resigned his

government job to devote the rest of his life to serving the Cause. He moved with his family from their home in town to a small house in a village where they lived a simple life. He developed a strong band of assistants who aided him in his Auxiliary Board work.

Many of his co-workers learned of his last illness only when they arrived in Tonga for a meeting of the Auxiliary Board attended by members from Tonga, Fiji and Samoa, all the arrangements for which Mosese had undertaken in spite of ill health. At the end of the meeting he was admitted to hospital. His affliction had taken its toll and he passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 28 August 1979. Baron Vaea, a well-known Tongan noble, a relative who greatly respected and admired Mosese, conducted the funeral service which was attended by many hundreds of people. Mosese is survived by his equally devoted wife, Ofa, and five children. The feats achieved by this devoted servant of Bahá'u'lláh in the Pacific region bring to mind the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *O that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá' in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it.*[1]

SUHAYL A. 'ALÁ'Í

MELBA M. CALL KING
1910–1979

A casual observer might assume mistakenly that Melba King lived in a limited and narrow world of darkness, for she was blind. But those who were privileged to share her world know that she lived in beauty and light, her horizons uncircumscribed by physical limitations.

A Yupik Eskimo, she was born on 11 October 1910 in the village of Savanaska in the Bristol Bay region of Alaska. Orphaned at an early age and physically handicapped, she might have been lost had it not been for Dr. French, a United States Commissioner, who took an interest in her welfare and assisted with planning for her physical and educational needs. She was reared by a white foster-mother, Corrine Call, a teacher for the Alaskan Indian Service.

Melba earned her way through college, attended the School for the Blind at Vancouver, Washington, and studied at Perkins Institute in Massachusetts. Later she completed two years' study at Washington University and an additional two years' study at Central Washington University. She was the first blind student ever to graduate from that University. Her diploma was presented to her by the Governor of the State of Washington, the Hon. William Langley.

Determined to help others to broaden their perspective through education, Melba accepted a position teaching newly-blind adults in New Mexico. It was there that she met Kathryn Franklin[2] who introduced her to the Bahá'í Faith, an event that was to change the course of her life. Melba declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh on 23 May 1943 in Albuquerque, New Mexico—the first full-blooded Eskimo to do so.[3] This occasion, unforgettable for Melba and significant for the Faith, was made more memorable by a letter written on the Guardian's behalf by his secretary on 24 July in which he predicted a radiant future for Melba and for her people. In his own hand Shoghi Effendi wrote, 'Your most welcome letter has rejoiced my heart. I extend to you a most hearty welcome into the ranks of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, and will greatly value your support and co-operation. Your conversion to His Cause is indeed an historic event, and will greatly rejoice the hearts of the believers. I will pray for your success and spiritual advancement from the depths of my heart. Rest assured and be confident.'

To teach the Faith among the Eskimos became her greatest hope.

She returned to Seattle, Washington, in May 1944 and attended the Washington State Training Center for the Blind where she met Eugene King. They were married on 30 September 1944.

Humility was an integral part of Melba's personality. She was a determined and completely honest champion of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, never hesitating to speak out

[1] *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, p. 39.

[2] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 337.

[3] *Bahá'í News*, November 1943, pp. 5–6.



Melba M. Call King

to prevent misunderstandings or misrepresentations. As an active member of numerous Local Spiritual Assemblies she was to become adept in the art of consultation. Unafraid of controversy, she believed that all the facts were necessary to full and frank consultation, and encouraged everyone to express his opinion as openly as she did. Outstanding among her gifts was that of love which she extended to Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike. She was an accomplished pianist and often performed at public meetings. She was, as well, a skilled secretary, and a competent speaker and teacher. Her teaching trips were numerous and varied. She, Eugene and her gentle guide-dog became a familiar sight throughout Alaska, Oregon, California and Washington. She taught on Indian Reservations and at Bahá'í summer schools from Geyserville, California, to Juneau, Alaska. She served on the committee that launched the first mass teaching effort in Washington which reached nearly three thousand people, and made repeated visits to teach the Yakima and Tulalip Indians on their reservations. Melba and Eugene were the first public speakers in an Indian community at Neah Bay, Washington. In addition to her dedicated and varied services as a member of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Tacoma and Seattle she served on the National Bahá'í Committee for the Blind.

Throughout her many years of service in the Bahá'í communities of Washington, part of Melba's heart yearned for her native Alaska. In 1969 she and Eugene moved to Juneau and soon endeared themselves to the entire Alaskan Bahá'í community. Despite difficult weather conditions and precarious health they served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Juneau and its numerous committees, did extensive teaching throughout the country, and helped build and strengthen the Juneau community before moving to Anchorage in 1971, a move which became necessary because of the need for access to medical facilities. Melba also served on the National Teaching and National Goals Committees. In 1972 ill health forced the Kings to relocate in the milder climate of Washington. They were able to attend the 1976 International Conference in Anchorage, following which they made a teaching trip into the central and northern regions of Alaska. In July 1978 they made a teaching trip to Sitka and formulated plans to settle again in Alaska, this time in Haines. But it was not to be. On 7 September 1979, after a year of puzzling illness, Melba was called to her greater home in the Abhá Kingdom, leaving us very blessed for having shared her world of infinite vision. She was buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Seattle. On 10 September the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> PASSING MELBA KING FIRST ESKIMO TO EMBRACE CAUSE BAHAULLAH GRIEVOUS LOSS. HER UNSTINTING SERVICES ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHING FIELDS FOR NEARLY FOUR DECADES IN ALASKA AND NORTHWEST UNITED STATES DESPITE LIFELONG PHYSICAL HANDICAP DESERVE SPECIAL MENTION ANNALS FAITH AMERICAN BAHAI COMMUNITY. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE PRAYERS TO HER HUSBAND EUGENE KING. SUPPLICATING HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL KINGDOMS GOD.

LUDMILA VAN SOMBEEK
1893–1979



Ludmila Van Sombeek

Certain moments are emblematic of a lifetime. One evening in Durham, North Carolina, in the 1960s, a period of civil rights conflict in the southern United States, Ludmila Van Sombeek circulated among a large, happy, multi-racial gathering in her home, speaking of the beauty of unity in diversity, the significance of this century, and the mission of Bahá'u'lláh. She paused momentarily to place a pillow at the back of an African student who had spent a weekend in her home recuperating from months in hospital. Without pausing in sharing the Bahá'í Message, she brought comfort to one in need. This gesture exemplified her life of ceaseless teaching of the Faith in words and, inseparably, in thoughtful and deeply caring service to those of all races, nationalities and strata of society.

Born Ludmila Ott on 30 July 1893 in Vienna, Austria, she experienced early the feelings of a minority. She attended a Lutheran school in predominantly Catholic Vienna. In 1916 she sailed to the United States, her parents fearing that she would not have the opportunity for education in war-torn Europe. In New York she studied nursing at the Jewish Training School, Brooklyn Hospital. Enduring language difficulties, heavy work and diphtheria sensitized her to the needs of those experiencing isolation, prejudice and despair. Her adoption of a sickly baby and of a foundling, after her marriage to Adolph George Bechtold, were an expression of this understanding. In this period she attended firesides at the home of Antoinette 'Aunty' Foote in Brooklyn and, in 1922, became a devout Bahá'í.

After the death of her husband, Ludmila studied optics and business management and served as president of Bechtold Optical Company for ten years before retiring to devote her energies to sharing the Message and to engaging in human relations activities. The organizations with which she became most actively involved were ones focusing on America's 'most challenging issue'. For her, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in New York, and the Urban League in Harlem, became centers for action and for relating the spiritual message to the cause of justice and harmony. She became a friend of Mary White Ovington, one of the founders of the N.A.A.C.P.; of Walter White, its long-time executive secretary; of George Schuyler, the *Pittsburgh Courier* columnist, and of many other humanitarians. Ludmila's participation in the work of various civic and religious organizations provided many opportunities to speak of the Faith and to promote unity. She was invited to speak to college audiences in Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Alabama, and often addressed organizations working for inter-religious understanding. On one trip in the north, Ludmila met Matthew Bullock, a black lawyer, chairman of the Massachusetts Parole Board and Advisory Board of Pardons, and president of the Community Church of Boston. Ludmila's answers to his questions and her friendship over many years led him to accept the Faith in 1940. Her home was always open; often thirty guests would dine and enjoy music and experience the joy of diversity.

With her marriage to Georg Van Sombeek another chapter in Ludmila's life began. They moved as pioneers to Durham, North Carolina. In the south, as in the north, Ludmila concentrated on the improvement of race relations through guest recitals at

her grand piano, dinner parties and literary evenings. In addition she addressed many church groups, university audiences and civic organizations. She became active in the International League for Peace and Freedom, the National Council for Negro Women, the Y.W.C.A., the Business and Professional Women's Club, the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs, and resumed her long-time activity with the N.A.A.C.P. Traveling throughout the south, she was in Montgomery, Alabama, when the boycott of 1955–1956 was at its height. She befriended the Martin Luther King family. She frequently worked eighteen hours a day visiting the sick, offering gifts to the needy, comfort to the desolate, sweets to neighborhood children. The formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Durham in 1962 was an achievement for which she had labored diligently.

A profound spiritual commitment followed her pilgrimage in 1953 when she met the Guardian. Shoghi Effendi's request that she visit countries behind the Iron Curtain was answered by her 1958, 1963, 1965 and 1967 trips to Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria and, until she became incapacitated, by her correspondence with many friends living there. In these countries she visited friends who had heard of the Faith through Martha Root and spoke with people from all walks of life. She was fluent in German and Czech and had studied Esperanto. She spoke at Austrian and French Bahá'í schools and firesides in Europe; attended the International Conference in Kampala, Uganda, in 1953 and did some teaching in Africa; toured Russia in 1958; made a pilgrimage to Írán in 1967 and addressed an audience of 400 Bahá'í college students; traveled to Panama, the Virgin Islands and, in the continental United States, from Maine to California—each journey providing opportunities to speak, show slides, inspire action.

Ludmila was active in Bahá'í institutions through the years. She was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of New York City in the 1930s and of Durham, North Carolina, from 1962 until 1969 when she moved west. She served on the Africa Teaching Committee, the Interracial Service Committee and was active in teaching children and youth at Bahá'í summer schools.

What was the power of this remarkable woman? A fervent commitment to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, an unwavering belief in the efficacy of prayer, a creative approach to living that mobilized all her experiences and talents in teaching the Faith, and a remarkable balance between sharing the Word and serving humankind. In its cable at the time of her death on 7 September 1979 in Phoenix, Arizona, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States deplored the loss of this INDOMITABLE TEACHER and expressed admiration of her FEARLESS PROMOTION [OF THE] ONENESS OF MANKIND DURING [THE] DARK PERIOD OF RACIAL PROBLEMS [WITHIN] OUR COUNTRY, stating that the SPLENDOR [OF] HER RADIANT EXAMPLE AS [AN] UPHOLDER [OF THE] RIGHTS [OF THE] DOWNTRODDEN SHALL NEVER FADE.

Informed of her passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> GRIEVED LEARN PASSING ABHA KINGDOM LUDMILA VAN SOMBEEK OUTSTANDING MAID-SERVANT FAITH BAHAULLAH. ASSURE FRIENDS FAMILY OUR LOVING SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS SACRED SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL.

(Based on a memoir by JEAN NORRIS SCALES)

RUHOLLAH FOROUGHI (RÚḤU'LLÁH FURÚGHÍ) 1915–1979

Rúḥu'lláh Furúghí was born in Iṣfahán in 1915. His father accepted the Bahá'í Faith when he was a child, a fact that would change the destiny of Rúḥu'lláh, his eldest son. While in his teens his mother passed away. This loss was also contributory to the future course of his life, thoughts and feelings. When he was just twenty he enlisted in the Army and remained in active service for almost three decades. He was a prisoner of war during part of World War II.

In 1940 he married Mulúk Pírmurádíyán. This gave another wing to his soul which had already been in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh for a few years during which he had read in Persian and Arabic most of the numerous Bahá'í books and writings his father kept in his large personal library. His wife



Rúḥu'lláh Furúghí

was a staunch believer and following their marriage Rúḥu'lláh's activities increased. I well remember their fireside meetings in Iṣfahán which were attended by people from all walks of life including mullas and professors. Teaching enquirers, and teaching their children, were their principal aims in life.

In response to the constant appeals for pioneers which the beloved Guardian had raised in his messages, he resigned his rank of Colonel and, in consultation with the National Teaching Committee of Írán, settled in Spain in October 1958 with his wife and five children (the youngest, one year of age, the eldest fifteen).They had no knowledge of the language nor of the circumstances obtaining in their chosen goal. Many were the members of his family who neither understood nor approved of his decision. From the moment they arrived they dedicated themselves to teaching the Faith. I vividly remember him attempting to teach some friends who knew little French, using his two dictionaries, French–Iranian and French–Spanish. After spending nine months in Barcelona he moved with his family to Mallorca to assist with the formation of the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Three years later the family pioneered once more, this time to Granada where there had been no Bahá'ís before. The dream of opening a town to the Faith was at last a reality. Soon firesides were organized and were attended by an increasing number; in this way local people began to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. He lived to see a well-established Bahá'í community in Granada with many local believers and an active and functioning Local Spiritual Assembly.

In 1975 he was elected a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Spain, and in 1978 was privileged to attend the fourth International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice. He led a group of Bahá'í youth on a teaching trip of several weeks' duration in Ireland and travelled thousands of miles across Spain giving public talks and carrying out different tasks in service to the Cause. During the last two years of his life he served as National Treasurer of the Spanish Bahá'í community.

Mr. Egea Martinez wrote of him in an article published in the national Bahá'í bulletin of Spain: 'I had the honour of being his friend and of accompanying him for the thousands of kilometres we travelled in his car, always at the service of the Faith . . . He was a great father, teacher and a good friend. He taught the Faith with firm authenticity and no compromises, no matter who his listeners were. Until the last few weeks of his life, although weak and ill, he remained active in the service of the Cause. This indeed was his last example of total commitment to the Faith he so ardently loved . . .'

We have lost our father, a loving friend and an outstanding teacher.

The Universal House of Justice cabled on 10 September 1979:

> GRIEVED NEWS PASSING RUHOLLAH FOROUGHI DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY BEREAVED FAMILY ASSURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.
>
> DR. D. FOROUGHI

GLADYS ANDERSON WEEDEN
1906–1979
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

SADDENED LEARN PASSING KNIGHT OF BAHAULLAH GLADYS ANDERSON WEEDEN. HER SERVICES HAIFA DAYS BELOVED GUARDIAN TEACHING ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND AT PIONEER POST ANTIGUA WELL REMEMBERED. KINDLY CONVEY SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY CONCORD NEW HAMPSHIRE OUR GRATEFUL APPRECIATION CABLE AND ASSURANCE PRAYERS HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL KINGDOMS GOD.

Universal House of Justice
16 September 1979

People seldom succeed in rounding out their own destiny, in fulfilling, even to a minor degree, their own potentiality. Not so Gladys Weeden. Of Swedish grandparents who had sought freedom of religious outlook in the New World, she was about five years old when her mother died in childbirth with the baby and Gladys's father found his burdens too heavy and disappeared; her mother's sister, Mrs. Anderson, legally adopted her; Gladys went to school until she finished eighth grade but her aunt now had children of her own and the cruel years of the great economic depression forced her to go to work; Gladys stayed at home to keep house and mind her much younger brother and sister. I can remember nothing easy in Gladys's life; at sixteen, when the children were older, Gladys got her first job as salesgirl in a store. It is no exaggeration to state that she worked hard, all her life, until she died, a fact which certainly produced in her a strong and wonderful character. Raised in a strict Baptist atmosphere, she recalled that its church and Sunday school had made no deep impression on her. In her own words, it was not until the years of the Depression, in 1919, that '. . . people began to re-evaluate their lives . . . there was a lack of everything, money in particular . . . we realized that the material things . . . were no support . . . I began to start my spiritual thinking.' She was twenty-three years old.

Even to purchase petrol for an outing was a rare luxury, but on a sunny July day in 1932 Gladys and her husband, Frank Cotton, whom she had married in 1925, and from whom she was divorced in 1941, went on a day's excursion to the White Mountains in New Hampshire with another couple. I (then Mary Maxwell) and Rosemary Sala[1] were motoring from Montreal to Green Acre in Eliot, Maine, and we all met at a sightseeing spot called Lost River. Years later Rosemary told Gladys that I had said to her: 'That girl is going to become a Bahá'í.' Thus began a very deep friendship that lasted forty-seven years.

Gladys came to see me in Green Acre and her first reaction—on seeing Bahá'ís of different races—was, 'O Lord, this is a religious place!' But the new friendship held firm and, combined with the love and teaching of my mother, May Maxwell, eventually brought Gladys into the Faith. She lived and worked in Haverhill, Massachusetts, but we met again at Green Acre in 1933 and also corresponded; a letter of mine to her, in 1934, seems to forecast the future: '. . . I feel you and I need each other in life as friends . . . When you spoke this summer of that feeling you have, that some day there is something great for you to do, I know you are right and I know you will do it. Who knows, perhaps our paths lie together in some great service? I feel they do.'

Although Gladys did not become an enrolled Bahá'í until January 1937 in Worcester, Massachusetts, from the very beginning she blossomed in love for the Faith. In November 1935 she wrote her first spontaneous letter to Shoghi Effendi. In his reply the Guardian urges her to study the Teachings and prepare herself for 'intensive work in the field of teaching', and in his own handwriting assures her of 'my loving prayers for your spiritual advancement and for the complete realization of your highest hopes in the service of our beloved Faith . . . may your endeavours be richly blessed by Bahá'u'lláh.' Before Gladys left Haverhill for Worcester she was already holding a weekly meeting for a few friends; in Worcester she taught the teenage children's class, telling me in one of her letters: 'I have so much love to give and I just lavish it all on them. I wish they were all mine.' A letter was duly sent to Shoghi Effendi about this activity and in his own writing he assures her: 'The clear evidences of your accomplishments in the service of our glorious Faith greatly

[1] See 'In Memoriam', p. 713.



Gladys Anderson Weeden

hearten me in my task. I am so glad to observe the signs of your activity, devotion and progress in promoting the interests of our beloved Cause. I wish you to persevere, nay to redouble your efforts, and not to feel disheartened under any circumstances . . .' This postscript became her mandate; to it she clung through thick and thin until her death.

During those Worcester years, because Gladys was devoted, creative and industrious, her Bahá'í activities steadily increased: she obtained publicity, organized new occasions for teaching enquirers, served on the Local Assembly, was appointed to the Regional Teaching Committee of the six New England States. She always aspired to new heights in her personal life. 'I have been attending a public speaking class all winter,' she wrote to me, 'and it has helped me a great deal. I have also tried to improve my English and increase my vocabulary.' Her longing to go forth and teach was steadily growing; once it was a dream that we two would go to Haiti; later it was Cuba and she started learning Spanish; as early as 1935 she wrote to me: 'We would like to curl up in some remote place for an indefinite stay, but our Bahá'í conscience will not let us. Life would hold no meaning if we could not feel we were doing something for the Faith . . . you know darling I *am* going to do something, I am so positive of it . . .' Her chance came in 1942; during a Regional Committee meeting the urgent call for pioneers was raised; Gladys wrote to me, 'Out popped the words . . . I'll go anywhere you want me to!' The goal of the Seven Year Plan—which would end in 1944—was to establish a Local Assembly in each State of the Union. She was stunned by her audacity and thrilled at her chance! On 18 February 1942 she was installed as a pioneer in Brattleboro, Vermont, with no need to take a job for the first three months so she could devote full time to teaching: 'I go out to walk and say the Greatest Name on every route I take . . .' This further great step in her Bahá'í life opened the door to many blessings. By April 1943 she had her Assembly and was on it; '. . . this new Assembly came forth,' she wrote to me, 'very much like the birth of a child with joy, pain and heartache. After the birth comes the responsibility of the child's future welfare and guidance.'

In September a man she was greatly attracted to accepted the Faith; he was Benjamin Dunham Weeden,[1] her future husband, a man with a singularly sweet nature, a cultured gentlemanly person who became a very convinced Bahá'í and who, in the twenty-two years of their marriage, brought her much happiness. By 1945 Gladys was chairman of the Brattleboro Assembly, Ben secretary. The Cause was well established there but Gladys was not satisfied or happy; her task seemed accomplished but her relation to Ben was static, with no marriage in prospect. Again she reached out to me, as she had many times since I left North America in 1935, and wanted to meet me somewhere, anywhere, for a few weeks. My own responsibilities were crushing; my father, then seventy-one, was designing the superstructure of the Báb's Shrine and trying to carry on additional tasks for Shoghi Effendi who was very alone and very overworked himself at that difficult period in our lives. When he saw that Gladys was free, supposedly, of personal ties, wanted

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 478.

to leave Brattleboro for good and was longing to be with me, he came and stood by my bed one day when I was ill and said, 'You can't go on like this', and then asked if I thought Gladys would be willing to come to me and serve in Haifa. On 4 February 1947 she wrote that my cable inviting her to come to Haifa had been received and she was in a dizzy whirl: 'Had a fairy godmother given me a wish that was dearest to the heart, the news in your cable fulfilled it!' On the morning of 30 March she was met in the Port of Haifa by my father, Sutherland Maxwell, and brought to the Western Bahá'í Pilgrim House which was to be her home for almost five years—years of great civil turbulence in what was then Palestine but soon became Israel, years when the Bahá'í pilgrimage was suspended. After praying in the Shrines, that same afternoon Gladys met the Guardian in the drawing-room of the Master's house; as usual, I was present. She had thought she might be called upon to help me in domestic duties and be my companion, but the Head of her Faith, sitting opposite her, welcoming her warmly, making her feel 'completely at ease and at home with him', had other ideas. She was never to forget 'the beauty of his face' or the 'resonant voice' or that 'it was just like a bubbling stream to hear him laugh'—or that 'Shoghi Effendi never did the possible, he always did the impossible, and he expected you to do that too'. It now seemed to Gladys this was what was expected of her! Next morning Mr. Maxwell would take her downtown and introduce her to various key people, the eventual range of which included dealing with not only our local law firm, our bank and various business firms, but the local city and government officers of Haifa and 'Akká, as well as high-ranking officials in Jerusalem. In 1938 she had written to me, 'my lack of education pops up to disturb me'—but it did not disturb the Guardian who used her many capacities, and her willingness, to great advantage.

The first months, at four o'clock every afternoon, Gladys reported to the Guardian. 'I will always give you a plan of guidance,' she says he told her, 'if you find that you are unable to carry out this plan, you must report to me in detail and I will give you another plan . . . but you must always tell me the truth.' Sometimes there were things to report which she knew would distress him and then these words were her protection, for her heart ached to have to add bad news to his burdens.

The feelings of Mr. Weeden—combined with a legacy that put him in a better financial position to marry—now came to a head; the upshot was that he would come to Haifa and be of assistance to Mr. Maxwell in building the Shrine. They were married on 20 March 1948 in Jerusalem. Ben was a distinguished-looking man; Gladys had a handsome, upright figure and always looked exceptionally neat and attractive. Together they attended many official functions, sometimes representing Shoghi Effendi, as well as social functions connected with the American Consul in Haifa and other prominent people. Gladys had a real gift for friendship and did a great deal, in the new State, to back up the esteem in which the Head of the Faith was already held. I was sad that Ben's health should become the cause of their returning to America just as our local Bahá'í life entered a new and wonderful phase. During November 1950 Shoghi Effendi invited five members of what was to be the future International Bahá'í Council to come and serve in the Holy Land: Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím, Jessie and Ethel Revell, then Mason Remey, and Amelia Collins all arrived in Haifa before Gladys and Ben left at the end of February 1951, the idea being that they would go back for Ben's medical treatment and return later to Haifa. The Guardian—who for the first time since pilgrimage had been suspended before the war, resumed his custom of having a meal at the Pilgrim House table—announced to us all that we were members of the new and historic Council he was forming; Gladys's and Ben's membership remained in abeyance until it later became clear that they would no longer be serving in the Holy Land.

Gladys then suffered the greatest test of her life: Ben was very run down, and she adored him. On the other hand there had been no time, nor indeed necessity, as they were supposedly returning, to hand over all the Guardian's highly involved work to the newcomers. When Gladys wrote making it clear that because of Ben's condition they would not be coming back, Shoghi Effendi immediately cabled her, on March eighteenth, BEN SHOULD REMAIN CARE DOCTOR. YOUR

PRESENCE ALONE NOT LATER APRIL FIFTEENTH ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. DO NOT WORRY. PRAYING FERVENTLY SHOGHI.

Gladys's love for the Faith, her loyalty to the Guardian, the self-discipline a hard life with many sorrows had taught her, now came to her rescue; she left Ben and returned alone. So that summer of 1951 Gladys was still the trusted postman; she held the affairs at the World Centre firmly in hand during Shoghi Effendi's absence; she not only assisted the new co-workers to understand the work, the restrictions and responsibilities of the World Centre, but launched them socially in Haifa through her good public relations and many friendships.

In November the Guardian and I returned to Haifa and she rejoined her Ben who was in good spirits and greatly improved in health. Serving the Cause becomes a habit, indeed it should become a habit. Gladys and Ben now offered their services to the American National Spiritual Assembly; after meeting with them it was agreed they would tour the country and stimulate the Bahá'ís during the final year of their second Seven Year Plan. Gladys wrote to me on 2 April 1952, 'We both feel we should do what we can to help this homefront situation.' They bought a car, motored to all forty-eight States of the Union and visited the friends in seventy-five major Bahá'í communities! By December they were tired out and withdrew to Vermont, but the National Teaching Committee requested them to help out in Greensboro, North Carolina, to which they retired to recover and to serve.

In April 1953 we met at the Centenary celebrations and inauguration of the Guardian's great Ten Year Plan; in July Dorothy Baker, the Hand of the Cause and an old friend, wrote them suggesting they pioneer to the West Indies which, she assured them, was 'just ready to pop . . . if you act, act fast . . .' On 16 October the Weedens arrived in Antigua, a tiny island in the Leeward group of the Caribbean; everything was very unfortunate: there had been terrible drought; prices were prohibitive; far from living, as they had been assured, on their income, they faced a heavy annual deficit; housing was astronomically dear; their hotel was about to go into 'season' prices of thirty per cent increase. After two months they left—'to lick our spiritual wounds and straighten out our financial debts', as Gladys wrote me. Nevertheless, they received the immortal title of Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. Tired and discouraged, they settled in Henniker, New Hampshire, a very small New England town where Ben was to live sixteen years and Gladys twenty-five. It was the end of their spectacular services, a fact which weighed heavily on Gladys.

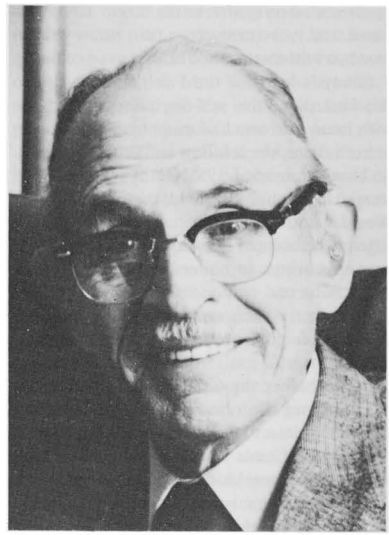
Ben, who was fourteen years Gladys's senior, died in 1970 after an illness that had been harrowing for both of them. Gladys wrote to me, 'After I have made my adjustment to this loss, I know there is plenty for me to do . . .' Her gift for speaking led to many invitations to give courses in Bahá'í Summer Schools, very often on the subject of the Guardian and her years of service in Haifa. Our own deep friendship never failed us; in 1973, after an absence of three years and ten months, I found that the Master's house needed radical renovation and asked her to come and help me. Although we had met during my visits to America and at the dedication of the Panama Temple, this was her first return to Haifa since the days of the beloved Guardian. She stayed almost five months; we both worked very hard and very happily together; when she left I wrote to her that 'no words from either of us could express what it had meant'.

In 1974 I was able to spend a few days in her home in Henniker and always hoped to repeat it for a longer visit. Again in the spring of 1977 Gladys returned to Haifa, this time for a much shorter visit. During the last years of her life she kept busy, going twice to Vancouver, visiting the Alaskan Bahá'ís for a month, paying her respects at Shoghi Effendi's grave in London, going on a trip to Ireland, giving courses at Summer Schools. In the winter of 1977–1978 she spent some months in Wilmette at the invitation of the American National Assembly to help out on a long backlog of letters. In June 1979 she wrote to me: 'I don't feel old but I am now in my seventy-fourth year and that makes you realize that eighty is the next landmark, heavens! . . . I keep happy and contented even though I miss my dearest Ben more as the years roll by . . .' In September at the suggestion of the National Assembly she went to speak on the Guardian at a

Bahá'í event in New Mexico; returning home very tired, she died in Hebron, New Hampshire, on the thirteenth, peacefully, in her sleep. An enviable end to a beautiful life.

RÚḤÍYYIH

ALLAN RAYNOR
1910–1979



Allan Raynor

Allan Raynor's legacy was formed with the tools of integrity, concentration and obedience. Long after the thousands of Allan's students and friends have themselves found their own ways to the Abhá Kingdom, the Canadian Bahá'í community will still be building on the foundations of his achievements.

Allan Frederick Raynor was the eldest of four children. He was born in Toronto, Canada, at midnight on 31 August 1910 of Anglo-Irish Protestant ancestry. His father, Fred, a hard-working merchant, was a stern disciplinarian. His mother, Bertha, instilled in her children a profound respect and love for God and His worship. Both Allan and his younger sister, Joyce, were in time privileged to recognize the station of Bahá'u'lláh.

Allan's early years were difficult, beset by illnesses and the economic crisis of the late 1920s. He left school for a secure job at Toronto City Hall where he stayed for seven years. In 1936 a new opportunity offered itself which was to change the course of his life. He won a job as a door-to-door life insurance salesman in Ottawa and worked in both Ontario and Quebec. Many of his clients were French Canadians, so he learned enough French to do his job. Despite the trauma of the sudden death of his father in 1937 he was able to concentrate on self-education. He had already studied business administration by correspondence, and now he prepared for his professional designation. Chartered Life Underwriter. So successful was he in his new business that he soon came to the attention of senior company management. Among those managers was one John A. Robarts who was looking for bright, enthusiastic recruits. Allan was transferred back to Toronto in 1937. In time he became a founder of the Estate Planning Institute of Canada and gained wide recognition for his dedication, sincerity and integrity.

His first acquaintance with Bahá'ís was in 1934 at a gathering organized by W. J. Christie of Parry Sound in northern Ontario. It was there that he met Lloyd Gardner.

In 1942 Allan met and married Evelyn Marie Johnson, daughter of a mixed Protestant–Catholic family of Toronto merchants. In that same year he joined the Canadian Army. Allan had been strong and healthy. However, a blood infection attacked his ears which had already been weakened by the scarlet fever of his youth, and he was discharged from the Army with only ten per cent hearing.

Allan sought to aid his fellows. He was so concerned with the effects of alcohol on both fellow soldiers and friends that he travelled to New York City to research, then became a founder and active member of Alcoholics Anonymous in Toronto. Throughout his life he continued to be singularly generous not only with his time but with his earnings.

Throughout this period of early testing, Allan was sustained by his new friend and manager, John A. Robarts, who stepped into a role which Allan's own father had never

really known how to fill. John and Allan spent many evenings together, Allan unburdening himself and John listening, waiting, counselling and offering encouragement.

In 1945 the war ended, an important year for Allan who recognized that 'I had no religion for my newborn son and I thought I should have one'. During a visit to the Robarts' home he asked to borrow a Bahá'í book. While John sought out just the right one for his dearly loved friend, Allan began to read a book of Bahá'í prayers. In those few words he recognized the Voice of God. No more reading was necessary—Allan had found his Lord.

Allan's enthusiasm could never be ignored, least of all by his wife. Evelyn was challenged by this new belief. When she was forced to stop teaching Sunday School because her husband was considered to be a 'pagan', Evelyn accepted the challenge. She studied by herself and then accepted the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, contributing both a fresh and vigorous presence to the Canadian Bahá'í community and an outstanding example of warmth and hospitality. Together, Allan and Evelyn joined the Gardners, George Spendlove and others to form the first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North York, a borough of Toronto. The tragic loss of an infant daughter, Susan, in 1952 marked Allan deeply but a healing compensation arrived with the birth of first Bruce, then Rosemary, to keep Doug and John company.

In 1945 Allan was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada. It was then that he began to make sterling contributions to Bahá'í life in Canada. During this period from 1954 to 1960 he served the National Assembly as vice-chairman and additionally chaired the National Teaching Committee. He again served on the National Spiritual Assembly in 1963–1964. It was also during this period that his intense need to understand as much as he could began to stimulate so many others. Study at Canadian Summer Schools took on a special meaning when Allan was there to ask, 'On what page of the Writings did you find that?' Many youth of that and later periods attracted his attention, his patience and his very generous devotion to ensure their fullest possible understanding of the fundamental verities of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

In 1956 Allan made his first pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The joy of pilgrimage under the guidance of Shoghi Effendi became the fulcrum against which he applied the lever of his convictions. He not only experienced the exaltation of this visit but, to his embarrassment, illness required him to extend his stay, as is noted in *Messages to Canada*, as a guest of the World Centre. The beloved Guardian took full advantage of the visit to enquire about the progress of the Cause in Canada (and in particular to clarify the status of the purchase of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds), and then used Allan's ongoing trip to South Africa to assure a direct communication with the beleaguered friends in Egypt via this trusted courier.

The sudden passing of the Guardian in 1957 was deeply felt by all who remember it. No sooner had Allan learned the news than he left on the next airplane for London. His grief was, however, a mixture of personal loss and an apprehension of danger for the Bahá'í community, a fear that attempts would be made to violate the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. He intensified his own deepening in the Covenant—which was to be the central theme of his teaching for the rest of his life—and then launched upon his mission. He travelled across Canada sharing with the friends his experiences at the table of Shoghi Effendi, his study of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* and his methodical but vibrantly enthusiastic conviction of the inviolability of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. He wrote a brochure on the Covenant in which he collected and documented the Writings on this subject. He committed himself totally to this work until the Canadian Bahá'í community had formed itself into a shield of the Covenant. When the assaults came from those misguided souls who had been deceived by their own vanity, Canadian Bahá'ís were not swayed. They knew the reality of their Covenant with Bahá'u'lláh. Allan's service was recognized in 1978–1979 in his appointment as an assistant to Auxiliary Board member for protection, Carol Bowie.

When no longer serving on the National Spiritual Assembly, Allan handled several special assignments. In 1962 he organized the travel of Canadian Bahá'ís to the 1963 World

Congress in London, and in 1968, to Sicily and Israel for the commemoration of the centenary of the arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land. In 1971 he co-ordinated the North Atlantic Oceanic Conference in Iceland. But throughout this period he was most active on the various committees dealing with the legal affairs of the Faith in Canada. Their overall mandate was to 'assure the recognition of the independent nature of the Faith in the eyes of government'. Allan patiently negotiated recognition of Bahá'í marriage with the governments of many Canadian provinces, securing amendments to provincial legislation in Alberta and Nova Scotia. He deepened the knowledge of Bahá'ís across Canada on the unique corporate status of Local Spiritual Assemblies. In 1971 the National Spiritual Assembly created the Office of Legal Affairs to enable Allan to perform these several duties as an executive agent to the National Assembly.

Allan's active professional work had ended in 1968. A semi-retirement was warranted by the early onset of arteriosclerosis and an aneurysm. Time was limited. Indeed, one doctor whom Allan knew well confided to him that he would probably live for ten more years. Thoroughly professional in planning his life, Allan knew he had work yet to do and he did it. In 1970 he organized a pilgrimage to Israel and Írán for fifteen Canadian Bahá'ís including his whole family. He again made pilgrimage to Haifa in 1973 and in 1977. During this last visit Allan sought the spiritual guidance and strength to face his ultimate test. From his extensive experience with doctors in life insurance he knew that his time had come. In September 1977 his bladder was removed.

The Bahá'í friends offered Allan their prayers. While he welcomed these prayers he repeatedly asked that they be not for his health but for his steadfastness. His fear of God was real and tangible. During the last months of his life he continued to teach and deepen the friends. In December 1978 he discovered that the ulcer in his bladder had been a tumour and had spread. His lungs were affected. On 21 March 1979 he was given six months to live.

He was determined to remain active. The 'Coping with Cancer' agency were so impressed by his positive attitude that he was among five patients who were interviewed extensively for a film on cancer treatment. Throughout the last summer of his life Allan was in and out of hospital for chemotherapy. But he continued to travel and to conduct deepening classes on the Covenant. In his hospital room he kept teaching. Between visitors he telephoned his farewell message to other friends. To his last day he repeated his request for prayers for his steadfastness. When the time came, Allan was able to show all those who had prayed for him the power of their prayers. He reached out for his tattered copy of *Gleanings* and clutched it to his heart. With that, in the early hours of 25 September 1979, Allan Raynor ascended to meet his Lord.

So moving and eloquent was he at the hour of his death that Canada's national newspaper printed a major article on his life. Roger White published in *The Witness of Pebbles* his poem written in tribute to Allan—'In Recognition'—which was inspired during Allan's 1977 pilgrimage. And in his *Spirit in Action: Teaching the Bahá'í Faith*, Nathan Rutstein paid homage in a chapter called 'The Example of Allan Raynor'.

In its cable of 27 September 1979 the Universal House of Justice paid final tribute in these words:

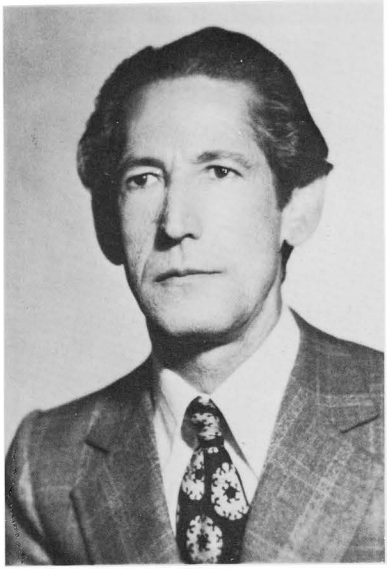
> SADDENED LEARN PASSING ALLAN RAYNOR DEVOTED STALWART SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY PILLAR FAITH CANADA MANY YEARS SERVICE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROMOTER FAITH TO LAST MOMENT EARTHLY LIFE. KINDLY CONVEY WIFE FAMILY LOVING CONDOLENCES ASSURANCE ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. SUGGEST HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL MEETING HIS BEHALF.

DOUG RAYNOR

BAHÁR VUJDÁNÍ
1922–1979

Bahá'ís have been heavily pressed to recant their faith and in one case a believer, who refused to do so, followed the glorious path of the martyrs and was executed.

Universal House of Justice
Message to the Bahá'ís of the world
Náw-Rúz 1980



Bahár Vujdání

Mr. Bahár Vujdání, a devoted Bahá'í of Míyánduáb, pioneered to Mahábád, in West Ádhirbáyján Province, north-western Írán, in 1954 and established himself as a merchant. His scrupulous honesty and personal integrity won him great respect in the business community and he was well known and much liked by the citizens of his adopted city because of his sincerity and friendliness. Mr. Vujdání found much happiness in serving the Bahá'í Faith and often was elected a delegate from his region to the Annual Convention.

In his fifty-seventh year, with all the good that the life of this world offers within his grasp, he was torn from the bosom of his family to join the ranks of those who have been martyred for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in His native land. On 26 September 1979, Mr. Vujdání was called before the Revolutionary Court and falsely accused of participating in a political disturbance. During the course of the interrogation he explained that as a Bahá'í he was forbidden to engage in political or subversive activities. At the mention of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh the presiding Judge, Shaykh Khalkhálí, abandoned the line of questioning relevant to the purpose for which Mr. Vujdání was summoned before the Court and pressed him to recant his faith. He was offered his freedom on condition that he repudiate the Bahá'í Faith and embrace Islám. When refusal was forthcoming, the Judge offered as an alternative the paying of a substantial sum of money. Mr. Vujdání explained that as a Bahá'í he found it necessary, as a matter of principle, to reject the idea of paying what would amount to a ransom. A disturbance outside the courtroom at this point engaged the attention of the Judge and other Court officials, and the prisoner was released. He was permitted to return to his home and was told that, if necessary, he would be summoned to reappear before the Court the following day. It was 7:00 p.m. and he had been called for interrogation in the morning hours.

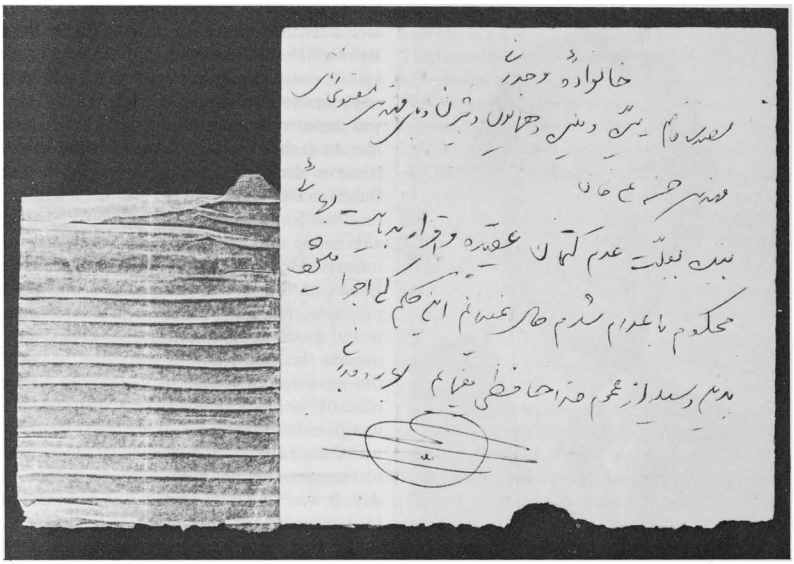
The following day Mr. Vujdání was called back before the Revolutionary Court at 10:00 a.m., and at 11:30 a.m. was condemned to death and placed in prison where, after several hours, confirmation of the decree was read to him. According to some fellow prisoners who were later freed, Mr. Vujdání received the news calmly and, with the greatest courtesy, invited the other prisoners to share the bread, cheese and melons he had brought from home, spreading these before them with a happy smile as if inviting them to a feast. 'We were struck with wonder,' one prisoner said. 'How could he have been so radiantly happy on the eve of his execution!'

Mr. Vujdání was able to obtain a fragment of lightly-waxed corrugated paper that had lined a biscuit tin and, in a firm hand, he wrote on it a final message to his family. This document, which has been preserved, reads:

'To the family of Vujdání: Manṣúrih Khánum, Nayyírih, Munírih, Humáyún, Bízhan, Mr. Ma'naví, Engr. and Mr. Hasan-'Alí Khán, Engr.

'I have been condemned to death because I have refused to recant my faith and my submission to the Bahá'í religion. I do not know when the time of execution will arise. However, I bid farewell to all.'

This done, he turned with dignity to the



The fragment of paper lining from a biscuit tin upon which Mr. Bahár Vujdání wrote a last message to his family before his martyrdom on 27 September 1979 in Mahábád.

Qiblih,[1] and to the astonishment of his fellow prisoners offered prayers.

At 3:30 p.m. on 27 September 1979, Mr. Vujdání and three other prisoners who were not Bahá'ís were taken from the prison to an adjacent courtyard where repeated shots were heard to ring out. The bodies of the executed men were unceremoniously left in the yard of the nearby clinic and their families were instructed to remove them for burial. A notice was posted next to the clinic on which there appeared the names of the dead prisoners and the charges on which they had been tried. 'Bahá'í religion' was written beside Mr. Vujdání's name in the place where the charge was set out. Later it was noticed that someone had drawn a line through the words 'Bahá'í religion'.

Thus it was that Bahár Vujdání was called upon to tread the path of martyrdom as had thousands of his fellow Bahá'ís before him in the land of Bahá'u'lláh's birth.

[1] The direction toward which the faithful turn in prayer. The Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh is 'the heart and Qiblih of the Bahá'í world'.

Approximately two thousand people—most of whom were not Bahá'ís—attended the funeral to honour a man whose kind demeanour and reputation for honesty had attracted the friendship and respect of the community of Mahábád.

FRANZ PÖLLINGER
1895–1979

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEARLY LOVED FRANZ POLLINGER LONG RECORD HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICES HIS EXAMPLE STEADFASTNESS PATH FAITH WILL SHINE FOREVER IN ANNALS AUSTRIAN BAHAI COMMUNITY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM CONVEY FAMILY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY.

Universal House of Justice

As a small boy Franz Pöllinger was taken from Klagenfurt, Austria, where he was born in 1895, to live with his grandparents in the



Franz Pöllinger

Turrach mountains. He had lost his father very early in life, and his mother was forced to work in the city to support the family. It soon became apparent that Franz could not see well. During the seven years he was able to attend school, he had great difficulty with subjects requiring use of his eyes. Later, because of poor eyesight, he was unable to retain any of the many jobs he attempted—working in a foundry, as a construction worker or as the pit boy in a mine. He also worked for a time as a painter, as a fire boy in a coffee house, and in a theatre, until he finally found a position in the household of a nobleman in lower Austria. In his search for an ophthalmologist who could correct his failing eyesight, Franz went to Munich in 1914. The doctors in Germany were no more successful in curing his condition than those in Austria had been. He therefore made himself a monocle from a flashlight lens and was thus able to read a little with one eye.

While working in the household of the Bavarian envoy in Stuttgart, Mr. Pöllinger met Mr. Bauer, the household masseur, who befriended him. During a Sunday afternoon visit to the Bauer family, Franz mentioned that truth was more important to him than anything else. Mrs. Bauer told him that as a seeker of truth he should know that Christ had returned and had suffered imprisonment and exile for forty years. He was intrigued and asked to hear more. That Sunday was 23 May 1916, the anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb. As Mr. Pöllinger himself later related, 'At home I of course read the booklet, and those Words of Baḥá'u'lláh, the *Words of Wisdom*, impressed me greatly. "My God," I thought, "how wide I can open my lungs to the air, as if my lungs were filled with ethereal air!" That was what I felt; I was electrified by the beauty of those Words. Thus I received the Bahá'í teachings—that was my commencement.'

Franz used the remaining time before returning to Vienna to study the Bahá'í Writings—in spite of his disability—and to visit deepening classes and firesides. He received answers to his many questions from Miss Alma Knobloch[1] who was his true spiritual teacher. He wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in return received a short Tablet in which the Master assured him of His prayers that he be able to successfully overcome self, acquire divine perception and be vivified by the eternal Glad Tidings. When he left Stuttgart to return to Vienna, his only solace was that in Vienna he was closer to the Holy Land and thus to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Neither the fact that he was completely alone nor the severity of the period following World War I lessened his courage or diminished his love for the Cause.

In a Tablet to Alma Knobloch, who had written of Franz Pöllinger's deteriorating eyesight and of his search for an ophthalmologist, 'Abdu'l-Bahá responded that He prayed Mr. Pöllinger's eyes would be so enlightened that he would become a discoverer of reality in all stages of life. Franz recounted, 'I then realized that my earthly eyes were not of the same importance as the eternal eyes, the eyes of the soul, and that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had opened my eyes through His believers, through His friends. It was a great exultation!'

In the period that followed, during which

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 641.

Franz found the first waiting souls in Vienna and in St. Veit an der Glan, he received his second Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

'O thou who art thirsty for the water of Heavenly Life! Thy letter has been received. Its contents imparted great joy because they were expressive of firmness and steadfastness.

'I feel great kindness toward thee and supplicate eternal endearment and everlasting life for thee so that thou mayest in those regions raise the call of the Kingdom, delivering the people from the obscurities of the world of nature through the light of guidance, that thou mayest, like the Egyptian messenger, become the bearer of the garment of the heavenly Joseph, giving light to the eyes of the Jacobs and perfuming nostrils with the fragrances of the mantle of the Joseph of the Kingdom.

'Give the divine Glad Tidings to the friends in Vienna, so that they may attain to eternal blessings, obtain new life and acquire limitless rapture and joy.'

'These regions are greatly in need of the heavenly Glad Tidings because all have, through the severity of the calamities of the war, become disappointed, withered, faded and almost dead. So they are in need of the breath of life. This breath of life is simply the heavenly Glad Tidings. Nothing can relieve them from this sorrow, grief, depression, disappointment except the divine Glad Tidings.'[1]

Because of his servitude and his love for Bahá'u'lláh, Franz Pöllinger was the magnet that drew a number of thirsting souls to the Ocean of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. These souls formed the basis of the Viennese Bahá'í community. Later, at an institute for the blind where he learned basket weaving, he found a number of souls whose spiritual eyes were open and who recognized the truth of Bahá'u'lláh's message.

The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Vienna was formed in 1926. In the meantime, through Franz's indefatigable efforts, a fledgling Bahá'í community was established in Graz. During this period, Martha Root and Marzieh Carpenter (now Gail) arrived in Vienna. Franz was always ready to assist where he could: he organized public lectures, firesides and deepening classes, and found ways to introduce Martha Root to Austria's leading public figures. Although there was widespread unemployment in Vienna, he did not hesitate to leave his job whenever he felt called upon to serve.

After Shoghi Effendi assumed his office as Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, he addressed Mr. Pöllinger in many letters as 'My dearest Franz', 'My dear co-worker', or 'My dear and precious co-worker'. A postscript penned in his own hand to a letter written on his behalf on 7 September 1926 states, 'My dearest Franz: Your most welcome letter has profoundly touched me. Continue in your steadfast heroic efforts and never forget that your exemplary services are engraved in characters of gold upon the radiant scroll in the Abhá Kingdom. You occupy a warm and abiding place in my heart. Your unsparing efforts are drawing you closer and closer to the heart of the Cause. You are destined to render memorable services to our beloved Cause. If you but persevere, doors will be opened to your face, obstacles will be fast removed and you will witness the harvest for which you are preparing so devotedly. Write me in full and frequently for I thirst for the glad-tidings of your letters. I will continue to pray for you from all my heart.' The Guardian's love and encouragement stimulated him to sacrifice even more of himself for the Cause of God.

Franz Pöllinger married Anna Mödlagl on 8 July 1935. From that time they trod the path of service and sacrifice together, with faces shining and their beings full of humour. However, the times were deteriorating noticeably as society lost its equilibrium and order vanished. Soon all meetings had to be registered with the police who sent a plain-clothes policeman to note all occurrences. The right of assembly was suspended entirely in 1937, which precluded further Bahá'í meetings. This was the beginning of a very sad time for the Austrian Bahá'í community. As most of the Bahá'ís in Austria were of Jewish ancestry, those who did not leave the country were deported to concentration camps. Mr. and Mrs. Pöllinger attempted to help wherever possible, at no little danger to themselves. At the end of World War II only a small number of Bahá'ís remained in Austria. With un-

[1] Cited, in this translation, in *Star of the West*, vol. 13, no. 10, January 1923, p. 281, where the name of the recipient is erroneously given as Pallinger.

daunted courage they began to rebuild the community. Franz even attempted to have the Bahá'í Faith officially recognized by the occupying powers.

Before the Guardian died he had stipulated that the National Spiritual Assembly of Austria should be formed in 1959. The necessary foundations were laid through the formation of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Graz, Salzburg, Innsbruck and Linz whose establishment was aided through the efforts of pioneers from Írán, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America. When the first National Spiritual Assembly was elected at Riḍván 1959, Franz Pöllinger was one of the nine members.

In 1963, after forty-seven years, Franz's dearest wish was fulfilled. Alma Knobloch had taught him a prayer which expressed the desire to make a pilgrimage to 'Akká and Haifa. When the first Universal House of Justice was elected, Franz Pöllinger was present. His dream was fulfilled, his patience rewarded.

In the following years there were very few activities in which he did not take part, whether summer or winter schools, seminars or firesides, youth camps or teaching activities. His humorous contributions, filled with the varied experience of his life, enriched every meeting. At the close of the Five Year Plan (1973–1978), as the Austrian Bahá'í community reached a new level of development, he was able to witness the fruits of his lengthy and untiring effort in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

In the final weeks of his life, Franz Pöllinger felt as if he were being called home. At last he could hasten to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, whose mandate to spread the divine Glad Tidings in Austria he had never neglected. After sixty-three years of loyal service, his shining soul winged its way back to its Creator. Our prayers accompany it.

KAMBIZ POOSTCHI

OTTILIE RHEIN
1903–1979
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Ottilie Rhein, named by the beloved Guardian a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for having pioneered to the Island of Mauritius in 1953,[1] passed on to the Abhá Kingdom on 29 October 1979 in San Mateo, California. She was laid to rest in the beautiful hills overlooking an expanse of the great Pacific Ocean.

Oceans were not a barrier to Ottilie's adventuresome spirit. She was to cross and recross the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian Oceans by both sea and air. She set goals for herself and went about accomplishing them regardless of the perils she might face. As a young girl she left her native Germany to seek adventure in the United States where she settled in Chicago and managed a building in which she rented rooms. One of her tenants, Betty Powers, had in her room a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which aroused Ottilie's passing interest—she thought Him a Holy Man—but through changing her job Ottilie lost contact with the Bahá'ís until 1941 when the distress and loneliness occasioned by World War II caused her to be drawn irresistibly to the Bahá'í Temple. After attending meetings conducted by Melvin Newport and Albert Windust, Ottilie gave her heart and life to Bahá'u'lláh. 'The Guardian will pray that, in the days to come, you may render the Faith many lasting and noteworthy services,' Shoghi Effendi's secretary wrote to her on his behalf on 10 December 1942. Almost immediately Ottilie arose to pioneer in Arizona to fill a goal of the Seven Year Plan in that State. From here she moved to San Mateo, California, where her dear Bahá'í friend, Mrs. Lisette Berger, made her welcome. San Mateo became the base to which she would return from her various international pioneering posts when necessity dictated. As a naturalized citizen of the United States she could not be away from the country for more than five years without losing her citizenship.

Ottilie was present at the International Conference in Chicago in 1953 when the beloved Guardian launched the Ten Year Crusade. All hearts were touched and a flood of volunteers arose in response to the call for pioneers. But Ottilie was always a person of action and she was one of the first to put her affairs in order and leave. She stored some of her belongings with Mrs. Berger and departed

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 57.



Ottilie Rhein

with only minimal luggage. She had thought of joining Rex and Mary Collison in Uganda but the Guardian had specified the settlement of virgin areas so she determined to go to Mauritius, an island mentioned by name in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Tablets of the Divine Plan* and one 'whose name was enshrined in Bahá'í history during the Heroic Age . . . as the source, two years before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in America, of a contribution towards the purchase of the site of the Mother Temple of the West'.[1] She pored over maps, atlases and encyclopedias but could discover very little about the island except that it had a mixed population, that sugar cane was the chief crop raised and that French and English were spoken. But that was enough for her, and excitedly she boarded a ship at Mombasa after having visited Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika (now Tanzania). She arrived in a heavy downpour on 11 November 1953. Shoghi Effendi's cable—ASSURE RHEIN LOVING APPRECIATION—was relayed to her on 4 December by Paul E. Haney, then chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.

Ottilie's utter trust in Bahá'u'lláh enabled her to overcome the difficulties she encountered. She rejoiced at obtaining a visa which was valid for six months and which later was extended to three years plus three months. With the assistance of a German missionary she found a house which offered the barest necessities but which provided a setting for Bahá'í meetings. Her first shopping expedition, occasioned by the urgent need to acquire mosquito netting, led her to a shop whose proprietor, Mr. Him Lim, a Chinese, became the first resident of Mauritius to accept the Faith. When she had enrolled two Bahá'ís and had interested a number of inquirers, Mr. Jalál Nakhjavání,[2] and later another Persian believer, visited the island and assisted with the teaching work. By 1956, just before her visa expired, there were forty Bahá'ís, enough to form three Local Spiritual Assemblies. Although some vacillated at the last moment, Ottilie was determined not to be deprived of victory. By sheer determination she confirmed some new believers and induced others to change residence with the result that there were established—as she later recorded—'three Local Spiritual Assemblies for the three years of teaching'. A strong and self-reliant foundation had been laid. This victory made it possible for Mauritius to send a delegate to the historic first Regional Convention convened at the farm of Mr. and Mrs. William Sears, near Johannesburg, South Africa, at Riḍván 1956. But Ottilie's service in Mauritius was at an end. Her request for an extension of her visa was refused although she called upon the Governor who listened sympathetically to her appeal and was attentive to her explanation of the Faith. This same gentleman—Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam—later became Prime Minister and addressed the Bahá'í Oceanic Conference held in Mauritius in August 1970. Ottilie had the bounty of attending that gathering and of receiving his smile of recognition.

After leaving Mauritius she remained in Kampala for a time lending much needed assistance in the production of Bahá'í literature until it became necessary for her to return to the United States to safeguard her citizenship. But her restless spirit could not be idle

[1] The Universal House of Justice, *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 299.

[2] See 'In Memoriam', p. 797.

when the Faith needed pioneers. By 1959 she had saved enough money to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and then settle in Chile where, by living frugally, she was able to remain from 1960 until 1963. Chile was her last international venture, but in her home community of San Mateo she could always be depended upon to contribute her share to every activity. One of her greatest joys was to keep in touch with her Bahá'í friends throughout the world.

On 27 December 1978 the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Mauritius wrote to Ottilie Rhein, addressing her as 'Spiritual Mother of Mauritius', and conveying 'deep love and gratitude on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Faith in Mauritius . . . It is highly significant that God's Message for this day was planted in this island by a lady. We turn our hearts in thankfulness to Bahá'u'lláh that you were chosen for this and we pray to Him that He may shower all His blessings on you and bring you eternal joy and happiness. Present generations may not be aware of the import of such a feat by you, but your name will forever be associated with the Faith in Mauritius and future generations will befittingly mark the event of your first coming to Mauritius. It may not be without meaning that when you landed in Mauritius on that morning of Sunday, the 11th November 1953, it was raining heavily—the happy presage of a bountiful harvest . . .' And again, on 21 February 1979, 'We were deeply touched to read the copy of the letter the Universal House of Justice addressed to you on the 29th November 1978 and appreciate your kind thoughts for Mauritius. It is incredible that a quarter of a century has elapsed since you arrived in Mauritius. The seed you planted has grown and it has no doubt been sustained by your love, devotion and sincerity in the Cause of God . . . We have now seventy-four Local Spiritual Assemblies . . .'

Ottilie remained in spirit a true pioneer right to the end. In her life she manifested the seven qualifications of the divinely enlightened soul mentioned by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in one of His Tablets: knowledge of God, faith, steadfastness, truthfulness, uprightness, fidelity and evanescence or humility. She was honoured at the time of her passing with the following cable from the Universal House of Justice:

> SADDENED LEARN PASSING OTTILIE RHEIN DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY KNIGHT BAHAULLAH MAURITIUS STEADFAST PERSEVERING IN PIONEERING POSTS MANY YEARS UNDER DIFFICULT CONDITIONS. OFFERING LOVING PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER VALIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. KINDLY CONVEY CONDOLENCES HER FAMILY OUR BEHALF.

(Adapted from a memoir by VALERA F. ALLEN)

MABEL ADELLE SNEIDER
1901–1979

> GRIEVED LEARN PASSING MABEL SNEIDER DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH LONGTIME PIONEER GILBERT ISLANDS. KINDLY CONVEY SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS. ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.
>
> Universal House of Justice
> 28 January 1980

One must see the example of sincere love, patience, discipline and humility in order to believe in the existence of these qualities. Mabel Adelle Sneider possessed them all, and more. She was born in Casper, Wyoming, U.S.A. on 8 September 1901 and grew up on a cattle ranch in Thermopolis, Wyoming, acquiring a deep love for horses and the outdoors. After graduating from high school she attended Fort Collins Agricultural College and then studied nursing which was her lifelong profession. Mabel declared her faith in Bahá'u'lláh in 1946 in Panama where she worked at the Gorgas Hospital. When asked why she became a Bahá'í, she simply stated, 'It made sense.' From the moment she embraced the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh she devoted her time and effort to furthering its progress. Putting her pioneering spirit into action, she made long-range plans to pioneer for the Faith after she retired from nursing. Mabel was adventurous but practical in nature, and she loved to travel.



Mabel Adelle Sneider

In 1953 Mabel had the privilege of making her pilgrimage and of meeting the beloved Guardian. Dorothy Baker and Millie Collins were also in the Holy Land at that time. The friendship that Mabel formed with these two outstanding believers exerted an influence which lasted the rest of her life.

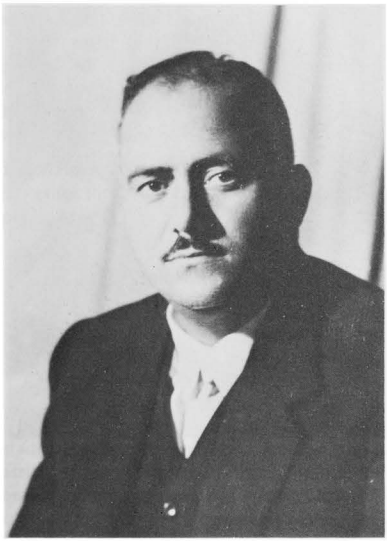
One of the many services that Mabel performed for the Faith in Panama was that of assisting in the selection and purchase of the original land for the Panama House of Worship, a parcel that was later exchanged for the present Temple site. She went as a travelling teacher to Africa and to Central and South America. She retired after thirty years of service at the Gorgas Hospital and, on 17 July 1958, left Panama for the island of Tarawa, Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati), in the South Pacific, where she remained for fifteen years. Knowing what to expect when she reached her destination, she purchased a hand-operated machine for making cement blocks, a set of directions for making a native-style stove, and a bicycle which was her sole means of transportation. With the blocks she built herself a house based somewhat on an African model, and constructed a stove. Her residence on the island of Bikenibeu became widely known as 'Mabel's house'. Although there were discouraging moments, she wrote in March 1964, 'There have been rare cases when, having talked with someone of the Faith, you felt that great spirit, and then the feeling of having to come back into this world and walk on the roads again. You live in hopes of capturing these moments again . . . How blessed, though, I am, for I do have the love and loyalty of many and they really love the Faith. Their lives have been completely changed and they are willing to devote their entire time to the teaching of the Faith. I am certain they are very dear to Bahá'u'lláh. This is one of the reasons you feel that this is your home and where you hope to stay.'

During her first few years in the islands Mabel spent most of her time travelling to every island to meet the Bahá'ís and help them establish the Faith. She served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the Gilbert Islands which was formed for the first time in 1967 and held the offices of secretary or treasurer. She helped purchase the site for the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. She was twice a delegate to the International Convention in Haifa for the election of the Universal House of Justice. Her marriage in August 1965 to Mr. Tebakasro Aritiera ended in divorce in 1975 at which time she reverted to the use of her maiden name.

The need for medical attention forced Mabel to return to the United States in 1975. Even with severely impaired eyesight she vigorously served the Faith in Huntsville, Texas, whose lapsed Local Spiritual Assembly was formed again in 1978 with Mabel as chairman. The friends in Huntsville felt blessed to have her in their midst. She had an introverted personality. She was a listener and rarely spoke, but when she did she was mild, loving and honest; she had a child-like quality in her manner.

Mabel served Bahá'u'lláh's Cause to her utmost. Her intense love for the Faith and her determination to get things done were an inspiration to all who knew her. A few weeks before her passing, the local newspaper ran a picture of the Mother Temple of the West and featured the Bahá'í Faith as the religion of the week. As Mabel looked at the photograph of the House of Worship she remarked, 'I have done everything that I wanted to do for the

Faith.' On 4 December 1979, in her seventy-ninth year, she passed away as the result of a stroke.



Ḥusayn Ḥalabí
(Ḥusayn Rátibu'l-Ḥalabí)
1921–1979

This believer, whose death occurred on 17 December 1979, was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi for his service in pioneering to Hadhramaut in February 1954.

HELEN HAZEL WILKS
1903–1980

Helen Wilks was born on 31 March 1903 in Anderson, Indiana, U.S.A. Her father died in 1919, whereupon she went to live with an aunt and uncle in Bellingham, Washington, where she completed her education and became a teacher. Her first position was in a one-room schoolhouse in Glacier, Washington, near Mt. Baker. Many of her students were older than she was. She would walk to school through the snow with her legs bound in burlap bags. Before the students arrived it was her duty to start the fire in the wood-burning stove, chop enough wood for the following day, then sweep the floor.

During the depression, in the early 1930s, Helen worked as a clerk in a store. A co-worker, Anna Reed, walked across the aisle and whispered in her ear, 'Did you know Christ has returned?' Instead of dismissing this as the remark of a fanatic or crank, Helen thought: 'If He has, where is He?' Helen's daughter, Phylis Kiehn, takes up the story: 'And so the seed was planted. Mother listened, studied, and decided that this strange new religion was not for her. She packed the Ford with her belongings and set off for Phoenix, Arizona, but, as I recall, we weren't there very long before she exclaimed that she must know more about this religion. She left us in Phoenix and hitch-hiked all the way back to Seattle, a distance of about 1,600 miles, in order to locate and further question Anna Reed. In 1934 mother became a confirmed Bahá'í and started a children's class at the Bahá'í Centre in the old Arcade Building in Seattle. The class was her first—I was "the children". After she remarried in 1936 the class comprised myself and my step-brother.'

William S. Wilks became a dedicated Bahá'í not long after his marriage to Helen. Over the years the couple moved seven times in the Seattle area in order to help establish new Local Spiritual Assemblies. At the London Congress in 1963 they made their plans for their greatest move—as pioneers to Africa. Would that space permitted the recounting of all their experiences in this new venture! On their first teaching trip, much to their astonishment, they found themselves snow-bound for three days in southern Africa. William—or 'Bill' as he was known—died on 14 December 1965, two days before his sixty-fifth birthday, and is buried in Mbabane, Swaziland. Helen survived him by fifteen years which were devoted to ceaseless teaching trips in some nine or more countries in the southern Africa area. Her passing on 3 January 1980, following a massive heart attack, ended a life of great service on this earth. Counsellor Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, alluding to the wish of a true soldier to die with his boots on, wrote of her:

'Well, our dear Helen, whom we all know was a real and true soldier in the Army of Bahá'u'lláh, always had her boots on for fear she might have to face her Lord without them. Those of us who knew her and worked with her could bear witness to her love, her devotion and her self-sacrifice for our beloved Faith. She gave herself totally, body and soul, to Bahá'u'lláh. Every step she took, every breath she drew, was to promote the Faith of God. At the age of seventy-six her spirit and her energy were youthful—so full of happiness, life and vitality. Her contribution to our beloved Faith, both in her native land and in the continent of her adoption, Africa, was tremendous. She was an indefatigable teacher of the Faith—always on the go, constantly seeking contacts and giving the Message . . .'

During the last fourteen years of her life Helen served the Faith as a member of the Auxiliary Board for Propagation, first in Swaziland and then in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and was sent by the Continental Board of Counsellors for Africa on special projects in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Seychelles and Mauritius. In all these places she will be remembered with deep love, admiration, awe and gratitude. In January 1980 Gary Worth, a fellow pioneer to Zimbabwe, paid tribute: 'Her spirit and enthusiasm, her energy, her sense of fun and laughter, and her desire to teach the multitudes about Bahá'u'lláh were unmatched by any other person I have met in my lifetime . . . despite age, failing health and poor eyesight, Helen had not decreased her activities on behalf of the Faith in the slightest bit. She begged for and scraped up valuable petrol coupons so that she could continue her teaching work in this war-torn country. She spent most of her small pension on petrol for her car. In this way she continued to bring the Bahá'í teachings to the people of this region through her never-failing spirit and love of life . . . On the very day of her heart attack, Helen made an exhausting teaching trip to at least eleven areas and on her last evening attended a meeting of a local Bahá'í Women's Club. On her death-bed she sent a message to her teaching companion, Mr. Carlos Kaupo, an assistant Auxiliary Board member, encouraging him to continue teaching. He has been Helen's eyes and driver and teaching companion these past several months and deserves great praise for his efforts in assisting her. I am not qualified to speak of Helen Wilks's valiant services to the Faith, because she had reached a level of spirit and understanding which I do not comprehend. But with her passing, I am rededicating my life . . .'



Helen Hazel Wilks

Helen's devoted services earned her the following cable sent by the International Teaching Centre to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa on 7 January 1980:

> GRIEVED NEWS PASSING MUCH LOVED DEVOTED SERVANT FAITH HELEN WILKS. HER LONG YEARS OUTSTANDING WORK TEACHING FIELD BAHAI EDUCATION CHILDREN IN HER NATIVE LAND AND HER HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SERVICES AS PIONEER AND BOARD MEMBER AFRICA UNFORGETTABLE. SUPREME BODY AND TEACHING CENTRE ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS SHRINES PROGRESS HER RADIANT SOUL.

In a letter written on its behalf on 24 January 1980 the Universal House of Justice stated, 'It is the hope of the Universal House of Justice that the selfless and sacrificial efforts

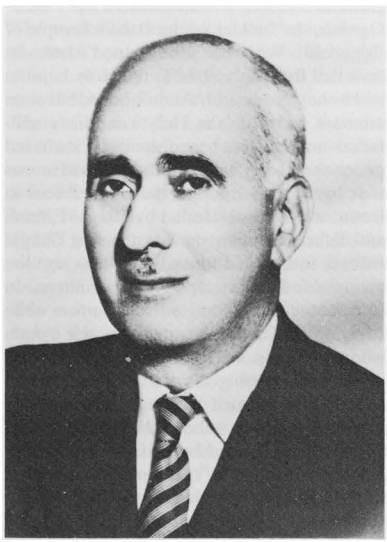
of friends like Helen Wilks may serve to inspire other friends in their aspirations for services to the Threshold of the Blessed Beauty, and to guide them in what they can achieve by devoting their resources to the advancement of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.'

Helen's wish to 'die with her boots on' was granted. After her passing, comfort was taken in the knowledge that she took her flight to the Abhá Kingdom the way she always wished, dying in service to God.

(Based on a memoir prepared by ELAINE EILERS for the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa)

ISFANDIYAR GHOBAD (ISFANDÍYÁR QUBÁD) 1895–1980

Isfandiyar Ghobad was born into a Zoroastrian family in 1895 in Yazd, Írán. He was brought up in surroundings which were coloured by deep-rooted religious orthodoxy and tainted by ancestral superstitions, prejudices and rituals. As a young man his quest for religious truth was ardent. While still a school student he would frequently challenge, in the presence of the religious instructor, the validity of the concepts prevalent amongst his own people, in return for which he would be punished harshly and accused of having been influenced by the 'heresy' of the Bábí movement. These confrontations made his receptive soul even more sensitive to the light of divine guidance. At last, through a new bond of marriage in the family household, he came to hear about Bahá'u'lláh from his brother-in-law, a staunch Bahá'í. The seed of faith which had germinated in his heart soon became a fruitful tree as a result of the instruction and loving care of such prominent souls as Ḥájí Muḥammad Ṭáhir-i-Málmírí and Ḥájí Muḥammad Ṭáhir-i-Qandahárí.



Isfandiyar Ghobad

Isfandiyar's recognition of Bahá'u'lláh at the age of twenty-two enkindled the flame of faith in the hearts of his entire family. Soon after his declaration he wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in reply he received an inspiring Tablet which instilled in his heart a new zeal and hope. He joined his father in trade but events forced him to leave his homeland for India and from there he proceeded to the Holy Land on pilgrimage. His arrival in the Holy Land coincided with the Guardian's departure from Haifa after the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. As a result he attained the presence of the Greatest Holy Leaf whose loving grace and affection encompassed him for fifty days. During that period he was privileged to receive from her gracious hand a copy of the Tablet of the Holy Mariner in the handwriting of Shoghi Effendi, as well as a letter full of encouragement and assuring him of a subsequent visit. After a few months' sojourn in Cairo, the joyous news of the Guardian's return reached him. He again asked permission to come to the Holy Land and to his joy received a loving invitation in which the Guardian expressed his eagerness to welcome him. On 19 October 1924 he set off for Haifa and was honoured to bask for forty days in the sunshine of the loving kindness of the beloved Guardian. Isfandiyar's real spiritual life began to take shape during this memorable pilgrimage and the Guardian's parting words—'Isfandiyar, I shall

never forget you, be assured'—engraved themselves indelibly on his heart and became his 'best provision' for the rest of his life.

On his return to Írán he was appointed to serve on various administrative bodies of the Faith which were closely associated with activities of the Bahá'í youth and teaching. In later years he was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán and he remained a member until he left Írán.

His third pilgrimage—this time accompanied by his wife and youngest daughter—took place in 1952, immediately before the launching of the Ten Year Crusade. They were among the pilgrims who heard from the Guardian's own lips his glorious message about the unfoldment of divine destiny through the implementation of the Ten Year Plan; they were galvanized by the spirit of urgency of the moment. A few months after Isfandiyar returned to Ṭihrán the National Spiritual Assembly assigned him the task of visiting the believers in the towns and cities of the southern part of Írán to share with them the joyous news of the commencement of the Ten Year Crusade and to stimulate their participation in its prosecution. His wife, Parízád, accompanied him.

Profoundly touched by the call himself, Isfandiyar and his family pioneered to Bursa, Turkey, and later to Recife, Brazil. While in Bursa, in 1962, he and his wife had had the privilege of being invited to accompany the Hand of the Cause of God Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí on his three-month tour of Pakistan, India, Ceylon and Burma, a unique opportunity which was joyfully seized and which brought many inspiring experiences.

In 1967 he settled in the United Kingdom where he remained in active service to the Cause until he passed on to the Abhá Kingdom on 18 January 1980. He was buried in the precincts of the blessed resting-place of the beloved of his heart, Shoghi Effendi.

From the time he became a Bahá'í, Isfandiyar Ghobad served with all his strength, even in his later years when he suffered from a heart condition. He is remembered by those who knew him as one steadfast in the Faith, dedicated in its service, forbearing in sufferings, radiant and assured in heart and submissive to the will of God. Precision and order were characteristic of both his private life and his professional practice. His life's achievements were crowned by the cable sent by the Universal House of Justice on 21 January 1980:

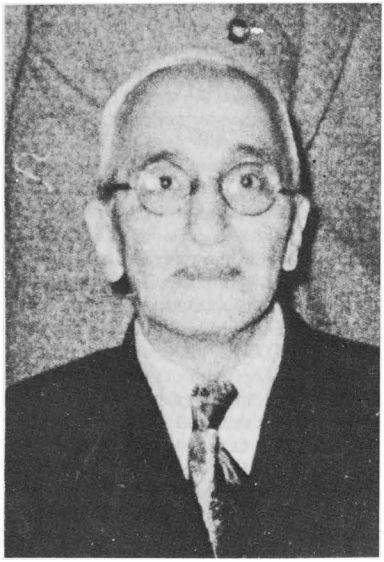
> SADDENED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT CAUSE ISFANDIYAR QUBAD HIS LONG RECORD SERVICES CRADLE FAITH PIONEERING FIELDS ALWAYS REMEMBERED. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL. CONVEY MEMBERS BEREAVED FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY.
>
> DR. M. FIROOZMAND

MUḤAMMAD 'ALÍ FALLÁḤ AFNÁN
1888–1980

Mírzá Muḥammad 'Alí Afnán was the son of Mírzá Muḥammad Báqir Afnán. His mother was the granddaughter of the younger uncle of the Báb, Mírzá Ḥusayn 'Alí, and his father was the grandson of the elder uncle of the Báb, Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad.

He was born in Yazd, Írán, in the year 1888, on the very day that seven Bahá'ís of that city were martyred. His father died when he was young and he was brought up by his grandfather, Mírzá Muḥammad Taqí Vakílu-Dawlah, the builder of the Bahá'í Temple of 'Ishqábád. With his mother and sister he travelled from 'Ishqábád to the Holy Land to reach the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but soon after his arrival in the Holy Land his grandfather passed away and he was sheltered under the loving care of the Master. He was sent by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the same school in Beirut which was attended by Shoghi Effendi and later on, when the Master sent Shoghi Effendi to England to study, He also sent the young Afnán to study agriculture there. In some of the letters Shoghi Effendi wrote while studying in Oxford he mentions the Afnán whom he occasionally visited in Yorkshire.

After completing his studies, Muḥammad 'Alí Afnán returned to the Holy Land only twenty days before 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away. The Afnán remained in Haifa for six months and then returned to Yazd on the instructions of the beloved Guardian. For many years he was elected as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Yazd and often was privileged to serve as chairman.



Muḥammad 'Alí Falláḥ Afnán

In 1939 an unfortunate incident occurred. The workman responsible for the heating of the Bahá'í public bath was injured during the course of duty. The enemies of the Faith seized the opportunity of making mischief. The chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Yazd was imprisoned and other members were prosecuted. Fortunately the members were released after a short time. Eleven years later, in a village called Abarqú, soon after a Bahá'í pioneer was sent from Yazd to that village, a woman and her several children were murdered in mysterious circumstances. The enemies of the Bahá'í community attributed this tragic event to the coming of the pioneer to their village. As a result the nine members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Yazd were sentenced to three years' imprisonment. They were confined to prison first in Yazd, then in Kirmán, and finally in the prison of Ṭihrán. After his release from prison the Afnán visited the Holy Land and attained the presence of the beloved Guardian who praised the steadfastness of those who had suffered unjust imprisonment. Through their incarceration, he said, these believers had followed in the footsteps of the Báb.

Mr. Afnán passed to the Abhá Kingdom in Ṭihrán in his eighty-ninth year and was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery of that city.

ABU'L-QÁSIM AFNÁN

INPARAJU CHINNIAH
1932–1980

For more than twenty years Inparaju Chinniah strode the Malaysian Bahá'í scene like a spiritual colossus. He was a valued friend to everyone who knew him and all were drowned in profound sorrow when he passed away suddenly on 5 February 1980. Two days later the following cable was received from the Universal House of Justice, describing his significant service to the Cause both in Malaysia and throughout the region of South-east Asia:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING DEVOTED COWORKER INPARAJU CHINNIAH. HIS OUTSTANDING UNTIRING SERVICES INSTITUTIONS FAITH BOTH MALAYSIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA SHED LUSTRE ANNALS CAUSE GOD ENTIRE REGION. PRAYING HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. MAY BELOVED FRIENDS MALAYSIA INCREASE FERVOUR SERVITUDE BAHAULLAH FOLLOW EXAMPLE DEPARTED FRIEND COMPENSATE HIS LOSS THEIR MIDST. ASSURE FAMILY FRIENDS SYMPATHY. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL MEETINGS.

Inparaju was his actual name but early in life he became known as 'Inbum', meaning 'joy', 'sweet' or 'lovely' in the Tamil language. Born on 9 March 1932 in Malacca, Malaysia, he was the second child of a school-teacher, Mr. J. V. Chinniah, who, like his wife Elizabeth Thyria Ratnam, was of Ceylonese origin. The family had a strong affiliation with the Methodist Church in Malacca.

We know little of Inbum's childhood except that he was a brilliant student and an active sportsman. He was a keen scout and rose to the rank of King's Scout, representing Malaysia at a Jamboree in Australia in 1949. Although he did very well in his Cambridge examination that same year, family circum-

stances prevented his pursuing his studies further. He started off his working life as a teacher in Malacca High School where his father had served earlier. In time Inbum rose to the post of headmaster of the Masjid Tanah Primary School. When this appointment was made in 1957, he was the youngest person ever to have been made headmaster in the State. At a later time he was appointed headmaster of a Secondary Continuation School in Jasin and, in 1965, headmaster of Sekola Menangah Jasin.

By 1954 Malacca had become a hub of Bahá'í activity. Among the many active workers there were school-teachers, one of whom was teaching in Malacca High School. Inbum attended his first Bahá'í fireside—a talk on 'The New World Order'—and often mentioned that if it were not for Mr. Kumara Das he might not have accepted the Faith.

Inbum's marriage in 1960 to the exuberant and radiant Chinese Bahá'í, Lily Leong, a fellow teacher at Masjid Tanah Primary School, drew considerable attention in Malacca where interracial marriages were still taboo. Four lovely children were born to them.

Early in his life, despite his quiet nature, Inbum's qualities of leadership emerged and it is not surprising that these characteristics were identified and made use of in his service to the Bahá'í Faith. He served on the National Teaching Committee in Peninsular Malaysia in 1962 and 1963. At the second National Convention of Malaysia in 1965 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly, serving as treasurer and later as secretary. He settled in Kuala Lumpur. His home at Setapak became, as it were, a mini-hostel, harbouring numerous students and Bahá'í youth. One youth who stayed with him remarked, 'Inbum had the unique ability to tap the latent potential in each individual . . . many were the leaders who were nurtured and trained under his able hands.' During his years as secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly important organizational improvements were effected in the office of that body.



Inparaju Chinniah

In June 1972 the Hand of the Cause of God Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Malaysia and while there encouraged Inbum to go to Africa as a travelling teacher. Inbum spent six months in Tanzania on leave without salary and made a valuable contribution to the work of the Faith there. A Malaysian travelling teacher who was in Tanzania in 1977 when Inbum was appointed to the Board of Counsellors for South-east Asia witnessed the great joy experienced by the African friends when they learned of his appointment. He had served ably as a member of the Auxiliary Board for protection since 1972 and now he threw himself wholeheartedly into his role as Counsellor, on one occasion travelling the distance of a thousand miles by bus in order to attend a meeting in Bangkok. He was a living example of forgiveness, patience and consideration; he saw the good in every individual and never spoke ill of anyone. He had a genuine humility and the gift of extending a tender and personal attention to those who needed his assistance. His ready wit lightened all hearts.

A sense of urgency was noted in the last few months of his life. He often mentioned that he looked forward to early retirement in order to devote even more time to the Faith. In December 1979 when news was received of the untimely death of the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, although Inbum could be seen consoling the Bahá'ís all across the country, it was obvious that no one was more

heartbroken than himself; it was as though a lieutenant had lost his most admired general. Thirty-five days later the lieutenant was to join his loved commander in the Abhá Kingdom.

Inbum often jokingly remarked to his wife, 'I may be poor in wealth, but I am rich in friends!' The large gathering of mourners who came from all parts of the country to attend his funeral, and the torrent of telegrams and telephone calls that were received from all parts of the world, testify to what a rare friend he was. His INSPIRED SERVICES WERE TREASURES TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, the International Teaching Centre cabled at the time of his passing. Later, on 14 February, that institution wrote to members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors throughout the world: 'The loss of this devoted servant of the Faith is indeed great because of his knowledge, wide experience, high efficiency and constancy, all sweetened by an unassuming and natural humility.'

(Adapted from *Malaysian Bahá'í Bulletin*)



Rosemary Sala

ROSEMARY SALA
1902–1980

EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY PASSING YOUR BELOVED COMPANION AFTER LONG YEARS UNITED SERVICE FAITH. HAVE SENT FOLLOWING CABLE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY CANADA QUOTE EXPRESS OUR PROFOUND SORROW PASSING ROSEMARY SALA DEDICATED VETERAN SERVANT BAHAULLAH PIONEER TEACHING FIELDS AFRICA AMERICAS MEMBER FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CANADA TIRELESS EFFECTIVE DEVOTED BAHAI TEACHER THROUGHOUT LONG BAHAI LIFE. ASSURE PRAYERS HOLIEST SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL WORLDS GOD UNQUOTE

Universal House of Justice
26 February 1980

When we returned to Canada in 1968, after fourteen years of pioneering in South Africa, we felt we had not done much for the Faith in those long years. In fact, we believed that any imprint we might have made would soon be blown over by the sand of time and be forgotten. After Rosemary winged away on 20 February 1980 in Guadalajara, Mexico, due to cerebral thrombosis, I was flooded with messages from our former pioneer post.

The *Evening Post* of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, under the headline 'Service for Former P.E. School Library Pioneer', published the following item, together with a picture of Rosemary, in its issue of 18 March 1980:

'A memorial service for a former Port Elizabeth woman, Mrs. Rosemary Sala, who pioneered school libraries in black schools, was held in New Brighton at the weekend. The service was held at the Cowan High School, New Brighton.

'Mr. Frank Tonjeni, principal of Cowan High School, said Mrs. Sala was interested in black education while she lived in South Africa. "She was a very energetic woman and established libraries in all our secondary and high schools."

'Mrs. Sala also established a Sala Prize at three of the schools for leadership and scholastic achievement. "Above the door of our school library there is a plaque bearing her name," Mr. Tonjeni said.

'Her permit to enter New Brighton was withdrawn in May, 1967.'

Because of the Apartheid laws, social contact in South Africa was very difficult. Rosemary succeeded in obtaining from the authorities permission to enter black townships, where she established libraries in eleven schools, placed over 10,000 books, and brought enjoyment to thousands of students. She did this for ten years, her permit being renewed from year to year. Later it was restricted, and finally it was withdrawn.

Bahá'í News, South and West Africa, states in its February 1980 issue:

'She is known in all the schools of New Brighton, Kwa Zakele and Zwide, and will live in our midst for ages as the mother of the Bahá'ís of New Brighton. Many times have I heard her say: "I have said the Greatest Name all over New Brighton and Kwa Zakele." . . . I will always remember her as the kindly lady who was never frightened—even of waiting for the local bus to take her into town . . . She was unceasing in her efforts to attract all levels of society to the Faith . . . I, for one, will never rest until I have done all the things she herself would have done for the Bahá'ís of the townships in Port Elizabeth.'

There were many more similar eulogies.

Rosemary was born Mary Scott Gillies in Glasgow, Scotland, on 4 May 1902 to Captain and Mrs. Malcolm N. Gillies. When she was four her family brought her to Montreal, Quebec, where she was raised in a strict Presbyterian home. She wanted to become an architect, but the only faculty that would then accept women students was in New York City, and her mother would not allow her to move. She, therefore, had to be satisfied with graduating from Macdonald Teachers' College, near Montreal.

In December 1927, in Montreal, three young Bahá'ís—Rowland Estall, George F. Spendlove[1] and myself—started the first organized Bahá'í youth group of North America. Within months a few young people were attracted, among whom was a teacher who taught in the same school as Rosemary. She invited Rosemary who came out of curiosity. The following summer Rosemary was invited to the Bahá'í school in Green Acre where she was deeply influenced by the renowned teacher, Mrs. Elizabeth Greenleaf.[2] That autumn Rosemary declared her faith in Bahá'u'lláh. Since we had three 'Mary's' in our youth group, George Spendlove gave Mary Gillies the name Rosemary which remained with her all her life. She was soon elected youth delegate to the National Convention in Wilmette and was active in various national activities with the result that long after our marriage which took place in 1934 I was known only as 'the husband of Rosemary Gillies'. During the past forty years we have attended many conventions, conferences, summer and winter schools, and on almost every occasion—even as recently as a year ago—I have seen young Bahá'ís with eager eyes, who have read her article 'Marriage in the Bahá'í Faith',[3] corner her and become absorbed in deep discussion. Rosemary often said that because of that article she seems to have been used, all these years, as an unofficial Bahá'í marriage counsellor.

Rosemary and I worked together as one breath and I beg forgiveness if, in attempting to describe her services, I enumerate my own. In August 1938, while in Green Acre, we tried to induce a couple to pioneer in Latin America under the first Seven Year Plan. By the time we reached our home in St. Lambert, Quebec, we realized that while trying to inspire others we had talked ourselves into going. After six months of intensive preparation and an immersion course in Spanish, we set sail the following spring for Caracas, Venezuela, where we stayed for a year.[4] We found the experience so joyful and thrilling that the desire to pioneer remained with us for the rest of our lives. On our return journey to Canada we drove sixteen hours a day for eight days on a primitive, tortuous mountain road from Caracas to Bogotá, Colombia. Since we were the first Bahá'ís to make that trip, Rosemary invoked the Greatest Name in every valley and hamlet. We returned to Caracas in 1946 during the course of a four-month lecture tour which took us to every country in Latin America except Paraguay. One of the highlights for us was our visit, in Buenos Aires, to the resting-place of Mrs.

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 895.

[2] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 608.

[3] *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VII, p. 761.

[4] *The Bahá'í Centenary: 1844–1944*, p. 197.

May Maxwell where we offered prayers. In 1947 we were back in Venezuela, this time during the course of a Caribbean teaching tour.

In Canada we were instrumental in the creation of the first summer conferences and the Laurentian Bahá'í School; and, as members of the Canadian National Teaching Committee, we helped to prepare the Canadian community for the election, in 1948, of its first National Spiritual Assembly on which we served for the following six years.[1]

In 1952 Rosemary went on her first pilgrimage to Haifa as a guest of the Guardian. Her second visit to the Holy Land was in 1968 as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa.

With the announcement of the Ten Year Crusade we volunteered to pioneer. The Guardian suggested Comoro Islands in the Indian Ocean, but since a visa was refused he gave us Zululand as a second choice. We arrived in May 1954 and settled on a trading post in a native reserve, with no telephone or electricity. We were two hours' distance from the nearest doctor or police station. To our great disappointment, after one year our permit was not renewed. We moved to Port Elizabeth, in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, where we lived for thirteen years. We had to return to Canada for three years—which was a culture shock in reverse—and were happy to pioneer again, in 1971, this time to Guadalajara, Mexico. Previous to this, however, we made a tour of the Far East. We travelled all over Mexico, attended the Merida Conference and made two side trips to Panama. Rosemary spent many weeks preparing illustrated albums about historical events related to the Faith which are on display at the Bahá'í Shrine in Montreal.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum wrote this about Rosemary: 'She was a remarkable woman, a very sweet one, and her devotion to the Faith was truly exemplary. It never flagged but went on year after year to the very last breath. May we all die as she did, with the good pleasure of Bahá'u'lláh. She was also a devoted friend and a loyal one, and I shall miss very much receiving her letters . . . Rosemary will certainly go down as one of Canada's outstanding Bahá'ís as the Canadian community emerged and grew in stature and strength.'

The Hand of the Cause John Robarts and his wife, Audrey, life-long friends, chose for Rosemary the following from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *O ye handmaid of the merciful Lord! How many queens of this world laid down their heads on a pillow of dust and disappeared. No fruit was left of them, no trace, no sign, not even their names . . . Not so the handmaids who ministered at the Threshold of God; these have shone forth like glittering stars in the skies of ancient glory, shedding their splendours across all the reaches of time.*[2]

EMERIC SALA

ROBERT HAYDEN
1913–1980

Robert Earl Hayden was born in Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A., on 4 August 1913 of poor, uneducated parents. At birth he was named Asa Bundy Sheffey, 'Asa' being his father's name and 'Bundy' the name of the family doctor who had attended his birth. After the separation and divorce of his parents while he was still an infant, his mother put him in the care of friends, William and Sue Ellen Hayden, while she set about finding work to provide for him. A job was found in Buffalo, New York, and she moved there, visiting Robert and the Haydens occasionally. The Haydens did not like the name 'Asa' for the boy and, hoping that they would be permitted to adopt him as their own, renamed him 'Robert Earl'. His mother did not object to this, especially since she felt that the child had a good home while she was working.

It was during his pre-school years that it was discovered how little sight he had. Nevertheless, he was provided with glasses and eagerly learned to read before entering school. During his elementary school years he read a dictionary, an encyclopedia and any other available material, although he was placed in the sight-saving class. When Robert entered school he

[1] Shoghi Effendi in *Messages to Canada*, pp. 45, 74.

[2] *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 23.



Robert Hayden

was registered as Robert Earl Hayden. Not until his fortieth year did he come to know that this was not his legal name. Only in 1978 was it made legal.

All his basic education was received in Detroit. Since there was no money for college when he finished high school, he gave up hope of acquiring a higher education. However, the social worker who served his family interceded because of the obvious capabilities of the young man and enabled him to receive a four-year scholarship to Detroit City College, now known as Wayne State University. In the summer of 1938, four years after completing his college work, he entered the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor for advanced study. It was there that he entered a competition for a Hopwood Award, and that summer won a minor award for poetry.

In 1940 he married Erma Inez Morris. The following year they moved to Ann Arbor where Robert began graduate work in earnest and also took advantage of the opportunity to study with W. H. Auden, who at that time was visiting poet at the University of Michigan. In 1940 Robert Hayden's first book of poetry *Heart-Shape in the Dust* was published by a small press in Detroit.

A daughter, Maia, was born in 1942, and that same year Robert won a major Hopwood Award for Poetry. He received a Master of Arts degree in English in 1944 and that fall was appointed Teaching Fellow in English. He held that position for two years, the first black person to have been given that opportunity at the university.

In 1946 Robert and his family moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where he taught at Fisk University for twenty-two years. Meanwhile, he continued to write poetry, his first love. He could not find a publisher, but from time to time his poems would appear in magazines, including *Atlantic Monthly* and *Poetry*. In 1962 *Ballad of Remembrance* was published in England. Then, between 1966 and 1978, New York publishers and others brought out *Selected Poems*, *Words in the Mourning Time*, *Angle of Ascent*, *Night-Blooming Cereus* and *American Journal*. These accomplishments led eventually to other recognition: the reception of the Grand Prize for Poetry at the first World Festival of the Arts in Dakar, Senegal, 1965; the Russell Loines Award for poetry, National Institute of Arts and Letters, 1970; election by the Academy of American Poets as its 1975 Fellow; membership in the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; and appointment (1976–1978) to the post of Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.—these are a few of the many honours given him. In the last-named post he was enabled to bring the Bahá'í teachings to the attention of the manager of the Senate Chambers and some other government officials. On 3 January 1980 he was invited to the White House to read, along with other poets, and was received with genuine warmth by President and Mrs. Carter.

Robert was not a joiner and past experience had made him wary of institutional religion. However, the Hand of the Cause Dorothy Baker, through the instrumentality of Katherine Mills of Ann Arbor, had convinced him of the truth of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and he joined the Faith in 1943. During his Bahá'í life he served on the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Nashville, Tennessee, and, while he held the consultantship at the Library of Congress, of

Falls Church, Virginia. He also spoke about the Faith many times on television and radio.

Robert was often asked to give talks on the Faith. After a few such addresses he steadfastly refused these requests, firmly convinced that he could serve the Cause better as a poet. In this role he always strove for excellence. He received many requests to give readings of his poetry and always complied if it was at all possible. Readings took him to many places in the United States. At these presentations he usually read poems he had written containing direct reference to the Faith as well as those on other subjects. He prefaced the readings with explanatory information about the Bahá'í Revelation. Most of all, however, wherever he went he was recognized by all who met him as one who promoted a universal point of view as found in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh: whether in the classroom, on the lecture platform, or in social gatherings, this was the only view he held valid. In his work this also was true. In a letter written to an inquirer in December 1970 he had this to say: 'I think of the writing of poems as one way of coming to grips with inner and outer realities—as a spiritual act, really, a sort of prayer for illumination and perfection. The Bahá'í Faith, with its emphasis on the essential oneness of mankind and its vision of world unity, is an increasingly powerful influence on my poetry today—and the only one to which I willingly submit.'

From 1968 until his death Robert Hayden was an associate editor of *World Order*, a Bahá'í periodical published under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. He made constant efforts to raise the standard of the poetry used in the publication. *World Order* was very close to his heart, and he thought of his work for it as a real service he could render the Faith.

On 28 February 1980 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> GRIEVED PASSING ESTEEMED SERVANT CAUSE ROBERT HAYDEN. HIS NUMEROUS HONOURS AND DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTION POETRY AMERICA ADDS LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH. KINDLY CONVEY TO FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL.
>
> ERMA HAYDEN



Angeline Giachery

ANGELINE GIACHERY
?–1980

Angeline Giachery, whose pure and angelic spirit returned to God on 23 April 1980, was born in Sweden towards the end of the nineteenth century. The solemn beauty of her native land, bejewelled by thousands of rivers and lakes, and dotted with serenely tranquil and majestic forests, impressed itself upon her gentle spirit and found reflection in her stainless character. Highly sensitive to the divine intelligence and exquisite harmony that rule the universe, she found perfection in all created things. The inner happiness which suffused her being was crowned by her peerless love for the Creator. Her childhood and adolescence were richly blessed and congenial. As a small child she studied music passionately and became an accomplished violinist. She was educated in Sweden and England and was a diligent student who took delight in her studies. She enjoyed the rational sciences—particularly mathematics—liberal arts, literature and the poetry of both countries. Travels

in Europe and abroad completed her education and widened her perspective, preparing her to make what she would later recognize as the supreme choice of her life. In the early 1920s she was introduced to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh while visiting friends in Boston, U.S.A. Her conversion was immediate, sincere and total: she dedicated the rest of her life to ardent service to the Cause of God and to bringing happiness to her fellow man. A short time later I met Angeline in the home of mutual friends; she was gentle, gracious, cultured, elegant and happy. In her presence one seemed to sense the fragrance of the pines and firs of the Värmland forest, the most romantic and beautiful region of Sweden. We met frequently and a mutual affection developed. On 24 February 1926 we were married in New York City.

Now a considerable part of her time was spent in the company of early believers, many of whom had been in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Her heart was filled with joy and wonder. She gathered accurate notes and treasured the early translations of Sacred Writings that loving friends gave her. Her knowledge of the Teachings became greater day by day. She attended meetings, lectures and classes and formed deep and lasting friendships with her fellow Bahá'ís. The early writings of the Guardian which were then becoming available enkindled her with new hope and inspiration. Her home was opened to seekers, firesides were maintained, and her melodious eloquence conquered many hearts. Increasingly immersing herself in the writings of Shoghi Effendi she preoccupied herself with the questions: How to serve the Cause more fully? How to multiply my efforts? She arranged music recitals to attract outstanding and influential people and her efforts were most successful. Trips in America and Europe gave her the opportunity to spread the teachings—seeds which were never lost—but as time went on the desire to pioneer in Europe or in Latin America was uppermost in her mind. At the end of World War II she was able to leave for Rome, a city she had visited in her youth; she rejoiced at the thought of being closer to the Holy Land and to the Guardian whom she greatly revered and honoured with all her heart. Reaching Naples on 20 February 1947 she was distressed by the misery and destruction which were to be seen everywhere, and by the spectacle of countless cold and hungry children. After a twelve-hour journey on an ancient and overcrowded bus she reached the Eternal City. A cabled message from the Guardian—SUPPLICATING ABUNDANT BLESSINGS NOBLE MISSION—brought great cheer.

Despite the difficulties life in war-torn Italy presented Angeline was able to establish herself, and by the end of March the first Italian believer was enrolled in Genoa. A cable from the Guardian arrived on the thirty-first expressing HEARTFELT CONGRATULATIONS and urging ALL OTHER PIONEERS EMULATE NOBLE EXAMPLE. It was signed, LOVING APPRECIATION, SHOGHI. The events of the years and months that followed were recorded by Angeline in her diaries in which she poured out her supplications to God for greater assistance, her humble gratitude for His bounties and her happiness. She looked up old friends; volunteered her services to an association that provided assistance to orphans and displaced persons; made contact with cultural groups, literary figures, art circles, embassies and the Dante Alighieri Society—always winning, with her gracious manner, new friends and interest in the Cause.

By Riḍván 1947, the anniversary of the foundation of Rome, electric lights came back in the streets; by Riḍván 1948 the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Rome was elected. Shoghi Effendi was overjoyed. He requested a photograph of the Local Spiritual Assembly, had it framed and personally placed it at the head of his bed in the room he often occupied when staying overnight in the Mansion of Bahjí.

The need for Bahá'í literature became evident. Angeline happily initiated a new activity, producing an introductory pamphlet in Italian which was sent to prominent citizens and to four hundred public libraries. This was followed by a new edition of Dr. Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, a special copy of which, bound in tooled green leather, was sent to the Guardian, who placed this, too, in his room at Bahjí. Until 1964 when she returned to America, she served as chairman of the Italian Publishing Committee, a field which gave scope to her artistic and administrative skills. Under her direction and guidance

many of the major Writings of the Faith were translated into Italian and published in attractive editions.

As the Faith became known throughout the entire Italian peninsula the Bahá'í community grew and new centres were established on the mainland and the offshore islands. Angeline became increasingly involved with travelling, teaching and encouraging the friends. Following the appointment by the Guardian of the Hands of the Cause of God,[1] and the creation of the Auxiliary Boards, she was appointed to the Auxiliary Board for the propagation of the Faith in Europe, serving in that capacity from Riḍván 1954 until her return to America in 1964. Her arena of service included not only Italy but Corsica, Malta, Rhodes, Greece, Monaco and Switzerland. The great tests of that period, including the passing of the beloved Guardian, challenged her capacity as she moved from one community to another, exhorting the friends to unity and faithfulness to the Covenant. Her tact, the immaculacy of her mind, and her strong awareness of divine assistance enabled her to maintain the integrity of the administrative order and inspire greater efforts among the believers, resulting in a considerable increase in their numbers.

Her assistance at the Italian end of the magnificent enterprise of securing materials for the construction of the superstructure of the Shrine of the Báb is inestimable, calling as it did for infinite patience, time and attention to detail, and extending from 1948 to the end of 1957.

Early in 1964 she began the painful task of detaching herself from the many friends she had made in Italy over the course of seventeen years; it was agonizing to leave all those she had guided into the Faith and with whom she had worked to build up sixteen Local Spiritual Assemblies. Upon settling in La Jolla, California, intensive teaching activities were undertaken, including several firesides a week and travels that took her through Arizona, Oregon, Washington and as far north as the Yukon Territory of Canada where, north of Whitehorse, a large cabin capable of holding forty students at a Bahá'í school bears her name. Crossing to Alaska she captivated the affection of the Indians; here the elders of a venerable clan, during a jubilant official ceremony, invested her with the title Princess of Tlingit Eagle Tribe—their escutcheon represents a flying eagle. She formulated at this time a plan to unite in the Faith all the people of the Arctic territories, from Finland to Alaska. At the Intercontinental Conference in Helsinki in 1976 the plan again received some consideration. After the conference she travelled to the Arctic region of Finland and on her return journey met with a serious accident which started her physical decline. Undaunted, however, she travelled to Sweden and to the Arctic region of Norway, and the following year returned to the Arctic regions of Finland and Sweden.

When she had taken her leave from the beloved Guardian on 23 December 1954 he had said that she would return to the Holy Land after the Archives building was completed but that in the meantime he wished her to travel and see the friends. Angeline promised herself that from then on she would wholly dedicate herself to travelling and teaching. In the years that followed she visited countless centres on five continents participating in every type of activity that circumstances demanded of her from simple fireside talks to the presentation of the book *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* to Pope Pius XII, to His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II and to Umberto II of Italy.

She grew frail in the last months of her life and sorrowed that she could no longer travel. Her end came suddenly, but until the very last moment the name of God was on her beautiful, smiling lips. Her mortal remains are now gathered in a befitting sepulchre in Cap d'Ail Cemetery, near Monaco, facing the blue Mediterranean Sea she was so fond of. May present and future generations keep alive the memory of this true lover of God, and maidservant of Bahá'u'lláh.

Her inconsolable Ugo

[1] Editor's note: Dr. Ugo Giachery was appointed a Hand of the Cause on 24 December 1951.

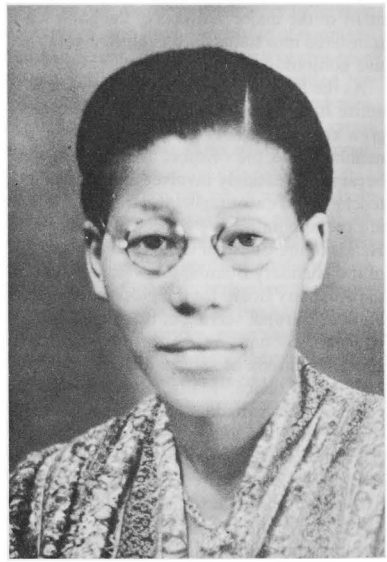
CECILIA MKIZE NODADA
1917–1980

Cecilia Mkize Nodada, whose nickname 'Zimbili' means 'two' in her native Zulu tongue, was born on 21 November 1917 in Inanda, a

village near Durban, South Africa. She studied nursing and worked in this profession for thirty-eight years. She was considered an exemplary nurse by her professional colleagues. In 1949 she married Baptin Nodada, a Xhosa, and they had eight children, four of whom later became Bahá'ís. Cecilia and her husband constantly stressed the importance of education to the youth and, giving concrete form to their thought, they helped to pay the college fees of two young men who were distant relatives.

Cecilia was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith through her father's sister, Bertha Mkize, who presented her with a copy of *The New Garden*; and Ruth Kubone, a member of the Auxiliary Board, also came to Umtata, Transkei, to further her knowledge of the teachings. She finally signed her declaration card in Umtata on 23 August 1966, her aunt countersigning it as her teacher. At first Cecilia's heavy responsibilities as a nurse prevented her from being very active in Bahá'í community life. She was also, in her own words, 'one of those sleepy Bahá'ís who need deepening in order to become fully aware of the significance of the Faith'. This desirable deepening came in about 1974 as the result of a visit to Transkei of two distinguished African teachers, Robert Mazibuko and Joyce Dwashu. As a result, Cecilia became enkindled with love for the Faith. She visited and deepened some of the friends in Northern Transkei, especially those near the village where she lived after retirement. She was fluent in Zulu, Xhosa and English, and was fond of both reading and writing. She loved to teach but, unfortunately, she became ill when she did much travelling or walking. This was probably an early sign of the cancer that would later develop.

She greatly enjoyed teaching children's classes—employing songs and plays—and strongly encouraged others to establish classes and showed them what to do. She tried very hard, especially by example, to demonstrate to the friends in the rural areas how they could produce goods that could be later sold for cash to give to the Bahá'í Fund. For instance, she grew beans and offered them for sale at the National Convention. She encouraged the friends to use their money to go out and teach others about the Faith; at times she would also pay the bus fares of friends who wished to make local teaching trips.



Cecilia Mkize Nodada

Cecilia was deeply loved by the friends in Transkei because of her warm and loving spirit. She was a quiet, modest and affectionate soul who was always surprising people with little gifts and presents. When she was not knitting for the Fund she was knitting special little gifts for the believers—right up to the last few weeks of her life. When friends forgot to write reports for the national committees, or hesitated to do so because of their poor skill in English, Cecilia would generously offer to do it for them. The friends felt that they had in Cecilia a kind friend who was concerned for their welfare and happiness and who loved them.

In 1976 the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa appointed her to the National Teaching Committee. She served on this body, even though it required her making long trips to Johannesburg, until, in 1977, she was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board for Propagation. However, just two years later she became very ill with cancer against which she battled valiantly for more than two years; to the limit of her strength she

was active right up to the last few months of her life. Her absence from the first national convention of Transkei was so deeply felt that Counsellor William Masehla paid her a visit, hoping to transport her in a car. This was not possible because of the advanced stage of her illness; it was apparent that she had only a few weeks of earthly life left. One of her Bahá'í daughters remarked that throughout her illness Cecilia took comfort from the Bahá'í song *Angene Ndibuyele Umva* whose lyric attests 'I'll never turn back from being a Bahá'í'. Finally, less than two weeks after the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Transkei, on 12 May 1980, in Dangwane village, our dear Cecilia followed the Messenger of Joy and departed for the next world. The news of her passing saddened the whole Bahá'í community of this region, especially Transkei and its newly-formed National Spiritual Assembly, all of whose members attended her funeral on 16 May. There were hundreds of people present on that day. A bus-load of nurses in uniform attended, some of whom composed a guard of honour during the funeral while others made short addresses about her excellent work as a nurse. Two Christian ministers were present, both of whom offered prayers and praised her character. Even in death Cecilia Nodada, the first Bahá'í of Northern Transkei, was teaching; even two years after her funeral people who were present on that occasion are enquiring about the Faith she had espoused. Her life was an enactment of her favourite song, *Angene Ndibuyele Umva*.

On 13 May the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> GRIEVED LEARN PASSING CECILIA NODADA KINDLY EXPRESS OUR LOVING SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS. OFFERING PRAYERS SACRED SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.
>
> NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF TRANSKEI

JEANNETTE OUTHEY
?–1980

The National Spiritual Assembly of New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands on 21 May 1980 cabled to the Universal House of Justice: WITH DEEP SORROW ANNOUNCE PASSING MADAME OUTHEY FIRST BELIEVER TERRITORIES ON 20 MAY . . .

Having learned of the Bahá'í Faith through Mariette Bolton[1] of Australia, Jeannette Outhey—thought to be the first Caledonian believer—declared her faith in Thio, New Caledonia, on 10 June 1961. She became a great friend of the untiring Australian pioneer, Margaret Rowling, who found the first Melanesian believers in that French-speaking territory. Jeannette took part actively in 1961 in the election of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Noumea and served on that body for nineteen consecutive years. Such was her enthusiasm that she even wanted to participate in the election of officers two weeks before her passing, although she was suffering painfully from an incurable disease. In 1971, when the seat of the National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific Ocean was transferred from Honiara in the Solomon Islands to Noumea, Jeannette was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly which was composed of believers from New Hebrides, New Caledonia and Loyalty Islands. Re-elected in 1972, she was able to make the trip of her life by going to the Holy Land the following year to attend the third Bahá'í International Convention. On the return journey she was also able to visit the resting-place of Shoghi Effendi before resuming her activities in New Caledonia. When her mother, the senior Bahá'í of the Territories, passed away four years later, Jeannette became free to accept the position of custodian of the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Noumea, a sensitive function which she discharged with zeal, competence and love until her last days. She made of this blessed spot a fragrant garden where local believers and transient guests enjoyed the generosity of her services, the affability of her character and her unequalled hospitality.

After having served the Cause of God for twenty years with love, devotion and perseverance, and having proclaimed its ideals to people from all backgrounds and races, both in the Loyalty Islands and New Caledonia, and even in Europe, Australia and New Zealand, Jeannette Outhey left this world under physical suffering but with mental

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 435.



Jeannette Outhey

serenity. On 21 May almost all members of the Bahá'í community of New Caledonia gathered at her grave to pay public tribute to her in the presence of her sorrowing family and friends. The memory of this great figure of the Faith in New Caledonia will for a long time remain engraved in the hearts of all those who had the joy of knowing her. May the Abhá Kingdom, where she has taken flight, offer her unrestricted happiness.

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF NEW CALEDONIA AND THE LOYALTY ISLANDS

KAMIL ABBAS
(KÁMIL 'ABBÁS RIḌÁ)
1911–1980
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

From his youth my late father took the service of the Bahá'í Cause as his principal aim. After completing his primary and secondary studies he began his Bahá'í service as a member of the youth committee of Baghdád. He began to study Persian, English and German and eventually excelled in these languages. He corresponded a number of times with the Guardian. While still a young man he became a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Baghdád and then was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq.

In 1953 at the beginning of the Ten Year Plan he arose as a pioneer to the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean for which he was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi.[1] He remained there for approximately three months until forced to return to 'Iráq due to his inability to obtain a residence permit.

In 'Iráq he steadfastly served the Cause. He was sent on a number of missions to neighbouring Arab states at the instructions of the beloved Guardian, especially to Lebanon to which he travelled several times. He represented the National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq at a number of Bahá'í Intercontinental Conferences and he likewise represented the Cause at several non-political conferences sponsored by the United Nations. Within the Bahá'í community he was a patient and



Kamil Abbas

[1] See Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 52.

exemplary believer, courageously defending the Faith, diffusing its wisdom among the friends, and respected and honoured by them. In 1957 he was appointed to the Auxiliary Board for the protection of the Cause. On a number of occasions his Bahá'í service took him to India and Pakistan and in 1966 he spent some time in Írán. He assisted Mr. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Rawháni[1] in the delicate task of transferring the remains of the father of Bahá'u'lláh, Mírzá Buzurg, to a Bahá'í cemetery.[2] He also carried out, upon the instructions of Shoghi Effendi, various assignments relating to historic Bahá'í sites in Baghdád. For nearly twenty years he served as secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq.

After his return from Ṭihrán in 1967 he remained in Baghdád due to the difficulty of travelling abroad. It was the will of God that he be one of the faithful friends who were arrested in December 1973 and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was so firm and steadfast in the Cause of the Blessed Beauty that the prison authorities watched my father carefully. At times they oppressed him and at times tried to persuade him to recant, but without avail. My father's course was to be firm in the service of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, to cling to His ordinances, and to proffer obedience and fidelity to the Universal House of Justice. A few months after he left the prison his health weakened, and on 5 June 1980 his spirit ascended to the Abhá Kingdom. It was my father's wish during the last years of his life to write a book on the blessed Cause and we may be certain that only his imprisonment prevented him from carrying out his intention. He ascended from this transitory life firm in the truth of God's mighty Cause.

Informed of my father's passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled on 15 June 1970:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BAHAULLAH STAUNCH STEADFAST PROMOTER FAITH ABLE DEFENDER COVENANT KAMIL ABBAS WHOSE MANIFOLD SERVICES PIONEERING TEACHING FIELDS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL. CONVEY MEMBERS FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY.

DR. B. K. ABBAS

(Translated from the Arabic by JOHN WALBRIDGE)

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 373.
[2] See Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 175; also *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 297.



Cecilia King Blake

CECILIA KING BLAKE
1911–1980

On 25 February 1911 a privileged soul, Cecilia King Blake, came into the world. She embraced the Bahá'í Faith on 20 October 1957 in Panama and almost immediately arose to serve as a pioneer in the Chitré zone where she gave her services with great dedication and efficiency. In the closing years of the Ten Year Crusade there was an urgent appeal for pioneers to Nicaragua. In the period between May 1960 and April 1961 a contingent of pioneers arrived, including Cecilia. She had been on the front lines in the teaching field for more than a decade in Panama and on several occasions served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Her activities in Nicaragua were described in the Panama Bahá'í Bulletin of July 1980: 'A Panamanian pioneer of great enthusiasm and joy, she arose to serve at fifty years of age, leaving Panama to offer her valuable services in Nicaragua and help in the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Bluefields, a very important factor in making possible the simultaneous election, in the memorable year 1961, of all the National Spiritual Assemblies of Latin America. From the moment she arrived at her pioneer post, "Miss Cecilia", as she was affectionately called by the local people whose confidence, love and esteem she immediately won, began to work for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, opening up every type of activity, including children's classes, literacy classes and firesides. She made long-distance, hazardous teaching trips to inhospitable places all along the Nicaraguan coast, carrying high the banner of the Most Great Name and proclaiming the healing message of the Bahá'í Faith in mountainous and rural areas.'

It is difficult to describe the wonderful work she carried out in the Department of Zelaya, Nicaragua. There she worked expanding the foundation of the Faith, deepening the believers and consolidating communities which were separated, in some instances, by distances of more than a day's journey over rivers, through jungles and along coastal beaches. The task was difficult but her spirit was indomitable in the service of the Cause. By great economic sacrifice she purchased in Rio Escondido a considerable piece of fertile land—a veritable paradise whose silence is broken only by the lapping of the sea waves—and donated it to the National Spiritual Assembly of Nicaragua with the hope that it would in future be the site of a permanent Bahá'í Institute.

In spite of her health, which was weakened by the difficulties of climate and food and her exhausting work among the indigenous people whom she loved dearly, Cecilia was always ready not only to teach the Bahá'í Faith but to defend it, even at the cost of her own life if circumstances should demand it. Her hand was always extended to assist the sick, protect the helpless and share her meagre bread with the hungry. She saw all the indigenous people as her children and at any moment would have given her life for them. Her heart was so large and generous that it almost would not fit in her chest. So exhausting were the conditions under which she laboured that her health broke down under the strain. One day we received her at the airport in Managua in a very serious condition and practically unconscious. It took two months for her to recover from that illness, and as soon as she regained a little strength, in spite of our pleas that she take a rest, she returned to her pioneer post because, she said, her indigenous friends needed her.

During the 1970s Cecilia settled in Costa Rica and continued teaching the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh with the same enthusiasm and dedication as before, in spite of age and broken health. Even from her sick-bed during her last days in this world she continued spreading the divine fragrances.

The Bahá'ís of three countries—Panama, Nicaragua and Costa Rica—grieved at her passing on 27 June 1980, because upon the believers in those lands she had lavished the intense love of her great heart. DEPLORE LOSS OUR BELOVED SISTER COWORKER CECILIA WHOSE EXTENSIVE SACRIFICES GREATLY AIDED THE FIRM ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FAITH IN THE PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC REGIONS OF NICARAGUA, cabled the friends in Nicaragua. MAY THE BLESSED BEAUTY LOVINGLY PROTECT HER FOREVER.

A consolatory message from the Universal House of Justice was cabled on 1 August 1980:

> SADDENED LEARN FROM YOUR BULLETIN PASSING CECILIA KING BLAKE. HER SELFLESS PIONEER SERVICE BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD ADDS LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH COSTA RICA AND PROVIDES STERLING EXAMPLE HER COUNTRYMEN. PRAYING HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL KINGDOMS GOD.

The funeral was held in accordance with Bahá'í laws and was conducted with great dignity. The attendance was very large. Her grave was literally covered with flowers. Cecilia King Blake is in the Abhá Kingdom and from there she sends us her loving and kind smile.

SALOMÓN ESCALANTE E.

(Translated from the Spanish by BARBARA BARRETT)



John William Allen

JOHN WILLIAM ALLEN
1907–1980
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

He knew very little of his new home. So when he and his wife Valera arrived at the border of Swaziland in a rented car on 19 April 1954, they had with them full camping provisions; though they never had to use them. They were responding to a letter from Shoghi Effendi urging them to take up residence in a virgin Bahá'í territory before the end of the first year of the Ten Year Crusade. God had granted their wish to join the legions of the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. At that time they had no way of knowing that Swaziland would be their home for the rest of their lives. Nor could they know that this colonial territory would emerge as an independent nation before John's death on 31 August 1980, with more than 5,000 Bahá'ís; with its own National Spiritual Assembly recognized by the government; with national, regional and local Bahá'í Centres; with the Leroy Ioas Bahá'í Teaching Centre named after John's longtime friend and confidant; and with other endowments.

Behind this spiritual triumph, guided always by Shoghi Effendi with whom the Allens had extensive correspondence and whom they visited while on pilgrimage in 1954, is the life-story of a man with the clear vision that the Cause of God must be the beacon toward which his entire life must be oriented to give it meaning and direction and success.

John Allen was born on 16 May 1907 in Auburn, California. His talent for organization and leadership emerged early. As a teenager he took full responsibility for managing a fruit orchard when his father fell ill. He was an excellent athlete and played on the football team at the College of the Pacific. He married at the beginning of the great depression and supported his family during those very difficult years through his initiative, imagination and tenacity as an automobile salesman. In 1945 he opened his own automobile dealership which grew and prospered until he left to pioneer to Swaziland.

John's relationship to the Cause of Bahá'-u'-lláh developed through his marriage. His wife, Valera, had become a Bahá'í in 1925, well before they had even met. A year after their marriage they moved to Sacramento. When the only Bahá'í couple in that town came to call, they simply assumed that John was a Bahá'í and he joined in the teaching activities. In those days there were no enrolment cards.

His business skills in bidding on government surplus at the end of World War II were put to use to serve the Faith. He secured for the Bahá'í faith registration as a charitable organization. Under this registration the Bahá'ís were able to purchase government surplus at more than a ninety per cent discount on bid price. In his capacity as chairman of the Maintenance Committee at the Geyserville Bahá'í School, he equipped the school, from dormitories to kitchen, for almost nothing.

John Allen was a builder both of physical edifices and spiritual communities, and the two came together in his service to the Faith in Southern Africa. He was never happier than on the frequent occasions when he negotiated for a particularly difficult purchase of land, or the permits to build, or was able to lay out a new building. It was even his good fortune to be in Haifa when the Guardian asked the

Hand of the Cause of God Ugo Giachery to lay out the position of the Archives Building. John helped Dr. Giachery drive the stakes and stretch the strings which marked the location of the first building to arise on the Arc around which will be located the international institutions of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

He was a generous man. He helped pioneers settle in Swaziland, obtaining lists of employment opportunities, corresponding with pioneer committees, negotiating for residence permits, jobs, housing, cars, and often inviting newly-arrived pioneers to accept the hospitality of his home. Many times he contributed material support to make it possible for them to remain in Swaziland. He assisted with the education of many young Swazi students, some of whom lived in his own home.

Automobiles were a lifetime preoccupation. As a high school student he built his own 'buggy' from the frame up, selling it to raise funds for college. Cars were designed for use and he did not spare them. In the early days when there were no paved roads in Swaziland he might drive more than an hour one way over very rough roads to collect a Swazi Bahá'í to attend a Nineteen Day Feast or a group of seekers to come to a fireside, repeating the journey when he took them home the same evening. Years later he wore out two trucks, even as his own health was failing, carting the materials and supervising the construction of two regional Bahá'í Centres, in Hlatikulu and Piggs' Peak, each a two-hour drive. He was appointed to the first Auxiliary Board by the Hand of the Cause Músá Banání with responsibility for Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Mozambique. Travelling in those countries over difficult roads he would sometimes carry a full set of tyres on the roof-rack to prevent delays. One of his strong points was his ability to anticipate both needs and consequences in the most diverse of circumstances.

As well as assisting in the spiritual development of Swaziland, John sought, with two of his sons, to participate in its economic advancement by rescuing a moribund pineapple industry. A noteworthy achievement was the establishment of a Swazi Farmers' Pineapple Settlement Scheme under which Swazi farmers, for the first time ever, were enabled to purchase and operate their own pineapple farms.

In the early teaching plans of the Guardian, the task of building world order fell to few hands. While in the United States John served on the Geyserville School Committee, the National Youth Committee and the National Teaching Committee. At the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade, when he was a member of the Asian Teaching Committee, he would laugh and say it was the committee's job to send Bahá'í pioneers to countries and islands neither they nor anyone on the committee had ever heard of. Nonetheless, he and his fellow committee members succeeded in turning naïve intentions of devoted Bahá'ís into the reality of service. As always, he was a salesman, with the gift of convincing people of their worth and their ability to accomplish things they feared to hope for, and to serve in ways they did not dream to be possible.

And then he came to Swaziland to become an example of what is possible if you have the courage to try and the determination to stay with it. The Faith quickly took root and the early Swazi believers were carefully nourished and deepened. Several members of the Royal Family became Bahá'ís. Soon a Regional National Spiritual Assembly was formed for Southern Africa and he served as a member of that body, and of its daughter National Spiritual Assembly in Swaziland, for many years. Through triumph and heartbreak, John and Valera persisted at their post for more than a quarter-century. The Cause of God continues to grow in Swaziland, nurtured by the efforts at various times of almost a hundred pioneers, but increasingly its destiny must lie in the hands of the local believers taught so carefully and well.

John was the head of a large, active Bahá'í family, in addition to being an example of service to the Bahá'í world. His three sons, with their wives, have all served as Bahá'í pioneers. All eleven of his grandchildren are active in their service to the Faith as pioneers, travelling teachers and members of National and Local Spiritual Assemblies. John lived to see the birth of his first great granddaughter at the pioneering post of her parents in Zimbabwe.

John Allen was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland when he died at Stanford, California, while on a visit to

celebrate his fiftieth wedding anniversary. It was the bounty of God that his family, gathered from all over the world, were able to share the celebration of fifty years of devoted service to family, profession, and the vision of World Order, before his peaceful ascension. On 1 September 1980 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> HEARTS GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BAHAULLAH DISTINGUISHED PIONEER PROMOTER FAITH JOHN ALLEN. HIS RADIANCE PERSEVERANCE AUDACITY IN DEVOTED SERVICES FAITH IN NORTH AMERICA AND PARTICULARLY SOUTHERN AFRICA OVER SEVERAL DECADES SET SHINING EXAMPLE SERVANTS CAUSE GOD. ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS THROUGHOUT SWAZILAND BEFITTING HIS STATION. PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Reporting on the memorial services held throughout Swaziland, the *Swaziland Bahá'í News* stated: 'The life and sacrifices of dear John Allen will long remain a shining example to all the believers in Swaziland to follow—this Knight of Bahá'u'lláh who brought us God's Message for our time.'

DWIGHT W. ALLEN

SARAH FLORENCE FITZNER
1906–1980
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

On 19 October 1906 Sarah Florence Parry was born in Wrexham, Wales. Her family emigrated to Australia when she was six years old.

Florence became a teacher in the Education Department of South Australia. In 1927 a fellow-teacher, Miss Bertha Mochan (who later, as Mrs. Bertha Dobbins, became the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the New Hebrides) invited her to a meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hyde-Dunn in North Adelaide. Florence asked her friend, Harold Fitzner,[1] to accompany her, and they became regular attendants at these meetings. The sincerity and love of the couple who became affectionately known in the Australian Bahá'í community as 'Father and Mother Dunn', and the truth and beauty of the Bahá'í Writings, deeply affected Florence and Harold. In 1928 they embraced the Cause.

In 1931 Florence married Harold Fitzner; this was one of the first Bahá'í marriages in Australia. They held firesides in their home regularly and many enquirers who attended subsequently accepted the Faith. Florence was a hard-working teacher of the Bahá'í Faith. Accompanied by her husband she undertook much extension teaching in country towns of South Australia, in addition to serving on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Adelaide, supporting various meetings at the Bahá'í Centre, assisting with children's classes, visiting the sick and elderly and other activities. They attended the Intercontinental Conference in New Delhi in 1953 where, in response to the great call issued by Shoghi Effendi for believers to arise and go to the virgin territories, they offered their services as pioneers to Portuguese Timor. Many difficulties had to be overcome before they reached their pioneering goal but with much prayer, persistence and dedicated effort Harold arrived in Portuguese Timor in June 1954; Florence joined him four months later. After his arrival he met distrust



Sarah Florence Fitzner

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 449.

and opposition from some of the authorities and Florence helped to make life easier for Harold by sharing the problems and the tasks of daily living. Florence and Harold were honoured by the Guardian with the title, Knights of Bahá'u'lláh.[1]

In time, opposition was overcome and they were accepted through their lives of loving service. They taught English to many students —Portuguese, Chinese, Timorese, Arabs and others of mixed blood—and created a schoolroom in their new house which was built in Dili. These students, many of whom later went abroad for further study, also learned from the Fitzners about the Bahá'í Faith. The Faith could not be taught openly in Portuguese Timor but, as the years passed, some of the local people embraced it.

Harold's deteriorating health became a cause of great concern for Florence. After a protracted period of illness he died at his post in 1969. Love for the Faith and for the Timorese people prompted Florence to remain serving in Timor and to continue teaching English. In 1973 she was privileged to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She made occasional visits to Adelaide for dental and medical reasons and it was during one of these visits in 1974 that revolution broke out, making it unwise for her to return to her beloved Timor where she had served for twenty years. She continued teaching the Faith and supporting Bahá'í activities in her own and other areas of Australia, and in 1978 went as a travelling teacher to Tonga, Fiji and both islands of New Zealand. Health problems gradually prevented her from doing all she would have liked to have done in service to the Cause she loved so dearly. Florence passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 7 September 1980. After her passing the following cable was sent by the Universal House of Justice:

> SADDENED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT KNIGHT BAHAULLAH FLORENCE FITZNER HER DEVOTED SERVICES AND THOSE OF HER LATE HUSBAND HAROLD IN ESTABLISHING FAITH TIMOR LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. CONVEY SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL KINGDOMS GOD.
>
> JAMES CHITTLEBOROUGH

[1] See Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 69.



Louis Pierre Henri Dhacoo

LOUIS PIERRE HENRI DHACOO
1930–1980

Pierre Dhacoo was born on 16 February 1930 in Mauritius and was a member of a devout Christian family whose beliefs he adopted. On 1 March 1961 he accepted the Bahá'í Faith, expressly desiring to declare his acceptance on that day so that he could begin his Bahá'í life by observing the Fast. Despite the opposition and disapproval of friends and relatives he served the Faith selflessly and unceasingly from the moment he embraced it. At first his employer expressed concern at his involvement with the Bahá'í community but Pierre's loyalty, integrity and devotion to duty soon caused his employer to change his attitude to one of appreciation and respect.

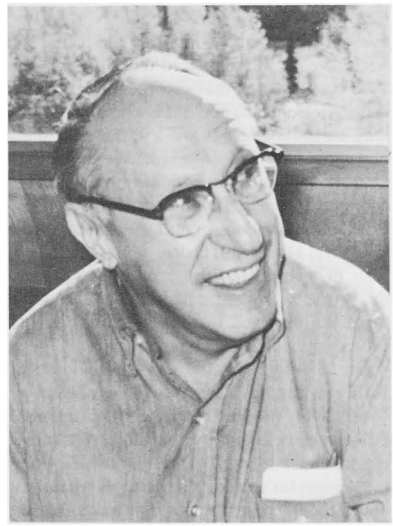
The nature of Pierre's employment required him to travel extensively during the day but he was never too tired at day's end to undertake teaching trips for the Faith. He discharged any task entrusted to him with a high sense of dedication, performing it to the best of his ability. Many were guests in his home, and many in need or in distress would knock at his door knowing that he would extend any

assistance within his power. He was admired for his devotion to his family and for his constant willingness to extend help to those within and without the Bahá'í community. He was even-tempered, humble and courteous, and nothing would dampen his spirit. He had the gift of seeing the humorous aspects of ordinary situations, and the anecdotes he would relate at Unity Feasts and social gatherings lightened all hearts.

He was an enthusiastic teacher, capable of presenting the Glad Tidings in simple and moving language. He served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Port Louis and on the National Teaching Committee. He was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly in 1968 and was a member of that body until his death. His service on these institutions was rendered in an unassuming and quiet yet dynamic way.

His passing on 5 October 1980 deprived the Mauritian Bahá'í community of one of its most valued servants. He was a dearly loved friend, a faithful co-worker and a true Bahá'í brother. He leaves a wife and five children who have all espoused the Faith. In a letter written on its behalf on 3 November 1980 the Universal House of Justice expressed sorrow at the passing of 'an outstanding believer and devoted servant of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh'.

S. APPA and S. MOOTEN



Karl Donald Stettler

KARL DONALD STETTLER
1908–1980

Karl Donald Stettler was born in Canton, Ohio, U.S.A., on 17 October 1908 to Roman Catholic parents. A few years later his family moved to San Bernardino, California, where he attended school. While still a young man he was lured north to Alaska where he settled in Cordova and trained as a meteorologist. After completing his training, he travelled to all the weather stations throughout Alaska as a relief meteorologist.

While stationed at Point Barrow, he first heard about the Bahá'í Faith from a pioneer, Frances Wells.[1] She introduced me to Karl just before she left to pioneer once again, this time to Luxembourg. She suggested that I keep in touch with him and invite him to Bahá'í activities when he was in Anchorage. I discovered while talking with Karl that I had been binding his library collection on Alaska through the local book store. After that he brought his books directly to me. Dutifully, I sent him Bahá'í literature and notices while he manned weather stations out in the tundra. For my birthday, he sent his Bahá'í enrolment card. The next summer we were married.

Karl was active on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Spenard and was a popular speaker and chairman for public meetings. He became the executive member of the Alaska National Book Sales Committee. Through him, the book sales were enlarged to include publications from Bahá'í publishers around the world. In 1960 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska but in the same year the weather bureau sent him to Washington, D.C., for additional training in personnel work.

In 1970 Alaska was requested to send pioneers to Swaziland. Karl, myself and my daughter, Deanne, volunteered for this assignment. We became the first caretakers of the

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 923.

Leroy Ioas Institute at Mbabane. Karl was constantly working to improve the facilities.

During his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1973 Karl learned that George Ronald, Publisher, in England, could use his help. He had long nursed a desire to work at this publishing house for Marion Hofman. We moved to Oxford and lived in an apartment over the company's office. In this position Karl also worked for the Publishing Department of the Universal House of Justice.

In 1979 Karl's health forced him to give up this work to which he had devoted so much love. We returned to the United States and settled in Coos Bay, Oregon.

On 25 May 1979 the Universal House of Justice wrote to Karl, 'On the occasion of your leaving the service of the Department of Publishing we take the opportunity of expressing to you our very warm thanks and commendation for the devoted services which you have rendered over the past few years. We are very happy that you and your dear wife have been able to visit the World Centre before going back to Oregon and we offer you both a very warm welcome. Your pioneering services in Africa are remembered by us and we are sure that wherever you may be you will continue to serve the Cause with steadfast devotion. We will offer prayers for you both at the Sacred Threshold.'

After a year's illness Karl passed from this life on 7 October 1980. He was the first Bahá'í to be laid to rest in the Sunset Memorial Park in Coos Bay. On 21 October the Universal House of Justice cabled:

OUR LOVING SYMPATHY TO YOU LOSS KARL STEADFAST DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH.

Karl was a generous, loving, hospitable person and was happiest when our home was humming with Bahá'í activity. His quick wit made him many friends wherever he went. We miss you, Karl, but we know you are just as busy helping as before.

LUCILLE STETTLER



Alexe Cookson

ALEXE COOKSON
1918(?)–1980

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED MAID-SERVANT BAHAULLAH ALEXE COOKSON. ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER IMMORTAL SOUL KINGDOMS GOD. KINDLY CONVEY SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS.

Universal House of Justice

Alexe Cookson was born on the Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides, Scotland, about 1918. Completing her education at boarding-school, she trained as a nurse during World War II. In this period she married a New Zealand Air Force pilot. When peace was declared she emigrated to New Zealand with her young son. In 1964 Alexe became a Bahá'í in Wanganui. She tutored the hard of hearing, employment which enabled her to pioneer to the goal areas of New Plymouth and Nelson.

'To enumerate the many contributions Alexe made to the New Zealand community', friends have written, 'would not be as Alexe herself would wish, as she was very self-effacing and humble, and saw herself only as a channel to

serve the Cause of God; but among these were service on Local Spiritual Assemblies, pioneering, travel-teaching on the homefront and abroad, and service on committees. She was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly for ten years and was its secretary for eight, until her appointment as Auxiliary Board member for protection in 1978.' It was during this time that her fullest and richest service was rendered, based as it was on a depth of knowledge of the principles of Bahá'í administration combined with her natural capacity for winning the confidence of the friends and of tendering them advice and guidance.

In an entry in her diary in 1949 Alexe confided her concern for her children who were born of parents of different races: 'Miscegenation is not an easy thing and sometimes I am hurt to the quick by what people say and sometimes I wonder "What have I done? Have I harmed these children? They are neither Celt nor Maori. As they grow up will the social distinctions—and they are quite definite—embitter them, influence them? So many problems! May God help us . . ."' Sorrow was changed to joy when she discovered the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. Alexe later wrote: 'Well, God did help and heaped the mercy and bounty of recognizing Bahá'u'lláh on my heart and the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá were sweet to my eyes, *The lovers of mankind, these are the superior men, of whatever race, creed or colour they may be.* To have been able to share the dignity, the wisdom, the love of these words with my children was the greatest moment of my life.'

Alexe worked tirelessly all through the years to bring the message of Bahá'u'lláh to the Maori people. She had a great respect and love for them and prayed that this noble race would respond wholeheartedly to the Bahá'í Cause. She wrote and published *Te Marama* (The Light), a simplified introduction to the Faith which reflected her love for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and the Maori people.

In June 1980 she was enabled to make a brief visit to the Holy Land and finally she returned to her native highlands and the relatives of her youth. On 11 October 1980, shortly before she was due to come home to New Zealand, she died at Fort William, Scotland, and is buried at Kilmarcie Cemetery. She is remembered for her very strong sense of humour, her sense of justice and keenness of mind. On 12 October the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia in its cable to the International Teaching Centre made reference to the GREAT LOSS PROTECTION BOARD OF THIS DEVOTED STEADFAST CONSECRATED MAIDSERVANT. In reply the International Teaching Centre cabled:

> HOUSE OF JUSTICE AND TEACHING CENTRE SHARE YOUR DEEP GRIEF PASSING VALIANT DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT ALEXE COOKSON. WARMLY REMEMBER HER RECENT VISIT HOLY SHRINES. PLEASE INFORM HER FAMILY LOVING PRAYERS OFFERED PROGRESS HER SOUL AND THAT MANIFEST BLESSINGS OF BAHAULLAH BE SHOWERED UPON HER.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF NEW ZEALAND

(assisted by IAN and JILL COOKSON)

SHAH BEHRAM MOBEDZADEH (SHÁH BAHRÁM MÚBIDZÁDIH) 1901–1980

Shah Behram Mobedzadeh was an exemplary Bahá'í—devout, self-sacrificing, sincere in his love for the friends and utterly devoted to the Faith. I first met him in Karachi in 1936. His face was spiritual, his eyes luminous, and his language was an exalted Persian, sweet and inspiring. I was strongly attracted to him at first sight. We met frequently thereafter. In all meetings he spoke of the Faith, its greatness and glorious history; and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the beloved Guardian. He also spoke with great admiration of the early believers of India. It was my good fortune to travel in his company in 1975 and I availed myself of the opportunity of learning as much as I could of his life and of his record of service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

He was born on 25 January 1901 into a Zoroastrian family. His ancestors had been priests since the time of Zoroaster. His father, however, left his ancestral occupation and became an importer, trading in goods from India. Shah Behram was named by his father's sister who was reported to have said, during the naming ceremony, 'God willing, he will



Shah Behram Mobedzadeh

live to see the Promised One foretold by Zoroaster, "Sháh Bahrám Varjávand" ("The Glory of God")." Shah Behram felt that her hope was fulfilled when he accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

When he was sixteen Shah Behram was sent to the house of his sister in Iṣfahán in order to perfect his Persian. He learned of the Bahá'í Faith through the great teacher Fáḍil Ṭihrání whose scholarship and good character deeply impressed him, and in 1925 he became a Bahá'í. 'Immediately thereafter', Shah Behram told me, 'I addressed a letter to the beloved Guardian expressing my utmost obedience and signed myself Shah Behram s/o (son of) Mobed Khuda Bux. Back came a reply in the name of Shah Behram Mobedzadeh. This will explain my surname "Mobedzadeh" which I accepted forthwith.'

In 1928 Shah Behram came to India with letters of introduction and worked in restaurants, first in Bombay and then in Calcutta, although for a few months he was penniless and near despair. In January 1932 he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and was privileged to be in the presence of Shoghi Effendi. Speaking of this experience later, Shah Behram remarked that the Guardian was so kind to everyone that each pilgrim felt that he had been singled out to be the recipient of a special measure of love, greater than that bestowed upon the others. 'I cannot describe my parting from the beloved Guardian,' he said, 'for my eyes were veiled with tears. He was filled with understanding and consoled me, emphasizing that I should meet the friends and impress upon them that nothing is more important than teaching and guiding seekers to the Cause. This I did both in India and Írán. Shoghi Effendi would ask me to chant and generously made a kind reference to me, saying that some Zoroastrian priests had accepted the Faith before me, but that I was the first among them to espouse it openly.'

Shah Behram thenceforth became a tireless worker for the Faith—travelling, encouraging, inspiring. In 1941 he married Riḍván Khánum, the daughter of the distinguished Behman Behi, whose entire life had been devoted to the Faith. In 1945 she became caretaker of the children's hostel in Panchgani. The original hostel which housed twelve children grew to become The New Era High School where Riḍván continues to serve as superintendent. In 1964 Shah Behram was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board and in this capacity travelled all over India. In his seventy-fifth year he remarked, 'I do not feel the sting of age. I derive inspiration from the example of the late Hand of the Cause Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí who even in his nineties travelled in service to the Faith like a young man. I know that there is only one joy in life—to surrender everything to Bahá'u'lláh, to live for Him and die for Him.'

During the last two years of his life he was often confined to bed but in spirit he was always preparing to travel and was full of plans to advance the work of the Faith. He spoke only of the greatness of the Cause, the lives of the martyrs, the services of the Hands of the Cause of God, and described interesting and inspiring situations that arose in his lifetime. On 17 October 1980 he bade farewell to all and started his journey in the world of immortals. The Universal House of Justice paid him a glowing tribute in its cable of 23 October:

GRIEVED PASSING STEADFAST DEVOTED PROMOTER CAUSE SHAH BEHRAM MOBEDZADEH. HIS DECADES UNINTERRUPTED UNFORGETTABLE SERVICES CAUSE CONTRIBUTED STRENGTHENING FOUNDATION FAITH INDIA. OURSELVES AND MEMBERS INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE PRAYING ARDENTLY HOLY SHRINES BESEECH PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. CONVEY WIFE FRIENDS OUR SYMPATHY. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERINGS.

(Based on a memoir by DIPCHAND KHIANRA)

LEONORA STIRLING ARMSTRONG
1895–1980

Rio de Janeiro: At dawn on 1 February 1921, the *S.S. Vasari* plowed through sparkling waters into the majestic harbor. Below deck, in second-class accommodation, watching, stood an attractive, cultured young woman, a lone American. In her heart she nourished the vision of an unspeakably glorious mission, the spread of the Light of God in this day to an entire continent. In her purse, all her savings, barely enough for two weeks' modest expenses. No friends in the city, no job. She spoke no Portuguese. Odd circumstances for one who so readily confessed a lack of self-confidence. Clearly her reliance was placed elsewhere.

Panama City: Half a century later at an international conference held in connection with the dedication of the first Bahá'í House of Worship in Latin America, this same slight and soft-spoken woman—Leonora Stirling Armstrong—was presented to the thousands of believers gathered there. Spontaneously they rose to pay tribute to her achievements. What emotions must have surged within her weakened frame, now bent with long toil, as she surveyed these children of her dream. For here were fervent followers of Bahá'u'lláh raised up from every country of Latin America, of every color, clime and custom. Here was her vision made real; like Saint Peter she cast the seeds, and now witnessed a heavenly harvest. Heartbreaks and anxiety; aches, pains and fevers—how they all took on divine meaning.

* * *



Leonora Stirling Armstrong

On 23 June 1895, in a pleasant two-story house, high on a rise overlooking the Hudson River and the Catskill range beyond, a first child was born to Samuel Norris Holsapple and his beautiful wife, Grace Stirling. They named her Leonora. The Holsapples were well-known in the then little town of Hudson, New York, where they had settled after their marriage. The gifted Mrs. Holsapple served actively in civic work, and had taught school. The childhood of Leonora was, however, soon overshadowed with tragedy and sadness, for her mother's health steadily declined. Just after her precious daughter's fifth birthday she died.

Mrs. Holsapple's untimely death had a profound effect on Leonora and her younger sister, Alethe. They never again had what could truly be called a home. 'How we could endure', Leonora herself recounts, 'through those years of our childhood and adolescence, such loneliness, such suffering, even cruelty, I do not know . . . I can remember how when still a small child, often at night before going to bed, I knelt down at my sister's bedside and in agony of soul, implored God with all the intensity of my being to let us feel His Presence, His nearness, His protection. Little

did I then dream in what way, and how specifically, that prayer was later to be answered!'[1]

Despite her suffering Leonora was a gifted student all through her childhood. In her high school graduating class she received the highest honors and was made valedictorian. She was able to enter Cornell University on a scholarship, and was elected Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year.

Though she attended church from an early age, Leonora was somewhat disillusioned by what she experienced there. When she was about thirteen her maternal grandmother, 'Mother Stirling', who had by then after long years of spiritual searching found and embraced the Bahá'í Faith, first began to teach her granddaughters the truths of the New Day. The example of Mother Stirling's devotion and many efforts to spread the Bahá'í teachings made a lasting impression on Leonora's sensitive nature. She was greatly attracted to the new Revelation and began to memorize passages and prayers from the Writings. Already at that time she made her own efforts to share the Message with her classmates and friends.

After graduation from college she taught Latin in high schools and was active in social work as her mother and grandmother had been before her. During this period she came in close contact with a number of prominent early believers, among them the Obers and, in particular, May Maxwell. 'May, more than anyone else, helped me to feel the great love of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the reality of love, which I had longed to feel, and a deep bond was formed between us, which gave me the greatest joy I had known.'[2] Others, too, such as Roy Wilhelm and the Kinneys, inspired her with their immense devotion to the Faith.

The desire to pioneer first stirred in Leonora's soul when 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Tablets of the Divine Plan* were unveiled at the Bahá'í Convention held in New York in 1919. Spontaneously, and at once, she wrote to the Master, offering herself in service. *Thou hadst*, was His reply, *expressed thy great wish to be of service to the Divine Threshold and to heal the infirm with the Divine Panacea—the infirm who is afflicted with passion and self. Spiritual malady is more severe than physical illness for it may be that the latter may be converted by the least remedy into health and vigor, while the former will not be cured by a thousand well-known remedies . . . My hope is that thou mayest become a spiritual physician.*[3]

As Leonora recounts it: 'This hope of the Master's became my highest aspiration and when, early in 1920, I read His Tablet to Martha Root, commending her teaching work in South America and stressing the importance of its being followed up by others, it at once seemed to me that here there might be a definite task for me. A letter to Martha brought an immediate reply, with all encouragement.'[4] Martha Root had opened South America with her historic visit there in 1919. Her response to Leonora was whole-hearted. She shared thrilling accounts of her experiences and gave her young recruit a copy of her own diary notes from that period. Brazil was finally decided on as the best place to go first.

The grave concerns of relatives and friends alike now assailed her: to expose herself to the dangers and rigors of such a far-off country, much of it a jungle, alone, friendless, and without knowledge of the language—why it was nothing less than foolhardy! 'I felt my resolution weakening, when some social work in the northern part of New York State gave me the sudden idea to slip up to Montreal to consult May Maxwell. Although ill, May, on hearing the situation, sat upright in bed and in ringing tones which still vibrate in my memory, said, "Leonora, what are you waiting for? Go!" "I will take the next boat," I replied.'[5]

And so it was that on 15 January 1921 she set sail from New York on a divine adventure destined to span no less than sixty years. In doing so, she became one of a handful of valiant souls who arose in response to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's call during His Own lifetime, and the first Bahá'í pioneer to settle permanently in Latin America.

Had not the Master promised confirmation to those souls who, like unto Peter and Paul, would journey to South America with the requisite qualities of 'perfect severance, devotion, firmness and steadfastness in the Covenant'?[6] Leonora knew this meant severance

[1] Unpublished memoirs.
[2] ibid.
[3] Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í International Archives.
[4] Unpublished memoirs.
[5] ibid.
[6] ibid.

'from dearest friends, comforts, profession, from everything . . .'[1] Martha Root had herself impressed this upon her. And now she was to be surrounded and sustained by such divine confirmations.

Leonora's original intention had been to proceed from Rio to Bahia, the northeastern city mentioned by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*—the only city so blessed in the southern hemisphere. But the way opened shortly after her arrival in Rio to teach the Faith in Santos to the south. There she stayed with a family who, in a letter to Martha Root, had expressed interest in knowing more about the Faith. Her quarters were very humble but it was a start.

Life in her land of spiritual adoption was never easy. She often suffered from loneliness, meagre means, malnutrition and illness. Gradually as she became proficient in the Portuguese language, she was better able to support herself. Still, it required long working hours, sometimes at several jobs just to keep body and soul together. She found teaching English, which was the main avenue open to her, to be a valuable way of meeting people and interesting them in the Faith.

Just three months after settling in Santos, Leonora learned of the loss of her beloved grandmother, the spiritual mother of her heart. Later that same year a profounder grief overtook her when news came of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She had so intensely longed to meet Him in this life. Providentially, from Bahjí in June 1921, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had revealed a second Tablet for her. This Tablet became a source of great comfort to her not only in that time of tragedy but throughout the long years ahead. The Master had addressed the envelope simply: 'Brazil. To the Maidservant of God, Leonora Stirling Holsapple.' Amazingly it reached her, as the Master no doubt knew it would. In the text He refers to Leonora as a *Herald of the Kingdom*, calls upon her to *thank God that thou hast enlightened thy sight, and art giving light to the sight of others, too*, refers by name to a number of seekers, and promises that *the intoxicated friends will grow in rapture and ecstasy, begin to break into melodies and harmonies and raise such a tune that will reach the Supreme Concourse and rejoice and exhilarate the holy ones*. He, likewise, advises her to say that *the entering into this Divine Cause is accompanied by everlasting honor and eternal sovereignty*.[2]

'Soon the beloved Guardian's messages began to reach me, urging me never to become discouraged, rather to redouble my efforts, and guiding me with his unfailing wisdom.'[3] Indeed, throughout his ministry Shoghi Effendi's esteem for her and her services was clearly evident. His love for her and his warm encouragement of her work lasted till the end of his life and are recorded in the tender words he addressed to her in many letters: 'I feel deeply attached to your work.'[4] 'Your name I assure you will adorn the annals of the Cause and will inspire many a Bahá'í pioneer in future. You cannot realize the splendour and significance of the work you are doing at present.'[5] 'I will pray that you may be guided and fortified by the spirit of our beloved Master Who I am sure is guiding you, watching over you and sustaining you in your labours. Persevere and never lose heart.'[6]

A survey of Leonora Armstrong's tireless pioneer activities must necessarily span six decades of continual service. Her achievements marked a high tide of human endeavor. Whether in her constant teaching of individuals, her historic travels, the publicity she garnered for the Cause wherever she went, her herculean labor of translating, publishing and disseminating Bahá'í literature both in Portuguese and Spanish, her work in spreading the Message through correspondence, or her eventual material contributions to the community, she stands out eminently distinguished. Through the years she also engaged in social service whenever possible, and became known in the press as the 'Nurse of the Poor'.

The first decade of these activities is marked by extraordinary travels. Twice during the ten years, her father sent funds for a return visit to New York. By careful economy she was able to visit many places along the way. By sailing

[1] Unpublished memoirs.

[2] Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í International Archives.

[3] Unpublished memoirs.

[4] From a handwritten postscript of Shoghi Effendi in a letter written to Leonora Holsapple, 30 July 1932.

[5] From a handwritten postscript of Shoghi Effendi in a letter written to Leonora Holsapple, 18 August 1927.

[6] From a handwritten postscript of Shoghi Effendi in a letter written to Leonora Holsapple, 5 April 1930.

third class, she included countries not on her route. In this way she was able to emblazon the Cause of God in city after city up the Brazilian coast, into the heartland of the Amazon basin, and throughout the Caribbean Sea. Between these travels she raised the banner of the Faith in São Paulo, in Rio and particularly in Bahia through extended stays. A number of souls were attracted to the beauty of the Teachings. Alone in Manaus on the Amazon River, to cite one instance, during a short visit she proclaimed the Faith to 3,400 souls in public meetings and school gatherings.

In 1927 she became the first Bahá'í to visit and speak of the Cause in Colombia, Venezuela, Curaçao, Trinidad, Barbados, Haiti, British Guiana and Dutch Guiana, thus complementing and completing Martha Root's unfulfilled intention of raising the Call of God in all the Latin American countries. The visits of this pure, self-effacing soul, so modest in her personal life, were, paradoxically, always amply reported in the press. And she often enjoyed the spontaneous cooperation and support of various organizations in arranging public meetings. All this occurred in some places within hours of her arrival!

During her stay in Santos Leonora began her prodigious and historic task of translating Bahá'í literature into Portuguese; at first it was a simple pamphlet to distribute at her talks—often typed over and over on her small portable typewriter—later, as her skills developed, an intense outpouring of the major works of the Faith. In the end she had rendered into Portuguese a wide range of literature, and for several decades, under the guidance and with the generous assistance of Shoghi Effendi, had personally seen to its publication. When a Bahá'í Publishing Trust was founded in Rio, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Brazil came into being in 1961, she worked closely with these institutions, adding such long and weighty works as *God Passes By* and *The Dawn-Breakers* to her already highly-distinguished record of accomplishments.

By the late 1920s, having made many contacts in Spanish-speaking countries, Leonora was increasingly concerned with producing adequate Spanish translations as well. She decided to proceed to Spain for a course of study in the University of Madrid to better equip herself. In July 1930 she boarded a French ship which first took her to several ports of call in West Africa and then to Barcelona. As always she taught along the way. From Barcelona she proceeded to Madrid where through her efforts she was able to found the first Bahá'í group of Spain. As she fell seriously ill for a time, she was unable to enter the course at the University and shortly felt inspired to ask the Guardian for permission to come to the Holy Land and visit the Bahá'í Holy Places. He cabled her MOST WELCOME on 2 November 1930.[1] Leonora describes how, when meeting Shoghi Effendi, she 'was awed, overwhelmed, by the spiritual majesty of his presence, his love, his purity'.[2] She frequently visited the Holy Shrines to pour out her heart in prayer. She had the immense privilege of meeting Bahíyyih Khánum, the beloved sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on several occasions. 'On the day set for my departure, the Greatest Holy Leaf was sitting near the door and I knelt down before her in tears, while she gently, lovingly, stroked my head.'[3] In saying goodbye, Shoghi Effendi emphasized that 'of first importance is the direct teaching work, second in importance is the translation, and third social service, if you have time for it'.[4]

During the 1930s more traveling teachers visited South America and additional pioneer settlers gradually strengthened the work Leonora had begun. This was especially so after the launching of the first American Seven Year Plan in 1937 which aimed at the systematic spread of the Faith throughout Latin America.

For Leonora these visits reached their culmination when her beloved May Maxwell traveled to South America in February 1940. They were able to spend some wonderful days together in Rio, and then Mrs. Maxwell went on to Argentina, with the intention of visiting Bahia on her return trip. Leonora went home to Bahia to prepare for this visit, only to be met upon her arrival with the tragic news of May Maxwell's passing in Buenos Aires. She was able to attend the funeral and through this

[1] Cablegram of Shoghi Effendi, 2 November 1930, Bahá'í International Archives.
[2] Unpublished memoirs.
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid.

visit came in contact with the handful of Bahá'ís in Buenos Aires and Montevideo.

The following year, 1941, Leonora married an Englishman, Harold Armstrong, whom she had known for some time. He was destined to support and comfort her through the years ahead in her unceasing Bahá'í services. During the next two decades Leonora and her husband lived in various places in Brazil and raised several adopted children. In 1946 she helped form the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Rio itself. During the 1950s she spent much time at their farm outside Rio, and continued her important translation work. At this time she added Braille to her skills and undertook the transcription and distribution of Bahá'í literature in Portuguese Braille.

In 1961 the first National Spiritual Assembly of Brazil was established. Leonora could now rest assured that all the activities she had begun would be consolidated and perpetuated. One might have thought her work was drawing to a close, passed to the hands of the many capable younger believers. The crowning labors of Leonora's sixty years of international service, however, were still ahead. For it was in June of 1973 that the Universal House of Justice appointed her to membership on the Continental Board of Counselors in South America. Characteristically overwhelmed, and apprehensive regarding her own inadequacies, she nevertheless flew off to her first meeting with that Board in Lima, Peru. From the outset it was clear that the spiritual influence of direct contact with her fellow-believers in the various lands she would visit was to be far-reaching. During those first memorable meetings in Lima, young and old literally sat at her feet imbibing the radiant love, the immense tenderness, which flowed forth in waves of healing from her whole being. It was always a spiritual feast to be with her. She seemed to move in the shadow of her Guardian, and one always felt him close in her presence.

Among the joyful events of Leonora's latter years were the visits to Latin America made by the Hand of the Cause, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, the Guardian's widow, and the daughter of May and Sutherland Maxwell. It was in her presence, in April 1971, at the time of the dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America in Panama, that the homage mentioned earlier, was paid to Leonora. On the several occasions that Amatu'l-Bahá visited Brazil, they spent as much time together as possible. Rúḥíyyih Khánum recollects a little of their long association in the following words: 'When Leonora went to South America she was over twenty-five years old and I was fifteen years younger. My first vivid recollection of her was when, on one of her return visits to America in the 1920s, she came to the hotel in New York where my mother and I were staying; she was tall and slender with brown hair, a sallow complexion and droopy brown eyes in which was an expression of sincerity, of purpose and purity of spirit. Her personality seemed to have united the tenacity of Martha Root with an unsureness of herself which she constantly overcame through her complete consecration to serving the Faith. I must have seen her many times before this, because she and my mother had a profound bond of love and I loved her too. Mother always took a keen personal interest in people and was very generous; she disapproved of Leonora's wardrobe and insisted that at her expense she go buy some summer frocks and other things. The only other intimate thing I remember about those hours we had together was her description of how she had been living—at least in the beginning—in the home of a family in a single room which had no doors or windows except one big door that opened onto the garden; she was greatly disturbed by two things, the huge cockroaches that crawled across the ceiling and sometimes fell on her in bed in the night, and the fact that she had an unwelcome admirer who would come into the garden and heave huge bouquets through the open door as a tribute to his would-be lady love. When she closed the door, in that tropical heat, she suffocated!

'Shoghi Effendi considered Leonora as one of the Faith's outstanding and most distinguished believers in the West, he never forgot the great historic significance of her arising to pioneer in Latin America before the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and in his letters to her he warmly praised her exemplary and ceaseless services, in which he took a keen interest.

'Our friendship, strong and deep in both our lives, was renewed and reinforced on the rare but prized occasions when we met during my visits to Latin America and spent as much

time together as my schedule permitted; the last time was at the meeting of the South American Counselors in Lima, Peru, at the end of the Green Light Expedition in 1975; always we would talk about my mother—our greatest mutual bond.

'The study of such a life as Leonora's, a life of complete consecration to Bahá'u'lláh and His teachings, a life of ceaseless work which lasted till a few hours before her passing at the age of eighty-five, a life in which it never even occurred to Leonora that she was sacrificing—such a life is a manual for every generation of Bahá'ís to study and presents an enduring challenge to all those who would follow in her footsteps.'

Seven years of service were left to Leonora after she was appointed a Counselor. Her back somewhat humped, bent by years and years of translation and typing, literally often day and night, her neck stiff and increasingly painful, the valiant and indomitable Leonora, far from relaxing her efforts, extended her activities and travels immensely. Her husband had already passed away and between her trips she was able to concentrate long hours on the translation work. Gradually, however, her health began to fail. A serious illness finally confined her to bed, and during her last months she was moved to Bahia—the city where she had labored so arduously to establish the Faith sixty years before, a city now boasting ten thousand believers. Here the friends lovingly ministered to her last needs. Even in the final week of her life she rallied her strength for one last outpouring. Propped up in her bed she wrote out a translation of the newly-arrived English version of Bahá'u'lláh's Long Healing Prayer and of the Fire Tablet—a final legacy for her many spiritual children.

The longing for service came to her young. The vastness of Latin America was the arena of her sacrifice. There she poured forth her life, and having given up the world, she gained the Kingdom. At the end she was incarnate light. Even before she slipped from her earthly vesture, the unearthly radiance of her inner being surrounded those attending her. On 17 October 1980 her precious spirit quietly took flight to its celestial Source.

The Universal House of Justice promptly cabled the following tribute:

HEARTS SADDENED PASSING DISTINGUISHED COUNSELLOR LEONORA STIRLING ARMSTRONG HERALD OF THE KINGDOM BELOVED HANDMAIDEN ABDULBAHA SPIRITUAL MOTHER SOUTH AMERICA. HER SIXTY YEARS VALIANT DEVOTED SERVICES CAUSE BRAZIL SHEDS LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH THAT PROMISING LAND. REQUESTING MEMORIAL SERVICES MASHRIQULADHKARS WILMETTE PANAMA URGE ALL COMMUNITIES BRAZIL LIKEWISE HOLD SERVICES. OFFERING ARDENT SUPPLICATIONS MOST HOLY SHRINE PROGRESS HER RADIANT SPIRIT ABHA KINGDOM.

HOOPER C. DUNBAR

LORETTA L. SCHERER
1907–1980

CARL A. SCHERER
1900–1982
Knights of Bahá'u'lláh

EXPRESS LOVING SYMPATHY LOSS YOUR DEAR PARTNER KNIGHT BAHAULLAH LORETTA SCHERER. YOUR JOINT SERVICES ENGRAVED ANNALS BELOVED GUARDIANS GREAT CRUSADE. ASSURE PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
31 October 1980

SADDENED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT CARL SCHERER KNIGHT BAHAULLAH MACAO. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL KINGDOMS GOD.

Universal House of Justice
14 October 1982

Dad will always be remembered for his devotion, for his indefatigable travelling in the service of the Blessed Beauty, for his love for all races, for his patience and gentleness, and for his love of music and violin-making. He was born on 7 March 1900, the third of four children of Robert W. and Ida (Koch) Scherer, in New Ulm, Minnesota, U.S.A.

Mother will always be remembered for her kindness, her tireless devoted service to everyone, her consecrated promotion and protection of the Cause of God and for her beautiful smile. She considered unimportant her pre-



Loretta L. Scherer
Carl A. Scherer

Bahá'í life, but for the history books let me state that she was born on 8 December 1907 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the fourth of twelve children of Herman and Elsie (Lyman) Bremer. She married Dad on 28 February 1925. I was born on 22 September 1929, their only child.

We travelled and moved many times as my father was a salesman. From 1931 until 1936 we lived in China where Dad worked for the Texas Oil Company. Mother enjoyed horseback riding and acting in the theatre at this time. But always we gravitated back to Milwaukee where most of our family lived. Mrs. Florence Petersen, who was to become my mother-in-law, heard of the Bahá'í Faith first. Within six months she and her husband, Charles, and their son Glenn and I, became Bahá'ís in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, on 12 January 1949. Glenn and I were married in August of that year and moved to Madison where Glenn was finishing his last year at the University of Wisconsin. We came back to Wauwatosa to visit in November, and what a beautiful surprise—my parents had just become Bahá'ís and were present at the Feast. It was the happiest feeling being part of an entirely Bahá'í family.

When the Ten Year Crusade was launched in 1953, Mother and Dad volunteered to pioneer to Macao for which service they were named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh.[1] Dad was appointed an Auxiliary Board member in 1954. Sometimes Mother travelled with him and sometimes she held down the homefront in Macao where they helped raise a Local Spiritual Assembly. She and Dad attended the Teaching Conference in Nikko, Japan, in September 1955 and both may be seen in the conference photograph, a copy of which hangs in the Mansion of Bahjí.

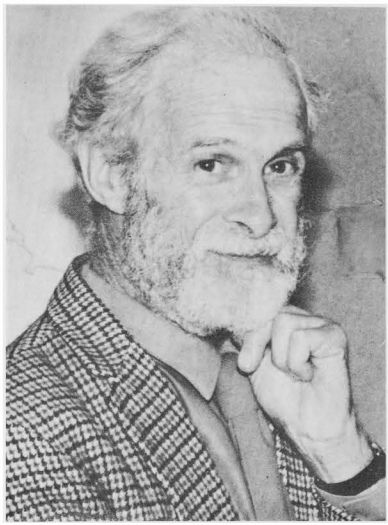
In 1958 Mother and Dad returned to the United States and lived for a short time in Shorewood, Wisconsin. Then, in 1959, they pioneered again, this time to Portugal. They lived in Lisbon for a short while and finally settled in Sintra (formerly Cintra) where they helped form a Local Spiritual Assembly. They made teaching trips to Faro, Portimão and Espina. Dad was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Portugal and had the privilege of voting for the members of the first Universal House of Justice. He voted by mail as he was unable to afford to travel to the Holy Land. Dad was very sick in January 1963 and, with their work completed in Portugal, they attended the London Conference in April 1963 on their way home to Milwaukee.

Their longing to be of service resulted in their winging their way, in 1970, to Funchal, Madeira, where they served with Ed Bode.[2] In March 1973 they went back to Macao, stopping in Haifa for pilgrimage. Mother's poor health and the difficulty of finding accommodation they could afford in Macao forced their return to the United States in June 1973. Here they settled in Burlington, Wisconsin, a homefront goal city. Mother suffered a cerebral haemorrhage on 1 October 1980. The Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem chanted prayers at her sick-bed. On 30 October she passed on and was buried in the Burlington Cemetery. On 10 October 1982 Dad died of congestive heart failure and was buried next to Mother. I thank God for my beautiful and extraordinary parents who have shown forth pure and holy deeds. Al-

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 57.
[2] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 566.

most everywhere they lived, even before they became Bahá'ís, now seems to be blessed with a flourishing Bahá'í community. They lived in New Ulm, Minnesota; Milwaukee, Shorewood, Wauwatosa, Wausau and Burlington, Wisconsin; Austin, Texas; Kingston, Jamaica; Shanghai and Tsingtao, China; Mukden (now in Russia); Charlotte, North Carolina; Mechanicsburg No. 3, Pennsylvania; Evanston, Illinois; Macao; Sintra, Portugal and Funchal, Madeira. If it is true that the presence of pure and detached souls in a community attracts divine bounties, might we not confidently expect that Burlington, Wisconsin, Funchal, Shanghai, Tsingtao and Mukden will in time be abundantly showered with substantial blessings?

DOROTHY VIRGINIA (SCHERER) PETERSEN



Harold Shepherd

HAROLD SHEPHERD
1909–1980

Harold Shepherd passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 13 November 1980 at his home in the Orkney Islands. The National Spiritual Assembly cabled the World Centre:

> GRIEVED NEWS PASSING LAST NIGHT STALWART SERVANT BAHAULLAH HAROLD SHEPHERD. HIS STEADFASTNESS UNWAVERING LOYALTY LONG-STANDING PIONEER RECORD LABOURS ESTABLISHMENT CAUSE GOD SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS MADE HIM VITAL INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT FAITH ISLANDS NORTH SEA EARNED HIM GRATITUDE BRITISH BAHAI COMMUNITY. FAITHFULLY HE REMAINED AT HIS IMPORTANT PIONEER OUTPOST ORKNEYS UNTIL HE HASTENED ABHA KINGDOM. BESEECH PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS VALIANT SOUL.

Harold became a Bahá'í in October 1956. At the National Teaching Conference in Blackpool in January 1959 he and his family volunteered to pioneer to Inverness in the Scottish Highlands, the most northerly British goal town of the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Crusade. Harold, his wife and their two children, aged nine and eleven, spent the Easter holiday that year on a campsite on the outskirts of the town, waking up on the first morning to find the tent surrounded by snow. All doors seemed to be closed as neither accommodation nor employment could be found. They returned to Manchester but returned to Inverness in July intending to devote their summer holiday to attempting to get settled. Their faith was rewarded: within a week they had acquired a house that was to become a real Bahá'í home for countless pioneers, travelling teachers and friends, and would later become the 'gateway to the islands', as most of the Bahá'ís who travelled to the Western Isles, Orkneys and Shetlands passed through Inverness. It was virtually impossible for Harold, already in his fifties, to find work so he took on the task of running the home while his wife, Betty, worked full time as a teacher. Thus began twenty-two years of continuous, active service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

When Harold was serving on the Scottish Teaching Committee a project was developed under which Bahá'ís of independent means spent three-month periods in Orkney. Harold purchased 'Little Gorse Cottage' to further that project and that house, too, became a home for many pioneers and travelling teachers.

The fruit of their pioneering was the establishment of a strong Local Spiritual Assembly in Inverness. This accomplished, Betty and Harold, in September 1972, pioneered to Uganda where Betty could bring her professional knowledge and experience to the running of Claire Gung's kindergarten. Harold had already suffered a heart attack before leaving for Africa but this did not prevent him from fulfilling his pledge. He was soon appointed to the committee charged with the care of Bahá'í properties which included two Bahá'í schools and three teaching institutes in different districts, as well as the House of Worship and Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds on Kikaaya Hill in Kampala. He became the vital force, together with Stuart Rhodes from the United States, in renovating the House of Worship. On an occasion when thieves broke into Claire Gung's kindergarten[1] Harold was wounded in his efforts to protect Miss Gung. Only a providential fall over a roll of carpet protected him from fatal injury, as the knife, or panga, had been aimed at his head.

In February 1976 Harold's health deteriorated and he returned to Inverness alone, as Betty could not at that time leave 'Auntie' Claire to cope unaided at the kindergarten. They had intended to meet again at the Nairobi Conference in October. This separation was possibly Harold's greatest sacrifice for he had always been part of a family team. He did not return to Africa. In May of that year he had another heart attack which brought Betty back to Scotland. Later in 1976, when he recovered, they pioneered to the Orkney Islands, a post they had offered to fill in 1972 as a possible alternative to Uganda. Harold became the chairman of the Orkney Local Spiritual Assembly, an institution for whose establishment he had worked so hard in earlier years. Even as his health deteriorated Harold offered unwavering support to Betty in her service as a member of the Auxiliary Board for Propagation in Scotland.

Harold Shepherd's life was dedicated entirely to serving Bahá'u'lláh. Though not young when he embraced the Cause, he learned by heart numerous Tablets and prayers; they were his spiritual food. He was the embodiment of worship and of service. The harvest of his labours is evident in the development of the Faith throughout the north of Scotland and the Scottish Islands, and he had his own special part to play in service to the Faith in Uganda. On 17 November 1980 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH HAROLD SHEPHERD DEPRIVES BRITISH COMMUNITY OUTSTANDING VETERAN BELIEVER WHOSE DEDICATED SERVICES ASSOCIATED HISTORIC EPISODES AFRICA PROJECT TEN YEAR CRUSADE FIRM ESTABLISHMENT FAITH SCOTLAND ORKNEYS. COMMUNITY COMPENSATED HIS UNFLAGGING DEDICATION BRILLIANT EXAMPLE RISING GENERATION. EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY MEMBERS FAMILY ASSURE PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

(Adapted from a memoir in *Bahá'í Monthly News Service*, United Kingdom, February 1981)

SOLOMON KAHALOA
1932–1980

It is impossible to speak of Solomon Kahaloa—known as 'Sol' to his many friends—without speaking of his family, for it was as a family that they served the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. One of Sol's sons was the first to accept the Faith through the teaching of various friends, including David Schreiber, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Leeward Islands, but in a very short time the entire family had embraced it and begun to serve actively on their home island of Hawaii in the State of Hawaii.

The Kahaloa family, drawing strength from Sol, was instrumental in forming the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Puna, Hawaii. An old-fashioned house raising, in which Bahá'ís from all over the Island took part, provided the first Bahá'í Center for the Puna community. It was situated, as is the present Center, on land donated by Sol. He was well-known in Hawaii, and later on Guam, for his Hawaiian *luaus*, complete with *kalua* (or pit-roasted) pig and Hawaiian music. One of these events was the scene of the declaration of twenty-six souls including some tourists

[1] See p. 209.



Solomon Kahaloa

from passing buses. Sol had arranged a *hukilau* (an outdoor feast at which a large fishing net attached to a long rope is placed in and then pulled from the sea). As these visitors to Hawaii assisted in hauling in the rope they were themselves drawn into the ocean of the Most Great Remembrance.

In the early 1970s the Kahaloa family moved to South Hilo on the Big Island where they rented a large house for the purpose of attracting and teaching youth about Hawaiian arts and crafts as well as introducing them to the Bahá'í Faith. They worked tirelessly before, during and after the 1974 Bahá'í International Youth Conference, an event still warmly remembered there and around the world by Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike.

Guam, a goal of the Hawaii Bahá'í community, has a sizable population of Hawaiians, and the Kahaloas have relatives there. Those facts, and the desire to serve as pioneers, brought Sol, his wife, Emily, and their two youngest children, Bonnie and Sam, to the tiny southern village of Inarajan in 1975. The family immediately plunged into Bahá'í activities. Sol continued the tradition of preparing one of his famous *luaus* with its blend of physical and 'spiritual' food. The family lived at first in an old wooden house near Inarajan Bay. A few months after settling into their home it and all their possessions were swept away by typhoon *Pamela*. With the assistance of their son, Greg, helpful friends and the Red Cross, the Kahaloas were moved into a small apartment a few miles further south. That apartment and two vacant ones became the site of a Bahá'í winter school later that year, and a nearby private beach owned by Sol's employer was made available for a Bahá'í youth camp-out, activities for which, as always, Sol and his family provided the food. Later they moved to Mangilao in the central part of Guam where their home again became a center for Bahá'í activity and the sharing of Hawaiian-style hospitality.

In 1980, at the request of the National Teaching Committee of the Mariana Islands, Sol made a trip to the small neighboring island of Rota. Emily met him at the airport upon his return. On the way to their home their vehicle was struck by another car, injuring both Emily and Sol. A few days later, on 1 December 1980, Sol succumbed to his injuries and pneumonia. During his last days he talked animatedly of the Rota teaching trip, the great potential for teaching the Faith there, and his plans to move his family to that island to spread the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Throughout his years as a Bahá'í he gave open-handedly of his possessions, his kindliness, patience and love, and finally his life itself for the love of his Lord. He lived and died with the promise of Bahá'u'lláh, . . . *We behold you from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whomsoever will arise for the triumph of Our Cause with the host of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favored angels.*[1] We, his co-workers who are left behind, joyfully trust that Sol has joined that favored company. The Universal House of Justice, in its cable of 4 December, gave voice to the thoughts of the Bahá'ís of Hawaii and Guam:

> GRIEVED LEARN PASSING SOLOMON KAHALOA DEVOTED PIONEER. ASSURE FAMILY FRIENDS ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

RICHARD GRAHAM

[1] *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 139.



'Iṣmat Vaḥdat

'IṢMAT (ESMAT) VAḤDAT
1900–1980

Mrs. 'Iṣmat Vaḥdat, who was born and raised in Írán, was an example of devotion in her Bahá'í life. Her faith radiated from her face. She was always cheerful, confident and a source of comfort to the friends.

When, in 1943–1944, the beloved Guardian called for Iranian pioneers, she volunteered to go to 'Iráq, although she was a single woman, having been widowed at an early age. When the government of 'Iráq required the pioneers to leave that country she went to Ṭihrán to serve in the Education Centre, an institution that catered for Bahá'í orphans and needy children. Under her management the children had a very happy home. However, the Guardian's call for pioneers during the Ten Year Crusade again stirred her heart. She left Ṭihrán in 1955 or 1956 and after a brief visit to India pioneered to Indonesia where she moved from place to place as the need arose in order to be of use to the Bahá'í community.

From 1970 until her life ended on 9 December 1980 she served in the hostel for Bahá'í children in Mentawai in Padang. This institute was created in 1970 by the Hand of the Cause of God Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who had advised Mr. Manúchihr Ṭahmásibiyán, a young Persian pioneer in Thailand, to re-establish himself in Padang to manage the hostel. Mrs. Vaḥdat, who at that time lived in Java, was requested to settle in Padang in order to assist in developing the project. Her passion for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, her deep love of children and her experience in the Education Centre in Ṭihrán made her service in the hostel a blessing. Scores of the children of Mentawai and of other parts of Indonesia consider 'Iṣmat Vaḥdat as their mother. When the news of her death reached the World Centre, the Universal House of Justice cabled on 22 December:

> SADDENED NEWS PASSING STAUNCH STEADFAST DEVOTED PIONEER ESMAT VAHDAT. HER SACRIFICES PATH PIONEERING SERVICE FAITH OVER THREE DECADES HER MOTHERLY LOVE CARE BAHAI CHILDREN HOSTEL PADANG UNFORGETTABLE. OFFER ARDENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL.

PEDRO VARGAS
1940–1980

Pedro Vargas, a Toba Indian, born on 7 August 1940 in Argentina, was among the first of his tribe to embrace the Bahá'í Faith and is to date the most distinguished of its followers among his people to have passed to the worlds beyond.

The first efforts to enrol the Tobas of the Chaco province of Argentina were undertaken immediately following the Continental Conference held in La Paz, Bolivia, in August 1970. In three successive projects more than one thousand people entered the Cause. The records of the first believers to accept the Faith in the locality of Makalle bear the name of Pedro's father, Vicente Vargas, who was well-known as a former tribal leader or *cacique* and as a pastor of a local evangelical church. Pedro was respected by his people as one of the 'learned'. Like his father, he had served as pastor of an Indian church and was well versed in Christian scriptures. He was also knowledge-



Pedro Vargas

able about the medicinal properties of the plants and herbs native to the Chaco and their application to various human ailments.

From the moment of his acceptance of the call of the New Day Pedro arose, first, to deepen his knowledge of the fundamental verities of the Bahá'í Faith, and then to travel and share it with his Toba brethren. Later, in response to the goals of the Nine Year Plan, he made the first translations of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings into the Toba language. Though the written form of Toba is still in its early stages of development and few members of the tribe are familiar with its use, Pedro could both read and write his native tongue. His translations include a selection of prayers, selections from *The Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Unity in Diversity', one of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's discourses from *Paris Talks*.

Among Pedro's accomplishments was his continual participation in teaching projects which were to raise the standard of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the Chaco area and bring His light to thousands of new souls. In 1972 he took part in the opening of the Miraflores reservation and continued until his death to nurture that community as a travelling teacher. In 1975 he joined the team that opened to the Faith the Bartholome de las Casas reservation in the province of Formosa. In 1977, at the invitation of the National Spiritual Assembly of Paraguay, he assisted in the enrolment of the first Toba believers in the locality of Cerrito near Asunción. The following year, accompanied by Francisco Gómez, he made an historic fifteen-day journey on foot into an area of the Chaco now known as 'the impenetrable' because of its thick thorn forests, wandering riverbeds, bothersome mosquitoes and poisonous snakes. Pedro and his companion left Bahá'í literature along the way with those in the Toba settlements and with the white *criollos* who offered them water and kindness during their tortuous and wearisome journey.

Pedro served for a number of years as chairman of the Regional Teaching Committee and attended many Bahá'í conferences including the International Music Festival held in Rosario del Tala, Entre Rios, Argentina, in 1973 where he presented his Toba rendition of the Spanish hymn *El es el Rey de los Reyes*. He is also the author of a rendering, in the musical style and language of his people, of a portion of the *Tablet of Aḥmad* as well as chants of the Greatest Name in Arabic, Spanish and Toba. He loved singing devotional music and possessed a rich musical voice, a recording of which is still in existence. He was a commanding speaker and often conducted study classes. I remember well an address that he gave in Makalle, his home town, on the subject 'The Kingdom of God on Earth' which he based on the eleven principles enunciated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Paris Talks*. I was deeply impressed by his grasp of the true significance of the Bahá'í Revelation in relation to the establishment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

Suffering was one of Pedro's constant companions throughout his years as a Bahá'í. Shortly after he accepted the Faith he lost his only infant daughter in an accident. Later on he suffered a paralysis of his lower extremities which he overcame after a long period of convalescence. At times, because of the harsh conditions encountered while travelling to deliver the message, he would experience great pain; nevertheless, he would only comment that whatever befell him was according to the wisdom of God. In the last year of his

life Pedro and his family moved to the capital of Resistencia province where he hoped to find work that would allow him to travel regularly to surrounding areas on weekends. A local Centre had recently been constructed there and Pedro consented to live in it and extend hospitality to the Bahá'í visitors who arrived from time to time. He also contributed to the completion of the building. He had just finished repairing the windows and was about to begin constructing a porch when he passed away on 15 December 1980. The municipal employees who attended to the legal formalities asked who was this man—apparently poor and bereft of worldly goods—that so many people should have come to attend his funeral, a Bahá'í service. His fellow believers and Toba brethren wept tears of great sadness at the news of his passing.

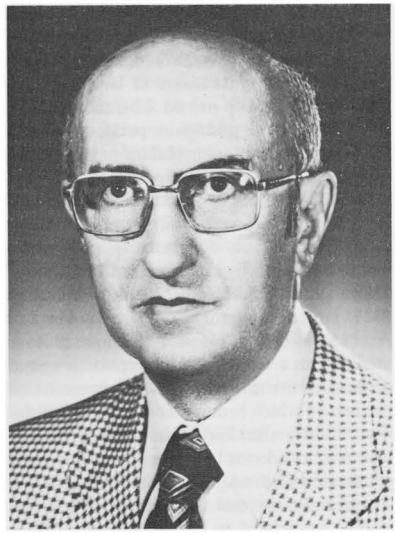
One day when Pedro and I were discussing the difficulties some pioneers were having in adapting to their new post, Pedro remarked: 'A pioneer is like a tree which has been transplanted to a new spot in the garden. Before the tree can take root again it must first shed all its old leaves. Only then will the new sprouts be forthcoming. You who are pioneers must pass through the same process. These friends are only shedding their old leaves.'

Now that Pedro himself has shed his earthly form, may God grant that the tree of his eternal being be adorned with fragrant leaves and blossoms in the Kingdom of Abhá. His Bahá'í life was one of truly fruitful service and exemplary steadfastness in the early years of the Cause among the Toba people.

EUGENE DORNBROOK

MANÚCHIHR ḤAKÍM
1910–1981

Manúchihr Ḥakím, son of Dr. Arastú Ḥakím, was born in Ṭihrán in 1910. After receiving elementary and secondary education at the Tarbíyat School, he studied medicine in France for the next nine years on a government grant. He completed a course in general medicine and specialized in teaching anatomy. He and his wife, Germaine, were married in 1938; they had two children, Paul and Christine.



Manúchihr Ḥakím

He returned to Írán, served his term of conscription, and for two years worked at the University of Ṭihrán where he established a Chair of Anatomy. He returned to Paris where he took his degree at the Medical College and then won the *agrégation* for professorial rank in the Universities of France. Returning to Írán, he taught in the University of Ṭihrán for the next thirty years. He was renowned for his researches in anatomy, his discoveries being twice cited in *Le Rouvière*, the standard work on the subject. His writings have become part of the textbooks used in many medical colleges. He was also well-known as a specialist in gastroenterology. In 1976 he was decorated by the French government with the *Légion d'honneur* for his humanitarian services. At the time of his death, Professor Ḥakím had retired from the University of Ṭihrán and had been associated for several years with the work of the medical school of the National University of Írán.

Professor Ḥakím was no less distinguished in his work for the Bahá'í Faith. Over a long period he was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán, and several times its chairman; he was a member of various

other Bahá'í bodies, as well. He laboured long to extend and organize the facilities of the Bahá'í hospital in Ṭihrán and was for many years chairman of its Board of Directors.

At about 5.30 p.m. on 12 January 1981 some assailants, posing as patients, gained admittance to Professor Ḥakím's surgery and shot him dead. The newspapers, aware for the most part that he was killed because he was a Bahá'í, feared to report it. One lone exception was the daily *Mízán* of Ṭihrán which mentioned it briefly in its issue of 17 January. The magazine *Tib va Dárú*, No. 62, 4 February 1981, carried an article by Dr. Shukru'lláh Asadí mentioning Professor Ḥakím's achievements. This assumes special import by virtue of the fact that the author was fully aware of the reason which brought about the assassination. Shortly after his tragic death, Professor Ḥakím's residence and its contents were confiscated under a government order issued, significantly, several months prior to this event.

A befitting funeral was given him on 15 January, and at memorial meetings held on 19 and 20 January, warm and endearing tributes were paid to the nobility of his life, a fruitful and honourable life that had been devoted to study and research for the welfare and well-being of all people. There were many in all parts of the country who had such faith in his skill and healing power that they used to speed to him when ailing and return home hale and hearty. More than four thousand Bahá'ís attended the funeral of Professor Ḥakím. An eyewitness described it as 'a truly great event . . . This remarkable gathering had a tremendous effect on the morale of the Bahá'ís as a demonstration of love, unity and the readiness for sacrifice by the beleaguered and oppressed Bahá'í community in the Cradle of the Faith.'

Moving tribute was paid Professor Ḥakím by his daughter, Christine Samandarí-Ḥakím, in her book *Les Baha'is ou victoire sur la violence* (Lausanne: Editions Pierre Marcel Favre), written shortly after his death. Upon its publication the Universal House of Justice, on 25 March 1982, cabled the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland requesting that it relay LOVING CONGRATULATIONS to the author on the publication of her VALUABLE BOOK WHICH ASSUREDLY WILL CAUSE SOULS HER DEAR FATHER AND OTHER MARTYRS REJOICE ABHA KINGDOM.

(Translated from the Persian by RUSTOM SABIT)

ṢUBḤÍ ELIÁS
1902–1981

The passing of Ṣubḥí Eliás on 26 January 1981 in Alexandria, Egypt, after a five-day illness, has ended a period of sixty years of devoted, loving and fruitful service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

Born to Coptic Christian parents on 17 May 1902 in an obscure village in the heart of the Nile delta, his childhood was marked by extreme hardship. With the premature death of his young father in 1906, the four-year-old Ṣubḥí was left to the care of an ageing, rich and kind yet helpless grandfather. His widowed young mother, who was then pregnant with her second son, Ṣabrí, was forced to leave her house and return to that of her parents in a nearby village, due to the machinations and unbearable treatment of one of her deceased husband's brothers. Ṣubḥí, who was not allowed to move with his mother, received his only tuition at the reading class conducted by the village priest. Bible reading was the only subject taught in these classes held in the village church, with the priest expounding the narrow and literal interpretations which he himself had accepted through a similar education. Ṣubḥí, however, had a flexible mentality and was able to investigate truth for himself independently of the traditional process. He recognized the limitation and prejudice of his tutor and observed the fanatical behaviour of high-ranking clergy on their visits to his village. At an early age he displayed courage in rebuking and criticizing them publicly.

In 1911 Ṣubḥí was surprised and overwhelmed with joy to discover that he had a brother, when Ṣabrí was mature enough to be claimed from his mother by the family of his father. The reunited brothers formed a deep attachment which led them ultimately to material success and which was heightened by the spiritual bond that the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh



Ṣubḥí Eliás

provided. Soon after being brought together the young men, again through the plotting of their cruel paternal uncle, were denied any share in the inheritance of their grandfather, were dismissed from their home and driven from their village. Homeless and wretched, the two boys made their own way unaided. They were then attracted to the Bahá'í Faith through the kindness and love of another uncle, the late Ibráhím 'Abdu'l-Masíḥ, whose sterling character and lofty idealism stood in marked contrast to all they had witnessed. Ṣubḥí embraced the Faith in March 1921 and proceeded to attract Ṣabrí's interest simply by requesting him to carry some Bahá'í books to friends with the purposed order that he was not to read them. It was not long until Ṣabrí asked his brother how to declare himself a Bahá'í, apologizing for disobeying the instruction that he was not to read the books he had delivered on Ṣubḥí's behalf. Ṣubḥí's zeal was such that he immediately made it known to his relatives that he was a member of the Bahá'í Faith, ably meeting the opposition they cast up. A few years later the brothers settled in Alexandria where Ṣubḥí remained virtually for the rest of his life. In 1934 Ṣabrí began his service as a pioneer, going first to Ethiopia, and later to a post further afield where he continues his work to this day.

In the early months of his life as a Bahá'í, Ṣubḥí yearned to make pilgrimage to the Holy Land and attain the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but alas his heart's desire was shattered by the passing of the beloved Master. A few years later he corresponded with Shoghi Effendi and received many inspiring replies. He had the privilege of making two pilgrimages and on each occasion had the bounty of meeting the Guardian. He lovingly cherished these experiences and in the eve of his life would speak tearfully of them to the young Bahá'ís.

Ṣubḥí was elected to the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Alexandria, formed in 1924, and served on that body until the disbandment of the Bahá'í administrative institutions in Egypt in 1961. He also served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of North East Africa. Characteristic of the early days of the Bahá'í administration in Egypt were the efforts of the believers to grasp the purpose of the New World Order and to witness its divine institutions come into existence. Under the unerring guidance of the beloved Guardian they longed to exercise their sacred responsibilities. They made devoted efforts to achieve recognition of the Faith as an independent religion and to secure the right for Bahá'ís to follow their teachings in matters of personal status. They were inspired and encouraged in taking this course by the historic verdict of the High Muslim Court in 1924 which ruled that the Bahá'í Faith is totally independent from Islám. Ṣubḥí's own contribution in those days was considerable. On the death of an infant son in September 1945 he refused to have the child buried in the Coptic or Muslim cemeteries and requested that the authorities allocate a burial ground to the Bahá'ís of Alexandria. Although his request was not granted, from that time onward Bahá'ís were permitted to inter their dead in 'civil' cemeteries which had previously been restricted to non-Egyptian *libre penseurs*. He raised his six surviving children as devoted and active Bahá'ís, three of whom followed the example of their uncle Ṣabrí in marrying

Bahá'ís of Muslim background despite the wrath of fanatical non-Bahá'í relatives. These marriages added lustre to the Bahá'í community as living examples of the capacity of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to unite people of different backgrounds.

In 1977, despite failing health, he taped a five-hour recording giving a comprehensive historical account of the development of the Bahá'í Faith in Egypt and, in particular, Alexandria. Quite often, when the Faith was attacked in Egyptian publications, the writers received a spirited reply from Ṣubḥí, either published in the same manner, or in the form of a personal letter. His greatest share of service to the Faith took place during the tumultuous, though blessed, decade that followed the proscription of Bahá'í activities in Egypt in 1961. The Bahá'ís were subjected to a series of arrests, trials and sentences of imprisonment, notably in 1965, 1967 and 1972, and Ṣubḥí played his full part in these events. In prison he conducted himself in a manner that inspired his Bahá'í fellow captives and filled his awe-stricken captors with perplexity. On two occasions he simply presented himself at police headquarters before the authorities had an opportunity to arrest him at home. Released from prison on bail pending his trial, he would painstakingly compile materials for the use of the non-Bahá'í lawyers who were to defend the Bahá'ís.

He passed on to the Abhá Kingdom without having lived to witness the fulfilment of his heart's desire, the restoration of freedom and recognition to the Bahá'í community of Egypt, which even today is still withheld. His friends there find solace only in remembrance of his great service which was worthy of emulation. 'His passing', his brother wrote to other members of his family, 'has scalded my heart . . . He was made homeless in early boyhood, yet he spread a shelter of loving protection over me. To me he was a father and a mother . . . Embracing the Faith in his early youth, he remained faithful and stalwart . . . Over a period of sixty years the torch of his faith kept burning . . . My only refuge is to turn my face towards the Supreme Ruler, that He may bestow on him the best of rewards.'

On 11 February 1981 the following cable was received from the Universal House of Justice:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING VALIANT PROMOTER DEFENDER CAUSE SUBHI ELIAS. HIS DEDICATED SERVICES OVER SEVERAL DECADES LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

(Compiled from tape-recorded accounts of Ṣubḥí and Ṣabrí Eliás)

HONOR KEMPTON
1892–1981

'How proud I feel of the spirit that so powerfully animates you. My prayers will, I assure you, accompany you on your great and historic adventure. Persevere no matter how great the obstacles in your way. Future generations will glorify your deed and emulate your example.'

No words other than these, written to Honor Kempton on 12 March 1939 by the beloved Guardian, could more adequately pay tribute to the life of this indefatigable servant of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, the spiritual mother of both Alaska and of Luxembourg.

Born on 30 September 1892 in Maidenhead, England (four months after the passing of Bahá'u'lláh), she was raised by her mother in the spirit of the Anglican Church. During World War I Honor served as a Red Cross volunteer, and became engaged to an American surgeon whom she followed to the United States after the war. She stayed in the Chicago area and, after the death of her fiancé in a car accident, moved to Wilmette to live with an English family. Here she first heard of the Bahá'í Faith and became attracted to its teachings. In 1935 she moved to San Francisco, attended firesides in the home of Leroy and Sylvia Ioas and soon after declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh. She was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly and immediately engaged in teaching.

When the Guardian cabled the American Bahá'í community on 26 January 1939 calling for NINE HOLY SOULS to open the remaining virgin territories of North America,[1] Honor

[1] See Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to America*, p. 16. The unsettled territories were Alaska, Delaware, Nevada, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Manitoba and Nova Scotia.



Honor Kempton

immediately responded by volunteering to go to Alaska, a place which at that time some might have deemed not a suitable locality for an unattached woman in her late forties to make her home. In her biographical notes Honor writes, 'I was, however, quite sure that Alaska was the place for me. I felt that the Guardian was speaking to me when he sent that message.' And so Honor set out upon her spiritual odyssey which was to extend throughout six successive international teaching plans given to the Bahá'í world by Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice, and which was to encompass Alaska and the European continent. Her decision to go to Alaska had come as the result of a mystical experience of great intensity. Anchorage was her chosen goal. Although well-meaning friends diverted her attention to Juneau she was led, again by what she felt to be divine promptings, to settle in Anchorage.

On 18 April 1939 she disembarked at Juneau. She did not find employment there but assisted a new-found friend who operated a bookshop. Two months later she moved to Anchorage and established the town's first bookstore. 'The Book Cache', as she called her shop, was later described by a former Governor of the State as 'the cultural center of Alaska'. After four discouraging months, during which those she contacted appeared to show no real interest in the Bahá'í Faith, Janet Whiteneck (later Stout), a seeker, enrolled—the first person in Alaska to do so during the first Seven Year Plan. Soon other pioneers arrived, new believers were accepted into the community, and in September 1943 the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed. During World War II Honor became an American citizen and continued to find new ways to spread the news of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. In exchange for book reviews that she prepared for a radio station she was given an opportunity to present weekly radio broadcasts on the Faith. In 1944 she attended the National Convention in Wilmette as Alaska's first delegate.

In 1946 Honor, who was then in her mid-fifties, proposed settling in Europe. Shoghi Effendi approved the suggestion provided her departure from Alaska would not in any way affect the stability of the Cause there. After an extensive teaching trip in England, undertaken with the encouragement of the Guardian, and a visit to her family, she arrived in February 1947 in Luxembourg, the smallest of the ten goal countries still unopened to the Faith in the second Seven Year Plan. Soon joined by other pioneers, she witnessed the declaration of faith of the first Luxembourg believer in December 1947. Until her departure, shortly before the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Luxembourg, Honor remained the focal centre of the many teaching and deepening activities initiated by the small group of believers there.

In January 1949 she moved to Geneva, Switzerland, to serve as the representative of the European Teaching Committee at the International Bahá'í Bureau. In her new function she helped to organize the annual European Teaching Conferences, including the International Teaching Conference held in Stockholm in 1953 which launched the Ten Year Crusade in that continent. She maintained a constant correspondence with the World Centre, and with pioneers, new believers and young Local Spiritual Assemblies through-

out Europe, and received many travelling teachers and other visitors, amongst whom were almost all the Hands of the Cause. She also served as a member of the Italo-Swiss Regional National Spiritual Assembly.

When the International Bureau was closed in 1957, Honor opened to the Faith several goal cities in France, including Lille and Nancy. After a visit to England, where her mother declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh at age ninety-nine, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States asked Honor if she would be willing to devote the remainder of her life to pioneering, no matter where. Readily consenting, she was asked to return to Luxembourg. Thus, in 1959, in her sixty-sixth year, she began to add the final laurels to a life already crowned by achievements. She opened to the Faith the industrial south and the agricultural north of Luxembourg, leaving behind her flourishing communities in Esch-sur-Alzette and Ettelbrueck. During this time she served on the Regional Spiritual Assembly of the Benelux countries. In 1963, as a delegate from Luxembourg, she attended the International Bahá'í Convention in Haifa for the election of the first Universal House of Justice.

She moved to Kopstal-Bridel in 1973 and lived with Miss Suzette Hipp, the first Luxembourg believer, a move which enabled the last Local Spiritual Assembly of the Nine Year Plan in that country to be formed. In addition to serving on the Local Spiritual Assembly she continued to teach, to pray for new souls to discover the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, to deepen and encourage her fellow believers, to correspond with old and new friends in Alaska and Europe, to make plans to open yet other localities in Luxembourg, and to serve on national committees. In 1976 she made a short visit to Alaska where she attended the International Conference in Anchorage and made a trip to Barrow, the Eskimo community dear to her heart.

Although physically weakened through advanced age and failing health she remained spiritually active until her last breath, thus dying in 'battle dress' as she had always wished to do. At her passing on 24 February 1981 the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg, deploring the loss of this 'dearly beloved, much admired' believer, reported that 'until her last moment she was eager to hear of the progress of her beloved Faith and to give her part to its development . . . Her unfailing fervour, her complete dedication and steadfast service', the National Assembly averred, 'will remain a shining example to all believers.'

On 27 February the Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States:

> ASCENSION ABHA KINGDOM OUTSTANDING DEARLY LOVED MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH HONOR KEMPTON IN HER NINETIETH YEAR AND AT FINAL PIONEER POST KOPSTAL LUXEMBOURG TERMINATES FORTY FIVE YEARS DEDICATED SERVICE CAUSE GOD. RESPONDING IMMEDIATELY BELOVED GUARDIANS CALL IN 1939 FOR NINE HOLY SOULS TO OPEN REMAINING VIRGIN AREAS NORTH AMERICA SHE PIONEERED TO ALASKA BECAME MOTHER THAT FLOURISHING COMMUNITY. IN 1947 SHE BECAME FIRST PIONEER TO GRAND DUCHY LUXEMBOURG AND FOR REST OF HER LIFE SERVED WITH GREAT DISTINCTION IN EUROPEAN CONTINENT ULTIMATELY SETTLING LUXEMBOURG AND RECOGNIZED MOTHER THAT COMMUNITY. HER LIFE STEADFAST DEDICATION CONSTITUTES BRILLIANT EPISODE EARLY YEARS FORMATIVE AGE FAITH. ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICE MOTHER TEMPLE WEST BEFITTING TRIBUTE SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY WHOSE SHINING RECORD EMBLAZONED ANNALS AMERICAN BAHAI COMMUNITY. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD BOUNTIFUL REWARD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

To the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg on 26 February the Universal House of Justice cabled:

> PASSING OUTSTANDING MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH HONOR KEMPTON SEVERS ONE MORE LINK HISTORIC PERIOD IMPLEMENTATION BELOVED MASTERS DIVINE PLAN CONTINENTAL EUROPE. HER OUTSTANDING SERVICES THAT CONTINENT AND ALASKA CONSTITUTE BRILLIANT EPISODE SHED LUSTRE ANNALS FORMATIVE AGE FAITH. REQUESTING NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY UNITED STATES HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERING MOTHER TEMPLE WEST. ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL MEETINGS ALL BAHAI COMMUNITIES GRAND DUCHY. ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS BOUNTIFUL REWARD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

(Based on tributes received from the National Spiritual Assemblies of Alaska and Luxembourg)

MUḤAMMAD LABÍB
1893–1981

Muḥammad Labíb was born in about 1893 in Yazd. His father, Muḥammad-Ḥusayn Ulfat (known as 'Aṭṭár), had been a prominent Shaykhí of Yazd prior to his conversion to the Bahá'í Faith, and when the populace of that town rose up against the Bahá'ís in 1903, in one of the most savage attacks that the Bahá'ís of Írán have experienced, he was among the prime targets of the mob. Mr. Labíb's father was expelled from Yazd and his shop and home were ransacked and demolished in the early days of the upheaval, while his mother was set upon by a throng, beaten to the point of death, and then thrown into a dark, damp dungeon for three days. Mr. Labíb himself, then aged nine, spent several days in the underground canals that bring water to Yazd, seated on the shoulders of his elder brother, until they found refuge in the cellar of the house of one of the Bahá'ís. Unable to remain in Yazd, the family moved in 1905 to Ṭihrán where Mr. Labíb attended the Bahá'í Tarbíyat School.



Muḥammad Labíb

From 1914 Mr. Labíb took a strong interest in Esperanto, and the following year when he moved to Qazvín to teach at the Bahá'í Tavakkul School he initiated Esperanto lessons and became the official representative of the World Esperanto movement. In 1916, while he was in Qazvín, he had the idea of establishing a trust fund called the Nawnahálán Company in which the Bahá'í children who attended his school could save their money. In 1919 Mr. Labíb and his father were on pilgrimage in Haifa for sixty days. During this time Mr. Labíb presented his idea of the Nawnahálán to 'Abdu'l-Bahá Who gave His blessing and endorsement to these plans and even contributed two gold coins as His 'share' in the company.

Mr. Labíb was a keen photographer and often in the course of teaching trips and on other occasions he took many photographs of great historical importance for the Bahá'í Faith. He accompanied Effie Baker[1] in 1930–1931 when, at the request of Shoghi Effendi, she toured Írán taking photographs for his translation of *The Dawn-Breakers*. Mr. Labíb crowned a life of service to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh by pioneering in 1955 to Hiroshima, Japan, and to other parts of the Far East where he remained for nine years, and in 1963 to Rhodes in the Mediterranean.

Towards the end of his life he wrote his memoirs as well as a large number of works dealing with episodes in Bahá'í history. These are rendered all the more valuable because they are profusely illustrated with his photographs. One of his books, *The Seven Martyrs of Hurmazak*, has been translated into English and published;[2] the rest remain for the future. Although blind and physically infirm in the last years of his life, he retained an active mind until his passing on 14 March 1981.

The announcement of his death elicited the following cable from the Universal House of Justice, dated 23 March:

SADDENED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 320.
[2] *The Seven Martyrs of Hurmazak*, trans. M. Momen, George Ronald, Oxford, 1981.

SACRED THRESHOLD MUHAMMAD LABIB. HIS DEDICATED LONGSTANDING RECORD SERVICES IRAN REMEMBERED WITH DEEP LOVE APPRECIATION. ASSURE RELATIVES FERVENTLY PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

MOOJAN MOMEN

RIDVANIYYIH SULEIMANI (RIḌVÁNIYYIH SULAMÁNÍ) 1904–1981

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING HANDMAID BAHAULLAH VALIANT PROMOTER FAITH RIDVANIYYIH SULEIMANI. STEADFASTNESS DEDICATION WITH WHICH SHE OFFERED SERVICES PIONEERING FIELD LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. ASSURE DEAR HUSBAND FRIENDS FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

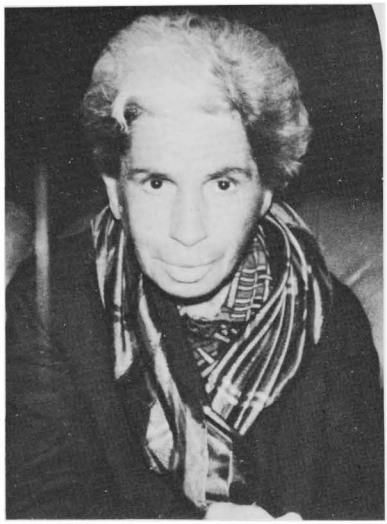
Universal House of Justice
19 March 1981

Ridvaniyyih (Ouskouli) Suleimani was born to Bahá'í parents on 25 April 1904 in 'Ishqábád, Russia, the first of four daughters and a son born to Zahra and Husayn Ouskouli. Both her parents were from Írán, and the devotion and enthusiasm with which they served the Bahá'í Faith was to ignite in Ridvaniyyih's heart a flame that never lessened and that was to warm all with whom she came in contact. When Ridvaniyyih was fifteen her mother passed away leaving her to help care for her siblings with a joy and generous giving of self that was for six decades to characterize the hospitality she lavished upon all who entered her home. At eighteen she married Suleiman 'Alí Muḥammad Suleimani Milani in 'Ishqábád where they remained for a year.

In 1923 Mr. Ouskouli and Mr. and Mrs. Suleimani made their great journey to the East to pioneer in China, a land which 'Abdu'l-Bahá longed to visit. They settled in Shanghai and were soon blessed with a visit from Martha Root who was making the first of her four trips to China. During their many years in mainland China Mr. Ouskouli and Mr. and Mrs. Suleimani made every effort to teach the Faith to the Chinese people, a race whom the Master described as 'most simple-hearted and truth-seeking'. Through all the wars and conflicts that raged about them, these lovers of the Blessed Perfection shared His healing, peace-bringing Message with everyone they met. In August 1950 Mr. and Mrs. Suleimani reluctantly left Shanghai because of disturbed conditions. Her father, although isolated and in his late seventies, decided to remain behind, to continue holding aloft the Light in the darkness around him. In various letters written on behalf of the Guardian, or in postscripts in his own hand, Shoghi Effendi made it clear how deeply he appreciated Mr. Ouskouli's remaining in Shanghai, an act to which he attached 'the greatest importance'.

In 1952 the Suleimanis made their pilgrimage and had the inestimable privilege of being in the Guardian's presence. Shoghi Effendi showered them with loving kindness, mentioned their services in China and expressed his hope that, if possible, they would be able to return there. He assured them that that vast land would witness the raising of the Banner of Bahá'u'lláh. After that never-to-be-forgotten sojourn, they returned to Írán and on 30 August 1954 they set sail from Írán for Taiwan, where they disembarked at the port of Keelung on 22 October and joyously cabled Shoghi Effendi news of their arrival. The beloved Guardian cabled back, assuring them of his loving prayers. They were the first pioneers to settle in Taiwan. They made their home in Tainan, on the western coast of the island, facing mainland China. When they first arrived there were only ten Chinese believers. On the eve of their first Naw-Rúz in Taiwan four friends became Bahá'ís, the first of many who were led to the Faith through the humble and persistent efforts of Ridvaniyyih and her husband. At Riḍván 1955 the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land wrote that 'The wonderful news of the progress of the Cause in Formosa brought great joy to his [the Guardian's] heart'.

By Riḍván 1956, through their untiring efforts, the Suleimanis were able to witness the formation, in Tainan, of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Taiwan. Through his secretary the Guardian expressed his pleasure at this victory, remarking on its historic importance, and stating that 'it is the first of the universal institutions of the Faith to be established in that unique and promising



Ridvaniyyih Suleimani

country. It is the center of the spiritual gifts which must now come to the people of the area.' In November 1956 the Suleimanis hosted the first All-Taiwan Teaching Conference in their home which was attended by the Hand of the Cause of God Agnes Alexander and forty other Bahá'ís. This had been preceded just a couple of months before by Taiwan's first summer school, also held in Tainan.

In 1958 the Suleimanis purchased land and constructed a beautiful Bahá'í Center in Tainan—Taiwan's first—located in an attractive area near an important national university. In October the following year, during the third Taiwan summer school, the Center was dedicated. Later, through their loving efforts, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tainan was incorporated, and Ridvaniyyih and her husband then legally transferred the ownership to the Local Assembly as a donation. It was the first property belonging to the Faith in Taiwan, and the Suleimanis humbly offered to be its caretakers. In the years that followed, the Center, with the Suleimanis as gracious hosts, was blessed with the visits of many of the Hands of the Cause, Bahá'í traveling teachers and other friends from around the world. No guest of Mrs. Suleimani's can ever forget her warm embrace, her enthusiastic greeting, her hurried footsteps as she brought a continuous flow of delicious homemade refreshments, the sumptuous meals that she seemed to create in no time at all. She would always inquire, with what one knew to be genuine concern, about one's health, about one's family and about the progress of the Faith in one's home area, the good news of which always brought her much joy. It was always a pleasure to talk with her, for she was quick-witted, full of humor and forbearing. Even into her seventies she would always try to journey to meet newly-arrived pioneers, bringing for them a homemade cake and plants from her garden. It was only in the last couple of years of her life that a debilitating skin disorder which doctors could neither diagnose nor cure forced Mrs. Suleimani to stop her constant travels around Taiwan, journeys she made as a member of the Auxiliary Board or as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly. In addition to serving on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tainan from the time of its formation in 1956 until her passing nearly a quarter of a century later, Mrs. Suleimani also served as a member of Taiwan's National Spiritual Assembly from its formation in 1967 through 1970, and again from 1973 through 1977. In 1978 she attended the International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice and had the bounty of being selected as one of the tellers; in her diary she commented that the wonderful task took all night.

As her illness grew worse Mrs. Suleimani suffered great pain, but would never let one know of it. After serving others for so many years it was a true sacrifice for her to allow others to try to serve her. At last, in the early morning hours of 18 March 1981, she left behind her small, bent, frail body. She was buried on the eve of Naw-Rúz on the crest of a hill overlooking a lake in Tainan county. Her resting-place is the first Bahá'í cemetery of Taiwan. She faces West towards the Qiblih. Between her grave and the Holy Land stretches the vast expanse of China, her adopted home, the pioneering post where two generations of her family have achieved their desire of burying their bones. We know that for generations to come the memory of Husayn Ouskouli and

of his daughter, Ridvaniyyih Suleimani, will be honored, as the Chinese people reflect on the lives of these valiant souls who brought to their land the Light of Bahá'u'lláh, in obedient response to the Master's call: *China, China, China-ward the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must march. Where is that holy, sanctified Bahá'í to become the teacher of China! . . . He must entertain no thought of his own but ever think of their spiritual welfare. In China one can teach many souls and train and educate such divine personages that each one of them may become the bright candle of the world of humanity . . . Had I been feeling well I would have taken a journey to China myself . . . China is the country of the future. I hope the right kind of teacher will be inspired to go to that vast empire to lay the foundation of the Kingdom of God, to promote the principles of divine civilization, to unfurl the banner of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and to invite the people to the banquet of the Lord!*[1]

DALE ENG



Seewoosumbur Jeehoba Appa

SEEWOOSUMBUR JEEHOBA APPA
1912–1981

DEEPLY GRIEVED NEWS PASSING SEEWOOSUMBUR JEEHOBA APPA. HIS UNSTINTING OUTPOURING OF SELFLESS SERVICE TO GODS CAUSE EVER SINCE HE EMBRACED ITS LIGHT HIS DEDICATED PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES INSTITUTIONS FAITH CULMINATING IN HIS MEMBERSHIP BOARD COUNSELLORS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED BY HIS COWORKERS SOUTHERN AFRICA PARTICULARLY ISLANDS INDIAN OCEAN. ADVISE COMMUNITIES INDIAN OCEAN HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS IN HONOUR HIS DEVOTED LABOURS PROMOTION CAUSE. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. CONVEY LOVING SYMPATHY MEMBERS BEREAVED FAMILY.

Universal House of Justice

'Papa Appa', as he was affectionately called by Bahá'í friends, young and old, both in his native Mauritius and in some African countries, was the fifth child in a family of six children. The family was of modest means and his education did not extend beyond the primary classes. His father died at an early age, so part of the responsibility for the household soon fell upon his youthful shoulders. He started a teaching career as a fourth class teacher in the same school he had attended as a child, not suspecting that later in life he would be called by Bahá'u'lláh to be a teacher of His Message. Many of his former students who attended his funeral still remembered their former teacher, Mr. Appa, describing him as the man with the smiling face whom everybody loved. He was really a very kind and lovable teacher and a good man; I was myself a pupil in the school in which he taught and, though not in his class, I remember how my classmates and I wished to have him as our teacher.

Mr. Appa's first contact with the Bahá'í Faith was in 1956. He was a pure-hearted man and it was not difficult for the light of the Revelation of God to reflect in his heart once it reached there. He immediately began a life of service. His home soon became the centre of many activities and he was happy only

[1] *Star of the West*, vol. 13, no. 7, October 1922, pp. 184–186.

when he was able to make teaching trips almost every day. He came from an orthodox Hindu background and his family and friends did not approve of his accepting the Bahá'í Faith and engaging in service to it. Despite the racial and religious prejudices he encountered, his faith was strong enough to withstand the opposition and pressures exerted by his relatives and friends. Eventually they grew to respect him and the Faith he had espoused. He served unwaveringly and faithfully until his last breath, dying as he would have wished 'with his boots on'. The day on which Mr. Appa winged his flight to the Abhá Kingdom was the day he had chosen to host a dinner and devotional gathering in his home. Although he had not felt well in the morning he would not cancel the meeting. During the prayers he suffered an acute pain in his chest and was immediately taken to a nearby hospital where he quietly passed away within a few hours.

The news of his death on 28 March 1981 was a great shock to his many friends who had never once heard him complain. The Bahá'ís throughout the islands of the Indian Ocean, in Africa and beyond lost a kind, gentle and loving father, for the love that flowed from his heart for everybody was that of a caring parent. His life was an example of real Bahá'í life. He was hardworking, conscientious and orderly, and always ready to accompany a Bahá'í friend anywhere for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. He not only read a great deal but frequently jotted down important extracts for others to profit by. His home was a true centre of attraction: his obvious joy in greeting friends at his door and his 'Oh!' of welcome would go straight to the heart. He was a child with the children, a young man with the youth, and an adult with his peers; but all who came in contact with him felt a warm, genuine fatherly affection. His name 'Appa' had the same sweetness as 'Papa' to me, and surely to many others who knew him closely. It was the Hand of the Cause John Robarts who first called him 'Papa Appa' years ago at a meeting in Vacoas, and use of the appellation was adopted by many of the friends. DEEPEST SYMPATHY FAMILY YOUR GREAT LOSS, Mr. Robarts and his wife, Audrey, cabled, UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES DEAR PAPA APPA HIS LONG SERVICE . . .

Papa Appa's service in the Faith of God was long indeed. He served on the first Local Spiritual Assembly of his home community of Vacoas. When the National Spiritual Assembly of the Indian Ocean came into being in 1964 he served as its treasurer. Later that year he was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board for the Indian Ocean region and in 1968 was appointed a member of the first Continental Board of Counsellors for the zone of Southern Africa. Over the years, even when his health was failing, he travelled for the Faith to many African countries and islands of the Indian Ocean and traversed on foot rough, hilly roads and paths. His last journey outside Mauritius was in 1981 when he accompanied Counsellor Shídán Fath-i-A'zam to Madagascar. Mr. Appa rejoiced when he found that the Bahá'í friends grasped the importance of love and unity as essential prerequisites for true and productive service to the Faith, and he constantly strove to help the friends achieve this understanding. In whatever function he was called to serve he did so with modesty, zeal, enthusiasm and thoroughness. His sole concern to the very last was to see the Faith progressing and the friends living in accordance with its laws and teachings. Unquestioning obedience—to the Revealed Word and to the instructions of the beloved Guardian and the Universal House of Justice—was the hallmark of his life and the message he always tried to convey in the important functions he was called to perform. His firmness in the Covenant, as exemplified by his ceaseless service to the Cause and his strong love for his fellow believers, is a source of inspiration to all.

The Counsellors who had known and worked with him cabled on 31 March 1981: OUR HEARTS BROKEN SAD NEWS PAPA APPA. WE LOST LOVING FATHER OUTSTANDING PROMOTER FAITH IRREPLACEABLE FRIEND . . .

Beautiful tributes were received from many administrative institutions and individuals. From South Africa the Hand of the Cause William Sears and his wife, Marguerite, deplored the passing of a DEARLY-LOVED FRIEND, OUTSTANDING TEACHER, STEADFAST HERO. REJOICE MANY HAPPY YEARS WE SERVED TOGETHER. EVERYONE REMEMBERING HIS FRUITFUL LIFE WITH LOVING PRAYERS . . . Co-signers of the cable were Michael Sears, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of South Africa and his wife, Ruth, a member of the

Auxiliary Board. The Bahá'ís of Swaziland, through their National Spiritual Assembly, sent a letter of condolence to the family of Mr. Appa and to the believers of Mauritius. The concluding sentence of that letter expresses beautifully the conviction shared by all who knew 'Papa Appa': 'As we pray for the progress of his soul, we in turn are confident of his assistance in our efforts to spread the Teachings of the Faith he so dearly loved.'

S. MOOTEN

FRANCES BEARD
1921–1981

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BAHAULLAH FRANCES BEARD. HER OUTSTANDING SERVICES UGANDA MALAWI ENRICH ANNALS IRISH BAHAI HISTORY. ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL MEETING HAZIRATULQUDS. ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. CONVEY LOVING SYMPATHY RELATIVES FRIENDS.

Universal House of Justice



Frances Beard

Many members of the Irish Bahá'í community knew Frances as that 'phenomenal worker' who used to burn the midnight oil for the Faith in the struggling community of Dublin. She became a Bahá'í in 1960, entering a diminutive community in Dublin; there were only one or two believers in the whole of the rest of the Republic in those days. The obstacles to Frances's entry into the Faith were tremendous. She was at that time separated from her husband, from whom she was later divorced, and was endeavouring to raise two young daughters alone; and her family background, like that of the Hand of the Cause George Townshend, was deeply rooted in the Church of Ireland. Any departure from her traditional religious and social background was bound to weaken support for her from these established, valuable sources during a most difficult period. Yet she braved this, and more, for when the call was raised for overseas pioneers in 1964 she responded and set off with her young family to assist with the teaching work in Africa.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda was formed in the very year she arrived in the country. The importance of her contribution to the teaching and administrative work there can never be overestimated and the radiant cheerfulness with which she performed her service will stand as an inspiration to all aspiring overseas pioneers. The time Frances spent in Uganda made a deep impression upon her as became obvious when she returned to Ireland in 1972. Clearly her experience with the African friends had deepened her own intrinsic qualities of patience, humility, love for every individual in the community and respect for the opinion of each member. She felt that we in Ireland had much to learn from the example of the young community of Uganda and never tired of presenting appropriate examples always, prefaced with the remark which we came to anticipate with delight, 'Well, in Uganda we always used to . . .'

With the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of Ireland in 1972, once again Frances's excellent secretarial and executive skills were brought into play. She was a

founding member of the National Book and Sales Committee and was subsequently appointed to the National Teaching Committee. She took her responsibilities most seriously and rendered extremely valuable work to the community, particularly through the latter committee. She also played a major role in the production of the news organ which came in time to be named *New Day*. Such service, however, lacked the challenge that Frances's spirit sought; increasingly she longed to return to Africa, the continent to which she had developed a considerable attachment. In 1974 she settled in Malawi. Her friends in Ireland looked forward to her cheerful, newsladen letters describing the progress of the Cause there. Invariably her letters contained anecdotes relating to her life in her new home, and the lives of others of the pioneers. Her service in Malawi was suddenly cut short. She was overtaken by a serious illness which necessitated her return to London and eventually, in 1977, to her home in Ireland. The year after her return she was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland. In addition to the normal work of the National Assembly she provided invaluable assistance in the secretariat and in relation to the administration of property. To the local community of Dublin she was a valuable and dedicated worker, serving during the last years of her life as an eager and efficient Local Spiritual Assembly secretary. Frances Beard died 'in harness' as a member of the National Assembly. One of my clearest memories of her at this time is of her presence at a meeting of the Assembly some months before her death, smiling, sharing jokes, enquiring about the teaching work and our own personal circumstances—always positive, always keen, mortally ill though she certainly was.

Frances was a warm and sympathetic friend and we are the poorer for her passing. She always asked with genuine interest after one's health, family, and activities, and was always sincere. She was a true friend and true servant. She came into the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh as a mature adult and gave the remaining half of her adult life to its service. Her unique life, embracing as it does service in two African countries and membership on the infant Irish National Assembly, is an indelible example for those who seek to play a part in the fulfilment of the high destiny won by our forebears in the Bahá'í community of the British Isles during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi.

JOE WATSON

MARGARET ROWLING
1897–1981

Margaret Rowling, a devoted handmaiden of Bahá'u'lláh whose service to the Faith extended over more than forty years, was one of three who joined the Faith in Sydney, Australia, in 1938 when there were only fifteen members in the community. Margaret held a job in the Public Service of New South Wales which for some years kept her in Sydney where she took an active part in local Bahá'í affairs.

In 1953 she attended the Intercontinental Conference in India and there determined to respond to the call for pioneers to the Pacific areas. After returning to Australia she worked enthusiastically on the committee concerned with obtaining information about the islands of the Pacific and when she retired from her employment in 1954 at the age of fifty-five she left for Noumea as a pioneer.

A detailed listing of Margaret's itinerary over the years of her faithful and loving service in the Pacific area would require extensive research. In the period between 1956 and 1975 she was almost constantly in motion, her travels taking her to Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, New Caledonia, Noumea and the Cook Islands. In 1957 she was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board for Protection and in 1963 was elected to the Regional Spiritual Assembly of the South Pacific.

It was on her return to Australia from the 1953 conference in India that Margaret began her study of the French language as a preparation for her pioneering work in the Pacific. Her long service in the French-speaking islands was invaluable; she made many friends and was highly thought of. For several years, while serving as secretary of the New Caledonian Assembly, she was the only member who could speak both English and French. One ever-recurring problem during her time in the Pacific was the need to move constantly



Margaret Rowling

because a visa for a French area was granted for six months only.

In 1967, after attending the convention in Noumea, she came to Sydney in October for the Intercontinental Conference. In 1971 she visited Suva and other Fijian Bahá'í communities, attending the Oceanic Conference in May of that year. In the 1970s Margaret spent much of her time in Sydney, for her health was failing and she had to undergo operations on her eyes; however, she visited Fiji again in September 1974 and March 1975.

Following her retirement Margaret was free to give her full attention and time to the service of Bahá'u'lláh and for nearly twenty years she travelled as a Bahá'í teacher. Her work was concentrated mainly in Fiji, New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. In terms of Pacific Island travel she was unrivalled. She was eloquent, direct in her manner, persevering and self-effacing. Her mode of life, involving constant travel, was frugal and there was great simplicity in the requirements of her daily life. Her unassuming attitude towards life, combined with her other qualities, gave her a dignity which attracted many seeking souls to the Faith.

During her years of failing health in Sydney Margaret often spoke of her wish to return to her beloved island friends. Shortly before her passing on 28 April 1981 the Sydney friends received a telephone enquiry from Noumea: a New Caledonian believer was anxiously enquiring about the well-being of his Bahá'í teacher, Margaret, whom he wished to see once again. Learning that she was very ill, he came at once to Sydney and was deeply touched that despite her weakness and loss of memory she recognized him and spoke his name.

In a memorial service held in her honour at the Mother Temple of the Antipodes on 22 August 1981 Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá were read whose reality Margaret Rowling had exemplified: *May they arise to serve Thee and dedicate themselves to the Kingdom of Thy divinity . . . and spread far and wide Thy signs . . . may they spread wide the pinions of unity and by their aid soar upward to the Kingdom of Thy singleness to become servants whom the Supreme Concourse will applaud, whose praises the dwellers in Thine all-glorious realm will utter . . .*[1]

(Based on a memoir by MERLE and JAMES HEGGIE)

YADU'LLÁH VAḤDAT
1910–1981

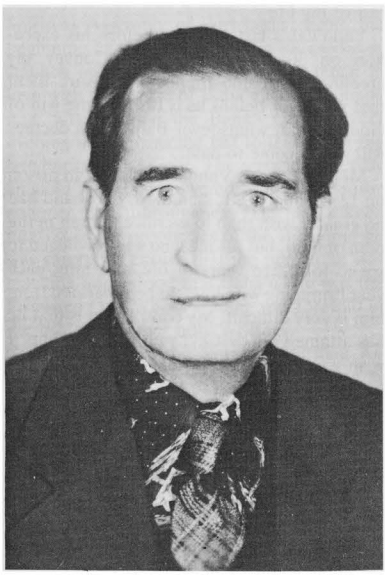
Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat, son of Mukhtár, a veteran believer of Ishtihárd, could trace his ancestry back to Shaykh Abú-Turáb Ishtihárdí who, as mentioned in *The Dawn-breakers*,'was responsible for such behaviour . . . as to cause him to suffer imprisonment in Ṭihrán, in the same dungeon within which Bahá'u'lláh was confined' and who 'remained steadfast to the very end, and crowned a life of loving sacrifice with the glory of martyrdom'.[2] Yadu'lláh's schooling began under a local tutor but, on his elder brother's advice, he moved to Ṭihrán and enrolled in the Tarbíyat School where he passed the elementary and secondary grades.

[1] *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, pp. 5–6.
[2] pp. 39–40.

Drawn to the army, he entered the military academy and emerged as a second lieutenant.

He married his cousin, Qudsíyyih; the flame of their affection for each other remained undimmed right to the end. She is serving a life sentence in an 'Ádil-Ábád prison today. She is not a young woman, is in ill health and is partially paralysed. The couple had four children, all active in the Cause. The youngest daughter, Mahvash, who was in Shíráz throughout the entire period of the recent convulsion, visited her parents in jail four times a week and was herself imprisoned during the last nine days of her father's life—a circumstance which made it possible for her to see him just before he was killed. She was called by her father 'the fearless lioness in the field of service'.

When Yadu'lláh was to be led to the place of execution, he expressed the wish to bid his wife and daughter goodbye. In spite of an official ban, the guards conducted his daughter to him and she threw herself into his arms, sobbing and weeping grievously. He comforted her, bade her be composed and brave and tend her mother which, when she calmed down, she promised to do. Yadu'lláh next proceeded to his wife's cell and the same scene was re-enacted there with her promising to take care of their daughter when he had gone. 'Bear constantly in mind,' he assured her, 'that I am a soldier in Bahá'u'lláh's army and as such must needs lay down my life for His Cause. Be not perturbed, therefore, at the fate that awaits me; rejoice, rather, that so supreme a bounty has been accorded me. Be steadfast and patient under all conditions and never, ever bow down to these guards or seek any help from them.' As he was being taken to the scene of his martyrdom Yadu'lláh exclaimed, 'It is I who am going towards the bullet, not the bullet towards me!'



Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat

When he received his commission, Yadu'lláh was posted to Ádhirbáyján and chose Salmás as the base of operations for his military service and his Bahá'í activities, in both of which he was highly successful. Later he returned to Ṭihrán with the rank of captain. After a while he was stationed at Shíráz where he seized the chance, when on official tours, to promote the Cause. He went on pilgrimage at this time and met the beloved Guardian who advised him to remain in Shíráz, to protect the Bahá'ís there, to be brave and to repose full trust in Bahá'u'lláh. The Guardian graciously designated him as the 'shield of the Faith' in that region. So it was that he made Shíráz his permanent home and was active there until the baleful year 1955 when he planned to go on pilgrimage once again. He applied for leave to do so but the commanding officer, Major-General Bátmánqilích,[1] turned down his request and wrathfully threatened to place him on the retired list. Yadu'lláh responded that as a Bahá'í he would readily accept whatever the authorities decreed. He was, thereupon, retired with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. Now he was free, at last, to serve the Cause full time, and was appointed an Auxiliary Board member.

On 27 February 1981 Yadu'lláh Vaḥdat and his wife, a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shíráz, were arrested and confined within the compass of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of Shíráz. After a preliminary examination he was included in a group of nine persons who

[1] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 294.

were assured freedom upon delivery of the effects of the House of the Báb in Shíráz. This promise was not kept, however, and they were transferred to a prison in 'Ádil-Ábád. After a period of suspense and unease, five of them were executed, of whom three were not only refused the fundamental human right of meeting their loved ones before execution but were denied a decent burial, armed guards being posted to ensure that appropriate interment could not take place.

In the diary of a fellow prisoner, Yadu'lláh had written: 'What memories flood my mind! The recollection of the divine bounty that surrounds and confirms the friends and adorns them with the mantle of a saintly character and goodly attributes and enables them to introduce the Faith to those around them in prison; the spirit of love and friendship which prevails among the loved ones and evokes the envy and jealousy of others; the prayers and invocations which ascend from our hearts by day and by night; the tears we shed as we remember the divine grace so profusely showered upon us undeserving ones; the vision of the glorious crown placed on our heads—a crown which our offspring shall cherish with pride and honour . . . The life and actions of a Bahá'í do not revert to him alone; their reverberations affect the entire Bahá'í world.'

In a letter dated 14 February 1981 written to a friend by Mr. Vaḥdat from 'Adil-Ábád prison shortly before his martyrdom he stated, in part:

'My dear and precious brother. It has been a long time since I have had the opportunity and honour of writing to you. I am sure that the beloved of God, wherever they are, are supporting these prisoners and wronged ones. We are all certain that the friends all over the world are clinging to the hem of the robe of the Blessed Beauty, praying for us.

'Today marks the ninth month of our imprisonment . . .

'My trial took place three days ago, from 8–10 February 1981. Each day the trial lasted for five gruelling hours. I have been accused of being a spy for Israel and the focal point of relationships with Zionism, corrupt on earth, etc. I lay all my affairs in the hands of God. The very first day I came to this prison, I happily accepted everything that was happening to me in the path of Bahá'u'lláh . . .

'My dear friend, I know how much you and the other friends outside prison are worrying about us. I know that your suffering is not less than ours, but my beloved, I am over seventy-one years old and have already lived longer than the other men in our family. Suppose God—exalted be His Name!—grants me through His Grace four or five more years? What would that matter? Old age is often more of a burden than a comfort; therefore, wouldn't it be wonderful if my blood were worthy to be shed in the path of His Faith? Would it be better if I took my last breath in a comfortable bed? God forbid! I should not say what is to my liking. Whatever is the Will of God, I accept with humility and gratitude.

'You have sent a message that the Bahá'ís are grateful to the prisoners in Írán, that by accepting hardships and imprisonment in the path of God, the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh has been strengthened beyond our imagination. You have said this, my dear friend; therefore, why worry about a few months of imprisonment which has bestowed such honour upon us. If it has spread the fame of the Cause, it is my dearest wish that I remain in prison the rest of my life . . .'

Yadu'lláh's last message before his execution on 30 April 1981 said: 'Convey my greetings to all the friends and assure them that whatever befalls us is through the will of God and that whatsoever Bahá'u'lláh decrees will surely come to pass.'

Mrs. Qudsíyyih Vaḥdat writing from prison on 12 October 1981, stated: 'My husband had no greater wish than to sacrifice himself in the path of God, but for me who was privileged to spend forty-five years of life with him, each year brimming with love, to be separated from him is very difficult. My consolation is that he has attained his destiny; well is it with him. I wish you to know with what happiness he left us. He bade farewell to Mahvash, who at that time was also in prison. Then he came to see me and told me, "For the sake of your children [outside] and your daughter in prison, be brave and steadfast." Then he kissed me goodbye and went away . . . The next night when the guards who had been with him during the last moments of his life brought to me my husband's clothing and personal effects I could not bear it and became very sad. They

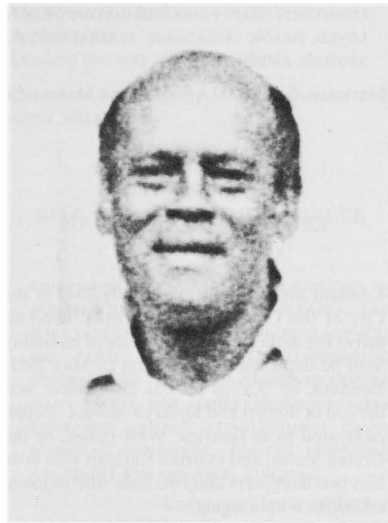
admonished me, "Why are you sad? Last night your husband was full of smiles. At the time of his death he said to us, 'Don't tie my hands or cover my eyes,' and placing his right hand over his heart he exclaimed, 'Don't shoot at my heart because it is the seat of my beloved!'"[1] In the shooting his right thumb was struck by a bullet; while his body was being washed for burial it was noticed that his lips were smiling.'

(Translated from the Persian by RUSTOM SABIT)

ARTHUR JOSEPH GUSTAVE RUGGOO
1923–1981

Arthur Joseph Gustave Ruggoo, who was born on 24 February 1923 in Mauritius, was among the first to respond with total conviction to the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith which he learned of through Miss Ottilie Rhein,[2] Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for that island. He embraced the Faith on 14 September 1956 and served it faithfully until the end of his earthly life. For many years he was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Port-Louis. From the beginning he was enthusiastic in his espousal, staunch in his conviction and very much in love with the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. He made it a duty to open the Bahá'í Centre every evening and he was the last to leave it in the late hours of the night. The question of every enquirer would be answered with characteristic patience and thoroughness. He had a keen interest in the prophecies of the Bible and he was careful to ensure that the person he was teaching understood that Bahá'u'lláh was the Promised One Whose coming was foretold in the Bible and other holy Writings.

When, in 1966, the National Spiritual Assembly called for pioneers for Seychelles he arose with sincerity and devotion and settled there for six years during which time he contributed greatly towards the progress of the Cause in those islands. During those years he had to return to Mauritius for short periods due to visa problems and in such intervals he would undertake special teaching projects in Réunion and Madagascar. In 1974 when a call was made for a pioneer for Rodrigues he again arose and served there under difficult and trying circumstances until 1980. The slow progress of the Faith in Rodrigues and the demoralizing conditions that obtained did not discourage him; he laboured patiently knowing that one day the seed would grow. Early in 1981 he went back to Rodrigues to spend four months on a teaching project. He was to have returned to Mauritius on 7 May 1981 but he fell ill suddenly at his pioneering post and died during the night of May sixth. He was given a Bahá'í burial which was attended by many people of various religious denominations as he was very well loved in Rodrigues.



Arthur Joseph Gustave Ruggoo

Mr. Ruggoo served the Faith with distinction. An accomplished painter and artist, he made many exhibitions for the Bahá'ís. He always voluntarily and gladly devoted his spare time to the maintenance, renovation and improvement of Bahá'í properties. He was always simple and humble. His selflessness and purity of heart endeared him to one and all. The National Spiritual Assembly of Seychelles sent the following message on receiving the news of his death:

[1] See Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, (Arabic) No. 59.
[2] See 'In Memoriam', p. 703.

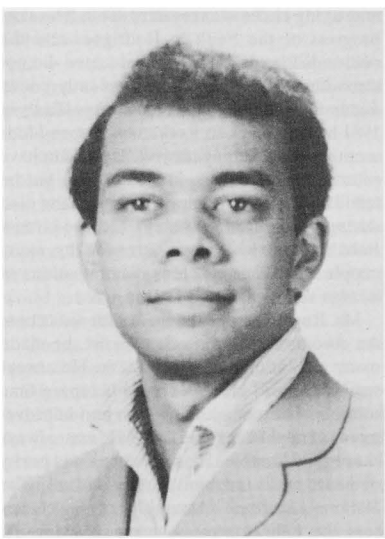
COMMUNITY DEEPLY SHOCKED PASSING DEARLY LOVED HEROIC STEADFAST SELFSACRIFICING BROTHER JOSEPH RUGGOO.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF MAURITIUS

KENNETH ALLAN MORAIS
1942–1981

Kenneth Morais, born on 29 July 1942 in the City of the Covenant (New York), lived an active life dedicated to the service of humanity until he departed this world on 29 May 1981. Kenneth, or 'Ka' as he was also called, was the son of Steibel and Kathryn Morais. Steibel emigrated from Jamaica, West Indies, to the United States, and married Kathryn who bore him two daughters and two sons who enjoyed a Christian upbringing.

After graduating from Public School 46 and the High School of Music and Art in New York, Ka attended Brooklyn Community College, New York University, Cabrillo College and the New York Institute of Photography. As an artist he made collages, painted with oils and acrylics, did scrimshaw and made animated and regular films, but he was best known as a photographer. His most important photographic works were his 'Terrainiums', or 'interior landscapes', striking and provocative three-dimensional photographic constructions which won him acclaim. He exhibited at the Studio Museum in Harlem whose director, Mary S. Campbell, described him as 'a fine photographer, one whose photographs it was an honour to exhibit at the Studio Museum'. Shortly after Ka's passing, the Black Photographers' Association of New York, at a meeting held in his honour to which some members of the Bahá'í community were invited, awarded him their certificate of merit.



Kenneth Allan Morais

Ka became a Bahá'í in the 1960s, despite the disapproval of his mother, and actively engaged in its service. He was bent on serving not only his country but mankind. As soon as he was discharged from the United States army in which he served in the war in Vietnam he busied himself rendering assistance to refugees in Thailand and Korea where he taught the Bahá'í Faith, distributed its literature, and worked towards translating its books into the Khmer language. In 1978–1979 he taught English at Ube Academy in Ube, Japan. His service in Thailand was interrupted in 1981 when he had to return to the United States to take care of his mother. Ka took his leave from this world on a warm sunny day in late spring. It happened in Washington Square Park, New York, where he was taking photographs. He came upon a group of musicians and began to dance to their music, delighting the many children among the large crowd of spectators, when he suddenly fell to the ground as a result of a heart attack. Medical assistance proved futile. He was buried at the Veteran's Cemetery, Long Island.

Jack Walker, whose fireside meetings Ka had attended, offers this description: 'Kenneth was selfless. Material wealth was not important to him. He was more interested in his spiritual growth.' Another friend states that he 'was soft-spoken, reserved and had a keen gift of observation. His conspicuous figure and his personality will be remembered wherever he visited.' Vaughan Smith, a fellow believer in Thailand, has written, 'Kenneth had been pioneering in Korea for a year and had been

travel teaching in Thailand twice. During the Kampuchean crisis of December 1979 he was so moved that he quit his job in Korea and came to Thailand to help the Khmer refugees at the border. We thought that if he wanted to help refugees he should go into the Lao camps where there were Bahá'ís. He, however, went to help the Khmer masses. He had a really dynamic personality and was loved and respected by us all . . . he was a true servant of mankind . . . he returned to the U.S.A. to help his ailing mother and never had the chance to continue his wonderful pioneering work.'

In a letter written on its behalf on 13 December 1981 the Universal House of Justice expressed sorrow at the passing of this 'stalwart Bahá'í pioneer and travelling teacher in several Asian countries . . . who strove to help the friends in these areas. His assistance to the refugees of these strife-torn lands, especially to the Cambodians, and his efforts [to facilitate translations of the Bahá'í Writings into Khmer] will be remembered by future generations. Ardent prayers will be offered in the Holy Shrines for the progress of this servant's soul.'

His passing was commemorated by his sister, Lisa Morais, in her poem, 'In Memoriam':

My brother
Died in celebration
While dancing
In a park.
A circle formed;
He was its centre.

My brother laughed
As he leaped into the air
Karate kicks, joyous movement.
The crowd whistled its approval
Until, in the middle of the dance,
His body jerked, losing its rhythms.
And crashed to the ground.

Later
We heard news of the news of the performance.
Two women told us of the joy they
Felt while watching him.
A true celebration of life, they said,
A fitting death for a wanderer.

Your family is not left
With the emptiness of a tragedy
We know you died
A pied piper
Leading the way with your dance.

(Based on a memoir by IVAN S. GRAHAM and ARTIS WILLIAMS)

RITA VAN BLEYSWIJK SOMBEEK
1903–1981

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING RITA VAN BLEYSWIJK SOMBEEK DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH WHO RENDERED VALIANT PIONEERING SERVICES HIS FAITH SWEDEN ITALY LUXEMBOURG NETHERLANDS UNDERTOOK EXTENSIVE TRAVELS MANY LANDS. HER ACHIEVEMENTS INDELIBLY ENGRAVED ANNALS ESTABLISHMENT CAUSE EUROPEAN CONTINENT. PRAYING FERVENTLY ABUNDANT REWARD ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
8 June 1981

On 28 May 1981, one day before the commemoration of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, Rita van Sombeek, one of the first Dutch believers, passed away at the age of seventy-



Rita van Bleyswijk Sombeek

eight. She had pioneered for the Cause of God and served Bahá'u'lláh faithfully to the end of her life. Rita was an example for many and her history is inextricably bound up with that of the Dutch Bahá'í community. In connection with her share of service she continually referred to the statement of the Guardian's to the effect that God uses every willing instrument he needs for the promotion of His Cause; it was her explanation for the many wonderful circumstances which had determined her life, a subject which she never tired speaking about:

'The firm I was working for in Amsterdam transferred me to New York. I arrived there on 1 May 1940, just before the May 10th invasion of the Netherlands. Why was I so fortunate? Through another coincidence I then heard about the Bahá'í Faith, and after attending a lecture by Stanwood Cobb[1] I was immediately attracted and enthusiastic, and thereafter I hardly ever missed a study class or lecture.' Yet despite her enthusiasm, she did not accept the Faith. 'I attributed my indecision to my atheism and my deep-rooted prejudice against all mission work. Then, in 1945, I heard Dorothy Baker speak about the Administrative Order. I realized, then, that what held me back was my selfishness and a lack of spirit of sacrifice, for I recognized that if I became a Bahá'í, I would feel obliged to return to the Netherlands. I know that my life passed before me in a flash. Suddenly Dorothy Baker stood before me and said, "Now you are a Bahá'í," and, further, "Pioneer!"'

After her enrolment during the summer school at Green Acre, Rita came in contact with Mr. and Mrs. Max Greeven,[2] an American Bahá'í couple who, in 1930, moved from New York to Bremen, Germany, and then to The Hague where they remained from 1937 until 1940. Mr. Greeven was responsible for the publication in Holland of Captain J. A. Liebau's translations into Dutch of *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* and *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* by Dr. J. E. Esslemont, editions of which all but a few copies were, unfortunately, destroyed in the bombing of Rotterdam. At Mr. Greeven's prompting Rita wrote to Shoghi Effendi offering to go to the Netherlands, although she felt inexperienced and she was able to get only a six-month leave of absence, and received a reply written on his behalf on 5 March 1946 stating, 'The need for Bahá'í workers in Europe is enormously great,' and encouraging her to 'do everything possible to bring this Message of hope to people who have endured so much misery and disappointment'. She sold everything she had of value, wanting to be free to devote her life to the Faith.

At the end of World War II Rita's sister, Georgette ('Jetty'),[3] joined her in the United States and eventually became a Bahá'í. In response to the second Seven Year Plan which called for a systematic programme of teaching in ten European countries the sisters left for Europe on 25 September 1946 aboard the *Westerdam*, sharing a cabin with Edna True, chairman of the European Teaching Committee. In Rita's words: 'While in America, Jetty had begun to translate; later we worked together on Mr. Esslemont's book after it was decided by the European Teaching Committee not to reprint the old edition. After a long search we found the printer Grapo who received the manuscript in January 1947 after we had worked on it for many hours a day for four months, in an ice-cold room with only school dictionaries available. In April the edition was ready. Also that spring most of the pioneers arrived in Europe and could start the teaching work. On 21 April 1947 the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Amsterdam was formed.'

In 1949 Rita returned to the United States in order to maintain her American citizenship which she greatly prized. From there she went as a pioneer to Sweden. At this time a friendship began with another believer of Dutch heritage, Mrs. Geertrui Bates, who wrote of her, 'Rita was a very attractive, indeed a striking woman, fluent and convincing whenever she talked about the Faith. She was athletic and loved skiing. I met her again in 1951 after she had returned to Amsterdam. With the encouragement of the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, Rita went to Italy and began a study of Italian, but she found her stay there disheartening because there was so little receptivity to the Faith. In addition to English, she was also fluent in German. When

[1] See 'In Memoriam', p. 814.
[2] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 909.
[3] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 475.

I pioneered to Luxembourg in 1956, Rita was there too, and she lovingly offered me hospitality until I could find a place to live. She was always the charming hostess, ever striving for perfection and demanding a great deal of herself. You could always appeal to her for help. She had a noteworthy integrity and would never let the Faith down even if it meant taking on and carrying through to completion projects which she had not originated and which, with her strong sense of realism and practical perspective, she had originally opposed because she recognized that they were perhaps born of the enthusiasm of the friends and in their scope exceeded our capacity to execute them. I have learned much from her.

'Rita had a great devotion to the Faith. In order to be independent of the Fund she relinquished her American citizenship so that she might obtain a permanent position in the Netherlands. Although she never complained, we knew that she was ill, receiving treatments and having to adhere to a strict diet. Nothing was too much for her; she carried out her duties as though she had never become sick.'

Back in the Netherlands Rita settled down together with her beloved sister, Jetty Straub (who in the meantime had become a widow) as the first Bahá'ís of Doesburg. In 1968 Rita went to Doetinchem to strengthen the community there. Her vast experience in teaching and administrative work must have greatly benefited the friends there who formed their first Local Spiritual Assembly at Riḍván 1970. From 1973 Jetty and Rita lived in Zeist, serving on the first Local Spiritual Assembly there. Jetty died in 1979. Now they are reunited in the Abhá Kingdom. We Bahá'ís in Europe are greatly indebted to Rita and the other valiant pioneers who came after the war. To Rita we are especially grateful for the large number of translations she made of the Bahá'í Writings; her name will forever remain associated with the translation of Bahá'í literature into Dutch.

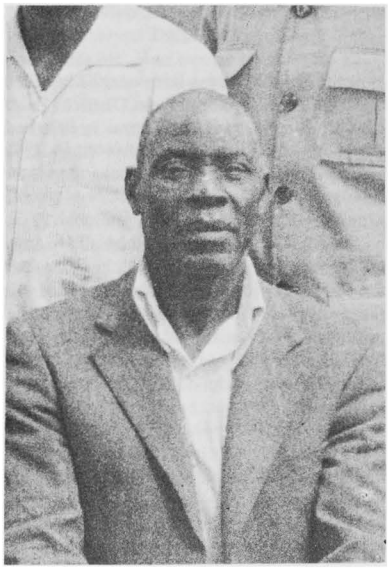
(Adapted from a memoir by LOTTIE TOBIAS)

YOWANE SANDANDO
1910–1981

Yowane Sandando was born on 12 May 1910 in Samaka'i village, Balovale District (Zambezi) of Zambia. He left his home in 1936 and moved to the Copperbelt Province. In 1948 he moved to Nampundwe, Lusaka Province, and in 1973 he settled in Machipisa village, Mumbwa District. Here, in September 1977, he heard the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and, although he was confined to bed, he embraced the Faith with joy and happiness. 'These are the principles which we need. These are the teachings which can unite the whole area. I would be delighted to be accepted as one of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh.' These were the words uttered by Mr. Sandando immediately after he learned about the purpose of the Bahá'í Faith. He declared himself a believer and served the Faith until the very last moment of his life.

Yowane was kind and helpful to everybody; his love and kindness had no limits. Most of the Bahá'ís who met him felt that his spiritual qualities could be compared to those shown by the early believers of the Faith during the lifetimes of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He received everybody with joy and open arms. His generosity and love attracted many people to his house where he offered them the life-giving Message of Bahá'u'lláh. From the moment he accepted the Faith until the time of his passing, he took every opportunity to teach the Cause. He always travelled with some Bahá'í pamphlets and declaration cards, and many people in different areas declared their belief through his efforts. He opened to the Faith more than fifty villages in his area and managed to teach many village headmen, including the senior chief of the area, Chief Shakumbila.

From 1978 he served as an assistant to the Auxiliary Board and, at Riḍván 1980, was elected a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Zambia. He was always present at its meetings and anxious to serve. He assisted greatly in the construction of the Mumbwa Regional Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds by organizing the workers, feeding and accommodating them, and by preparing the building materials. By his example he encouraged the Bahá'ís to take part in the construction of the



Yowane Sandando

Centre. Upon its completion, through his encouragement, a Bahá'í school was organized at the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, the first Bahá'í education centre in Zambia. At one stage more than 160 Bahá'í and other children were attending the school and learning Bahá'í prayers and songs. The school is still being conducted. He created a wonderful spirit of harmony and friendship between the Bahá'í community and the churches of the area.

He came to Lusaka to attend the National Spiritual Assembly meeting during the weekend of 24–25 May and was cheerful and happy as usual. Four days later a message reached Lusaka that on the eve of 29 May 1981 Yowane Sandando ascended to the Abhá Kingdom at his home in Machipisa due to an apparent stroke. The news of his death was shocking and unexpected. On Saturday, 30 May, a Bahá'í funeral was held at which more than 400 people were present. Even his funeral was a means of teaching and proclamation of the Faith. His body was put to rest in a spot not very far from the Regional Bahá'í Centre that he loved so much.

IRAJ YAZDANI

MASÍḤ FARHANGÍ
1912–1981

Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí was born in June 1912 in a village near Shahsavár in the province of Gílán, Írán. At age five he started attending a school established and directed by his father, a learned clergyman in the town of Langarúd. He was still a young boy when his father embraced the Bahá'í Faith, through contact with Mr. Ṭarázu'lláh of Qazvín (later known as the Hand of the Cause of God Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí), changed his attire and started to spread the Bahá'í message to the extent that in the religious education classes at the school he mentioned the Bahá'í religion along with other religions of the world.

At home young Masíḥ was encouraged by his father to read the Bible as well as the Qur'án, and he accompanied his father to Bahá'í meetings where he chanted prayers and passages from the Holy Writings. He attended high school first in Rasht and then in Ṭihrán. While in Ṭihrán he associated with Bahá'í youth and received loving guidance from Saifu'lláh Majídí who used to take him to Bahá'í study classes. He gradually deepened his knowledge of the Faith and at age fifteen became a devoted Bahá'í youth. He continued to study the Bahá'í Writings both in Persian and Arabic.

He enrolled in the college of medicine of the University of Ṭihrán and earned his living expenses by teaching science and French at the Bahá'í Tarbíyat School. His knowledge of the Faith was further enriched through association with such scholars as 'Azízu'lláh Miṣbáḥ and Fáḍil-i Shírází. During summer vacations he used to go back to his home town where, at the home of his parents, he held firesides to which he invited his friends. He also taught classes for Bahá'í children; among those attending were his brothers and sisters. In addition, he used to travel to villages in the area where he met and held discussions with his father's acquaintances, usually learned divines. After graduating in 1937 he married Qamaru'l-Mulúk, a graduate from medical college, who was not at that time a Bahá'í but who later embraced the Faith through association with the friends. Dr. Farhangí started his medical practice in Ṭihrán and later, upon advice from Bahá'í friends, transferred to Rasht.

In June 1941 the Farhangí family, aware of the Guardian's wish for Persian believers to pioneer in 'Iráq, managed to gather together sufficient funds through the sale of their belongings to settle in that country. World War II was raging and it was not an easy task, with two small children, to function in a strange land where shortages of food and medicine were being experienced. Dr. Farhangí continued to be active as a travelling teacher between Baghdád and Karkúk, and was honoured by election to the National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq. When, in 1943, the Persian Bahá'ís were forced to leave 'Iráq and return to Írán, Dr. Farhangí, who had spent all his savings, was advised by the National Spiritual Assembly to settle and practise in Rasht where, with the help of an old friend, he managed to procure the necessary equipment and open his office. Obstacles beyond his control prevented Dr. Farhangí from pioneering to Bahrein in 1944, as he had hoped he might, and he had to be content with going back to Gílán where he reopened his office and resumed his travels, teaching in the villages of Láhíján, journeying mostly on foot along mountain routes.

From 1949 through 1954 he served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán, and in June 1954 he had the privilege of making his pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines and attaining the presence of the beloved Guardian who inspired him with the determination to serve once again in the pioneering field. It was his wish to go to one of the foreign goals of the Ten Year Plan but could not readily find a means of doing so as he had limited resources and was responsible for the support of his wife and four children and his mother. In this period he frequently dreamed of Shoghi Effendi who would emphasize the necessity of pioneering abroad. Finally he wrote a letter to the Guardian, through Shoghi Effendi's Persian secretary, Dr. Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím, in which he implored the Guardian to pray at the Holy Shrines so that the object of his longing might be fulfilled and the means for his journey to foreign lands might be provided. A month later offers of employment for both Dr. Farhangí and his wife came from Indonesia. At the same time he received a visa for travelling to Turkey. After consultation about the matter at a session of the National Spiritual Assembly in which the latest letter from the Guardian asking the Persian believers to help strengthen the Bahá'í community of Turkey was read, the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly was in favour of the Farhangí family pioneering to Turkey. Obedient to this decision, Dr. Farhangí and his family set out for Turkey in preference to Indonesia, in spite of the fact that there was no chance of employment and their savings were enough to maintain them for only three years. Both Dr. Farhangí and his wife registered as graduate students in a medical college and with divine assistance managed to stay in Turkey until the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly in 1959. Dr. Farhangí was elected secretary. Forced to return to Írán at the end of that year, he resumed his medical practice in Rasht and was again elected a member of the National Assembly. He served with distinction on the Auxiliary Board and, in 1968, was appointed a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

After participating in the Palermo Conference in 1968, Dr. Farhangí gave up his



Masíḥ Farhangí

medical practice and devoted his full time to the service of the Faith in his new capacity. He and his wife travelled in India, from north to south, and in accordance with instructions from the Universal House of Justice they also visited Sri Lanka. In 1973 he was present in the Holy Land for the third International Convention and participated in the consultations of the Hands of the Cause and Continental Boards of Counsellors following which he continued his travels to countries in central and western Asia. The method of teaching employing the especially prepared album which Dr. Farhangí introduced in Írán was of great assistance and inspiration to thousands of Bahá'ís, particularly the youth.

Dr. Farhangí was arrested on 6 February 1980, and after being imprisoned for a year and a half in Evin Prison he was executed on 24 June 1981. His funeral was attended by a large number of Bahá'í friends. His family received many expressions of sympathy from the many non-Bahá'ís who loved and admired him, including some who had been in prison with him but who were later released. They remarked on the calm and dignified way in which he accepted his fate, and described how he had won their hearts by serving as a physician in prison, tending the sick and offering solace and comfort to prisoners who were condemned to death. His death was deplored by his medical colleagues, and the Medical Association of Rasht made a written protest. Some twenty days before his martyrdom he met his family with a smile when they visited him in prison. 'My destiny is bright; don't worry about me,' he told his wife and sisters. 'Since they have executed a few members of the Auxiliary Board, a Counsellor is also needed.'

Dr. Farhangí's daughter in Canada explained in an interview published in the 1 July 1981 issue of the *Dundas Star Journal* that her father, a cardiologist, had been asked to treat patients in the prison when he was imprisoned himself. His treatment, she remarked, was not only physical, but mental and spiritual for those facing death and possible torture. 'My father always served throughout his life, helping people—a true example of a good person.' The letters she had received from her father the week before he was killed were inspiring. 'I could see in his writing how happy he was serving the people, and I realized that he was ready for what God wanted him to do. He prayed every day that all the problems of the world will one day end. And, he told us how to be happy and serve humanity.' He was keenly interested in history and philosophy, was a writer and painter and spoke six languages.

His last letter written from prison was addressed to his wife. 'At this last moment of my transitory life, when I am on my way to the realm of eternity, I bid you farewell. I beg you to accept, with great patience and forbearance, what God has willed. Be thankful; be patient!' he admonished. 'During our forty-four years together I have felt nothing but tranquillity and comfort. I had no wish except companionship with you. I hope you are pleased with me and will not deny me your loving prayers . . . I am greatly relieved at this moment, content and pleased. I yield my thanks to God that He has vouchsafed to me this final overwhelming blessing. Praised be God, the Lord of all the worlds!' With words such as these Dr. Masíḥ Farhangí turned his gaze from the mortal world and with light step and joyous heart set out upon the crimson path of martyrdom.

(Translated from Persian by Fu'ád Ashraf)

MUḤAMMAD MUṢṬAFÁ
1898–1981
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING EMINENT DISTINGUISHED SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY MEMBER BOARD COUNSELLORS AFRICA KNIGHT BAHAULLAH DEARLY LOVED MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA. HIS LONG RECORD DEDICATED SERVICES IN ADMINISTRATIVE TEACHING FIELDS HIS SELFSACRIFICING AUDACIOUS EFFORTS IN PROMOTION DEFENCE BELOVED FAITH UNFORGETTABLE. CONVEY BEREAVED FAMILY FRIENDS LOVING SYMPATHY. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES FURTHER UNFOLDMENT PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

This most beautiful testimony summarizes vividly the sixty-five years of Bahá'í life of this



Muḥammad Muṣṭáfá

last remnant of the dedicated band of first Egyptian Bahá'ís. Born in the remote Nile Delta village of El Dhahriya to a fanatical Muslim father, raised in an entrenched Islami community, tutored in a Quranic village school which provided no more than primary school education. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, a telegraph operator at fifteen, rose, through the creative breath of faith in Bahá'u'lláh Whom he spontaneously and unconditionally accepted at the first hint, to become one of the veteran Bahá'í administrators, an experienced and reliable translator for the beloved Guardian, a defender of the Cause in the heart of the Islamic and Arab world, the subject of concern of both Egyptian Muslim clergy and state officials, a diffuser of the Glad Tidings in Egypt, Sudan and North Africa as well as other African countries, a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, the rallying point and source of love and encouragement to the valiant Egyptian Bahá'í community deprived of its administrative framework since 1960, and, during the last six years of his life, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

He first heard the name ''Abdu'l-Bahá' at age sixteen when his friend, 'Abdu'r-Raḥmán Rushdí, who had just accepted the Faith, wisely put a booklet entitled *Ten Days in the Light of Acca* on his telegraph office table in Etai-El-Baroud, a town midway between Cairo and Alexandria, when Muṣṭafá dropped in casually to keep him company. A third person, an interim railway station master, picked it up and commented unfavourably on 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His principles. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá's reaction was spontaneous: 'A Person with such principles and so many followers cannot but be True. I am one of His followers!' Some time later, he was taken to a meeting by Rushdí. The subject of the signs of the advent of the Promised One were discreetly approached by the experienced Bahá'í teacher and friends. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, to the astonishment of all present, suddenly exclaimed, 'He has come and His name is 'Abdu'l-Bahá . . .' And Muṣṭafá joined the ranks of the faithful.

Transferred to Tanta, he later went to Port Said where he shared with the other believers the persecutions of 1919 and 1920. He was not physically harmed, but he was among the frontline defenders of the Faith. He wrote to the Master and received three loving Tablets bearing the salutations, *O thou who art turning thy face towards God!*, *O thou who art attracted by the fragrances of God!* and *O brave friend!*

In the service of the beloved Guardian he was privileged to visit the Holy Shrines almost yearly up to 1933. Every moment he spent with his beloved remained imprinted in his mind and heart. The beloved Guardian once admitted him to his office when he was ill in bed and told him that even though ill and unable to move he had to carry on, so great was the volume of work before him. Muṣṭafá learnt then the need for the friends to intensify their efforts to assist the Guardian with his overwhelming load. Shoghi Effendi relied upon Muṣṭafá for a number of English and Arabic translations; till the end of his life, he devoted himself to translating into Arabic the Guardian's messages and incomparable prose. 'My dear and precious fellow-worker,' the Guardian once addressed a postscript to him, '. . . Your perseverance, your utter devotion, your sublime faith, your selfless

labours are all graven upon my heart.' And in another, Shoghi Effendi wrote, 'Your translation of the document will be of great service and assistance to the Cause. You should rejoice and be happy and thankful. I assure you of my prayers for your success and spiritual advancement. I will never forget you.' In two other communications the Guardian addressed him as 'O beloved of the hearts of the friends' and 'O faithful friend'.

The first Local Spiritual Assemblies and the first National Spiritual Assembly of Egypt saw Muḥammad Muṣṭafá an active member; for many years he was national secretary—an office he discharged most ably—and later chairman. Until he pioneered in 1953 he served on the national and on local assemblies. His life contained a series of 'firsts' for the Egyptian Bahá'í community. He was the first to marry in an exclusively Bahá'í ceremony without the customary traditional Muslim rites (his bride, Farida Naimi, was privileged on the morrow to attain the cordial and loving presence of the Greatest Holy Leaf); the first to register his children as Bahá'ís at birth; the first to be appointed Auxiliary Board member and, later, Counsellor from amongst the Egyptian believers.

The Guardian's announcement of the Ten Year Crusade made him restless. With meagre resources he pioneered to the desolate Spanish Sahara for which service he was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Denied residence, he resettled for a year in Benghazi, Libya. The ascension of the beloved Guardian caught him ill in bed in his home in Cairo. So great was the shock that it could be said to have endangered his life. Yet he managed to write to his fellow members of the Regional Spiritual Assembly of North-West Africa exhorting them to turn to the World Centre and the Hands of the Cause.

Between 1954 and 1960 he travelled in north, east and west Africa helping, amongst other activities, in the erection of the Regional Spiritual Assembly of North-West Africa in 1956. Wherever he went he was a source of happiness and encouragement to the friends and he assisted them in their teaching efforts through his knowledge of the Scriptures and Writings.

In 1958 he returned to Egypt. Clouds of opposition were collecting. A presidential decree, in 1960, disbanded all Bahá'í assemblies in Egypt and the believers there flocked around their two Auxiliary Board members, Muḥammad Muṣṭafá and 'Abdu'r-Raḥim Yazdí.

In 1965 a number of Bahá'ís were summarily incarcerated under serious false accusations and risked simple disappearance; Muḥammad Muṣṭafá was at the head of the list. Without hesitation he took full responsibility and requested, in vain, that the other believers be set free. Released under bail, he and the other victims remained subject to restraint until June 1967 when he and an even larger number of friends were thrown into a concentration camp. Auxiliary Board member 'Abdu'r-Raḥim Yazdí was expelled from the country leaving Muṣṭafá as the only reference for the loved ones in Egypt. Released after six months, these believers, and the Bahá'í community as a whole, continued to suffer even greater restrictions. In March 1972 Muṣṭafá and ninety-two believers ranging in age from two to seventy-five years, including thirty-three women and two children, were imprisoned in Tanta and publicly accused in the mass media of treason, espionage and misconduct. Miraculously released under bail after forty days of suffering, those loved ones and the whole community gathered round Muḥammad Muṣṭafá who became their comforter and adviser. His long experience in the administrative and teaching fields, his relatively wide travels, and his calm and percipient spirit were the basis of the guidance emanating from him to the friends. A deeply loving heart, eyes that saw no evil, and a mind enriched with memories of the beloved Guardian brought him so close to the hearts of the believers in Egypt that for them he was a father or a brother. His modest home was the haven for all, and despite meagre resources his wife somehow accommodated everyone who approached their ever-open door. The friends simply loved to come and sit with them both, and quickly enveloped the couple with such love and attention that any visitor could not help but notice and marvel.

As the older generation in Egypt slowly left this world, Muḥammad Muṣṭafá, guided by the instructions of the beloved Universal House of Justice, literally reared the younger generation, moulding it into a loving, united

and active community.

By 1978, when he was eighty, age and long-suffering and hardship showed clearly their effects, but he continued travelling, comforting and visiting in Egypt. The loss of his wife in October 1979 was a staggering blow; she had been his mainstay for fifty-three years and her self-sacrifice and self-effacement had permitted him to dedicate his life to the Faith. Two of her three sons and her only daughter had pioneered outside Egypt in 1952, 1954 and 1956 and she had suffered terribly during the periods when her husband was pioneering, travelling or in prison. Yet so encompassing was her love that to neighbours and friends, Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, she was the living example of the mother for the New Day. A letter of condolence received from the Universal House of Justice seemed to call forth from Muṣṭafá a final concerted effort to serve the loved ones. Towards the end of 1980 his health seemed to deteriorate rapidly; in 1981 he often intimated that his end had come and prayed tearfully that 'the House of Justice be content with me'. Just two days before he passed away he painfully walked up to a rear door in his room and waved goodbye to the few flowers and trees he loved in his small garden; and as the friends tried to give him his medicine he would refuse it saying, 'You are only trying to delay the longed-for encounter.'

Thus ended the life of Muḥammad Muṣṭafá who was dedicated to the Master, the beloved Guardian and the Universal House of Justice; who served on four local and two national Spiritual Assemblies and as Auxiliary Board member and Counsellor; who taught and travelled for the Faith in many African countries; who translated dozens of messages and documents and wrote two most significant booklets in Arabic, a book of proofs in English and a similar but more elaborate one in Arabic; who was three times imprisoned for the Faith yet defended it before clergy, in the press, and from Covenant-breakers; who was loved by the friends; who was loving, humble, and ever-encouraging; whose home was a haven for everyone who cared to come in; and whose numerous gifts in his beautiful handwriting of Tablets, prayers and the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* will constitute a touching and educating remembrance for his grandchildren and for generations to come.

Before his death, on 15 August 1981, he had asked that his grave be the simplest, and placed lower than all others at the Bahá'í cemetery in Cairo. His loved ones obeyed his wish; but in their hearts the memory of Muḥammad Muṣṭafá is a monument highly cherished and remembered.

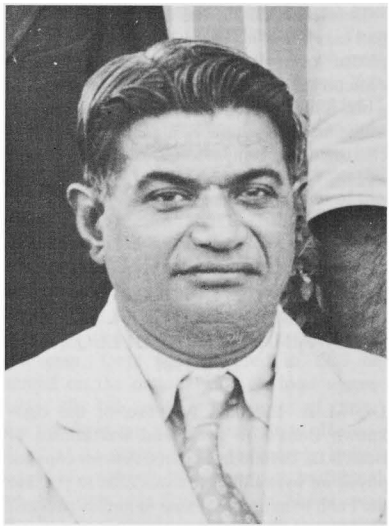
ROWSHAN MUṢṬAFÁ

M. E. LUKMANI
MOHAMMED EBRAHIMJI LUKMANI
(MUḤAMMAD IBRÁHÍMJÍ LUQMÁNÍ)
1896–1981

Dr. M. E. Lukmani was one of the best-known Bahá'ís in India and was known to Bahá'ís far beyond its borders. A homoeopathic physician by training, he was able to present the Faith to many who came to him as patients. He learned of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh from the renowned teacher, Mr. Mihr'alí Munji, who devoted many months to confirming him. By 1920 Dr. Lukmani was a fully-fledged believer and was actively teaching. Mr. Ghulám-'Alí Kurlawala, who became the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for Daman, was among the many whom he taught and who arose to render outstanding service to the Faith.

Dr. Lukmani was soon elected a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Bombay and within two years was serving as its chairman. He strove to intensify teaching activities in Bombay by arranging public lectures which prominent scholars of the Faith from East and West—including Keith Ransom Kehler, Fred Schopflocher, Mírzá Maḥmúd Zarqání and Mírzá Munír Nabílzádeh—were invited to address. By this means, and by press interviews, the Message was presented to the leading citizens of Bombay. In the 1930s Dr. Lukmani was elected a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and carried out his responsibilities with full devotion. He made many tours throughout India and travelled, as well, to Burma and Írán. Everywhere he taught the Faith with great proficiency.

In 1936 he was invited to make his pilgrimage to the Holy Land and was privileged to meet Shoghi Effendi for whom he had deep love and respect and with whom he corre-



M. E. Lukmani

sponded frequently from 1936 until 1956. When he returned from the Holy Land he was a new man. He increased the tempo of his activities, undertook more frequent teaching trips and took a heightened interest in national Bahá'í activities. In the early 1940s he pioneered to Hyderabad, and after some years moved on to Surat and Sholapur. Everywhere he went, many accepted the Faith through him. On 6 May 1942 the Guardian penned in his own hand, as a postscript to a letter written on his behalf to Dr. Lukmani, 'May the Beloved bless abundantly and continually your high endeavours, and reward you a thousandfold for the admirable manner in which you have arisen to serve His Faith in virgin territories, and at so critical a time in the history of the world.' Dr. Lukmani participated in summer and winter schools throughout India, accompanied visiting teachers from abroad on their lecture tours, and took a keen interest in the purchase of the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in New Delhi, gratified that its acquisition had pleased the Guardian. Shoghi Effendi wrote to him on 25 March 1943, 'Your noble efforts are highly meritorious in the sight of God. I am deeply thankful, and will continue to pray for you from the depths of my heart. Persevere in your historic task, and rest assured, and be happy.'

Dr. Lukmani's most important service to the Faith was his pioneering to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) in response to the Guardian's appeal. On 23 May 1949 Shoghi Effendi's secretary wrote on his behalf, 'You have no idea of how happy it has made him to know that at last a pioneer has carried the torch of Bahá'u'lláh to that country! A service highly meritorious in the sight of God and one long overdue.' In the Guardian's own hand was appended, 'Your spontaneous and exemplary response has rejoiced my heart and evoked my intense admiration . . . I am eager to learn of the progress of your work for which I cherish the brightest hopes.' Later, Shoghi Effendi referred to him as *Fátiḥ*, 'the (spiritual) "Conqueror" of Ceylon'. He performed outstanding services in Sri Lanka, and saw the formation of Local Spiritual Assemblies. Thus the groundwork was laid for the establishment, in 1962, of the National Spiritual Assembly, with its seat in Colombo where, with the assistance of the National Spiritual Assembly of India, a beautiful national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds had been purchased.

Having completed his mission in Sri Lanka, Dr. Lukmani returned to India in 1956 and settled in Aurangabad where he continued to reside until October 1981 when the Messenger of Joy called him to the realm beyond. His earthly remains were laid to eternal rest in Aurangabad, while his soul winged its way to reunion with Shoghi Effendi whom he had loved more than anything in life. Dr. Lukmani's services undoubtedly ensure him a permanent place in the Bahá'í history of India. The Universal House of Justice cabled on 22 October:

> GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED PROMOTER FAITH DR. LUKMANI. HIS LONGSTANDING RECORD SERVICES LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL. CONVEY RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY.

(Based on a memoir by DIPCHAND KHIANRA)



Bertha Mkhize

BERTHA MKHIZE
1889–1981

Nhlumba Bertha Mkhize was born on 6 June 1889 at Embo, near Umkomaas, on the south coast of Natal. Her father was Mashobane Mkhize. Her early years were spent at Embo, after which she attended the High School for Girls at Inanda. In about 1907 she became a teacher at the Inanda Seminary (American Mission) and remained there until 1911 when she started a tailoring business in Durban.

Bertha was one of the first black women to establish a business of her own in South Africa. One reason for this was that she had achieved the status of an 'emancipated' woman. In African law, if the parents feel that their daughter is upright and faithful, they may appear before a magistrate and sign a document granting their daughter the full rights of a man over the family household. At the age of twenty Bertha was emancipated, so that, unlike most Zulu women, her brothers had no power over her. She could become the head of the kraal. She never married. Bertha remained at her tailoring business until 1965 when the City Council of Durban decided to move the African businesses out of that area.

During those years, and especially the early ones, Bertha was a pioneer in the struggle for women's rights. She also campaigned against cattle culling and the dipping of people against typhus; took part in the defiance campaign over the pass laws, for which she spent a few months in prison; worked assiduously for literacy classes for about twenty years and at a crèche and a sewing group for at least twenty-five years. She also worked for a few years for an Indian charity at Phoenix, on the north coast. In this same period Bertha served at various times as president of the African Women's Association, the African National Congress Women's League and the Durban and District Women's League.

Bertha learned of the Bahá'í Faith in 1958 from Angelo Nyaba in Natal, and after a short but spirited investigation embraced it on 1 January 1959. She attended classes conducted by Prof. Bishop Brown and Mrs. Bahiyyih Ford (now Winckler). In the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, Bertha found the message of unity and justice she had always longed for, and came to realize that in order to have the peace which was her greatest desire, unity must be with all people and justice must be for all people; there must be love and forgiveness and a spiritual foundation in a Divine Message. Having been an active political figure, Bertha took some time to see the need to follow the Bahá'í teaching of not taking part in politics. But gradually, as her heart became increasingly filled with the inspiration she found in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, she resigned her affiliations. At the age of seventy, when most people are thinking of retirement, Bertha arose to promote the Bahá'í Faith. For five years she worked actively in Natal and Zululand, and when the call came for a Bahá'í pioneer to live in Zululand, Bertha settled in Gezinsila, Eshowe. In co-operation with several other local Bahá'í teachers, she helped establish a total of twenty-eight Bahá'í communities in KwaZulu. She remained in KwaZulu for nine years, trudging with her cane from village to village, bringing the Glad Tidings of Bahá'u'lláh. In 1968 she was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa, and served on that body until April 1969. She was a prolific translator of Bahá'í literature

into Zulu. Her translations include many prayers, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, the life-story of Bahá'u'lláh, stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Guidance for Local Spiritual Assemblies* and *The New Garden*.

In 1975, at the age of eighty-six, Bertha's health began to fail, but she remained at her pioneering post until 1978 when she willed her home at Gezinsila to the Bahá'í Faith and moved to Inanda, where she had received her education. She served on the Spiritual Assembly of Inanda until her passing on 3 October 1981 at the age of ninety-two. On receiving this news the Universal House of Justice cabled on 8 October:

PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS SOUL DEVOTED PROMOTER FAITH BERTHA MKHIZE. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS LOVING SYMPATHY.

OLIVIA KELSEY
1889–1981
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

The soul that hath remained faithful to the Cause of God, and stood unwaveringly firm in His Path shall, after his ascension, be possessed of such power that all the worlds which the Almighty hath created, can benefit through him.

Bahá'u'lláh

Olivia Kelsey was born on her family farm in Delaware County, Ohio, U.S.A., on 9 February 1889. Her mother died when Olivia was eleven years old, and two years later she left home to live with a maternal uncle and his wife in Cleveland.

Religion was, in Olivia's mind, a clouded question because of the religious conflict in her home. Her father was Catholic and her mother Protestant. She said that she reflected on religion and on the great men who had appeared throughout history, wondering why they did not appear again. The answer to her questions came when she met Francis Arthur Kelsey and learned of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. She married Arthur in 1929 and in 1932 became a member of the Bahá'í Faith. Their home in New York became a center of Bahá'í activity and hospitality. Olivia began to write poems and articles on diverse subjects, many of which were published in *World Order* magazine. A religious-historical drama depicting the early history of the Bahá'í Faith, 'Two shall Appear', was published, as well as a pageant entitled 'Had They Believed', a scenario, 'A Universal Language', and a satire, 'Gulliver's Return'.

During her years in New York city Olivia compiled her book *Bahá'í Answers* which was published in 1947. It is a collection of ninety-five questions about the Bahá'í Faith with answers compiled from the Writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and is an invaluable aid to teachers and students of the Cause.

Olivia became deeply interested in the welfare of animals and did intensive research on the subject. Her source of inspiration was a statement by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Educate the children in their infancy to be very kind to animals . . .* , from a Tablet the Master sent to Roy Wilhelm; she quoted it in many of her talks over radio and television on programs sponsored by local and national humane organizations. When in Monaco, pioneering under the Ten Year Crusade, she sent a copy of this Tablet to Prince Rainier and Princess Grace who were great animal lovers. A friend once remarked that 'Olivia brought the Bahá'í Faith to the animal kingdom'.

After Arthur's death in 1937, Olivia began her long career as a Bahá'í pioneer. Under the first Seven Year Plan (1937–1944) she pioneered to Louisville, Kentucky. She worked in many communities and helped many others with newspaper, radio and television publicity. Public information and public relations were subjects which engrossed her attention during the entire fifty years of her Bahá'í life. These fields were at that time unexplored territory to the Bahá'í community in general, as very few believers had as yet taken an interest in such forms of proclamation activity. From the very beginning she made efforts to reach out to small town newspapers, even visiting such communities to make personal contacts.

In 1944 she moved to Kansas where she served on the Regional Teaching Committee until the call for pioneers under the Ten Year Crusade in 1953. She then retired from her profession. In 1954 she left for Monaco, a move



Olivia Kelsey

which earned her the title Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, bestowed by the beloved Guardian. She visited the Holy Land on pilgrimage in the winter of 1954. The stories of her pilgrimage and of meeting the beloved Guardian have thrilled and inspired many. While on pilgrimage the Guardian encouraged Olivia to teach in France after the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Monaco had been firmly established. Accordingly, in 1959, in response to a call from the Hands of the Cause, she went to Toulouse and later to Montpellier to assist the Bahá'ís in those cities, following the crisis resulting from activities of Covenant breakers. During the ten years she spent in Monaco and France she attended many European Summer Schools, the Frankfurt Conference in 1958, and the World Jubilee in London in 1963. Because of poor health, she returned to the United States in 1964, in her seventy-fifth year, and settled in Columbus, Ohio, and became an active member of that community, devoting herself particularly to publicity work and extension teaching. When the Five Year Plan was launched in 1974, she was able to fulfill her wish to make teaching trips to South Carolina and West Virginia. She was then eighty-five years old.

When, in old age, Olivia was no longer able to live alone, she lived first with friends near Columbus and then with friends in Zenia and Yellow Springs. Her final months were spent at the Friends' Care Center in Yellow Springs. Neither ill health nor limited means diminished her will to teach or dimmed her devotion to the Cause she loved. Until the day she passed to the Abhá Kingdom—13 October 1981—she was actively teaching her nurses and all who came in contact with her.

Olivia Kelsey stands firmly in the tradition of world-minded women of strong character who emerged in the early years of the Bahá'í Faith in America. All who knew her well were enriched and deeply touched by her example. Her spirit, her talents and her capacities will be sorely missed.

The following cablegrams were received at her passing:

LONG DEDICATED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE KNIGHT BAHAULLAH OLIVIA KELSEY ADDS LUSTRE ANNALS AMERICAN BAHAI COMMUNITY. ASSURE PRAYERS BOUNTIFUL REWARD PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
15 October 1981

PROFOUNDLY GRIEVED PASSING DEARLY LOVED HANDMAID BAHAULLAH OLIVIA KELSEY. HER EFFECTIVE TEACHING ACTIVITIES STAUNCH LOYALTY PIONEER SERVICES FEATURES HER EXEMPLARY LIFE. PRAYING ABUNDANT BLESSINGS LIFE BEYOND.

The National Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahá'ís of the United States
14 October 1981

FLORENCE ULLRICH KELLEY and LOIS BIERLEY WALKER

HISHMAT ADLPARVAR
?–1981

Hishmat Adlparvar Muhájir was one of several children born to Ḥafiẓu'lláh Khán and Iṣmat Khánum, a devout Bahá'í family of Ṭihrán. The family home was a centre of great activity

and the children had the bounty of participating in the many meetings which took place there. Like her illustrious brother, Raḥmatu-'lláh Muhájir, Hishmat from an early age was aflame with love of the Cause and filled with a great desire to serve it. She became the very embodiment of the true Bahá'í teacher—selfless, detached, totally reliant on God and both fearless and tireless in her efforts to spread abroad the teachings. India, Kuwait, Spain, Venezuela and the Sudan were but some of the places where her loving labours were expended. It was in the latter country to which she and her husband, Amin, had gone as pioneers in July 1981 that she fell victim to cerebral malaria and died on 25 October 1981.

'Ever since her arrival in Khartoum', it was reported, 'our beloved sister Hishmat Adlparvar was engaged in actively teaching the Faith, and in deepening and inspiring the believers in this country. She continually encouraged the Bahá'í communities to participate in joint teaching efforts and aroused their enthusiasm by relating inspiring accounts of the progress of the Faith in India, the Philippines, South and Central America and many other countries she had either visited or had news of. Her own long and valuable experiences in teaching the Faith were also a source of inspiring stories. She was a warm, gracious hostess and constantly entertained Bahá'ís and their friends at her own home or at the homes of other friends. She was particularly intent on teaching women and deepening the Bahá'í women's knowledge of the Faith. She was a cause of unity, love and inspiration to all the friends.'



Hishmat Adlparvar

Among the last activities she undertook were a teaching trip to various centres in Eastern Sudan and attendance at a Summer School organized by one of the Local Spiritual Assemblies on her initiative and with her encouragement. The classes she led were devoted to discussion of the importance of teaching and the bounties derived from it, and study of *The Advent of Divine Justice*. On the first day she presented notebooks and pens to those in attendance for use during the sessions. 'It was a memorable school and a truly joyous occasion,' reported one participant. 'Her participation, in retrospect, was like a loving farewell gift from a beloved sister and devoted handmaiden of God.'

A memorial service held on 1 November at the National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds drew together many sorrowing friends who regretted her loss, praised her courage and devotion, and related many stories illustrating her generosity, loving-kindness and her profound knowledge of the Faith.

Informed of her passing the Universal House of Justice cabled on 2 November 1981:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY PASSING DEVOTED PROMOTER FAITH HISHMAT ADLPARVAR. PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL. ASSURE RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY.

ARDESHIR HEZARI (ARDISHÍR HIZÁRÍ) 1885–1981

Ardishír Hizárí was born into a Zoroastrian family in Yazd, Írán, in 1885. His parents died when he was young, leaving behind one daughter and five sons, of whom Ardishír and Rashíd were twins. Education was not universal in Persia a century ago so what little Ardishír could scoop up locally was supplemented by that passed on to him by an



Ardeshir Hezari

elder brother, Khudádád, who also guided him to the Bahá'í Faith.

In 1891 turbulent upheavals rocked Yazd and resulted in the martyrdom of seven Bahá'ís whose possessions were plundered. Ardishír who was about seven years old at the time was a witness to the martyrdom of one of this group of believers. He saw him savagely hacked to pieces and the mangled body dragged through the streets while the bystanders pelted it with sticks and stones. Asked about the reason for such monstrous conduct, Khudádád told Ardishír about the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, gradually drawing his young brother towards the Faith. Through meetings with the elder Afnán, Ḥájí Mírzá Muḥammad-Taqí, Ardishír became confirmed and declared his belief in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. From then on Ardishír joined Khudádád in his teaching work, and always they used tact and wisdom so as not to arouse antagonism among fanatical elements.

Teaching was the dominant passion of Ardishír's life. While he was working in Shíráz he would take enquirers to a prominent Bahá'í of that city who had a room adjoining his business premises, ostensibly for his siesta, but actually for use as a meeting-place by seekers and teachers of the Cause. Such was Ardishír's zeal that one day he sought to convert two outstanding Bahá'í teachers he met there whom he mistook for Muslims. These two youths were Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí and 'Alí-Akbar Rafsanjání. Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí, elevated by Shoghi Effendi on 24 December 1951 to the rank of Hand of the Cause, often mentioned this meeting in later years and jokingly accounted Ardishír as his 'teacher'. The bonds of friendship forged that day strengthened with the passing of the years.

Ardishír had the bounty of making pilgrimages to the Holy Land—once during the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and twice during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi. Tablets he received from the Master attest the sincerity of his purpose and his devotion to the Cause.

After being employed for several years Ardishír decided to start his own business with his brother Rashíd as a partner. In their desire to carry out the beloved Guardian's wishes, they decided that Ardishír would remain in Qazvín to run the business and thus provide funds for Rashíd and his family to pioneer. For the next five years their lives followed this pattern and Ardishír's participation in the activities of the Cause in Qazvín brought him great joy. Then his wife fell ill and, as her malady was incurable, she expressed a wish to die at a pioneer post and realize an ambition which fate had denied her during her life. Ardishír took her to Ankara in Turkey where his daughter and son-in-law had pioneered and where she died four months later and was buried in a plot of land donated to the Bahá'í community by Ardishír for use as a burial-ground. In spite of advanced age, Ardishír travelled to different towns in Turkey to encourage the friends to pioneer and teach and bring up their children according to Bahá'í standards. When the Turkish believers were unjustly accused and imprisoned, Ardishír suffered along with them. The persecution resulted in wide publicity for the Cause and the eventual vindication of the friends and their release from captivity.

Later, Ardishír pioneered to Ludwigsburg, Germany, with his son-in-law and family, and thence to Mannheim where he died on 26 October 1981. On hearing of his death the Universal House of Justice, on 27 October,

cabled to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING ARDESHIR HEZARI. HIS LONG RECORD DEDICATED SERVICES CRADLE FAITH PIONEERING FIELDS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. CONVEY FAMILY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY.

(Adapted from a translation by RUSTOM SABIT of a memoir by HABIB HAZARI [HABÍB HIZÁRÍ])

HERMIONE VERA KEENS-DOUGLAS EDWARDS
1908–1981

Vera was born on 26 December 1908 in Grenville, St. Andrew's, Grenada. In 1957, accompanied by her aunt, Millicent Douglas, she took an excursion cruise to Africa and arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, in December of that year. Her aunt had known Julius Edwards prior to his moving in 1953 from Jamaica to Africa where he settled first in Ghana and then in Liberia. For his services in opening to the Faith the Northern Territories Protectorate he was named by Shoghi Effendi a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Vera and her aunt began attending Mr. Edwards's public meetings in Monrovia and both accepted the Bahá'í Faith in the spring of 1958. They and Mr. Edwards were elected to serve on the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Monrovia at Riḍván 1958.



Hermione Vera Keens-Douglas Edwards

Throughout the Ten Year Crusade Vera was a very active teacher of the Faith. She, her aunt and Julius Edwards formed a teaching team and travelled to villages throughout Liberia. Vera Keens-Douglas and Julius Edwards were married in November 1960. Vera became a naturalized Liberian and always considered herself a Liberian Bahá'í.

At Riḍván 1964 the Hand of the Cause John Robarts appointed Vera a member of the Auxiliary Board. That year she represented the Hands of the Cause at the first National Convention of Liberia. She was the representative of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Africa at several National Conventions—Libera, Ghana and Gambia—and also at several important conferences in those countries as well as the Ivory Coast.

For many years, and before the present-day emphasis on the spiritual education of children, Vera single-handedly organized and taught children's classes. From 1964 until 1979 she composed monthly Feast Letters for distribution among the believers in Gambia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Ghana, Nigeria and Mali. She attended the first Youth Conference of Ivory Coast in 1967 and addressed the West African Bahá'í Women's Conference held at the University of Liberia in December 1978.

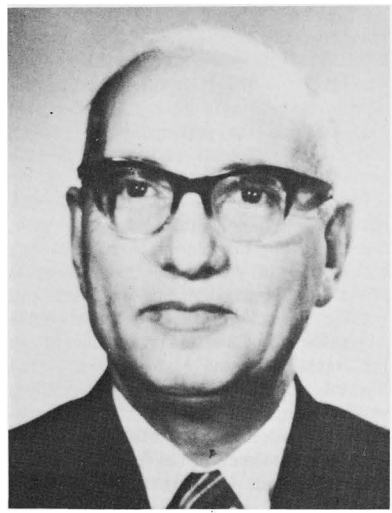
Julius and Vera Edwards left Liberia on 20 December 1979 and arrived in Grenada on 28 February 1980. She continued to be an active teacher of the Faith until her death on 19 November 1981. She bequeathed a small plot of land at Grenville, St. Andrew's, to the Bahá'í community of Grenada for an endowment.

In a written tribute to Vera Edwards, Mrs. Nura Master stated: 'She was a lady of grace, understanding and strong character whose dignity and manner quickly attracted those who came into contact with her. Through her trips, her very inspiring Feast Letters and through personal correspondence and contacts she tried tirelessly to attain and demonstrate

the standards set by the Universal House of Justice for those who are honoured to discharge this sacred duty . . . Her dissatisfaction always came from what had not been done in complete conformity with the Divine teachings.'

Vera was a kind, patient, gentle person who was deeply involved in teaching the Faith on the local level during the time she spent in Grenada; she was much loved by her Bahá'í and other associates. Informed of her passing, the Universal House of Justice on 1 December 1981 cabled:

> PASSING AT NEW POST GRENADA DEVOTED BELIEVER HERMIONE VERA EDWARDS BEFITTING CULMINATION HER LONG DEDICATED PIONEERING SERVICES. OFFERING FERVENT SUPPLICATIONS HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL WORLDS GOD.



Abdul-Missagh Missaghiyeh

ABDUL-MISSAGH (ABDOLMISSAGH) MISSAGHIYEH ('ABDU'L-MÍTHAQ MÍTHAQÍYIH) 1890–1981

Mírzá Ilyás (Elias), later called 'Abdu'l-Missagh Missaghiyeh ('Abdu'l-Míthaq Míthaqíyih), was the grandson of Ḥakím Hárún, a well-known Jewish scholar and physician of Káshán, central Írán, most of whose descendants became Bahá'ís and raised large and prominent families. One of his daughters, Jahán, married Mírzá Yahúdá, an esteemed Bahá'í of Káshán, who was also of Jewish background. Although Jahán was a fierce opponent of the Bahá'í Faith at the time of her marriage and for some time later, she embraced the Cause of the Blessed Beauty and became a devoted servant as a result of a dream in which she saw Bahá'u'lláh. Six children were born of the union of Mírzá Yahúdá and Jahán. Ilyás was the eldest son.

When Ilyás ('Abdu'l-Míthaq Míthaqíyih) was twelve years old he wrote a poem of eighty verses which he sent to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The poem was both an urgent appeal to the people of the Holy Land to recognize their Lord and a confession of faith of a Bahá'í child supplicating the Master to take him under His protection and to hear his wish for sacrifice. In response, 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed a beautiful Tablet to the boy, alluding to him in the salutation as an eloquent and brilliant poet. In the same year Ilyás's father was attacked by enemies of the Faith who struck him with shovels. Wounded on the head, he passed away at the age of forty years, having been in a state of semi-consciousness for some months. Ilyás thus became the head of the family, and left Káshán, his native city, to seek employment in a business in Hamadán. He went later to Rasht, in the north of Írán, to direct a branch of a business belonging to Khájih Rabbí' Muttahidih, an esteemed Bahá'í of Káshán, and became the secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Rasht. Some time later he was entrusted with a business mission in Kirmánsháh, a city whose population was bitterly opposed to the Faith. He was expelled from that town and replaced by Mírzá Ya'qúb Muttahidih, Khájih's brother, who was later martyred in Kirmánsháh, thus becoming the first Bahá'í martyr of Jewish origin.

Mírzá Ilyás was a self-taught man. Forced to work from childhood, he had no opportunity to obtain a higher education. However, his gift for poetry was sustained by a good knowledge of Persian and Arabic. The teach-

ing trips that he undertook in company with the great teacher, Mr. Mihdí Akhaván-i Ṣafá enabled him to widen his knowledge of the Teachings and to gain skill in the art of presenting them. During the meetings he lifted the hearts of the participants by reading and chanting Tablets and prayers in his beautiful clear voice.

In 1912, when he was twenty-two years old, he was finally able to fulfil his dearest wish, that of making his pilgrimage and attaining the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He was again privileged to go on pilgrimage towards the end of 1919, spending forty-five unforgettable days in the Holy Land and being frequently in the company of the Master. During that sojourn, an account of which Mírzá Ilyás wrote in verse, 'Abdu'l-Bahá on several occasions demonstrated the esteem in which He held him. It seemed to the delighted pilgrim that the Master fulfilled, one by one, his hidden wishes without their having to be expressed: while strolling in the garden surrounding the Shrine of the Báb he received from the hand of Shoghi Effendi a Tablet revealed specially for Mírzá Ilyás by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; he was photographed with the Master and other members of the Holy Family; and he was summoned by the Master who invited him to be seated while He dictated to His secretary a Tablet in which He bestowed upon the awe-struck pilgrim the name 'Missaghiyeh' (Míthaqíyih), or 'firmness'. Henceforth he adopted as his first name 'Abdul-Missagh' ('Abdu'l-Míthaq), or 'servant of the Covenant'. Thus he indicated his humble dedication to the Master Who was the Centre of the Covenant. Yet another wish was fulfilled during this pilgrimage: Abdul-Missagh was entrusted with a mission by his Beloved, that of returning to Írán via Egypt and India and placing into the hands of their recipients the Tablets addressed to them by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and which were eagerly awaited following the break in communications caused by the first World War. One can easily guess what ineffable joy flooded his being as a result of having received so many honours and favours from the beloved Master! Nor had the bounties ceased: before his departure 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave him a gold coin which was to become, in Abdul-Missagh's mind, the symbolic basis of his personal capital.

In Írán he continued to work tirelessly in service to the Faith and the friends. He married Maryam Khánum, a charitable and generous lady, who was the daughter of Khájih Rabbí', and from this union one daughter and three sons were born. He settled in Ṭihrán and worked in real estate. His business became very successful and prosperous and soon he became widely known and highly respected throughout the community as a businessman. Those who worked for him or had dealings with him also appeared to attract prosperity to their affairs. Abdul-Missagh attributed this success to the coin he had received from the hands of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. However, his professional activities did not prevent him from serving the Faith. He was elected several times to membership on the National Spiritual Assembly, and the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán, and he served on various committees. In about 1940 he built the hospital that he offered to the Bahá'í community of Írán.[1] Until the end of his life he contributed to the development and enlargement of the Missaghiyeh Hospital and Maternity Clinic, one of the most important and best equipped in the Iranian capital. Soon a school for nurses and later a home for the aged were created as auxiliaries of the hospital. These institutions to which persons of all backgrounds were admitted, sometimes free of charge, were 'silent teachers', the only Bahá'í-operated service institutions with which Iranians of all religions had a relationship. Abdul-Missagh took a deep personal interest in the hospital and his generosity made it unnecessary for appeals to be made for the purchase of new equipment or to meet deficits in the operating costs.

During the ministry of Shoghi Effendi, Abdul-Missagh was privileged to make pilgrimages in 1927 and 1952. During his second pilgrimage he fell ill as soon as he arrived in Haifa. The beloved Guardian himself came to visit him. Moved by this great honour, Abdul-Missagh recited these verses: 'If it is you who, as a compassionate physician, comes to my bedside, I would not give to anyone the pleasure of being ill!' On the occasion of his second pilgrimage the Guardian entrusted him with the mission of transferring the

[1] See *Írán, persécution des Bahá'ís: un livre blanc* (Paris: National Spiritual Assembly of France, 1982), p. 61.

remains of Mírzá Akhaván-i Ṣafá from the cemetery in which they were laid to the shrine of the martyrs Ṣulṭán'u'l-Shudadá and Maḥbúb'u'l-Shuhadá in Iṣfahán.

In addition to the services he rendered as a member of Bahá'í institutions and through the teaching trips he made throughout Írán offering encouragement to the friends, he made generous gifts of funds which made possible the acquisition of lands and buildings for the Faith in Asia, Europe and Africa. These gifts were made without ostentation, often without even his family being informed and in many cases in response to Shoghi Effendi's wishes. Although it is impossible to compile a complete record, his munificence can be glimpsed by mentioning that in Africa alone he had up to 1958 purchased no less than forty-four Temple sites, Teaching Institutes, Bahá'í Centres and other sites. This very generous man was, however, sparing with himself, residing in a simple house and living a modest life. As to his wife, Maryam, she was the refuge of needy people, finding jobs for some and personally supplying the needs of others. When Abdul-Missagh was asked why he did not spend a little more money on himself, he answered: 'This money does not belong to me, it belongs to 'Abdu'l-Bahá; I am only giving it back to Him!' It might be said that Abdul-Missagh was 'poor for himself and rich for the Faith'.

On 21 November 1981 he passed away in Ṭihrán at the age of ninety-one. The members of his family residing outside Írán were honoured by being informed of his passing by the Universal House of Justice in a cable addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of France on 25 November:

> KINDLY INFORM ROSHAN MAVADDAT GRIEVED NEWS PASSING ABDOLMISSAGH MISSAGHIEH STEADFAST DEVOTED PROMOTER FAITH WHOSE MANIFOLD SERVICES SPIRITUAL HUMANITARIAN FIELDS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS FERVENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

(Adapted from a memoir by ROSHAN MAVADDAT)



Zhínús Ni'mat Maḥmúdí

ZHÍNÚS NI'MAT MAḤMÚDÍ
1928–1981

Zhínús Ni'mat Maḥmúdí was born into a distinguished Bahá'í family in Ṭihrán on 7 August 1928, a fifth-generation Bahá'í on both sides.

In October 1947, at age nineteen, Zhínús married Húshang Maḥmúdí, age twenty-two, whom she had come to know through their participation in Bahá'í activities of the community of Ṭihrán. At the time of their marriage they were both undergraduate students at Ṭihrán University where Húshang studied law and Zhínús physics. Bound together by an intense love for the Blessed Beauty which characterized their lives, and by a common desire to serve His Cause, they reinforced and encouraged each other's love, devotion and service to their beloved Faith for over thirty years, and finally, one following the other, both trod the crimson path of sacrifice and attained the station of martyrdom.

While still a young man, Húshang spent some time as a Bahá'í teacher in the village of Námaq, Khurasán, where he had a dream which he described in a letter to Shoghi Effendi. He dreamed that he was fortunate

enough to catch a ring which the beloved Guardian had cast into the midst of a group of joyously vying Bahá'í youth who had gathered in a green field. In a letter written on the Guardian's behalf by his secretary on 21 June 1944, Shoghi Effendi praised Húshang's services, assured him of great success in his teaching efforts, and encouraged him to 'remain steadfast in order to win the prize and achieve brilliant victories'.

Zhínús received her formal education in Ṭihrán, excelling as a student throughout her school years. She received her B.Sc. and M.Sc. in physics from Ṭihrán University, specializing in atmospheric sciences and meteorology and graduating with honours at the top of her class. She started her career at age twenty-three as the first woman meteorologist of Írán. By this time she had two small children. Later she served as the head of the Atmospheric and Climate Research Department of Írán and finally was appointed as Director-General of the country's Department of Meteorology. She was at the same time President of the Iranian School of Meteorology, a school that was founded through her efforts in order to make Írán self-sufficient in training meteorologists. She also taught at Ṭihrán University. It is significant to observe that in the 1950s when Zhínús began her career the science of meteorology in Írán was in its infancy; no research or development took place and the country did not even have a Department of Meteorology. It was largely through the dedicated and ceaseless work of Zhínús over a period of twenty-five years that Írán's Department of Meteorology was founded and began to take a leading role in this area of endeavour in the Middle East. She devoted fifteen years to researching Írán's physical geography and its relationship to industrial and agricultural activities, a study which led to publication of her monumental work *Geographical Atlas of Írán* which became an indispensable tool in the planning of industrial and economic development projects. She was also the first Iranian to conduct research into the potential use of solar energy and often represented her country at international conferences on climatology and meteorology where she presented papers on various subjects including air pollution.

The leading scientist in her field in Írán, Zhínús was recognized and admired throughout the government for her contributions to that field and for her high degree of personal integrity. She was much loved and respected by her subordinates who observed her humanity and selfless service and who competed with one another in serving her, and by many foreign scientists who worked with her during her tenure in the government. To these visitors she came to represent, through her exceptional intellectual and moral qualities, a hope for the advancement of Írán. Among the many honours conferred upon her was the Royal Medal of Írán. She also served on various humanitarian organizations including the Women's Liberation Organization and the Zonta Club and served as head of the Dayhím Peace Committee.

To appreciate her professional achievements and her contribution to her country it is important to consider the odds against which she was working, given the existing conditions and standards of Írán, and to recognize the obstacles she faced as a woman with no 'connections' and as a Bahá'í with impeccable moral standards. Only her intellectual abilities, perseverance, sincerity of motive and, above all, her strong conviction that as a Bahá'í she had an obligation to contribute towards the advancement of her nation, enabled her to meet and overcome the obstacles confronting her.

In the 1970s when she became eligible for retirement Zhínús yearned to devote all her time and energy to the service of the Faith but her attempts to retire were blocked by the authorities who considered her services indispensable to the welfare of the country. And so she stayed on only to be dismissed later by the Revolutionary Government for being a Bahá'í. She was denied a pension and her bank accounts were seized.

Zhínús's professional activities at no time interfered with her active service to the Faith or her role as a mother. She was an active member of the Bahá'í community of Ṭihrán from her youth and served on numerous committees including the Committee for the Advancement of Women. She and her husband spent the year 1955 in Kirmán as pioneers, returning in 1956 to Ṭihrán. In 1961 they settled with their three small children in Nármak, a small town with a fanatical popu-

lation situated on the eastern outskirts of Ṭihrán. Here their home became a centre of Bahá'í activities and they became pillars of strength to the newly-established Bahá'í community. They both served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Nármak for five years, during which time they commuted daily to work in Ṭihrán. They left behind a strong and active Bahá'í community and returned to Ṭihrán in 1967. Zhínús was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán and served as its secretary until 1971 when they moved westward with their son and settled in a newly-built, deeply religious town named Gawhar-Dasht. Soon the Local Spiritual Assembly was formed. This community, vital and active and filled with spirit, subsequently became a target for the enemies of the Cause. At least five of its original Local Assembly members were martyred in the period 1980–1982, a large number of Bahá'í families were forced to leave and still more were imprisoned. Until it was confiscated in 1981 the home of Zhínús and Húshang in Gawhar-Dasht continued to be of use to the Faith by serving as a shelter for Bahá'í refugees.

In 1977, the last year during which their lives were to be normal, Zhínús was appointed an Auxiliary Board member serving Ṭihrán, Hamadán and the western region of Írán. In 1978 the situation of the Bahá'ís began to deteriorate. Húshang was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and the couple's combined responsibilities demanded their full-time presence in Ṭihrán. They rented an apartment in the city where they spent most of their nights. Later, as the situation worsened, even the luxury of a semi-permanent home was denied them and for security reasons they spent every night in a different place. The only permanent features of their lives at this point were their agonies and hardships and a small suitcase which they carried with them everywhere and which contained the necessary personal items for prison.

In 1980, after the imprisonment of the Counsellor, Dr. Masíh Farhangí, Zhínús accepted many of his duties and also attended most of the meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly. When she and Húshang parted on the morning of 21 August 1980 they did not know that they would never see one another again in this life. That evening while in their meeting the members of the National Spiritual Assembly and two Auxiliary Board members were abducted by the revolutionary guards and were never heard from again. Zhínús was to have been present at this meeting but for personal reasons did not attend and thus was, momentarily, spared. To the distress caused by the implications for the Bahá'í community of Írán of the arrest of the National Assembly was now added the agony of separation from her husband of thirty-three years. Zhínús endured her suffering with characteristic calm and continued her work. 'I do not permit myself anything but calm and laughter with the friends,' she wrote to her family in January. 'Missing you and anxiety affects me, and just then the phone may ring and my voice may not be reassuring enough . . .'

Zhínús was elected to the next National Spiritual Assembly but retained her appointive offices as well. She served the Bahá'í community of Írán in these capacities until her arrest on 13 December 1981 following which no family member was permitted to see her. She was executed on 27 December 1981 together with seven other members of the National Assembly and buried in a common grave in a section of the Ṭihrán cemetery reserved for infidels. A cell-mate has reported that when Zhínús was informed by the revolutionary guards that she was to be transferred to Evin prison she exclaimed, 'I shall be very happy to make a pilgrimage to Evin prison where so many Bahá'ís have been martyred!' In a letter to her family written in June 1981 Zhínús had remarked, 'I only want you to know that I lack nothing. There is no sorrow —absolutely no difficulties. I am content, well, fortunate, assured, serene, full of energy and thankful. Whatever should happen, there could be nothing better . . .'

A major contribution of Zhínús was the role-model she provided for women both within and without the Faith in illustrating in her own life the fine balance that may be achieved between spirit and intellect. She exemplified this balance through her nobility of character and her professional accomplishments. She was frequently in the public eye, interviewed on national television and interviewed by journalists as a 'pioneer' woman. Within the Bahá'í community, through her services as a teacher of Sunday School for

over two decades and her service on women's committees, she touched countless lives and gave inspiration and a vision of their potential to rising generations of Bahá'í women.

Zhínús, cut down in her fifty-second year, left behind three children, her aged mother, a brother and sister, who pray to be worthy of her sacrifice.

(Adapted from a memoir by RAMNA MAHMÚDÍ and MEHRNOUSH NI'MAT)

SHÍDRUKH AMÍR-KÍYÁ BAQÁ
1935–1982

Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá Baqá came of valiant stock. A paternal grandfather, Ḥájí Dáwúd Míthágíyán, a prominent member of the Jewish community of Káshán, while still young accepted the Cause in that city and went on foot to the Holy Land to attain the Master's presence. 'Abdu'l-Bahá referred to him in a Tablet as 'Affectionate'. Later on, with his wife and some of his children, he pioneered for about twenty years in Palma, Spain, and was privileged to buy a plot of land in Madrid for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.



Shídrukh Amír-Kíyá Baqá

Another forebear, on the father's side, Mírzá Háshim, also embraced the Cause in Káshán at a time when the friends were being persecuted. He arose in their defence and protested to the Governor against the injustice and oppression, and was promptly locked up in prison himself. However, his wit and eloquence won him liberty. The Master addressed him as 'Zealous'.

A maternal grandfather, Ḥájí Dáwúd Iqrárí, of Káshán, accepted the Faith when young. His father and brother, too, had embraced the Cause but none knew of the others' belief until they met at a Bahá'í meeting. Thereafter, they worked together in service to the Faith, entertaining the friends and guiding seekers to the Truth. They bought the impressive house of a high-ranking official with a view to holding befitting meetings therein to teach the Faith and, in this, they attained to their heart's desire. At one of these meetings they hoisted in front of the house a banner bearing the inscription *Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá*, inviting friend and stranger to enter. The Master said they were hospitable and of noble aim and that He was well pleased with them.

Shídrukh, a granddaughter of these veterans, was born in Ṭihrán on 8 October 1935, the eldest daughter of Rúḥu'lláh Míthágíyán and Ruḥáníyyih Iqrárí, both faithful servants of the Faith. Shídrukh had three sisters and one brother and from an early age was deeply attached to the Cause and its institutions. She was fond of music and took piano lessons at school. She had a charming voice and was the first person in Írán to record a prayer, revealed by our beloved Guardian, to the accompaniment of the piano. It was highly approved by the Hands of the Cause and was played in many continental conferences and large Bahá'í gatherings in Írán. For a time she was on the national television network demonstrating cooking and other domestic courses. She knew English and was well-versed in some arts. At age sixteen Shídrukh was married to Manúchihr Baqá; one daughter and two sons were born of the union.

A visit to the Holy Land as a pilgrim reinvigorated her faith; she attended the International Conferences held in London,

Palermo, Alaska, Paris and Brazil and had vivid recollections of them all.

While in the United States, two years ago, for her daughter's wedding, her children and sisters urged her not to return to Írán where her life would be in danger, but she disregarded their plea. 'When our beloved Guardian exhorted us to pioneer,' she told them, 'we did not heed his call; we let ourselves down. Now that the Universal House of Justice bids us maintain our posts, will we desert them and fail a second time? Not I! I feel I am needed in Írán and return there to do what lies in my power, regardless of the consequences.' When the hour for departure arrived, she was overcome with emotion. She opened her prayer book and read prayers which brought solace to her heart and the strength and courage to continue on her course to her destined fate and eternal glory.

Though Írán was agitated and distress was rife, she stood firm as a rock, bringing the friends together in devotional meetings and restoring calm and tranquillity to their disturbed hearts. She was ever ready to serve and was appointed on various committees. She was put in charge of organizing the Nineteen Day Feasts held in her district. This took up most of her evenings. She spoke to the friends of the need for steadfastness, courage and sacrifice in the path of the Beloved, conveyed to them the messages of the National Spiritual Assembly, and inspired them to be firm. Whenever news came of a martyrdom or some other affliction engulfing the Bahá'ís, she would expatiate on the glory of sacrifice, the station of the martyrs and the lustre which their deeds would shed on the pages of history.

The steadily mounting wave of oppression instigated by the authorities with a view to casting terror into the hearts of the believers, dampening their zeal and thus weakening the institutions of the Faith, was putting a heavy strain on the faith of some of the friends. At such a time of stress. Shídrukh did not flinch or falter. With the utmost courage, she arranged meetings at her own home or at the homes of her sister or children who were all abroad. She attended to the bereaved families of the martyrs and offered them comfort and shelter. One of these was a Bahá'í woman from Yazd whom she lodged in her sister's home.

Shídrukh was always very cautious in arranging Bahá'í meetings, and if she suspected any leak threatening the safety of a proposed meeting, she promptly switched it to the house of her sister or children. In spite of all her precautions, however, there came a night—Monday, 2 November 1981—when, at the hour of nine, there was a knock on her door. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán was in session at her home. She approached the door and asked who was knocking. The Bahá'í woman from Yazd answered, and recognizing her voice, Shídrukh was reassured and opened the door. To her dismay, she found that the Bahá'í woman was not alone; armed guards of the Islamic Revolutionary Party accompanied her. What had transpired was this: at the home of Shídrukh's sister was also a Muslim lodger, addicted to drugs, who made himself a nuisance to the neighbourhood. Shídrukh had consulted the Local Spiritual Assembly about the advisability of evicting him on the ground of his failure to pay the rent but was asked to refrain from taking any action for the moment. It appears, however, that some of the neighbours had lodged a complaint against the man and the guards had come to investigate. They asked where the owner of the house was and the Bahá'í woman from Yazd, being simple, led them to Shídrukh.

The guards asked the six Assembly members in session. Shídrukh, her husband, the woman from Yazd and another Bahá'í (Firdawsí's son), there present, to accompany them. Aware that the National Spiritual Assembly members who had been asked to accompany a similar squad of guards had never been seen again, Shídrukh insisted that she would accompany them only to the police station situate in the same street. The wrangle attracted the neighbours, and faced with a not too friendly crowd, the guards complied with Shídrukh's wish. Once at the police station, however, the guards transported their captives to a prison. After some ten days, Firdawsí's son and the woman from Yazd were released, and the rest transferred to another jail noted for its severe discipline and the oppression inflicted by its warders.

The following account is based on reports

by fellow prisoners, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í, and Shídrukh's relatives who were witness to these incidents.

Time and again, the Revolutionary Committee put pressure upon her to recant her faith, holding out freedom as the reward. It was a serious life-and-death game, not a mock one. A letter to her sister a week before related her encounter with the authorities when she approached them on behalf of herself, her sisters and brother to clear up the matter of their inheritance from their father. 'What is your religion?' the President of the Court had asked, and she had replied that she was a Bahá'í. 'If you desire prosperity,' he had suggested, 'you had better recant your faith or else you will experience serious loss.' 'Did you not hear,' she answered, 'what the old Bahá'í in Yazd said when such a proposition was put to him, that man of eighty summers whose head was repeatedly dashed to the ground to persuade him to comply with your demand? Did he not say: "What! Should I surrender my faith to secure some baubles?" I, too, tell you that I can do without my inheritance, if necessary.' The President said, 'You represent others who may not be of the same mind as you.' She replied, 'They are Bahá'ís, too, and none of them will barter the eternal world for this transitory one.' Having said this, she arose and, without waiting for permission from the Court, departed, leaving the President fuming with rage at his failure to turn her from her faith.

Shídrukh had for long prior to these events been engaged in committing to memory prayers and Tablets and passages from the Holy Writings. This she did in anticipation of the day when she might be confined somewhere without access to Bahá'í literature. Now, in prison, she could reap the reward of her foresight and draw on her memory for those priceless gems that were to delight, sustain and strengthen her.

Several times they told her that she could secure her freedom just by signing a paper. This was ostensibly to the effect that she would not participate any longer in any Bahá'í administrative activities, but she knew in reality it was a ruse on the part of the authorities; if secured, that document would be given wide publicity as evidence of her recantation in an effort to demoralize the friends, weaken their resolve and undermine the institutions of the Faith.

While she was in jail, the authorities confiscated her property as well as that belonging to her deceased parents, her sisters, her brother and her children who were all abroad and whom she represented legally.

During one of the interrogations, Shídrukh came face to face with her husband who also was in prison. He told her that he had signed the paper presented to him and was to be freed. 'For the sake of our children,' he said, 'you, too, sign it and secure your freedom.' She pressed his hand and merely said, 'Steadfastness! Steadfastness!' and was sorrowful, wondering what contrivance had brought about his defection.

According to her sister, Shídrukh was permitted to make one short telephone call to her relatives a few days prior to her martyrdom. She told them not to be concerned about her.

A non-Bahá'í who was immured for three days with that group said, on release, how the morale of them all had been sustained by the courageous spirit and uplifting words of Shídrukh—'With such faith and steadfastness and zeal animating her, you should have no fear for her,' we were assured.

On 4 January 1982, Shídrukh and the six members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán were secretly executed, this information being obtained fortuitously by their relatives and friends. No will or document exists to attest to her martyrdom although it was reported that she and the members of the Local Spiritual Assembly had decided to write their wills. The authorities were not prepared to deliver her body and, later, a demand seems to have been made for five hundred thousand túmáns [in excess of $50,000 U.S.] apiece for every will they would hand over. Since their wishes and intentions were known and their deeds and words were testimony to the unity, the greatness and glory of God, there was nothing further that could be gleaned from their wills. It is said that all these prisoners were buried unwashed, in the clothes they were wearing, and without any funeral rites, in a common grave.

As far as is known, Shídrukh is the first Bahá'í woman of Jewish extraction to lay down her life for the Faith. A year prior to her martyrdom, she requested the prayers of the

Universal House of Justice for steadfastness in the Faith for herself and her sisters and brother, and for the progress of her father's soul in the realms above. She withstood all tests and trials and never faltered until she attained the glorious station of martyrdom. She advanced with arms extended wide to embrace the darts of sacrifice and gave her life joyously for her belief. Her daughter and two sons, her three sisters and brother, all firm and active in the Faith, endure this tragic blow confident that the precious blood so willingly shed on Írán's soil for the love of the Glory of God will not be in vain and that every drop will raise a thousand lovers to serve the Cause of God and His people.

Shídrukh was a loving mother, an affectionate sister, a trustworthy companion, a faithful mate, a generous hostess, a true Bahá'í.

In response to an enquiry from the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada the Universal House of Justice cabled on 14 January 1982:

> MARTYRDOM SHIDRUKH AMIR-KIYA WIFE MANUCHIHR BAQA SIGNIFICANT. SHE AND HUSBAND WERE HOSTS LOCAL ASSEMBLY TIHRAN WHEN THEIR HOME RAIDED AND BOTH WERE ARRESTED ALONG WITH SIX MEMBERS ASSEMBLY. AS IN OTHER CASES PRESSURE WAS BROUGHT RECANT FAITH SAVE LIVES. UNFORTUNATELY APPEARS HUSBAND DID NOT STAND TEST AND AS PUBLISHED NEWSPAPERS RENOUNCED FAITH AND WAS IMMEDIATELY RELEASED. HE INCREASED PRESSURE HIS WIFE SHIDRUKH BY PLEADING HER FOLLOW HIM. SHE CHOSE CROWN MARTYRDOM REFUSED BETRAY HER FAITH AND JOINED RANK IMMORTALS. HISTORY WILL EVER EXTOL EXEMPLARY COURAGE RESOLUTE FAITH ONE WHO SACRIFICED HER LIFE THRESHOLD HER BELOVED.

(Translated from the Persian by RUSTOM SABIT)

APPU RAMAN
1921–1982

Appu Raman was born in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 21 December 1921 and came to Malaya in 1928. It has been said of him that he seemed to have been born with a burning desire to serve humanity. His association with the Ministry of Welfare Services began in



Appu Raman

1946 and he continued his dedicated services to the poor and needy through this Department until his retirement in 1976, during which time he held many important posts and initiated a number of societies including the Self-Reliant Society, the Association for the Physically Handicapped, the Association for the Mentally Retarded and a host of others.

His Bahá'í life began in 1962. He accepted the Faith through Mrs. Theresa Chee. On that auspicious occasion, when asked what his life ambition was, not having anything in particular to say, he pointed to a picture of the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette and said, 'Perhaps all I want is to visit that Temple!' He was granted the bounty of visiting the Mother Temple of the West three times and of visiting the Holy Places in Írán, as well. In 1965 he was elected a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia and continued to serve on that body until 1972 in which year he was elected chairman. In the early years of the Faith in Malaysia he was instrumental in establishing the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. In his teaching work he was recognized as a scholar of Hinduism and was popular among the Tamil believers because of his eloquence and his depth of knowledge of both their

language and culture. In his final years he became actively involved in the Ulu Langat Local Spiritual Assembly and the project assigned to it by the National Spiritual Assembly, that of developing the Balakong Summer School land.

In late December 1981 Mr. Raman started off on a four-month teaching trip which was to take him to Thailand, Burma, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka but he ascended to the Abhá Kingdom on 5 January 1982 at Rangoon, Burma. His sudden death came as a shock to the Malaysian community and his loss was felt equally keenly by the believers in Burma who had grown close to his radiant personality. More than five hundred friends from all parts of Burma gathered at the funeral. The National Spiritual Assembly of Burma reported that the Faith had not been so well proclaimed in that land since the days of the Hand of the Cause of God Muṣṭafá Rúmí. As the two rows of Burmese friends, with tears in their eyes, carried Mr. Raman's body from the hearse to the grave, they realized that through him a permanent bond had been established between the communities of the Greatest Name in Burma and Malaysia. The energy he devoted to the Faith and his obedience to its principles, laws and ordinances are but small examples of the love he had for Bahá'u'lláh. May the Blessed Beauty accept his loyal services at His Holy Threshold. Mr. Raman leaves behind his wife, Mrs. Thanapakian Raman, and five children.

On 8 January 1982 the Universal House of Justice cabled the National Spiritual Assembly of Burma expressing the hope that the example of this DEVOTED SERVANT would inspire the beloved friends in that country to INTENSIFY THEIR RESOLVE in service to the Faith. The friends in Malaysia received the following cable:

> GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAULLAH APPU RAMAN IN BURMA. HIS SACRIFICE FIELD SERVICE BAHAULLAH SHEDS LUSTRE YOUR COMMUNITY WHICH MAY WELL BE PROUD SPIRITUAL VICTORIES ACHIEVED BY ITS NUMEROUS DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS MANY FIELDS BAHAI SERVICE. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL.



Florence Elizabeth Altass

FLORENCE ELIZABETH ALTASS
1884–1982

Florence Elizabeth Altass was born on 13 May 1884 at Aldeburgh in Suffolk, England, and was one of a family of nine children. Slight in build and small in stature, she had an irresistible charisma. She was blessed with amazing perception of others' needs and she literally sparkled her way through life until the very day she passed on to the Abhá Kingdom on 22 January 1982, at nearly ninety-eight years of age.

Florence's upbringing was strictly Catholic but she never felt that that was where she 'belonged'. During her teens she travelled to Edinburgh to stay with a school friend, Kathleen Flemming. She attended her first Bahá'í meeting with Kathleen and immediately identified with the Bahá'í ideals. Although she attended Bahá'í gatherings subsequently and always considered herself a Bahá'í, she did not formally declare her belief in written form until many years later. Having broken away from the Catholic Faith and the authoritarian upbringing of her mother, she feared that by signing a declaration of belief she would in some obscure sense limit herself; yet as early

as her twenty-first year when she left home for good and enrolled for nursing training she identified herself as a Bahá'í on the application form and throughout her life associated with the Bahá'í community.

As a young girl Florence longed to become a missionary. To fulfil this dream she felt that she must take up nursing and that the more difficult aspects of this field would best prepare her. She persuaded a friend of her father's, a doctor, to assist her. She completed a course that covered caring for mental patients and maternity cases, the latter at a London hospital where prostitutes, indigents and the homeless were treated. Here Florence's compassion and love for her fellowkind expanded to an extent she had not dreamed of: the cases she described made one's heart ache for the plight of humanity. Slowly her aspirations towards the missionary field changed. She concluded her training with a three-year general course at the London Middlesex Hospital.

Her first assignment was to the Austrian Imperial court of the House of Habsburg to nurse a lady-in-waiting. Florence was well liked by the Archduke Franz-Ferdinand and the Archduchess and she became very fond of them. The sympathy she felt with them as strict Catholics enabled Florence to express many of her 'Bahá'í ideas'. She did not approve of the crucifixes in every room, and declared 'The God I pray to is a living God, not a dead Christ on a cross'. When she left his service the Archduke presented her with a rosary of carnelian which had at the end, in place of a crucifix, a medallion inscribed with the date, and a madonna and child.

From Austria Florence travelled to Budapest where she tried to learn more about her father's family, who were Austrian. (In later years Florence was one of the first Western women to cross Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railway, and in 1917 she returned from there when the fall of the Czar was imminent.) Meanwhile she returned to the United Kingdom and, as always, she felt drawn to Scotland where she attended Bahá'í meetings at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Whyte. Dr. Whyte was a prominent minister of the United Free Church of Scotland. The manse at 7 Charlotte Square, the home of Dr. and Mrs. Whyte, was attached to St. George's United Free Church which is now known as West Register House. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was invited to Edinburgh by the Whytes during the course of His visit to the West and remained in that city from 6 to 10 January 1913. During this sojourn Florence had the bounty of meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the Whyte's home, although she was not aware that He was to be present. In a recorded interview in later years she recalled, 'Of course when I saw Him I knew who He was. Oh, you couldn't mistake Him. And that heavenly smile! It was a perpetual smile, and yet it wasn't, if you can imagine; it looked as though He smiled at everyone, and yet the smile seemed always to be there. And His eyes looked as if they were looking through you. He had the most gentle voice; I've never heard a voice like it. I would like to hear it again. He embraced a good many people; He didn't me, He just shook hands. Several of us He just shook hands with.' Florence wrote of that meeting: 'When 'Abdu'l-Bahá shook hands with me, He seemed to transmit something to me, and I've never been the same since . . .'[1] Asked if He spoke in English at all, Florence laughingly replied, 'No. There was an interpreter—who spoilt the whole show! It wasn't that his voice didn't suit me, it was that although 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke in Persian, you *understood*; you knew what He was saying, somehow. One was so enamoured of His voice that one sort of *felt* what He was saying. It was as though He delivered His address in English, although He spoke Persian.' So great was the throng seeking admittance to the presence of the Master that Florence refrained from attending subsequent meetings though she was strongly drawn to do so and regretted to the end of her days the loss occasioned by her extraordinary courtesy and consideration for others. Her one meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá formed the theme of many of her poems which she continued to write till the end of her life.[2]

Ever after having met the Master, Florence felt His presence and inspiration. She asked that she should be a 'channel for healing'. Before treating a patient she always prayed and seemed inspired with 'the right means'. In spite of her orthodox medical training,

[1] See U.K. *Bahá'í Journal*, February/March 1967, for a fuller account of this meeting.
[2] See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, p. 650.

Florence (a vegetarian), held strong views about 'natural healing' and refused ever to administer drugs. Although she met with strong opposition in the orthodox field she persevered with her intuition which she felt came from an 'inner knowledge'. She worked closely with a number of doctors of similar convictions and often recalled the numerous occasions on which patients, officially diagnosed as hopeless cases, would come to them as a last resort and make seemingly miraculous recoveries. 'Given the right conditions,' she explained simply, 'the body heals itself. Healing is on three planes—mental, spiritual and physical.' Seriously ill only twice in her life, at the ages of seventy and ninety-five, Florence was always alert, vivacious and energetic, a living example of her convictions.

Florence was never in one place long and in moving around continually in her various nursing jobs she influenced the lives of many people. Even during the period when I knew her, beginning about 1974, she would not miss an opportunity to mention the Faith to those she met. She attracted into her confidence young and old alike. Numerous friends, Bahá'í and not, sought her advice and she always responded with perception and deep wisdom. It was during one of her illnesses, when she was about seventy, that she finally affixed her name to a declaration card, though she professed amazement at having done so when she saw herself listed as a declared believer in the *Bahá'í Journal*; but once recovered and now 'declared' she found to her astonished delight that the step she had taken did not limit her. 'Now I know what it's really like to be limited,' she would remark during her last years when her vision and hearing began to fail. But these were merely physical limitations, and very different from those which her free spirit had feared. Her last ten years were spent in vegetarian homes in Horsham and then in Hastings where she was allowed to remain in spite of difficulties of vision and hearing which would normally have qualified her for residence in a nursing home. Florence never lost her valiant spirit of independence. Residents of the home marvelled at her versatility and activeness, and remarked that 'something was missing' whenever she was away. She served on the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Horsham and Hastings and as the only English Bahá'í in Hastings she often found herself with the responsibility of conveying to enquirers the tenets of the Faith. Her presentation always made a profound impression on those who met her. 'Age has restricted my activities,' she wrote to a friend in 1981, 'but has not affected my love and devotion to the Faith or my gratitude for being allowed to meet the Master and to hear His voice, a voice like no other one would hear again.' She was humorous to the end, mentioning in one of her letters that she would rejoice to be reunited with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the spiritual realm but feared that she had been 'in queue so long He may have forgotten me'.

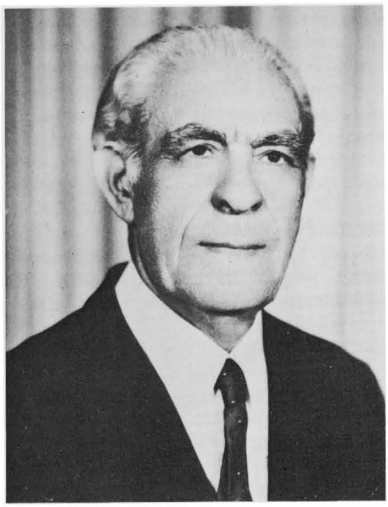
Three of Florence's life's ambitions were fulfilled in the years following her ninetieth birthday: she made a pilgrimage to the Bahá'í Shrines in the Holy Land in 1978; she found that her intuitive understanding of healing was confirmed in a number of the Master's Tablets published by the Universal House of Justice in 1978 under the title *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*; and her wish to see Bahá'ís in the medical field 'get together to share ideas' was realized in June 1980 when the first International Bahá'í Conference on Health and Healing was held in Ottawa under the auspices of the Association for Bahá'í Studies.[1] Unable to attend, though she had hoped to, Florence submitted a paper which was well received.

Florence recorded in her poems and written fragments of prose her visionary thoughts and ideals. We are fortunate to have these, together with the example of her dedicated life of service, as an inspiration for generations to come. The tribute accorded this unassuming believer by the Universal House of Justice in its cable of 1 February 1982 to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom would have astonished one who never felt worthy of the bounty of having gazed but once upon the face of the Centre of the Covenant:

> PASSING FLORENCE ALTASS SEVERS ONE MORE PRECIOUS LINK BRITISH COMMUNITY HISTORIC VISIT MASTER. HER DEDICATION STEADFAST FAITH COLOURFUL LIFE ENRICH ANNALS THAT COMMUNITY. ASSURE PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

CECILIA SMITH

[1] For a report of this gathering see p. 201.



Nasrollah Mavaddat

NASROLLAH MAVADDAT
(NAṢRU'LLÁH MAVIDDAT)
1897–1982

CONVEY SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY CAMPBELLTOWN GRIEVE PASSING DEDICATED SERVANT NASROLLAH MAVADDAT WHOSE EXEMPLARY DEVOTION LIFELONG SERVICES CAUSE AND LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

Universal House of Justice
8 April 1982

Naṣru'lláh Maviddat, though humble and self-effacing, was known to and loved and respected by many throughout the Bahá'í world. He was born in Ṭihrán, Írán, in 1897 and passed away in Adelaide, Australia, on 7 April 1982. He lived every moment of his life for the Faith and in its service. His great-grandfather was a devoted Bábí and both his parents were Bahá'ís. As a child he diligently followed his studies to the highest level available at the time and was then appointed to teach at Tarbíyat Bahá'í School. His thirst for knowledge and his devotion to his work touched the hearts of his students and colleagues alike and won him many admirers.

Mr. Maviddat was among the first group of young Iranian students to be selected for technical training in the United States under a programme in which the Iranian government was collaborating with a major American industrial complex. On his way to America he broke his journey in Beirut in order to visit the Holy Shrines in Haifa. While in the Holy Land he had the bounty of meeting the beloved Guardian. The two years he spent in the United States provided an opportunity to participate in the activities of the American Bahá'ís and to enrich his experience in Bahá'í administration. On his return from America his heart was filled with joy and gratitude on being able to visit Shoghi Effendi for the second time.

Back in his homeland he lived in Ṭihrán for several years and served the Faith tirelessly as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly and many local and national committees. In particular he was appointed to a small committee formed for translating the Guardian's messages received in the English language or other Bahá'í materials in that tongue. In addition he taught at Summer Schools, conducted classes for youth and became a speaker and teacher of the Faith.

In 1956 he pioneered to the south of France where he quickly perfected his knowledge of French and participated in the activities of the friends of that region. When Shoghi Effendi passed away he began the difficult task of translating *God Passes By* from English to Persian. He worked arduously on that book for several years, seeking to be faithful both to the style of Shoghi Effendi's own writings in Persian and to the words and expressions used in the Bahá'í Writings. That he successfully achieved his purpose to a very great extent is attested by many. His deep knowledge of Bahá'í literature was a considerable aid in identifying and locating original Persian texts for the numerous quotations Shoghi Effendi used from the three Central Figures. He thus avoided, apart from a few exceptions, retranslation of the original passages to Persian.

In 1968 Mr. Maviddat was asked by the Universal House of Justice to help with the work at the World Centre where he spent three years assisting the Research Department in codifying and indexing the Bahá'í Writings. When his wife developed asthma

and was advised to reside in a more favourable climate they left the Holy Land with keen regret. Mr. Maviddat continued to the end of his life to translate and write. He translated into Persian Shoghi Effendi's *The Advent of Divine Justice*, as well as numerous letters, cables and compilations. He also wrote in Persian an introductory book on the Faith. His last few years were spent in Australia. With the persecution and apparent suppression of the Faith in Írán, and its manifest progress in Australia and the Pacific, he would often quote Bahá'u'lláh's words about His Revelation that *should they attempt to conceal its light on the continent, it will assuredly rear its head in the midmost heart of the ocean, and, raising its voice, proclaim: 'I am the life-giver of the world!'*

We cannot conclude this short biography of Mr. Maviddat without mention of his wife, Ṭalí'ih 'Alá'í, who was his companion for more than half a century and who, with her kind nature, faith and perseverance gave him total love, devotion and wholehearted encouragement in completing his work.

After his departure from this world the above cable was communicated by the Universal House of Justice, thus crowning his achievements with words of love and appreciation from that august Institution.

RAFIE MAVADDAT

ARDESHIR ROSTAMPOUR (ARDASHÍR RUSTAMPÚR) 1901–1982

Ardeshir Rostampour was born of Zoroastrian parents in the village of Kuche Buyuk, near Yazd, Írán. He was a small child when his father died. His father had taken two wives, and Ardeshir's mother, the second wife, was both mute and deaf. 'The two of us were left dependent upon my half-brother,' Ardeshir related. 'I lived with my mother and worked as a servant for my half-brother; he was a very rough man and used me as a slave. I gradually became dissatisfied with my life. When I was about ten years old I learned that a caravan, bound for Bombay, was passing not far from our village. Through the use of sign language I conveyed to my mother my wish to escape my miserable existence and go to India where I hoped to be able to earn some money to make life easier for her. She granted her consent, we took tearful leave of one another and I set off, taking as provision for my journey my meagre savings amounting to about the equivalent of one dollar, and five pieces of dried bread which I wrapped in a handkerchief. For two days and two nights I wandered alone in the desert in search of the caravan, vainly asking every passerby if he knew of its whereabouts. Finally I caught sight of it when it stopped for the evening. I was invited to join the caravan through the kindness of some people from my village who were travelling with it, one of whom, a Zoroastrian lady who had been a teacher in our village, engaged me as a servant and compensated me handsomely for my services. Through her generosity I was able to travel by steamer to Karachi where I found employment. I used to send all I had earned to my mother, asking her to distribute whatever she would not need herself to the needy ones in our village. Later on I managed to go on to Bombay, and after a while I came to Hyderabad, Sind, where I opened a restaurant. I have stayed here ever since.'



Ardeshir Rostampour

From his earnings in the restaurant, Ardeshir made gifts to his village, establishing first a long-needed cemetery for the Zoroastrian community and later a reservoir to provide drinking water. Two entrances and taps were provided, one for Zoroastrians and one for Muslims, since custom would not allow them to share, and it was his wish that all might benefit equally from the facility.

Through meeting early distinguished Bahá'í teachers, including Mr. Shahríyár Yazdání, Mr. Isfandíyár Bakhtíyárí[1] and Mr. Pritam Singh,[2] who frequented his restaurant when they travelled to Hyderabad on teaching trips, Ardeshir became attracted to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and embraced it. He was a generous host to travelling teachers and enquirers, often accommodating eighteen or twenty guests and arranging personally for their food and comfort. On one occasion Miss Martha Root was an overnight guest.

Ardeshir's Bahá'í life was lived entirely in the spirit of the words of Shoghi Effendi who encouraged the believers to be 'like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by the fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good—this is the secret of right living.'[3] He lived a simple life in Spartan surroundings and he gave spontaneously, generously and continually in support of Bahá'í undertakings. A contribution he had made was the means of acquiring the land for the Temple in India early in the Ten Year Crusade. Learning that the National Spiritual Assembly had found a suitable site for the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár but lacked the funds to acquire it he immediately donated his entire savings. Only through strenuous insistence did the representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly succeed in persuading him to accept back a small amount for his own use. When he was asked on one occasion how he could give all of his money with no thought for himself he replied, 'I did not have a penny when I started. All that I had accumulated was given to me by God. Now He needed the money. I said to myself, If He needs the money, I will return all of it to Him. If I am supposed to have money, He will provide me with more, and if I am not supposed to have it, He would take back what I had anyway. Therefore, it was easy. I did it with full confidence and a joyful conscience. He has repaid me many times since then and I have always returned it to Him, as I am only a temporary trustee.'

It has been written of Ardeshir Rostampour: 'Never one to seek honour for himself, his services have been rendered so quietly as to have been almost unknown and invisible to all but those members of the institutions of the Faith who received his many contributions. He has given as 'Abdu'l-Bahá had always done, in such a way that the right hand was unaware of what the left hand was doing. When Ardeshir said of himself, "I have given everything I have made to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh," it was a stark, matter-of-fact and unadorned description of his life, without a trace of personal pride or self-praise.'

When his passing on 11 April 1982 was announced, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS ARDESHIR ROSTAMPOUR ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. HIS EXEMPLARY DEVOTION AND DETACHMENT UNFORGETTABLE.

(Based on a memoir by DR. IRAJ AYMAN and CHARLES NOLLEY)

SULIANA HALAHOLO KOREAN
1950–1982

Early on a sunny April morning, in 1982, Bahá'ís of the Western Pacific gathered on a lovely knoll in Saipan, Mariana Islands, overlooking the blue Pacific, to pay their last respects to beloved Suliana Korean. Throughout her thirty-one years, she was an example of strength and courage, and of dedicated service to the Cause of God.

Born Suliana Halaholo on Tonga in 1950, she began attending Bahá'í children's classes at the age of eight. She studied with joy and was soon herself teaching classes. Her involvement in administrative activities began

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVI, p. 554.
[2] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 874.
[3] From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, cited in *Bahá'í Procedure*, pp. 8–9.



Suliana Halaholo Korean

while she was still a youth. She was secretary of the youth committee of Tonga, and later of Fiji, where she attended the University of the South Pacific. She often made teaching trips to other islands, an activity in which she particularly delighted. Academically, also, she shone brilliantly. The government of Tonga sent her to study dietetics at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji, where she obtained her Bachelor's degree. Vacations from school were not vacations from Suliana's most loved work, service to the Faith. She devoted two of her vacations to translating into the Tongan language *The Seven Valleys*, and at a later time she translated *Words of Wisdom*. Both translations were approved by the National Spiritual Assembly of Tonga.

After graduating from university, Suliana married Dr. Masao Korean and settled on Ebeye in the Marshall Islands where she pursued her career and devoted herself to raising her children: Ruthann, Saane and Sulṭán. She learned Marshallese and continued to make teaching trips to the islands. In 1979 she was appointed an Auxiliary Board member for propagation of the Faith, and through her work for this institution all the Bahá'ís of the Western Pacific came to know and love her. Although she had no professional training in music she found time to learn to play string instruments. She sang and played at Bahá'í gatherings and proclamation events. It was her wish always to bring happiness wherever she was.

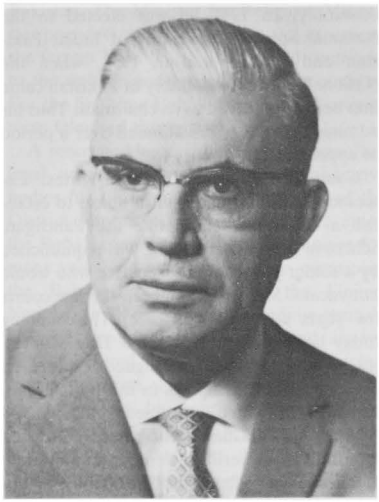
In June 1981 she moved with her family to Saipan. Shortly thereafter she was appointed to the Regional Teaching Committee for the northern Mariana Islands. However, at this time, tragedy struck. A brain tumor which had been operated on in 1979 began to create physical difficulties for her, although almost no one was aware of her discomfort and she continued to perform her duties. In December she participated in the dedication of the Bahá'í Center on Saipan, joining in the singing and dancing with the same fervor and joy as the other believers. It was perhaps her last public act. To the end, however, Suliana was aware of the love of the Bahá'í friends, and of the wonder of the Bahá'í teachings. Her talk, during the last month of her life, was of her beloved Cause of God. One week before her passing on 15 April 1982, five pioneer adults and three pioneer children arrived on Saipan, much to Suliana's joy. The people of Saipan said that their prayers had been answered with the arrival of the pioneers. Perhaps Suliana's special dedication was also in some way balanced at that time. But we know that no one will take her place. No one will carry such love to the islands.

At the time of Suliana's burial, Auxiliary Board member Marian Johnson said, 'To know Suliana was to know an angel.' If angel she is—and surely the Bahá'ís of the Western Pacific would agree—then her love and the example of her faith will always be with us.

KATHY MILLHOFF

JULIUS HENSELER
1901–1982

Julius Henseler left this material world on 30 April 1982 after a short illness. The German Bahá'í community has lost a steadfast believer who was an example until his last breath. Doctors, nurses and attendants who treated him during his last illness considered him their favourite patient. He bore his suffering with patience and always had a smile as an expression of thanks for everyone who cared for him.



Julius Henseler

Julius Henseler heard about the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in 1921 through a friend who told him that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had passed away. Julius was then twenty years old and was known as a seeker among his friends. He attended many Bahá'í functions in Esslingen and Stuttgart and embraced the Cause, developing an unbounded love for Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.

With a saddened heart, but obedient to the Bahá'í institutions, he suspended his teaching activities during the period of proscription under Hitler. These were years of crucial importance when he was confined to living the Bahá'í life within his family circle consisting of his wife and two children. Cut off from the World Centre and without the guidance of the National Spiritual Assembly, he and his wife Anna remained loyal servants of the Covenant of God. After the war, when the Bahá'í institutions had to be rebuilt, he dedicated himself wholeheartedly to this task. From 1949 to 1954 he was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany and Austria, and served as its treasurer from time to time. He extended a special love to Bahá'í youth. Himself the father of two youth, he enkindled in them a love of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and fostered their spiritual growth.

At age seventy, in response to the call of the Universal House of Justice, he arose to pioneer for one year in Innsbruck, Austria, where he was reunited with Dr. Ahmedzadeh and Mrs. von Werthern with whom he had served on the National Spiritual Assembly many years before. This was a highlight of his life for he was once more in a position to devote all his energies to the Faith which he loved above all else.

'I am leaving this world in peace. I am at peace with everyone and hold no grudge against anyone. I have already seen 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Master.' These were some of the last words he spoke to his family.

On 3 May 1982 the Universal House of Justice cabled Anna Henseler:

> EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY YOURSELF AND FAMILY PASSING YOUR DEAR HUSBAND. HIS SERVICES CAUSE GOD GERMANY UNFORGETTABLE. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

In a cablegram sent to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany on the same date the House of Justice expressed its sorrow at the passing of this DEARLY-LOVED STALWART SERVANT of the Faith. The German Bahá'í community will always remember him.

ASANAND CHAGLA JOSHI
1910–1982

Know thou that the souls of the people of Bahá, who have entered and been established within the Crimson Ark, shall associate and commune intimately one with another, and shall be so closely associated in their lives, their aspirations, their aims and strivings as to be even as one soul. They are indeed the ones who are well-informed, keen-sighted, and who are endued with understanding.

Bahá'u'lláh

These words of the Blessed Beauty came to me as the greatest balm in my direst moment. My beloved father, while on a visit to the United States for treatment, expired peacefully on 8 May 1982 in Oakbrook, Illinois, after unsuccessful major surgery for internal abdominal haemorrhage. Beside him were my mother, Mrs. Shirin Joshi, sisters, Dr. Par-



Asanand Chagla Joshi

veen and Dilafroz, and brother-in-law, Dr. Azam. I was in Karachi. Sorrowing friends attended his graveside in the Arlington Cemetery in Elmhurst and a befitting memorial meeting was held on 30 May in Skokie during which the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem described him as a 'dedicated Bahá'í who truly served the Cause'. A memorial gathering was also held in Karachi on 10 September.

My father was born on 10 June 1910 into a priestly Hindu family; Sanskrit and Hindu scriptures came to him with his mother's milk. He graduated in law in 1914 and started a successful legal practice. He learned eleven languages, mastering nine, and was awarded a gold medal for Sanskrit by Bombay University. In 1945 he was accepted into the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Mr. Dipchand Khianra, whose appointment to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Asia was announced on 8 June 1973, was greatly responsible for enabling him to recognize the truth of the Bahá'í Faith.

Soon after embracing the Faith he was elected a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Karachi. In 1947, when Pakistan was born, he served as chairman of the Local Assembly. In 1948 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of India, Pakistan and Burma, and in 1958, when the National Spiritual Assembly of Pakistan came into being, he served as its chairman. Thus his administrative service extended over a period of approximately twenty-five years.

Counsellor Dipchand Khianra writes: 'Esteemed Bakhtiari had built a house to establish a children's school like the Panchgani School in India. The building was requisitioned by a senior government executive who would not vacate. Mr. Joshi fought in the law courts for years and won the case. The building today houses the famed "New Day Montessori School". A silver-tongued orator, he organized many symposia in the Bahá'í Hall, Karachi, in which prominent citizens and scholars of Pakistan participated; addressed hundreds of gatherings; went in deputation to General Ayub Khán, the President of Pakistan, who, impressed by his sincerity, thereafter regarded him as a friend. As a member of the Auxiliary Board, appointed in 1974, he played a most vital part in teaching the Faith to Hindus in the interior of Pakistan and undertaking many teaching tours. It is pertinent to state that these Bahá'ís comprise seventy-five per cent of the members of the Bahá'í community of Pakistan.'

Another unforgettable service was his ceaseless effort to win recognition for the Faith as a separate minority religious community. In September 1972 the government of Pakistan accorded this recognition, the first ever achieved in an Islamic country. In his report to the National Spiritual Assembly he wrote, 'A victory has been won, a goal of the Nine Year Plan achieved. History was made when the Islamic Republic of Pakistan issued a letter from the Law Minister to the National Spiritual Assembly assuring that all the minority religious communities, including the Bahá'ís, are free to profess their Faith, and the State [government of Pakistan] will in the discharge of its responsibilities give no cause of complaint to any community or religious minority. It is stated that under the Interim Constitution freedom of expression [free speech] is guaranteed.' He also secured tax exemption for the Bahá'í properties and led the Bahá'í delegation to the first Minorities Committees' Conference held at Quetta,

Pakistan. The Minister for Religious Minorities presided over the meeting and expressed the fervent hope that Bahá'ís would contribute to the welfare and prosperity of the country. For the first time Bahá'í speeches and prayers were televised throughout Pakistan.

A renowned lawyer, he served as honorary legal adviser to the Bahá'í administrative bodies for thirty years. As a member of the District Minority Committee he represented the Bahá'í community to the government for many years and was, on countless occasions, the Bahá'í representative to the United Nations. In all activities in the administrative field he served wholeheartedly and always readily offered his assistance in resolving crucial problems. He was given the status of an intellectual by nearly every President of Pakistan. Ever ready to serve the Cause, he advised us to be firm Bahá'ís, saying, 'Children, you must ally yourself with the spiritual army of Bahá'u'lláh. Faith is not a half-way house.'

A few days before he died he said that he wanted his grave to teach the Cause. Inscribed on his tombstone is a stanza from Bahá'u'lláh's *Hidden Words*. May the Blessed Beauty elevate in the Abhá Kingdom the station of one who so meritoriously and untiringly devoted his life to the firm establishment of the Cause of God in Pakistan.

The Universal House of Justice on 10 May 1982 cabled:

SADDENED LEARN PASSING ASANAND JOSHI STAUNCH SUPPORTER PROMOTER BELOVED FAITH PAKISTAN. HIS LONGTIME SERVICES IN ADMINISTRATIVE TEACHING FIELDS AS WELL AS MEMBER AUXILIARY BOARD WILL BE REMEMBERED AS INTEGRAL PART DEVELOPMENT CAUSE THAT COUNTRY. ASSURE HIS FAMILY FRIENDS LOVING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

RÚHU'LLÁH CHAGLA JOSHI

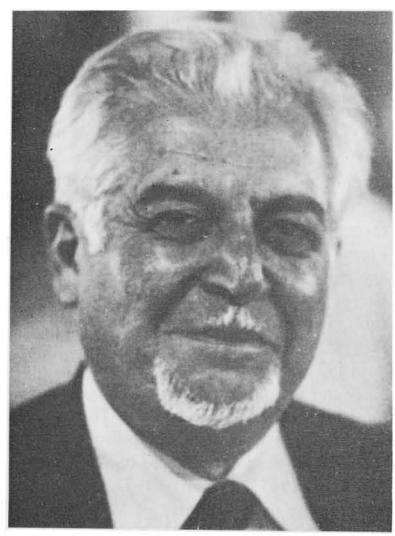
JALÁL NAKHJAVÁNÍ
1917–1982

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY JALAL NAKHJAVANI. RECALL WITH DEEP AFFECTION HIS DEDICATED SERVICES IN AFRICA IN VANGUARD FIRST PIONEERS TO SETTLE THAT CONTINENT LATER IN GERMANY AND MORE RECENTLY IN CANADA PARTICULARLY FRENCH SPEAKING AREAS. ASSURE BELOVED MEMBERS HIS FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE PRAYERS FURTHER UNFOLDMENT HIS RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

Few walk among men and invoke a spirit of love and admiration, respect and reverence that continues to inspire long after they have departed for the Abhá Kingdom, those with whom they came in contact during their earthly life. One such man was Jalál Nakhjavání, a truly great Bahá'í teacher, firmly rooted in his beloved Faith, deeply conversant with human history and international affairs, a scholar who was superbly capable of speaking fluently several languages of the East and the West.

He was born on 17 September 1917 in Baku, Southern Russia, to Fáṭimih Khanúm Tabrízí and 'Alí-Akbar Nakhjavání, who were married at the suggestion of the beloved Master. His father was one of the key believers in Baku and had regular correspon-



Jalál Nakhjavání

dence with the Master from Whom he received numerous Tablets and instructions. Mírzá 'Alí-Akbár Nakhjavání later accompanied 'Abdu'l-Bahá on His travels in the West. Jalál's mother, Fáṭimih Khanúm, was the eldest daughter of two eminent believers whose mention is made in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Memorials of the Faithful*, as she came from a line of believers who accompanied Bahá'u'lláh on His exile to the Holy Land. She and her sister, Zeenat Khanúm Baghdádí, spent many years as attendants in the Master's household in 'Akká.

After the tragic passing of 'Alí-Akbar Nakhjavání, and owing to the political upheaval in Russia, Fáṭimih Khanúm was advised by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to travel to the Holy land and reside there with her two small sons, Jalál aged four and 'Alí aged two. *En route* to the Holy Land the shattering news came of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Fáṭimih Khanúm immediately stopped their journey and awaited the decision of Shoghi Effendi, an example of her implicit servitude and obedience to the Faith and its administrative order which she imparted and instilled so lovingly in her children. Shoghi Effendi urged her to continue on her way to the Holy Land and thus it was that Jalál and his brother had the honour and privilege of growing up under the shadow of the Holy Shrines, and in Haifa, so blessed by the presence of the beloved Guardian and of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

From his youngest years Jalál was reared in the spirit of service exemplified by his mother and he acquired that devotion to Shoghi Effendi which was to characterize his acts of 'instant, exact and complete obedience' throughout his life. He attended the École des Frères of the Jesuits in Ḥaifa until he was of age to enter the American University in Beirut where he graduated in English Literature. He was fluent in both French and Arabic.

In 1937, at the injunction of Shoghi Effendi, Jalál and his mother returned to Írán; a year later his mother passed away in Ṭihrán. Jalál served his two years of compulsory military service and then entered the banking profession. In 1943 he married Darakhshandih Na'ímí, the only daughter of Maḥbúbih and Darí-i-Mu'ayyad (Muṣin) Na'ímí, and six months later the young couple enthusiastically embarked on homefront pioneering to the towns of Burújird and later Kirmanshán where they stayed until the early 1950s when the call came from Shoghi Effendi for Persian pioneers to arise and open new territories for the Faith in Africa. This exhortation of the beloved Guardian's to take the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to Africa, the dark continent which was soon to become the continent of light, evoked an immediate response from Jalál. He relinquished an important promotion as head of the Foreign Exchange Department of Bank Melli of Írán and set out immediately for East Africa. In October 1950 Jalál set foot on the soil of East Africa as the first Bahá'í pioneer and by December of that year he had settled in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika (now Tanzania), with his characteristic exuberance and optimism, ready to overcome every obstacle in the advancement of his beloved Faith. He was joined in June 1951 by his wife, his daughters Mona and Hoda, and his brother-in-law, Farhang Na'ímí. His third child, a son, Ramin, was born in Dar-es-Salaam in 1956.

This was a difficult time, a period of two years when Jalál had no work and when he had to use all his savings to maintain his family. The heat of East Africa was intense. But it was during these years that his teaching efforts were crowned with exhilarating results. Their home was a focal point for the African friends to gather, hear and accept the soul-stirring message of Bahá'u'lláh. Jalál was instrumental in assisting a number of pioneers to settle in Africa at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade launched by the beloved Guardian. Despite hardships and difficulties, Jalál persisted, and with his natural adaptiveness and joyous vitality, lent his share of energy to the firm establishment of the Cause in East Africa. He served on the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Dar-es-Salaam (1952) and was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa (1954). He performed whatever duties he was given with zeal and enthusiasm. In 1954 the Hand of the Cause of God Músá Banání appointed him one of his nine Auxiliary Board members. It was at this time that Jalál made extensive teaching trips visiting the islands of Zanzibar, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion and the Comoro Islands. His dynamic and vibrant

personality, his total and unquestioned devotion and his deep knowledge of the Bahá'í Writings, especially in the fields of Bahá'í history and administration, influenced and galvanized the believers.

When Shoghi Effendi announced the need for pioneers to open the virgin territories of the Belgian Congo (now Zaïre), Jalál immediately arose, arranged his travel documents and started out. When he reached Nairobi, Kenya, he received a cable from the Guardian telling him to return and maintain his post in Dar-es-Salaam, an instruction with which he immediately complied. These were glorious years of expansion and consolidation, years that made history and brought triumphs in the teaching field in Africa which gladdened the heart of the beloved Guardian.

The passing of Shoghi Effendi in November 1957 was a terrible and shattering blow to the entire Bahá'í world, but it was a personal loss for Jalál to whom the Guardian had been an inspiration all his life. He renewed his teaching trips with greater diligence and was instrumental, at the specific request of the Hands of the Cause, in confirming and deepening in the Covenant, the believers on the islands of the Indian Ocean. Throughout Jalál's remaining years in Africa he continued to be an outstanding example of radiant steadfastness, of contented servitude, spreading joy, humour and delight wherever he went and showering love and happiness on all whom he met. To his last days he performed every service for the love of Shoghi Effendi and it was with the same dedication that he maintained his services to the Universal House of Justice.

In 1967, after having spent almost seventeen years in Africa, he moved with his family to West Germany, ready to face a new challenge with undiminished zeal. Here he continued to render inestimable services to anyone who required help in settling in Europe, performing every task with courtesy and loving kindness, care and understanding. Of him it can be truly said that he raised the down-trodden, comforted the hopeless, assisted the weary unfamiliar traveller and quenched the hunger and thirst, whether material or spiritual, of those who search among the multitudinous confusing theories of men. He was a valued member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Hamburg/Eimsbuttel and was a delegate to the National Convention a number of times, contributing his irrepressible enthusiasm to the consultation each Riḍván. He and his wife pioneered to Neumuenster, West Germany, and assisted in the initial stages of the establishment of the first Local Spiritual Assembly there. For eleven years, in spite of language impediment, he gave of both time and energy to the work of the Faith until 1978 when he and his wife decided to move to Canada where their daughter, Mona, had already settled.

It was in Canada, during the last four years of his earthly life which he had lived so fully and richly in the service of his beloved Faith, that he gave of every last ounce of his unique capacities. As a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Selkirk, Manitoba, he was both distinguished and accessible to all who needed his encouragement and love. As a member of the National Pioneering Committee of Canada he contributed from the wealth of his experience and inspired future pioneers with his optimism. As a travelling teacher throughout the province of Quebec and the Maritimes, he was a source of vitality and joy, enthusing the believers with his spontaneous nature, delighting them with his sense of humour, inspiring them with his depth of knowledge and unrestrained flow of stories on every facet of life and with the example of his zeal. His travels in Canada and particularly in Quebec were of great benefit, for he was able to communicate with fluency and depth of feeling in French, a language he dearly loved. French-speaking Canadians remember him with great love and respect. A believer who visited the Maritime area shortly after his death wrote, 'Everyone misses Jalál. It is beyond the capacity of my words to tell you just how much and in what ways and to how profound a degree this extraordinary, ebullient, magnanimous spirit touched the hearts and revivified the life of the souls of the people here. He was a catalyst, a mover. He exuded wellbeing and delight in life that tantalized the seeker and confirmed the believer in the Cause. Remembrance of him never fails to bring the glow of sunlight to people's faces.'

In October 1981, immediately after an extensive teaching trip to Quebec, the Maritimes and the French islands of the Atlantic

Ocean—a trip during which he appeared on television and radio and became the instrument through which a number of people accepted the Faith—Jalál became suddenly ill. Despite surgery in January 1982 his health declined rapidly and he passed away peacefully on 9 May. The year of his passing was that of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passing of the beloved Guardian, the two shining figures who had inspired his love, devotion and service to the Faith since his earliest years. Jalál's blessed remains were laid to rest in St. Clements Cemetery in Selkirk, Manitoba; this, too, was a service to the Faith as it enabled the purchase of a Bahá'í burial plot. The Hand of the Cause of God John Robarts, a dear friend of long standing since the days of pioneering in Africa, attended the funeral along with an enormous assemblage of people from all strata of society and of many racial and religious backgrounds upon whom Jalál Nakhjavání had left a deep and lasting impression by virtue of his radiant nature. A special delegation of members of the United Nations Association on whose executive committee Jalál had served actively in Winnipeg also attended the funeral to pay their respects to a truly unforgettable man. His family was inundated with telegrams and letters from all across the world recounting his innumerable services, recording the impact of his dynamic personality and remarking upon the laughter and joy he had showered upon all whom he met and the memory of which would remain with them for ever. He left behind a testimony that valiant heroism and service to the true interests of humanity are alive and thriving, and that exemplary and effective action will continue to inspire those remaining in this transient world.

The truly great are those, such as Jalál Nakhjavání, whose very memory, long after their passing on to a nobler habitation, befitting their station, will continue to stir in people the desire to do the Will of the Creator. Those who reflect on the actions of Jalál Nakhjavání perpetuate the remembrance of one who was a true servant of God and a lover of mankind.

MONA BOSSI (NAKHJAVÁNÍ)



Eugen Schmidt

EUGEN SCHMIDT
1901–1982

We take leave of Dr. Eugen Schmidt. A fulfilled life has come to an end. A great, pure soul has ascended to its eternal home.

Eugen Schmidt was born in Stuttgart on 22 February 1901. He grew up in an austere Christian home where basic religious values and ethics were imprinted deeply upon his mind. 'God grants success to the sincere,' was his guiding motto. In his early youth his alert intellect had discovered the many terrible conflicts of life, and especially those afflicting human society; experiencing the First World War as a youth made him an ardent seeker. Deep in his heart he felt that the solution to humanity's problems lay not in brute force but in intellectual enlightenment, philosophical endeavour, unbiased and world-embracing religious consciousness and an improved social order. After the war he gathered about him a circle of like-minded friends who, without regard to political affiliations, worked enthusiastically and with great conviction for the cause of world peace, setting before their

listeners at youth congresses, and at functions they themselves organized, the high aspirations they held for an enlightened society in which all would work together in harmony. Already, then, we glimpse Eugen Schmidt as he will live on in our memory: a man of passionate convictions and thoroughly thought-out views which he was able to present with great eloquence.

About 1924 he encountered the Bahá'í Faith. He must have been a very critical and challenging God-seeker at first, but the longer and more actively he explored the all-encompassing, clear concepts of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the more deeply convinced he became of their validity. The vision of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh captivated him and became the motivating force of his life.

Because of his father's unemployment, Eugen Schmidt began studying rather late. In 1932 he obtained a doctorate in political science. Professionally, he had for many years held a leading position in industry. After his military service and war captivity he was employed in the service of Public Health and Social Security, a field about which he had written in his doctoral thesis. As a writer, editor and organizer he was constantly expending his energies on behalf of a 'healthy nation'.

On one of the first occasions when he presented a Bahá'í paper at a youth conference he met Erna Kauffmann whom he later married. Two sons and one daughter were born of this happy marriage.

Eugen Schmidt was one of the most active, conscientious and enterprising German Bahá'ís. If, in the thirties and fifties—before and after the prohibition imposed by the Nazi regime—there were three believers who decisively influenced the German Bahá'ís and led them as they took their very first steps towards fulfilling that great vision which Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi had of the spiritual reality of the German people, they were the three doctors: Hermann Grossmann, the visionary of the new Covenant of God and the divine World Order; Adelbert Mühlschlegel, the poet and mystic; and Eugen Schmidt, the pragmatic organizer, who was capable of advancing the German Bahá'í community, step by step, closer to the practical realization of its spiritual goals. He was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany from 1932 onwards, and its chairman in the decisive years of re-building after World War II. He was also a member of the Spiritual Assemblies of his home communities of Stuttgart and then Leinfelden-Echterdingen; editor of *Bahá'í Nachrichten*, the newsletter of Germany, and of *Sonne der Wahrheit*, a Bahá'í periodical; an ever-available public speaker and lecturer; an enthusiastic organizer of and participant in large international conferences, World Religion Day observances and other gatherings; and the author and translator of articles. It is my hope that the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Germany will soon have the privilege of producing a memorial volume of his selected essays. For myself, and surely also for my friend, Dieter Schubert, the editorial consultations with Eugen Schmidt about the first issues of *Bahá'í Briefe* were among the most fruitful inspirations of our younger years. As a postscript to a letter written to Eugen Schmidt on his behalf on 9 April 1955, Shoghi Effendi inscribed these words, 'May the Almighty bless your meritorious endeavours, guide every step you take, and aid you to enrich the record of your deeply appreciated services to His Faith.'

Without the intensive, personal, sacrificial service of Eugen Schmidt we would not have witnessed the dedication of the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds (1952) nor that of the first European House of Worship (1964). He served the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh for many years as a member of the Auxiliary Board and, until his strength waned in old age, he worked for the Bahá'í Public Relations Committee and the liaison committee of the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations. In all these sacrificial and time-consuming undertakings extending over more than half a century, Dr. Schmidt had the close companionship of his trusted co-worker and dependable comrade, Erna. Few families have more fully exemplified the spirit of the new age in their every-day living. The Schmidt home was an inviolable centre of harmony, the embodiment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Words, *a house of peace, a house of happiness and exultation*.

The German Bahá'í community is deeply indebted to Eugen Schmidt. Only later genera-

tions will be in a position to fully appreciate how wide and secure were the foundations which he and other Bahá'ís of his generation laid in difficult times. The Universal House of Justice wrote, in its cable of condolence to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany, on 2 June 1982:

> CONVEY MEMBERS HIS FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY PASSING OUTSTANDING STALWART DEVOTED BELIEVER EUGEN SCHMIDT. HIS LONG SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE TEACHING FIELDS WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED. ASSURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABUNDANT REWARD ABHA KINGDOM.

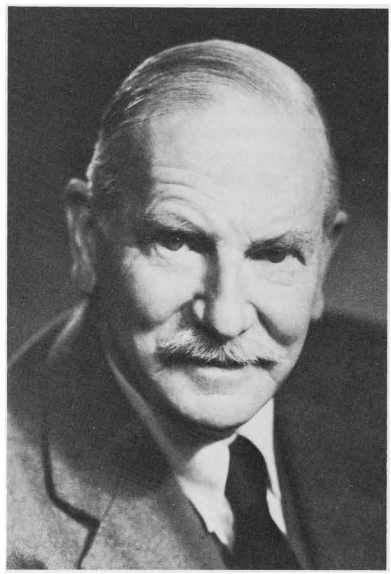
(Adapted from a memoir by PETER MÜHLSCHLEGEL)

RICHARD ST. BARBE BAKER, O.B.E.
1889–1982

> PASSING DISTINGUISHED DEDICATED SERVANT HUMANITY RICHARD ST BARBE BAKER LOSS TO ENTIRE WORLD AND TO BAHAI COMMUNITY AN OUTSTANDING SERVANT SPOKESMAN FAITH. HIS DEVOTION BELOVED GUARDIAN NEVER CEASING EFFORTS BEST INTERESTS MANKIND MERITORIOUS EXAMPLE. ASSURE FAMILY FRIENDS PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD BOUNTIFUL REWARD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.
>
> Universal House of Justice
> 10 June 1982

Ecology is not a new branch of science, but rather one newly appreciated by recent generations. This interest in the pattern of relations between organisms and their environment is no longer the preserve of academics; the general public's concern in this field has assumed an increasingly important profile. As with so many other areas of human endeavour, the questioning of inherited traditional values in the mid-1800s encompassed our relationship to the natural environment. One of the most important figures in articulating these questions and engaging the public in a search for new directions was an Englishman who became widely known as 'the Man of the Trees'.

Richard St. Barbe Baker, usually addressed as St. Barbe, was born on 9 October 1889 at West End, near Southampton, in England. His long life as a forester, author and conservationist brought to many generations the message of the importance of the natural environment and, in particular, trees. His unique synthesis of the practical knowledge of a trained forester and an almost mystical vision of the role that forests play in the life of man served to inspire millions of people the world over to become involved in restoring what he referred to as the '. . . earth's green mantle, the Trees'. He was the first Bahá'í to achieve international recognition for his forestry and environmental work, and so it is appropriate to examine not only the contribution he made to his profession, but also to the influence of the Bahá'í Faith on his development.



Richard St. Barbe Baker

As a young man, St. Barbe went to homestead in Canada in response to a call for Christian men to attend to the spiritual needs of settlers on the prairies. He bought land in the newly-created province of Saskatchewan,

and devoted himself to building up congregations in rural areas. Then, in 1909, he enrolled in the first class of the University of Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon.

It was while living in the Canadian west that he first saw the effects of the sudden disruption of an entire ecosystem. The ploughing up of immense areas of prairie grasslands to create farms, with only sporadic compensation measures such as planting tree shelterbelts, resulted in much valuable topsoil being blown away. Similarly, when he began working at a lumber camp in northern Saskatchewan, he witnessed the unnecessary waste of trees as virgin forests were logged. He left for England in 1912, determined that one day he would be involved in forestry and conservation work. However, the Christian ministry was still his first calling, and he enrolled in Divinity at Ridley Hall, Cambridge. This pursuit was soon interrupted by the outbreak of World War I, in response to which he enlisted and served in France. Following the war St. Barbe returned to Cambridge and this time took a diploma in Forestry at Caius College.

Thus qualified, he went to Kenya in 1920 to serve under the Colonial Office as Assistant Conservator of Forests. In Africa he again saw evidence of the tendency to take too much from the land and to exploit excessively the forests. In the highlands of Kenya large tracts of land had been devastated by a combination of the introduction of goats, the clear-felling of forests and the arrival of white settlers. St. Barbe conceived a plan to restore the indigenous forests using a system under which food crops were planted between rows of young native trees. Several years of crops would be harvested before the trees grew to a size that necessitated moving to a new site, leaving behind a potential forest and demonstrating that supplying people's basic needs is not incompatible with managing forests. Thousands of tree seedlings were needed for the operation, and departmental funds that St. Barbe had at his disposal were negligible.

In 1922 he took a step, unprecedented at the time, to remedy this lack of funds. He consulted with the Africans themselves, approaching the Kikuyu Chiefs and Elders in the area and enquiring how their tribesmen could be enlisted to help with tree planting. He worked with them to develop a scheme for the voluntary planting of trees. This resulted in three thousand warriors coming to his camp from among whom, with the assistance of the Chiefs, he selected fifty to be the first *Watu wa Miti*, or Men of the Trees. They promised before *N'gai*, the High God, that they would protect the native forest, plant ten native trees each year, and take care of trees everywhere. The society of The Men of the Trees later spread to many other countries and its membership today includes men and women from all walks of life. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales became the Patron of the organization in 1979.

In the last decade foresters have begun to realize that the answer to deforestation lies in persuading the local people that safeguarding their forests will preserve their livelihoods, while planting new forests will actually enhance their standards of living. This approach of enlisting local people is now called 'social' forestry. St. Barbe began implementing this idea half a century before it became accepted practice, and was the object of much criticism during his early days for becoming too involved with the indigenous people of Kenya and elsewhere. He lived long enough to see the climate of opinion change and to witness recognition of his pioneering work in helping to pave the way for the adoption of a new philosophy in forestry.

After leaving Kenya in 1924, St. Barbe went back to England where he read a paper on African Bantu beliefs at the First Congress of Living Religions within the Commonwealth. At the conclusion of his talk he was approached by Claudia Stewart Coles who introduced him to the Bahá'í Faith by explaining that his genuine interest in another's religion struck a sympathetic chord with the Bahá'í principles. Under her guidance St. Barbe studied the Faith and embraced it shortly after.

Although he was later appointed Assistant Conservator of Forests for the southern provinces in Nigeria and served in this post from 1924 to 1929, there was one event during St. Barbe's tenure in Kenya that prevented his ever rising higher within the ranks of the Colonial Office: a superior officer attempted to strike a Kikuyu worker with the butt end of a rifle and St. Barbe stepped in to intercept. He felt that it was an unfair action and took

the blow on his own shoulder. Considered an outrageous act of insubordination at the time, the episode is still remembered by Africans. It helped St. Barbe in enlisting their support for his many tree-planting programmes. He was later to reflect that: 'My discharge from the Colonial Service liberated me for much greater work in reafforestation and earth regeneration in other parts of the world.'

The first indication of the new direction of his career came in 1929 when the High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir John Chancellor, asked St. Barbe to apply the lessons garnered during his time in Kenya to help unify disparate religionists in the British protectorate. In a move that indicated his appreciation of the role of the Bahá'í Faith, St. Barbe's first action was to approach its Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, who became the first life member of The Men of the Trees in Palestine. Working closely with the High Commissioner, St. Barbe then went on to enlist the Chancellor of the Hebrew University, the Grand Mufti of the Supreme Muslim Council, the Latin Patriarch, the Bishop of Jerusalem and others, explaining that: '. . . there was no land needing trees more than Palestine and no land would respond so well to planting.' From this initiative, forty-two nurseries were established. However, St. Barbe realized that providing the seedlings was not enough, and so he set out to establish tree planting as part of the culture, as he had done so successfully in Kenya. To this end he was instrumental in making *Tu Bi'Shvat* (the traditional Feast of Trees) a national tree-planting day which is now taken up by most Israeli schoolchildren. In his project in Palestine St. Barbe had the active support of notables including Field Marshal Viscount Allenby and Sir Francis Younghusband. His ability to enlist the help of prominent figures was now combined with his appreciation of the practical side of forestry and an understanding of how to involve local people in his plans. Thus was set a pattern of action which was to result in the involvement of millions of men and women around the world in the planting of billions of trees.

For many, St. Barbe will be remembered for two of his undertakings which more than any others seemed to capture the public's imagination: his work to save large tracts of California coastal redwood trees, and his plans to reclaim millions of acres of the Sahara desert.

By the early 1930s the redwoods of California were under threat from lumber operations. Although there was talk of saving small groves of these trees, St. Barbe felt it was necessary to set aside an area large enough to sustain the natural climate needed by the micro-forest. He raised interest in his plans by lecturing extensively across the United States and Britain. With a modest financial contribution towards the 'save the redwoods' project from The Men of the Trees in the United Kingdom, St. Barbe was able to attract the attention of the American public who in turn responded with contributions amounting to over ten million dollars. The result was that a natural reserve of twelve thousand acres of redwoods was handed over to the State of California to be preserved for all time.

In 1952, with the blessing of several major universities, St. Barbe led the first Sahara University Expedition. His book *Sahara Challenge* describes the 9,000-mile journey and outlines his conviction that the phenomenal pace with which the Sahara over the centuries was merging into the Libyan desert could be arrested, further encroachment prevented and reclamation undertaken if the correct action was taken. As in other areas, St. Barbe was ahead of the times in his vision of trees forming a 'Green Front' against the Sahara and other deserts. Only recently have governments and international agencies such as the United Nations begun to properly address the issue of the spreading of deserts. And yet St. Barbe was aware of the root cause of this delay. He wrote: 'The conquest of the desert will have to start with the conquest of the heart of man. We have witnessed tremendous strides in scientific research and inventions, but it is obvious that the spiritual advance of mankind has not kept pace with scientific progress.' He presented the challenge of reclaiming the Sahara as: '. . . A One World Purpose' that 'would unite East and West and be the scientific and physical answer to the world's dilemma.'

For many years following his acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith, people would often know St. Barbe for some time before learning that he

was a Bahá'í, for he was also an Edwardian—a composite of convention, eccentricity and very strong principles—who found it difficult to discuss religion, let alone ascribe himself publicly to this 'unconventional' Faith. However, as his friend of many years, David Hofman, said of St. Barbe's very first encounter with Bahá'í: 'He always said that this was the beginning of his true life, and he realized that he derived so much benefit from these [Bahá'í] prayers that it was only fair that he should serve the Bahá'í Faith to the best of his ability.' Mr. Hofman also noted that: '. . . he spread knowledge of the Faith wherever he went and was greatly admired by Shoghi Effendi for his dedication to the cause of humanity.' He served the Faith throughout his life in his work as a forester and author. He wrote: 'The simple act of planting a tree, which is in itself a practical deed, is also the symbol of a far-reaching ideal, which is creative in the realm of the spirit, and in turn reacts upon society, encouraging all to work for the future well-being of humanity rather than for immediate gain.'

A letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to St. Barbe on 31 May 1953 bears a postscript in the Guardian's own hand: 'May the Almighty abundantly reward you for your splendid and manifold activities in the service of the Faith, and enable you to enrich continually the record of your greatly valued and meritorious accomplishments, Your true and grateful brother . . .'

St. Barbe died on 9 June 1982 in Saskatoon. Although he was in his ninety-second year, he was still full of plans and was working on his thirty-first book. Just days before his death he planted his last tree on the grounds of the University of Saskatchewan. He had gone full circle to return to the place which had helped kindle a vision that, fuelled by the Bahá'í Faith, aided the creation of a new understanding in the consciousness of men of the importance of trees.

HUGH C. LOCKE

HENRY BRECHTEFELD
1929–1982



Henry Brechtefeld

Henry Brechtefeld passed on to the Abhá Kingdom on 13 September 1982 in his fifty-third year. He was born on the island of Marakei in the Kiribati (formerly Gilbert) Islands. He came from a strict Catholic family and received his education at a church school. He left the Gilbert Islands as a youth and went to New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) to live with an uncle. Later he settled in the Solomon Islands where he first worked with the government, then for Mr. and Mrs. Alvin J. Blum, and then went into business on his own. He opened a second-hand clothing store. This was a great boon to the island people who could not afford new clothes. Later this industry was taken up by the Solomon Islanders and the Chinese and has spread throughout the Solomons.

The Blums were the first to tell Henry of the Bahá'í Faith and later he came into contact with the musician, Russ Garcia, and his wife, Gina, who were in the Solomons for a short time. He became very attracted through their songs and the meetings he had with them. They gave him books to read and he became deeply touched by the Bahá'í teachings. A truly amazing change came into his life and he became completely dedicated to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. It was this change in Henry that

created a deep impression. Formerly he drank heavily and was an inveterate gambler. He immediately gave up drinking and when he became aware of the admonition about gambling he told his friends not to come to his house for this purpose. His family and friends, many of whom were of Gilbertese background, were at first antagonistic because he was teaching a new Faith. However, Henry displayed patience and persistence. He started classes and firesides in a room he built at the back of his store which was located in the village of White River, about three miles from the township of Honiara. Gradually he won to the Faith most of his family. His saintly old mother, who could not speak English, would sit quietly day after day, listening and observing and lost in thought, when suddenly the veil was rent and she became a radiant Bahá'í.

Henry was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly and served until he was named an Auxiliary Board member. He travelled to different islands of the Solomons—Savo, St. Christobal, Western Solomons, Tulagi and Guadacanal. He brought into the Faith a very outstanding personality of great capacity, one well versed in the Bible and a sound teacher of the Cause today, who, too, has travelled extensively teaching the Faith; he is now chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly and with several other members of the National Assembly attended the International Convention in Haifa.

Henry developed diabetes in the last year of his life and experienced great tests—marital, financial and health. However, his very strong faith in meeting these problems was an example to all of us. He had a longing to go back to his native Kiribati and to the Marshalls where he had spent some time in his early days. His condition was aggravated by a coral cut he received and he returned to the Solomons very ill. He might have been spared if he had consented to have his leg and arm amputated. This he refused to do, as he was already longing for that other world which had now become very near to him.

The last days of his life were very poignant and sweet. The many youth he taught in White River came as in vigil and sang the songs he loved in the Gilbertese language and songs of the Faith. With great love he counselled them to dedicate their lives to the teaching of the Faith and exhorted them to become examples worthy of this great Cause. This they have done and are doing. They have become a very united group, teaching and singing their way to the hearts of the people.

It is said that there are as many ways to God as there are breaths. How can one gauge the hunger of a soul for its Creator, when one who was a drunkard and gambler can change in the twinkling of an eye through the Words of the Blessed Beauty and render 'instant, exact and complete obedience' to His Cause?

Many people of all denominations came to the funeral of Henry Brechtefeld and were visibly touched by the funeral service and the spirit of the Faith. His remains are buried in the Bahá'í cemetery close to the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the Solomon Islands.

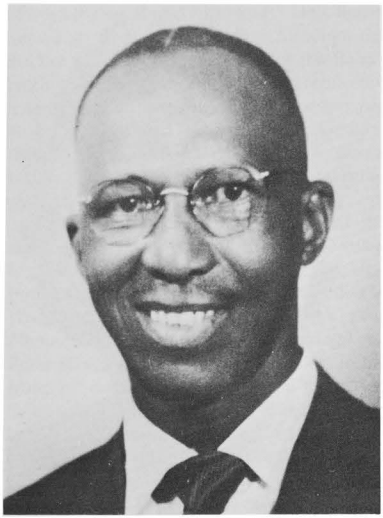
LOT MAX SEEPÉ
1908–1982

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING BELOVED PROMOTER FAITH MAX SEEPE. HIS LONG RECORD DEVOTED SERVICES HIS EXEMPLARY STEADFASTNESS WILL ALWAYS INSPIRE HEARTS HIS COWORKERS AND COUNTRYMEN. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL. EXTEND FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY.

Universal House of Justice
6 October 1982

Max Seepé was the first 'Coloured' believer to embrace the Faith in South Africa. His declaration was made in July 1955 when he was forty-five years of age. He was a teacher by profession and had taught in many cities in South Africa, but at this time he was working for an insurance company, a job which he held until the end of his life. He lived in Western Township, Johannesburg. He had distinguished himself through his services as a Scout and he was active in the St. John Ambulance Association as a first-aid assistant.

Western Township was one of several 'Coloured' townships in Johannesburg. The Seepé home soon became the focal point of Bahá'í teaching work. In his enthusiastic teaching Max was assisted by his wife, May, who enrolled in the Faith later that year and became the first 'Coloured' woman believer in South Africa. For many years Max



Lot Max Seepé

served as chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly for Western, Newclare and Sophiatown Townships. Eventually this Assembly was integrated into the Johannesburg Assembly as restrictions in the country relaxed. Max continued to serve on this Assembly until his passing.

In the firesides at the Seepé home, Max and May were assisted by Florence Marumo, Peter Thebenare, Andrew Mofokeng, and William Masehla. In those early days there were also deepening classes conducted by William Sears and his wife, Marguerite, at their farm. Max made certain that the Western Township Bahá'í community was regular in attending such classes; he could, indeed, be considered the father of the 'Coloured' believers in Johannesburg.

In April 1956 Max was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa and served on this institution for twenty-five years. At the time of his passing on 3 October 1982, he was the only original member remaining on the Assembly.

During his period of service Max showed several virtues. He was frank and forthright in consultation, was not given to unnecessary speech, took decisions with ease and an almost youth-like enthusiasm and firmly upheld the application of Bahá'í principles. His phenomenal memory for the various evolutionary steps involved in the development of the Faith in the region served the Assembly well as new members were added. He believed strongly in fellowship and was always enthusiastic about attending a Convention or conference, distance and expense being no object. He found ways of economizing in order to travel and teach. Max unfailingly displayed obedience to his Assembly and humility to his fellow believers. Nothing was more paramount than attending the meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly; punctuality delighted him and it was rare that Max was absent or late. His well-worn prayer book, flexible from handling, was always in his breast pocket ready for use. He gave a helping hand to a number of countries in Southern Africa including Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, Zululand and Mozambique, where he travelled, often with May, on teaching trips or to attend conferences, Conventions and Summer Schools. He attended the first International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice, where he served as a teller, and went on to attend the World Congress in London. In 1978 he was again privileged to serve as a teller during the International Convention. He was the official representative of the National Assembly at many conferences over the years and always discharged his responsibilities with honour and dignity.

On 9 July 1957 the beloved Guardian wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa: '. . . considering the diversity of problems this newly-elected Body has had to grapple with since its inception, the grave dangers with which it has been faced, the vastness of the area in which it has been called upon to operate, and the diversity of the peoples and tribes which it has been its privilege to contact, enlighten and direct, its concrete and enduring achievements, in the course of the last twelve months, have been such as to evoke in my heart feelings of unqualified admiration for the manner in which it has discharged its varied and weighty responsibilities. It has indeed, through the wisdom it has displayed, the energy with

which it has laboured, the fidelity which it has abundantly demonstrated, and the courage and single-mindedness with which its members have arisen to discharge their mission, set an example worthy of emulation by not only its three sister Assemblies in that continent, but by every other National or Regional Assembly in either the eastern or western hemisphere.' Max was an integral part of that National Spiritual Assembly. The cable sent by the Continental Board of Counsellors for Africa at the time of Max's passing summarizes his effect upon the continent:

> DEEPLY GRIEVED SAD UNEXPECTED NEWS PASSING BELOVED MAX SEEPE WELL REMEMBERED THROUGHOUT CONTINENT AS ONE OF MOST ENTHUSIASTIC EARLY BELIEVERS SOUTHERN AFRICA. KINDLY CONVEY LOVING CONDOLENCES HIS FAMILY YOUR MEMBERS AND ALL FRIENDS. DEEPEST SYMPATHY COUNSELLORS.

Max Seepé's last meeting with the Bahá'ís was the International Conference held in Johannesburg on 19 September 1982, the conference dedicated to the Greatest Holy Leaf and held in the year that marked the fiftieth anniversary of her passing, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passing of the Guardian. Present at that gathering as the representative of the Universal House of Justice was Max's teacher, the Hand of the Cause of God William Sears.

Max's greatest wish was to once more attend the International Convention in Haifa during Riḍván 1983. But it was not to be. However, his fellow National Assembly members who were present thought of him often during those precious days, especially when the tellers made their report, and said prayers on his behalf at the Holy Shrines.

Truly, HIS EXEMPLARY STEADFASTNESS WILL ALWAYS INSPIRE [the] HEARTS [of] HIS CO-WORKERS AND COUNTRYMEN. What greater tribute could be paid a Bahá'í than to be called by the Universal House of Justice A NOBLE SOUL!

ANDREW MOFOKENG



Lisbeth Greeves

LISBETH GREEVES
1897–1982

> ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS RADIANT SOUL LISBETH GREEVES. BAHAI COMMUNITIES GREAT BRITAIN IRELAND MAY COMPENSATE GRIEVOUS LOSS CONTRIBUTE HER HAPPINESS ABHA KINGDOM BY EMULATING HER BRILLIANT EXAMPLE UNFAILING DEVOTION UNIVERSAL LOVE CONSTANT CHEERFULNESS. KINDLY EXPRESS LOVING SYMPATHY RELATIVES.
>
> Universal House of Justice

On 14 December 1982, following a long illness, Lisbeth Greeves passed to the Abhá Kingdom in her eighty-sixth year. Her many manifest spiritual qualities endeared her to hundreds of people during her long service as a Bahá'í. Although she was born in Australia in 1897, her entire Bahá'í life was lived in Northern Ireland, first at Crawfordsburn, near Bangor, and then as a member of the Belfast community.

From her early years she was a spiritual rebel. She recalled walking out of church in Australia, in a rage, saying, 'Jesus wouldn't

like what that stupid man said!' Thus began her questioning and searching. Although she did not declare her acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith until 8 October 1954, she recollected having seen in the spring of 1918 a newspaper headline: a cabled message from General Allenby which read, HAVE TODAY TAKEN PALESTINE. NOTIFY THE WORLD THAT 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ IS SAFE.[1]

During World War II her disgust at the senseless violence resulted in her publishing, in co-operation with her husband, two little booklets of spiritual inspiration called *The Windows of Heaven* and *The Little Blue Flame*. For these she used the *nom de plume* Peter Jarvis. Providentially, she chose, in the front of one of them, to quote Emerson: 'Man's health and greatness consists of his being the channel through which Heaven flows to earth.' This became the hallmark of her future Bahá'í life. Having decided some time prior to becoming a Bahá'í that the spiritual path was the one to follow, her qualities as a spiritual healer began to come to the fore. From then, until a few months before her death, she became a healing channel for the relief, and sometimes the seemingly miraculous cure, of many people from all walks of life. Her unshakeable reliance on prayer resulted in many stories of divine aid coming to the rescue. Some of these incidents were very humorous; indeed, humour was a quality which wove itself firmly into her spiritual fabric.

From the beginning of her devotion to Bahá'u'lláh, which was unfailing, her many qualities quickly developed and were placed at the service of mankind. She constantly thought of others: a little posy of flowers, a small note of love and prayerful thoughts, a timely telephone call to a sick one. In spite of her pouring out love to all, she never once neglected her husband and three children. In this respect her example was a beacon to all: how to both live a full Bahá'í life and pay constant, devoted attention to a wide family circle.

The universal love she displayed expressed itself in her desire to share the message of Christ's return with all in a manner which they might understand. To this end her talents as a writer came to her aid. She wrote and broadcast from time to time on several subjects. She has left us at least four short plays on historical figures of the Bahá'í Faith. In 1976 she recorded her memories in a short work called *The Choir Invisible*. In this she spoke of her early experiences in Australia, as well as the many extraordinary spiritual happenings which attended her life. Her deep love for children was constant, and her own child-like quality attracted young people of all ages. In 1976 she recorded *Stories for Children* —stories about the Master.

Despite her very full life, her international relations with Bahá'ís from many countries is well recognized. She was overjoyed to be able to attend the dedication of the Temples in Kampala and Sydney. While the historic World Congress in London in 1963 left its loving mark on her soul, she was most inspired by her pilgrimage to the Holy Land also in that same year. On the local level she worked for many years for the United Nations Association and will be long remembered in this respect.

Her constant cheerfulness throughout all the years uplifted many a struggling soul just when they most needed it. Surely she made 'Heaven flow to earth'. Now, released from this material world, one feels she is soaring in those other climes with which she was often in contact. She is, no doubt, surrounded by that heavenly music she so vividly described hearing one special night a long time ago.

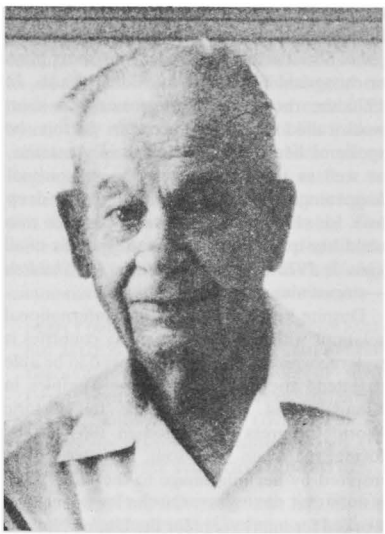
KEITH MUNRO

DUDLEY MOORE BLAKELY
1902–1982
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Dudley M. Blakely was born in October 1902 and declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh in 1920. He was ever afterwards a devoted servant of the Bahá'í Faith. Following in the footsteps of his illustrious aunt, Lua Getsinger, he spread the Message far and wide. His travels took him in the 1930s to the Sudan in Africa and Guyana (formerly British Guiana) in South America.[2] In the spring of 1936 he wrote to

[1] Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway*, p. 220.

[2] See *The Bahá'í Centenary: 1844–1944*, p. 197.



Dudley Moore Blakely

Shoghi Effendi seeking approval of his plan to teach in Latin America with his wife, Elsa. A reply dated 6 March written on behalf of the Guardian expressed Shoghi Effendi's gratification at the news of this 'projected teaching trip to South America', and remarked that 'the lands you are planning to visit are still virgin soils that no Bahá'í pioneer has as yet opened to the Faith. You are therefore called upon to undertake the work of a true pioneer.' In a postscript in his own handwriting the Guardian added, 'I am delighted to learn of your plans and of your determination to serve our beloved Cause in such distant countries and under such difficult circumstances. You are often in my thoughts and prayers. May the Almighty, Whose Cause you are serving with such love, fervour and devotion, bless richly your work and fulfil your highest and dearest hopes.' A letter dated 8 April 1936 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by his secretary records that 'the Guardian is truly delighted to learn of the success of your teaching trip to British Guiana'. There followed years of valuable contributions to the development of the teaching work in Latin America. Between the years 1936 and 1956 the Blakelys were in frequent correspondence with the Guardian, reporting the progress of their teaching efforts and seeking approval of new ventures.

In the early phase of the Ten Year Crusade Dudley and Elsa (or 'Judy' as she is known to her many friends) pioneered to Tonga, earning the title Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. A report sent to the Holy Land in the spring of 1956 describing the participation of Tongan believers in the teaching work in the islands brought a reply written on the Guardian's behalf on 1 May, stating, 'The Polynesians for many centuries . . . have been admired for their fine characteristics and the nobility of their spirit. It would be a great contribution to the world-wide character of our Faith to have people of this race active in its service and representing what their race has to give, as time goes on, in joint Bahá'í national and international councils. Your services there are very deeply appreciated, and the work you are accomplishing, very dear to his heart.'

They settled in Hawaii at the end of the Ten Year Plan, and in September 1977 pioneered to the Bahamas to help prepare the Bahamian Bahá'í community for the formation of its first National Spiritual Assembly, but circumstances beyond their control forced them to leave the following February. Dudley was then in his seventy-sixth year.

An artist, sculptor and designer by profession, he served as an adviser to the Tongan government. His handiwork can be seen in the several buildings and interiors he designed in the islands. Many such works can also be seen in the United States. He left a legacy of beauty. As a consultant, he produced designs for such diverse items as a small dory for the Department of Fisheries, a pilot boat, a government market, a refrigeration system and buildings for various purposes. He also designed a set of the first gold coins in Polynesia, in 1962, of which two hundred and fifty proof sets were minted. A year earlier he had designed a five-stamp special issue set commemorating mail deliveries to the islands from the era of the fishing boat to that of airmail. He designed Tonga's first decimal coin set in 1965.

Dudley Blakely ascended to the Abhá Kingdom on 19 December 1982 from his homefront post in St. Simons Island, Georgia,

U.S.A. Recognizing his many years of dedicated service, the Universal House of Justice, when word came of his death, cabled on 19 January 1983:

DEEPLY SADDENED RECENT PASSING KNIGHT OF BAHAULLAH DUDLEY MOORE BLAKELY WHOSE PIONEERING SERVICES GRATEFULLY REMEMBERED. KINDLY CONVEY HIS WIDOW JUDY OUR LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE OUR ARDENT PRAYERS FOR PROGRESS HIS SOUL AND HER FULL RECOVERY FROM RECENT ILLNESS.

GULDÁNIH YÚSIFÍ 'ALÍPÚR
1918–1982

Mrs. Guldánih Yúsifí 'Alípúr, daughter of Fatḥ'alí, was born in 1918 to a Muslim family in the village of Sádát Mahallih, situated in the Chahár Dángih section of Sárí, which is five kilometres from Rawshankúh, a Bahá'í village. About fifty years ago she married Mr. Fatḥ'alí 'Alípúr, a Bahá'í from the village of Kandas Bun, adjacent to Rawshankúh. She developed a great love for the Cause and encouraged her children to be pious and to follow the teachings of the Faith; she even assisted them in the performance of their spiritual obligations and duties. Her two daughters and one son had Bahá'í marriages and have been very staunch and steadfast believers. Mrs. 'Alípúr enrolled as a Bahá'í in 1979.

During the disturbances in Kandas Bun which started in the early summer of 1982, the family of Mr. Fatḥ'alí 'Alípúr, and especially this dear lady, led the friends in setting an example of constancy. Although the instigators and the evildoers were Mrs. 'Alípúr's nieces, nephews and other relatives, and despite the fact that she was the target of most of the attacks, her family was the last one to leave Kandas Bun. Mrs. 'Alípúr, who was sixty-five years old, and whose back was bent, who walked with a cane and was physically frail, was repeatedly beaten, together with her husband, and even dishonoured. At one point their adversaries urinated on them and forced into their mouths a stick covered with human excrement.

The essential occupation of the inhabitants of this region is tending cattle. After the afflicted friends were forced to evacuate Kandas Bun they took refuge in Rawshankúh. Mr. Fatḥ'alí 'Alípúr and his son, 'Alí, created a temporary pasture for their cattle in Gáv Bunih which lies between the two villages. On Friday, 24 December 1982 at about 2:00 p.m. an unknown number of persons hostile to the Faith appeared in Gáv Bunih, strangled Guldánih, and set fire to her body. They burned Gáv Bunih and all the forage. They even inflicted a wound on a sheep. When the grandson of Guldánih returned from grazing the cattle at 4:00 p.m. he discovered the burnt body of his grandmother and hastened to inform the friends and other members of the family. The incident was reported to the police in Kíyásar. At noon the next day members of the police force arrived on the scene and, at about 3:00 p.m., the official medical doctor and the interrogator from the Public Prosecutor's office in Sárí. The doctor confirmed that Guldánih 'Alípúr had been strangled prior to being set ablaze and issued a permit for burial. Her body was so burnt, especially the upper part and about the chest, that it was not possible to wash it properly, but a full Bahá'í burial was accorded her before she was finally laid to rest in the Bahá'í cemetery of Rawshankúh.

(Translated from the Persian by BAHARIEH MA'ÁNÍ)

AMINE MESBAH
(AMÍN'U'LLÁH MIṢBÁḤ)
1905–1982

JEANNE MESBAH
(MARIE-JEANNE IRADY MIṢBÁḤ)
1909–1983

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING STAUNCH DEVOTED PROMOTER FAITH AMINULLAH MESBAH. HIS PIONEERING SERVICES THREE CONTINENTS HIS SCHOLARLY WORK HIS SPIRIT UTTER DEDICATION WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED AND SERVE AS INSPIRATION HIS COUNTLESS ADMIRERS. CONVEY LOVING SYMPATHY MEMBERS FAMILY. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
30 December 1982

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING JEANNE MESBAH. HER RADIANT SPIRIT HER DEVOTED PIONEERING ACTIVITIES HER WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT SERVICES HER BELOVED HUSBAND WILL ALWAYS BE TENDERLY REMEMBERED. PRAYING SHRINES NOBLE SOUL THIS DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE BASQUE PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE UNFOLD PROGRESS ABHA KINGDOM. EXTEND HEARTFELT SYMPATHY MEMBERS FAMILY.

Universal House of Justice
14 April 1983

All those in Europe, Asia and Africa who knew Dr. Amín'u'lláh Miṣbáḥ remember having been in contact with an exceptional personality. His deep knowledge of the Faith, his global vision of events, his scientific mind, his literary aptitude and his poetical gifts made of him a man open to every avenue of culture. He was not a public speaker nor an eloquent leader of the multitudes, but rather a fascinating interlocutor whose lucid and intuitive sensibilities inspired in all whom he met a recognition of a reality beyond the moment and beyond material existence, that of the image of God which he carried within him.

A physician, the confidant of the most intimate sufferings, a member of Assemblies, a witness of the most private individual problems, he was attentive and close to every heart, listening to every person who unburdened himself to him, yet he roused and stirred up these same people in the name of the glorious destiny promised to their souls.

All those who came from near or far to seek his opinion, an elucidation or an explanation and who submitted to him the fruit of their research or a manuscript found him to be of valuable assistance and a source of knowledge. Never did he avoid answering even at risk of breaking the contact through his complete frankness and the boldness of his remarks: his moral integrity would not brook any compromise.

This erudite Persian who had access to the Arab and French cultures, this tormented and lucid poet, this scholar who even at an advanced age regarded science with the enthusiasm and wonderment of an adolescent, consecrated his life to the Bahá'í ideal which inspired him. All his life—not easy, monotonous or banal—was marked and guided by the personality of Shoghi Effendi.

Amín'u'lláh Miṣbáḥ, born in Ṭihrán in 1905, came from a family whose maternal and paternal roots go back to the very beginnings of the new Dispensation. His father, 'Azízu'lláh Miṣbáḥ, director of the Tarbíyat School, was an eminent poet and writer; his mother, Qudsíyyih 'Alá'í, was the sister of the Hand of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í. From his earliest years Amín'u'lláh captivated those around him by his literary talents and his scientific gifts. Enamoured of literature and passionately devoted to science, he cultivated these two interests throughout his life, aligning oriental mysticism to occidental rationalism.

After he completed his studies at the Tarbíyat School chance, in the garb of a competitive examination, opened the door to the study in France of biology and medicine. Then, at the Institute of Physiopathology in the Paris Faculty of Medicine, he undertook research on the physiology of the anterior hypophysis. The publications which resulted from his work are, in large part, the source of our understanding of certain diseases of this gland.

He married Marie-Jeanne Irady, a French Bahá'í, and started his life with her in 1937 with a pilgrimage to the Holy Land where they met the Guardian. He then returned to Írán and joined the Faculty of Medicine in Ṭihrán as a professor. It was evident that a comfortable and tranquil university career seemed to await him, but such was not the destiny nor the desire of the young couple. In 1942, as soon as Amín and Jeanne heard the Guardian's call for pioneers in the forty-five month Plan assigned to the Bahá'í community of Írán, they arose and settled with their son in Afghanistan where they remained until 1945, isolated from the world and unable to communicate with anyone, but happy to have been able to respond to the appeal of the Guardian. After persevering for three years, tired, indebted and with the life of their forty-day-old daughter in jeopardy, they returned to Írán.

Amín took up again his teaching position on the Faculty of Medicine and opened a medical practice. He also devoted much energy to the Bahá'í community, serving as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Ṭihrán, of com-



Jeanne Mesbah



Amine Mesbah

mittees, of commissions and of the Board of Directors of Missaghiyeh (Míthaqíyih) Hospital. His life and that of his family again appeared to be laid out: intense Bahá'í activity and the sustained pursuit of his professional and scientific interests provided material, intellectual and spiritual satisfaction and comfort. Once more the call of the Guardian—the launching of the Ten Year Plan—disrupted the organized pattern of their lives. Without regrets, Amín and Jeanne with their two children abandoned family, friends, school, profession and secure future to throw themselves, as did so many others, into the adventure of the Ten Year Crusade.

In Ethiopia, from 1955 to 1959, Amín, while consecrating himself to teaching the Faith, carried on his profession and obtained the position of military doctor in Asmara. In Morocco, from 1959 to 1969, he was chief physician of the anatomopathology laboratory. And finally, in France, at the service of the International Pioneer Committee of the United States, he took advantage of his retirement. During his last ten years, at the suggestion of the Universal House of Justice, he conducted historical research in Paris at the National Library and in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which brought to light material that has already served historians of the Faith.

This itinerant life (never more than ten years in one place), this life with no rest (for he was always at the service of the ill and was active in Bahá'í teaching activities), was for Amín a source of inexhaustible enrichment and of poetic inspiration, for he was one of those who offer humanity, in the form of an enduring work, the fruit of every ordeal and joy. His literary work consists primarily of poems inspired by the events of the moment, happy or sad, and dedicated to his venerated parents, to his dear wife, to his children and grandchildren, or to the launching of the Ten Year Crusade, to the conquests of the pioneers, to the glory of the Guardian or in honour of the establishment of the Universal House of Justice. During the last period of his life he laboured relentlessly on the epic task of writing the history of the Bahá'í Faith in

verse. He had ardently hoped to finish this work, but on 29 December 1982, when he was in full possession of his physical and intellectual forces, a cerebral haemorrhage carried him off leaving his friends, his family and in particular his wife, Jeanne, in profound dismay. Their destinies had been so intimately linked that his companion and partner in a life he laboured relentlessly on the epic task of writing the history of the Bahá'í Faith in the Abhá Kingdom a scant three-and-a-half months later on 14 April 1983. Forty-seven years of life together had welded inseparably these two beings, so different and so complementary.

In contrast to Amín who had tormented and hidden depths, Jeanne was elegant, fascinating, enchanting and lively, and travelled through life like a ray of sunshine. Armed with her bright and sparkling smile, her polished speech and her refined manners she set out to conquer the most morose dispositions and the most reticent hearts; she faced ticklish situations with equanimity and was at ease in the drawing-rooms of the great of this world. She was born on 27 March 1909 to a Catholic family in Biarritz, a Basque area, where traditions and values seemed fixed for eternity. As a child she aspired to a secure and tranquil life without surprises, but a serious and protracted illness at an early age led her to reflect and meditate upon life and death. As a student in Paris she accepted the Bahá'í Faith through May Maxwell and frequented the homes of such early Bahá'ís as Mme Dreyfus-Barney, Miss Edith Sanderson and Mme Scott. She met Amín in the Bahá'í meetings and found herself, as a result of her marriage, embarked upon an epic adventure. 'You must be proud to belong to the Miṣbáḥ family,' the Guardian told her in the early days of her married life. She found herself in Írán, a young and inexperienced Bahá'í, a refined and emancipated woman in the grip of foreign customs; but Amín's family welcomed her, and her sincerity and radiance opened many doors and won for her acceptance and love. Later she found herself pioneering—she who had nothing of the adventurer in her—not hesitating to encourage or support her husband in hazardous enterprises or to enlist his energetic aid in projects in which she was sure she could succeed.

Having proved herself and gained confidence by serving on various committees in Írán and particularly on the East–West Committee, she continued to serve wherever she found herself. She was a member of the Regional Assembly of North-east Africa. She travelled, using her natural charm and her ease of expression (in French, English, Persian and Italian) to meet and interest people. Always she represented the Faith with dignity. She was in touch with the authorities in Djibouti, then a French dependency, gave French lessons to the daughter of the king (Negus) of Ethiopia, became secretary to the viceroy in Eritrea, and the President of the *Alliance Française* in Asmara. The Guardian pointed out to her in 1953 that he had inscribed the Basque country on the map of the Ten Year Plan. Proud of being the first Basque Bahá'í Jeanne, following Shoghi Effendi's instructions, had a text of Bahá'u'lláh translated by the Director of the Basque museum in Bayonne.

Jeanne took pleasure in measuring the path she had followed since accepting the Faith. She, who had struggled so much, communicated a climate of peace, of quietude and of certitude. She had an expansive nature and could listen for hours to complaints and sighs; she knew how to comfort the saddest soul.

Amín and Jeanne spent the last years of their lives near their children in France in an Alsatian village called Hegenheim on the borders of three countries, France, Switzerland and Germany. After a full life they took their flight to the Abhá Kingdom. Even their departure provided opportunity to proclaim, as the local newspaper reported, that the fate of humanity depends upon its acceptance of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

(Adapted from a memoir by DR. A. CH. MIṢBÁḤ and LEYLA MIṢBÁḤ SABÉRAN; translated from the French by DIANE STARCHER)

STANWOOD COBB
1881–1982

At the passing of our dearly loved and greatly missed Stanwood Cobb—noted Bahá'í lecturer, educator and author—the following

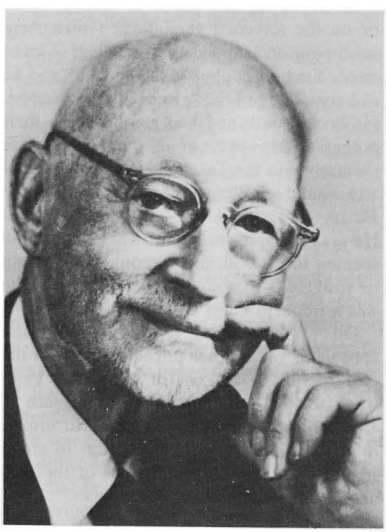
cablegram was received from the Universal House of Justice:

GRIEVED PASSING STANWOOD COBB. HIS LONGTIME SERVICES CAUSE BEGINNING AS CONTRIBUTOR STAR OF THE WEST AND SUBSEQUENTLY COEDITOR WORLD ORDER MAGAZINE EARNED HIGH PRAISE BELOVED GUARDIAN. HIS SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENTS SPECIALLY FIELD EDUCATION HAVE GREATLY ENRICHED LITERATURE FAITH. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

31 December 1982

Dr. Cobb passed away at age one hundred and one in his home in Chevy Chase, Maryland, on 29 December 1982, having achieved his ambition to live for a full century. During the final weeks of his life he often referred to his last meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá which occurred in Washington: '. . . He embraced me at the end, kissed me, and said three times, *Be on fire with the love of the Kingdom!*' Stanwood Cobb was indeed on fire with the love of the Kingdom to his last breath after some seventy-five years of service to the Bahá'í Faith.

To review Dr. Cobb's life is to make a beautiful and heavenly journey through those marvellous years beginning with the early dawn of the Bahá'í Faith in the United States when news of this 'new Revelation' and of the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land reached the ears of a few 'ready souls', aroused their curiosity, quickened their hearts and resulted in their making their way to 'Akká in an ever-increasing stream to enter the Master's presence.



Stanwood Cobb

An account of Dr. Cobb's introduction to the Bahá'í Faith in 1906 is given in his *Memories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* and in *Star of the West*, Vol. 15, No. 1, April 1924: He was at that time studying for the Unitarian ministry at the Harvard Divinity School but was drawn to Green Acre in Maine as a result of a series of weekly articles in the *Boston Transcript*. Miss Sarah Farmer introduced Dr. Cobb to the singer, Mary Lucas, who had just returned from visiting 'Abdu'l-Bahá. '. . . within half an hour from that moment I became a confirmed Bahá'í and have remained so ever since,' Dr. Cobb wrote.

After graduating from Dartmouth College and taking an M.A. in philosophy and comparative religion at Harvard, Dr. Cobb served as an instructor at Robert College in Constantinople from 1907 to 1910, an experience that led to the publication of his first book *The Real Turk*. During this interval Dr. Cobb met 'Abdu'l-Bahá on two occasions. The first meeting was in 1908 when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was still a prisoner of the Turks. On this occasion the pilgrim disguised himself as a Turk in order to attain the Master's presence, spending several days as a guest in His home in 'Akká. Mrs. Lua Getsinger, whom Dr. Cobb had encountered by chance in Cairo, had encouraged him to accompany her on this most significant of journeys.

'Again it was my privilege to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the summer of 1910,' writes Dr. Cobb, 'and this time at His own invitation . . . spending a week there in the Persian guest house on the slopes of Mt. Carmel . . . He seemed to me more noble in countenance, more regal in bearing, more potent in the power of His presence than ever before.'

Later Dr. Cobb was to again enter the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in France and in the United States during the course of the Master's historic travels. Dr. Cobb related

that while teaching at Robert College he suffered severe depression. During the course of one of his visits to the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá took him aside, held his hand and sat with him quietly. The depression lifted and never returned. Indeed, sunniness of disposition, cheerfulness of outlook and uncomplaining acceptance became Stanwood Cobb's outstanding characteristics.

He returned to the United States from Constantinople to pursue a career in education and writing. He published approximately twenty books on religion, education and philosophy, and several volumes of verse. He made his home in Chevy Chase, Maryland, where, in 1918, he organized the Progressive Education Association which has exerted a profound influence on education in the United States. He established the Chevy Chase Country Day School where he was able to put into effect his ideas about education. His wife, Nayam Whitlam, a Canadian Bahá'í, was of considerable assistance in this activity until their retirement in 1958. In 1935 Dr. Cobb founded Avalon Press through which he published his works. Some of his better known publications that deal with the principles of the Bahá'í Faith are *Security for a Failing World*, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, *Islám's Contribution to Civilization* and the pamphlet *America's Spiritual Destiny*. Among his books dealing with the development of the individual are *Discovering the Genius Within You*—a book which proved very popular—and *Character: A Sequence in Spiritual Psychology*. His autobiography, *Saga: A Tale of Two Centuries*, appeared in 1977.

In 1924 Dr. Cobb was invited to serve as editor of *Star of the West* and until 1939 he acted as co-editor of its successor, *World Order*, with various distinguished Bahá'ís including Mariam Haney, Horace Holley, Edna True and Jináb-i-Fáḍil. Almost every issue of this publication carries an editorial signed or initialled by Dr. Cobb on a large variety of significant topics reflecting his wide range of interests. He was a popular lecturer on the Faith at public functions and informal firesides and a sought-after teacher at Summer Schools. To the end of his life he possessed an amazing memory for names, dates, places and historical facts, and seldom if ever used notes when giving an address. He kept well informed about current events and world affairs. He was a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Washington, D.C., at the time of its incorporation in 1933, and until his one hundredth birthday frequently lectured at the weekly public meetings held at the Bahá'í Centre there. He mingled with noted authors at the Washington Cosmos Club of which he was a member, and had many distinguished friends among the clergy.

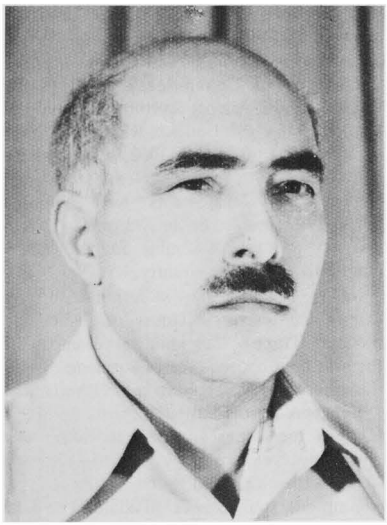
Shoghi Effendi warmly appreciated Dr. Cobb's services to the Faith as the following excerpt, appended in the Guardian's hand to a letter written on his behalf on 5 September 1943, attests:

'. . . Your services to our beloved Faith have been such as to reflect lustre on its institutions and literature, and I pray from the depths of my heart that Bahá'u'lláh may graciously guide and assist you to render through your able and ready pen still greater and more distinguished services.'

Although content with a simple life style, Dr. Cobb was a highly cultivated person and had a taste for the arts. He believed strongly in and greatly valued the power of prayer, and many of his friends would come to ask for prayers on their behalf. Often he could be seen sitting on his porch at Chevy Chase or on the screened veranda at Green Acre meditating and supplicating on behalf of loved ones. Young people sought him out and he was something of the 'wise man' in our midst. He loved youth and had great faith in their potential. Always he urged them to immerse themselves in the Teachings, acquire spiritual virtues and—in the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—*Be on fire with the love of the Kingdom!* He was a happy man and whatever he did seemed to be achieved without stress, strain or struggle. Vigorous and young at heart, he was a frequent guest at youth conferences.

Dr. Cobb's passing to the eternal realm robs us of yet another priceless link with the early period in the rise of the Bahá'í Faith when seekers hastened into the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and returned home to inspire others with the Glad Tidings and to strive zealously to lay the foundations of the burgeoning World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

(Adapted from a memoir by RUTH L. DUNBAR)



Mírzá Áqá Kamálí-Sarvistání

MÍRZÁ ÁQÁ KAMÁLÍ-SARVISTÁNÍ
1924–1983
Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

They that have forsaken their country in the path of God and subsequently ascended unto His presence, such souls shall be blessed by the Concourse on High and their names recorded by the Pen of Glory among such as have laid down their lives as martyrs in the path of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsistent.

Bahá'u'lláh

The above words of the Blessed Beauty apply to Mírzá Áqá Khán Kamálí-Sarvistání. Early in the Ten Year Crusade he opened the island of Socotra to the Faith, for which service he was named by the beloved Guardian a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. In letters written on Shoghi Effendi's behalf it was stated that the Guardian was praying for the accomplishment of the difficult task Mr. Kamálí had undertaken and that he expressed deep appreciation for his sacrificial services. The bounty of receiving such loving and encouraging messages delighted Mr. Kamálí's heart, rejoiced his spirit and further enkindled his eagerness to serve the Cause.

Mr. Kamálí was born in June 1924 in Sarvistán, a town in Fárs Province, Írán. During the thirty years he spent in the Arabic-speaking countries in which he chose to serve he was a source of encouragement and inspiration for his fellow pioneers. He was a knowledgeable and popular teacher at the Bahá'í Summer Schools where he conducted classes for the youth on the history and principles of the Faith. How eager he was to be at his pioneering post when it came time to leave this mortal life!

The day after his passing on 1 February 1983, friends from many Bahá'í centres gathered to honour him, their hearts filled with love for this departed friend. The dignity and serenity which were characteristic of Mr. Kamálí during his earthly life and which reflected his qualities of resignation and contentment were visible in his beautiful countenance after his death. It was a glorious funeral service, befitting that devoted and faithful servant of Bahá'u'lláh, and bringing comfort to his family and friends in their loss.

The services of Mr. Kamálí were crowned by the cable received from the Universal House of Justice on 23 February:

EXPRESS SYMPATHY FRIENDS RELATIVES PASSING KNIGHT BAHAULLAH MIRZA AQA KHAN KAMALI SARVISTANI. ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. HIS STEADFASTNESS HISTORIC SERVICES LOVINGLY REMEMBERED.

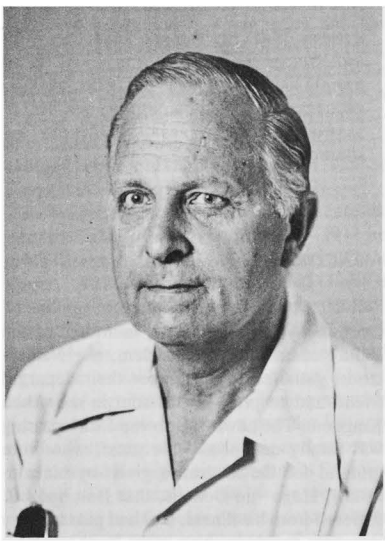
JACOB EDUARD (BOB) VAN LITH
1922–1983

On Sunday, 10 April 1983, members of the Bahá'í community of Haarlem, the Netherlands, gathered to remember their departed friend and to pray for his soul in the Abhá Kingdom. The news of Bob van Lith's passing was totally unexpected for most, who were grateful for the assurance given by his son-in-law, Hugo van Bolhuis, that Bob had not suffered from his illness, and had passed away in peace, deeply trusting in the Faith, with his wife, Marijke, and his daughters, Patricia,

Carolien and Monette, by his side. At the close of the commemorative meeting the cablegram sent by the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Suriname on 9 March was read:

> GRIEVED PASSING VALIANT SERVANT CAUSE JACOBUS VAN LITH. RECALL WITH ADMIRATION HIS THIRTY YEARS CONTINUOUS SERVICE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY BENELUX COUNTRIES AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY NETHERLANDS FOLLOWED BY PIONEERING SURINAME ELECTION FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THAT COUNTRY. HIS OUTGOING PERSONALITY SAGACITY WARM HEART EXEMPLARY CHARACTER TIRELESS LABORS FAITH ENDEARED HIM FELLOW BELIEVERS ENABLED HIM ADVANCE FAITH BAHAULLAH AND RAISE ITS PRESTIGE EYES HIS COUNTRYMEN. CONVEY LOVING SYMPATHY WIFE FAMILY ASSURANCE OUR FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS LOYAL SOUL WORLDS GOD.

Bob van Lith, together with his wife Marijke, accepted the Bahá'í Faith in January 1952. From that moment on he served the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, offering his talents and strengths in all fields of the work of the ever-expanding Bahá'í community.



Jacob Eduard (Bob) van Lith

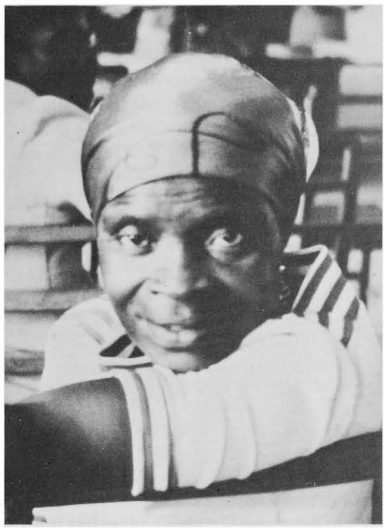
From its inception, he was a member of the Bahá'í Benelux Committee, and afterwards served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Benelux which came into being in 1957. When, in 1962, each of these countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) formed its own National Spiritual Assembly, he served on the Dutch National Spiritual Assembly and was chairman until he left the country.

In 1975 Bob and Marijke responded to the call of the Universal House of Justice for pioneers. Three of their children accompanied them to their chosen goal of Suriname, while the others stayed behind in the Netherlands.

Bob was devoted to the Faith, faithfully fulfilling the duties and obligations he was given, always supported by his Marijke. Every week presented a full round of meetings, committees, study classes. In addition he held an exacting job as a lawyer and an insurance assessor, not to mention his responsibilities towards his growing family. It was a richly blessed family, a hospitable house, a home with magnetic appeal for young and old. Bob's character left its mark on family and friends and on the various parts of the Bahá'í community which he served. He was a born chairman, with attention for everything and everyone, with much patience, much wisdom and especially much humour, with a perfect sense of timing, always acting at the right moment, always to the point, and never hurtful, never causing pain. You could talk to him about yourself, but not about others; the word 'gossip' was not in his vocabulary. He was also an example in the way he was able to separate and confine to its proper sphere such diverse activities as Local Assembly matters, professional and management concerns and personal affairs.

It was, perhaps, his qualities of patience and courtesy which, above others, endeared him to the friends. Now God has called him to Himself. How brave Marijke is, and how faithful and resigned; she needs our prayers and our support.

(Adapted from a memoir by LOTTIE TOBIAS)



Elizabeth Idang Njang

ELIZABETH IDANG NJANG
1928–1983

Elizabeth Idang Njang was born on 30 July 1928 in a village near Calabar in Nigeria. Having lost her parents at a tender age, she was raised by relatives and became a dedicated member of the Church of Christ. Her first marriage, to a man who developed a serious drinking problem, was doomed to failure. However, a son born of this union eventually embraced the Bahá'í Faith, serving as a Local Spiritual Assembly secretary before his death in the Nigerian civil war.

In 1956 Mrs. Njang met her future husband, Mr. O. E. Njang, who is at present a member of the Auxiliary Board in Nigeria. They were both attending a ceremony at which palm wine, the traditional alcoholic beverage, was being served. She noticed that he alone was abstaining from the drink. Her curiosity about the Faith was aroused as she heard him telling others about Bahá'u'lláh. She began to attend deepening sessions conducted by Mr. Njang and three other friends. Within a year she embraced the Faith and returned to her former church where she audaciously announced to the congregation that Christ had returned in the Glory of the Father. This event, while earning her an immediate expulsion from the church, marked the beginning of a quarter century of dedicated service to the Bahá'í Cause.

In 1958 Mrs. Njang was appointed a full-time teacher by the then National Spiritual Assembly of North West Africa and in the same year she and her husband brought the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the Ejagham tribe in southeastern Nigeria. Finally, at the Annual Convention in Victoria, Western Cameroon, in 1960, she so impressed the delegates with her devotion and dynamism that the attending Hands of the Cause of God referred to her as 'the Ṭáhirih of Nigeria'.

She was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of West Central Africa in 1967. Prior to this she had served as chairman of the National Teaching Committee of the Bahá'ís of Nigeria and as Local Spiritual Assembly chairman for many years. In 1979 she organized a Bahá'í women's conference in the Calabar-Mamfe area which was attended by more than one hundred Bahá'í women.

Eventually Mrs. Njang decided to return to her home village to engage in farming to help feed her orphaned grandchildren and to deepen three new Local Spiritual Assemblies in the area. Finally, on 17 March 1983, she passed away after a brief illness and was laid to rest in the presence of approximately one hundred of the friends.

In a country where the ministry is frequently viewed as a means of attaining material enrichment, Mrs. Njang was often ridiculed for being a 'woman pastor' of a 'church' which did not remunerate its workers. She would reply to such derision by explaining that she and her husband were in reality the wealthy ones, although perhaps not in a material sense. On a continent where women are only beginning to develop their latent potentialities she is remembered as an outstanding example for the Bahá'í women of Africa, and elsewhere, to emulate.

On learning of Mrs. Njang's death the Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to the National Spiritual Assembly of Nigeria on 28 March 1983:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED HAND-

MAID BAHAULLAH ELIZABETH IDANG NJANG. HER SPIRIT DEDICATION HER ACTIVE SERVICES FAITH WORTHY EMULATION HER COWORKERS AND RISING GENERATION PROMOTERS GODS HOLY CAUSE. CONVEY RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY. ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

SHARON RICKEY KAZEMI (KÁẒIMÍ)
1949–1983

Sharon Rickey, daughter of Horace B. Rickey Jr. and Jewel Katherine Seybold, was born in Lafayette, Louisiana. She attended Hamilton School, Château Mon Choisi, Lausanne, Switzerland, and graduated as a National Merit Scholar from Lafayette High School. She received a B.A. in English literature from Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, and her Master's and D.E.D. degrees in African literature from the University of Abidjan. Before becoming a Bahá'í, Sharon was active in many civic organizations, as a Girl Scout leader and as a Red Cross worker, and she performed valuable services on several committees of the First Presbyterian Church of Lafayette. She was interested in musical and theatrical presentations as evidenced by her membership in the Middlebury College Choir, and by her association with and participation in a number of plays and musicals both in Vermont and in Louisiana where she played the lead in a production of *My Fair Lady*. In sports, she became a champion fencer, and she achieved a measure of public notice as the State secretary of the 'Young Republicans'. She was brought up in a religious family. Her parents, staunch Christians, taught her the equality of men without distinction as to race or religion. When at the age of twenty she became acquainted with the Bahá'í Faith, the new Revelation was the embodiment of the spiritual truths she had been taught.

Sharon's varied activities at Middlebury College ultimately led her into contact with a Bahá'í who proceeded to explain to her the spiritual realities of Bahá'u'lláh's divine economy. She faced each principle determined to prove it wrong; yet after each bout, returned



Ṣharon Rickey Kazemi (Kázimí)

convinced and ready to argue another point. It was during an adult Christian baptism in the College Chapel that she realized that her answer was not in partisan politics in which she had been so active but in that divine polity being built by Bahá'u'lláh's followers. That very day she declared her belief with characteristic bravado, rushing into the room of her Bahá'í friend and demanding enrollment on the spot. Hers had been the real 'baptism'. Sharon retired from her political connections as time and opportunity permitted. She worked assiduously over the next two years to allay the fears of relatives and friends who believed that she had been misled. Some of their misgivings were softened when Sharon's great-aunt remarked, 'I heard 'Abdu'l-Bahá speak in 1912. There is nothing wrong with Sharon's being a Bahá'í. Any religion which has 'Abdu'l-Bahá is good.'

In 1972 Sharon pioneered to the Ivory Coast where, in the same year, she married Zekrullah Kazemi (Dhikru'lláh Kázimí) whose appointment to the Continental Board of Counsellors was announced in May 1973. Her dynamic enthusiasm and vitality inspired all who met her. For several years she was a member and secretary of the National Spiri-

tual Assembly of the Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta. She also performed sterling service as a member of a number of national committees including the National Women's Committee and the National Teaching Committee of which she was secretary. From 1974 to 1979 she labored diligently as secretary in the office of the Continental Board of Counsellors for West Africa. She served at the same time and until the end of her life as member-at-large of the Continental Pioneering Committee for Africa, as well as performing additional services for the Continental Board and in translation work. During part of her pioneering career, she relocated to the northern areas of the Ivory Coast, areas which have seen dramatic increases in numbers of Bahá'í believers.

Besides her work for the Bahá'í Faith, Sharon was equally energetic in other activities. She taught English at Bingerville High School, at the Center for Audio-Visual Research and Studies, and in the English Department of the University of Abidjan. She also served as an interpreter with a number of organizations. She was a member of the *Ensemble Vocal d'Abidjan*, a well-known choir in the Ivory Coast. She was at the same time preparing her doctoral thesis in African literature.

Her passion was teaching the Faith and she did not hesitate to sacrifice her health and life for this noble aim. For her, to be a pioneer meant to stay in the pioneering post until the end of one's life. For this reason she wished to die and be buried in Africa. It was a wish that was, alas, prematurely realized. In March 1983 she contracted severe amoebiasis which attacked her body already weakened by chronic diabetes. At dawn on 4 April her pure soul winged its flight to the Abhá Kingdom. Her earthly remains were buried at Niangon-Attié close to the site of Ivory Coast's future Bahá'í Temple. Sharon is survived by her husband; her parents; two children, Jaleh Katherine and Ryan; and two sisters, Marjorie Rickey and Priscilla Rickey Forest. At her passing these cablegrams were addressed to her family on 5 April:

PROFOUNDLY SADDENED PASSING BELOVED WIFE SHARON, HER DEVOTED PIONEERING SERVICES LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM. ASSURE YOU ALL RELATIVES HEARTFELT SYMPATHY.

Universal House of Justice

NEWS PASSING YOUR DEAR WIFE SHARON DEVOTED STEADFAST SERVANT OF THE CAUSE EXEMPLARY PIONEER FILLED OUR HEARTS WITH SORROW AND SADNESS. WE SHARE YOUR GRIEF AND ASSURE YOU OUR PRAYERS AT THE HOLY THRESHOLDS FOR ELEVATION PROGRESS HER SOUL AND GOD GRANT YOU STRENGTH TO WITHSTAND THIS HEARTRENDING TEST.

International Teaching Centre

A subsequent cable dated 8 April offered the consolation of the assurance of continued prayers by the Universal House of Justice for the progress of Sharon's 'radiant soul'.

Sharon's knowledge of the Holy Writings, her sharp memory and her genial intelligence made her a rare asset to the Bahá'í community of West Africa. Her loss was deeply felt, for she was at once a strengthening and stabilizing influence in the administrative institutions of the Ivory Coast, and a beloved teacher who won the hearts of many to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. And more than this, she proved herself a true friend, always ready to extend that Bahá'í friendship which is the hallmark of those who have truly imbibed the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It is in her acts of generosity, unfeigned fellowship, and pure love that Sharon Kazemi lives in the hearts of those who knew her. Her services and untainted life must surely find an honored place in the annals of the Cause of God in the African continent.

WILLIAM P. COLLINS
FELICITY ENAYAT
ZEKRULLAH KAZEMI (DHIKRU'LLÁH KÁZIMÍ)

DORIS HOLLEY
1894–1983

PASSING DISTINGUISHED MAIDSERVANT BAHAULLAH DORIS HOLLEY ROBS IRISH BAHAI COMMUNITY OUTSTANDING MEMBER ACTIVELY ASSOCIATED EARLY DAYS FORMATIVE AGE CAUSE. HER STERLING SERVICES IN STAUNCH

SUPPORT CLOSE COOPERATION HAND CAUSE HORACE HOLLEY WERE LATER ENRICHED AS PIONEER CONTINENTAL EUROPE AND FINALLY HER DEARLY LOVED IRELAND. HER CHEERFUL GENEROUS SPIRIT CONTRIBUTED CORDIALITY UNITY MANY BAHAI OCCASIONS. ASSURE LOVING PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL.

Universal House of Justice
4 April 1983

Doris Holley, whose maiden name was Pascal, was born in London on 14 August 1894. She had two brothers and a sister. Her father was a concert pianist. Always a seeker of truth, he became, in turn, a Swedenborgian and a Christian Scientist. Her mother was not much interested in religion and considered it an unsuitable subject of conversation. When Doris was five years old, her parents moved to the United States of America. Four years later, while her father remained in a boarding house in New Rochelle, New York, her mother took the children to live in Barbados, West Indies.

While she was growing up, Doris liked to get off by herself and read. When she reached sixteen her mother said to her, 'I will find some way of making you do as I wish.' Doris then resolved to leave home as soon as she could. In the autumn of 1912 her mother sent Doris to Paris to study for a year. On her arrival there Doris said to the woman who had agreed to look after her, 'Mother told me that I was not to go out alone in Paris.' The woman replied with amusement, 'Does your mother expect me to engage a nanny to take care of you?'



Doris Holley

One morning in February 1913, a month after 'Abdu'l-Bahá had arrived in Paris to start His second visit to that city, Doris heard Him address a meeting at the home of Hippolyte and Laura Dreyfus-Barney. Although she had already heard His name from Juliet Thompson, she did not realize who He was and knew nothing about the Bahá'í Cause. Doris has said of this, 'I was spiritually asleep at the time, but while I was listening to the Master's talk I felt as if Jesus were speaking and I thought that the Master was saying what Jesus would have said. When the meeting was over, instead of following the Master out of the room as the others in the audience had done, I remained in my chair. The Master soon returned. To my natural astonishment He walked straight up to me and kissed me on the forehead. I still did not recognize who He was.' Ironically, Horace Holley and his wife, Bertha, attended this meeting with their child, Hertha. Doris had not seen them before nor were they introduced on that occasion.

Some weeks after the start of the First World War, in the autumn of 1914, Doris moved to London and several months later sailed for New York City. After Horace Holley's marriage had foundered he and Doris became friends. Doris has remarked, 'The first time that I saw Horace alone, I thought that our marriage was to be; I married Horace because I liked him, not because he was a Bahá'í.' Doris attended some Bahá'í meetings with Horace. She explained, 'I just gradually learned more about the Cause until I realized that I had become a Bahá'í.' In September 1919 Horace and Doris were married. About a year later she lost her only child at birth.

In the spring of 1925, assured by the National Assembly that such a move would be of much assistance to the Bahá'í community, Horace resigned from his position at the

Redfield Advertising Agency to devote all his time to secretarial work for the Assembly. Although he and Doris occasionally received help by means of modest inheritances, most of their support for the rest of Horace's life came from the Bahá'í Fund. It cannot have been easy for either of them to accept regular support from this source. That their action would be bountifully blessed finds assurance in Shoghi Effendi's response of 24 October 1925: 'I rejoice to learn that ways and means have been found to enable the National secretary, who discharges in such an exemplary manner the manifold and exacting duties of a highly responsible position, to devote all his time to the pursuit of so meritorious a task. I am fully conscious of the privations and sacrifice which the choice of this arduous work must involve for him, as well as for his devoted and selfless companion; I cannot but admire and extol their heroic efforts, and wish to assure them both of my continued prayers for the speedy fruition of their earnest endeavours.'[1]

For the first twenty years of their married life, except for part of each summer when they occupied a cottage of their own at Green Acre, the Bahá'í School in Eliot, Maine, the Holleys lived in New York City. Although they were happy there, when they realized that the Guardian wanted 'the spiritual and administrative centre to be fused into one', they made plans to change their residence to Wilmette, Illinois. According to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, late in 1939 the Guardian cabled Horace, AWARE PROFOUNDLY APPRECIATE PERSONAL INCONVENIENCE INVOLVED TRANSFERENCE TEMPLE VICINITY DEEPEST LOVE.[2]

The American Bahá'í, issue of May 1983, records Doris's service in the United States: membership on the Contacts Committee (1925); the Public Relations Committee (1948–1950); the *Bahá'í News* Editorial Committee (1949–1950 and 1951–1952); the Temple Hospitality Committee (1953–1958), serving most of that time as committee chairman; and the National Spiritual Assembly's Reviewing Committee (1958–1959). During the years that her husband served as secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, Doris regularly provided hospitality for the members during breaks in their meetings at the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, and also entertained numerous visitors to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

Early in 1944 Horace had his first serious illness. Although he recovered and remained in fairly good health until 1949, he was not very well for the rest of his life. When Doris was asked whether it was difficult to take care of him, she said, 'No, I always felt that Bahá'u'lláh was taking care of him. Besides that, Horace always felt that whatever I did was right.'

In his message of 24 December 1951 the Guardian announced to the Bahá'í world the appointment of the first contingent of Hands of the Cause, twelve in number. Horace was one of the three elevated to that rank on the North American continent.[3] Two years and a day after the passing of the Guardian in the early hours of 4 November 1957, immediately following their third Conclave, the Hands of the Cause announced their selection of Horace for service in the Holy Land. Horace and Doris reached Haifa on the last day of 1959; Horace passed away there on 12 July 1960. After his death Doris remained in Haifa for a year and kept house for the nine Hands who were serving there, and then began her life as a pioneer.

In November 1961 she settled in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, and seven years later she moved to Lausanne. She pioneered for almost a decade in Switzerland. In her letter of 13 May 1983 to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland, Counsellor Agnes Ghaznavi wrote, 'In spite of the great difference of age, Doris was a very near and dear friend, both to my husband, Bijan, and to myself. Doris had a special quality of understanding people in their difficulties and of using her keen intellect for piercing mysteries in human lives . . .'[4] She is also remembered for her delightful sense of humour that never failed her during her long and distinguished career of service to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Just before she left Switzerland, when it became apparent that her hearing was failing, Doris wrote to a friend announcing her decision to settle in Ireland and remarking wryly that she

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, pp. 89–90.
[2] *The Bahá'í World*. vol. XIII, p. 855.
[3] Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World* (1950–1957), p. 20.
[4] Letter from Dr. Agnes Ghaznavi, Biel, Switzerland.

might find it easier to be hard of hearing in English than in French.

Early in the summer of 1971 Doris moved to Limerick in the Republic of Ireland. During her early months there she was thrilled to find that a large number of young people were becoming attracted to the Faith. In a warm, sensitive and understanding manner she taught and helped each person with whom she became acquainted. Bahá'ís throughout Ireland, both north and south, had the opportunity of getting to know Doris and of listening to her valuable remarks about the Bahá'í Revelation during the four years she spent in Limerick. The young people who flocked to her confided in the Hand of the Cause of God Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, 'We cannot talk to our parents, but we can talk to Doris. The age difference is of no importance to us.'

In order to save the Local Spiritual Assembly of Dun Laoghaire from lapsing, Doris moved there just before Riḍván 1976. Two years later she transferred her residence to Dublin. In February 1980, after visiting Connecticut for several months, she returned to Ireland and, for the purpose of serving on the Spiritual Assembly of County Wicklow, found a room for herself in a comfortable home in Greystones. A little more than a year before her passing on 4 April 1983, to enable her close friends to reach her without delay if she needed them, Doris lived in a home in Dun Laoghaire, where she was treated with much kindness and consideration. During the last weeks of her life she said happily to some of us, 'I feel that Horace is with me every night.'

Four days after her passing, on a bright, clear Friday afternoon, a moving funeral service was held in the chapel of Deansgrange Cemetery, near Dublin. More than fifty people were in attendance, a few of whom were not members of the Bahá'í community. On this occasion—joyful, yet tinged with sadness—I was privileged to read a poem which Doris had written in 1935:

> Let us want everything and nothing,
> And only that elusive fire
> That burns our wayward consciousness
> Into the flow of Thy desire;
> That melts the metal of our minds
> From separate sparks to liquid flame
> And lights the Inner Light;
> And melts in tears the veil that hides from sight
> The path—the home—the end—
> That is Thy Name.[1]

O. Z. WHITEHEAD

ARNOLD ZONNEVELD
1933–1983

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING ARNOLD ZONNEVELD HIS DEDICATED OUTSTANDING SERVICES PIONEER FIELD MERIT GOOD PLEASURE BLESSED BEAUTY. KINDLY CONVEY MEMBERS HIS FAMILY CONDOLENCES LOVING SYMPATHY AND ASSURANCE ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice
5 April 1983

Arnold Zonneveld was born in Haarlem, the Netherlands, on 30 March 1933 and died in Cochabamba, Bolivia, on 13 April 1983. This exceptional Bahá'í of Dutch background was known to very few of his fellow Dutch believers, for barely one year of his twenty-three years of life as a Bahá'í was spent in his home country. Arnold was the example of a born pioneer: he gave up everything in order to settle in the most inhospitable places where he lived in primitive circumstances and devoted himself to the spiritual and physical well-being of his fellow man. Whether he had to endure bitter cold or terrible heat, whether alone and unmarried or responsible for a large family, Arnold understood the art of being satisfied under all conditions. We can rightly call him a true servant of God.

He was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith by Arnold van Ogtrop, and in 1961, while attending the International Summer School for Youth in Delft, the Netherlands, he met Paul Adams, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for Spitsbergen, and heard his account of life in that barren arctic region. Arnold decided to join Paul in Spitsbergen. He served there for three years, working as a hunter and later in coal-mines. The rigorous climate and hard working conditions affected his health and he

[1] *World Order*, vol. I, No. 9, p. 354.



Arnold Zonneveld

had to leave. He returned to Germany and in 1965 married Gisela von Brunn. The following year, inspired by the talks given by Anna Grossmann at the German Summer School, they resolved to pioneer to Latin America. Bolivia seemed to offer the opportunity they sought to actively spread the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh among a receptive population. On 21 November 1966 they arrived in South America with their one-year-old son, Hilmar, and soon settled in Cochabamba.

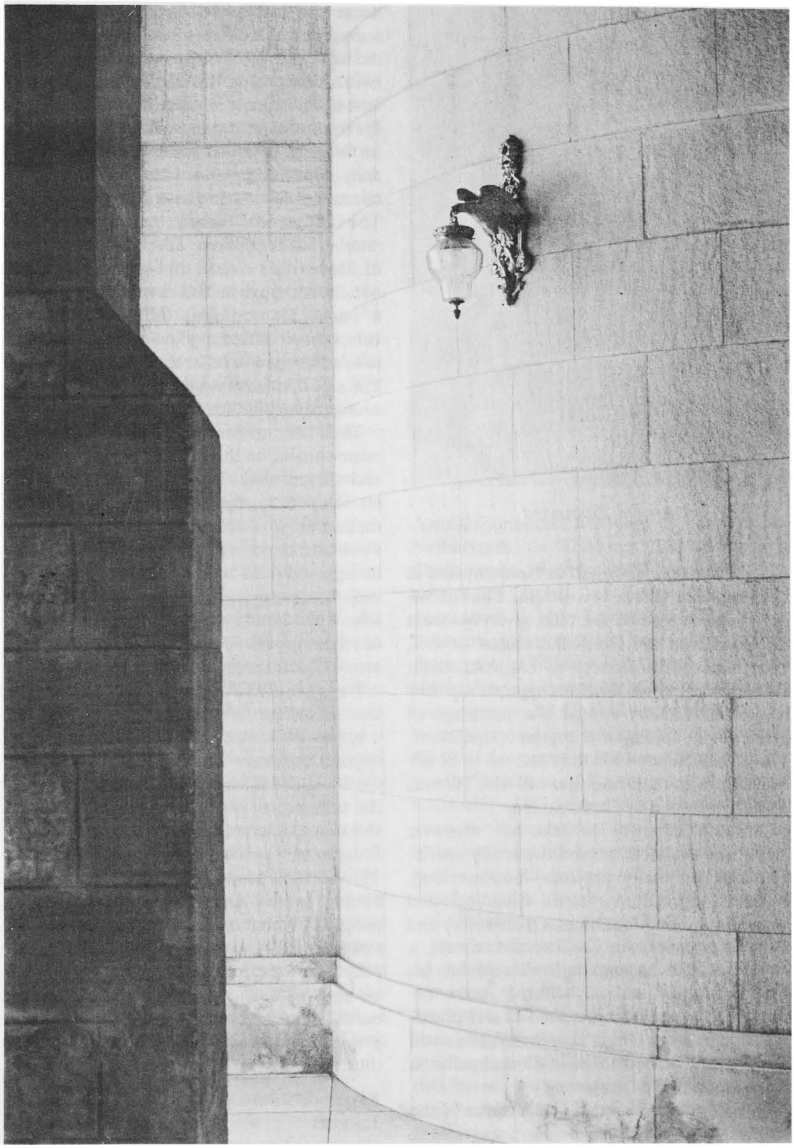
Arnold's capacity to take up whatever work was available proved especially useful. He took on many projects—woodworking, business, agriculture, cattle breeding—and earned a wide reputation as a trustworthy and competent workman. It was not always a simple matter to earn a livelihood for his growing family and he suffered many setbacks. They received great moral and practical support from Gisela's mother, Ursula von Brunn, who joined them in Cochabamba in September 1967.

The Zonnevelds settled in the centre of the tropical jungle and savannah area, in the Department of Beni, where they located on a piece of land on the Rio Blanco and gave their home the name *El Alba* (Dawn). *El Alba* served well as a pioneer post because seven of the eight provinces of Beni can be reached by rivers, there being virtually no roads or other amenities. Equally important, there is a city in the area, Costa Marques, Brazil. There were no Western comforts which meant that basic daily needs occupied a great deal of time, a circumstance which they deeply regretted. The Zonneveld family, which eventually numbered six children, adopted the local way of life as their own. Lumber was difficult to obtain. Although he had never thought he had a talent for technical things, Arnold developed two different guide-systems for chainsaws and began to fell trees and to saw planks. The sale of quality planks became the primary source of income for the family.

Their way of life aroused admiration and astonishment on the part of the native people and visitors alike. But the Zonnevelds found no solution to the problem of how to free themselves to devote more time to the Bahá'í Faith and to projects that would improve the living conditions of the local people. It was their dearest wish to establish first a primary school and later a trade school for the region, but their appeals for others to join them in the area and lend assistance went unanswered.

Early in 1983 Arnold fell ill. After a long bout of malaria it was discovered that he had a brain tumour which had already developed beyond the stage where it could be treated. On 13 April 1983 he passed away peacefully in the presence of his wife and their two oldest children, supported by the prayers of the Bahá'ís of Cochabamba and other centres. This servant of the Cause of God devoted himself to the service of a special race of people of whom he was very fond. Often the task seemed beyond his strength. His family prays that the effort expended in Cochabamba be not lost and that the promise of success be fully realized. May we remember in our prayers the one who has passed away and also those who live after him.

Extracted from a memoir by MARIJE FIENIEG-JONKERS
(Translated from the Dutch by NANCY FOLKEMA)



Interior view of the Arcade of the Shrine of the Báb, showing the original limestone construction from the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Ministry (left) and the Chiampo stone erected by Shoghi Effendi (right).

PART SIX

DIRECTORY, BIBLIOGRAPHY, GLOSSARY

I

BAHÁ'Í DIRECTORY 1979–1983

136–140 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA

1. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Address: 16 Golomb Avenue, 33 392 Haifa, Israel (P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa)

2. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE

Address: 7 Haparsim Street, 35 055 Haifa, Israel (P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa)

THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE RESIDING IN THE HOLY LAND

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum
'Ali-Akbar Furútan
Abu'l-Qásim Faizi
Paul E. Haney

CONTINENTAL HANDS OF THE CAUSE

Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í
Ḥasan M. Balyúzí
H. Collis Featherstone
Ugo Giachery
Dhikru'lláh Khádem
Jalál Kházeh
Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir
Adelbert Mühlschlegel
Enoch Olinga
John A. Robarts
William B. Sears
'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá

3. THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE

Address: 69 Ben Gurion Avenue, 35 663 Haifa, Israel (P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa)

4. CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS*

Africa *Asia*

The Americas *Australasia*

Europe

5. BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Dr. Victor de Araujo,
866 U.N. Plaza, Suite 444,
New York, New York 10017,
U.S.A.

European Office:
Mr. Giovanni Ballerio
100 Route de Suisse
1290 Versoix/GE
Switzerland

6. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

At Riḍván 1979 there were 130 Bahá'í National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world, and at Riḍván 1983 there were 135—37 in Africa, 38 in the Americas, 26 in Asia, 15 in Australasia and 19 in Europe. Current addresses are available from the Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa, Israel.

7. BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUSTS

ARGENTINA
E.B.I.L.A.,
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AUSTRALIA
Bahá'í Publishing Trust,
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Australia.

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Belgium.

BRAZIL
Editora Bahá'í—Brasil,
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20551 Rio de Janeiro RJ,
Brasil.

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FIJI ISLANDS
Bahá'í Publishing Trust,
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Government Buildings,
Suva,
Fiji Islands.

GERMANY
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INDIA
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Spain.

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Bahá'í-Förlaget,
Alströmergatan 9,
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Sweden.

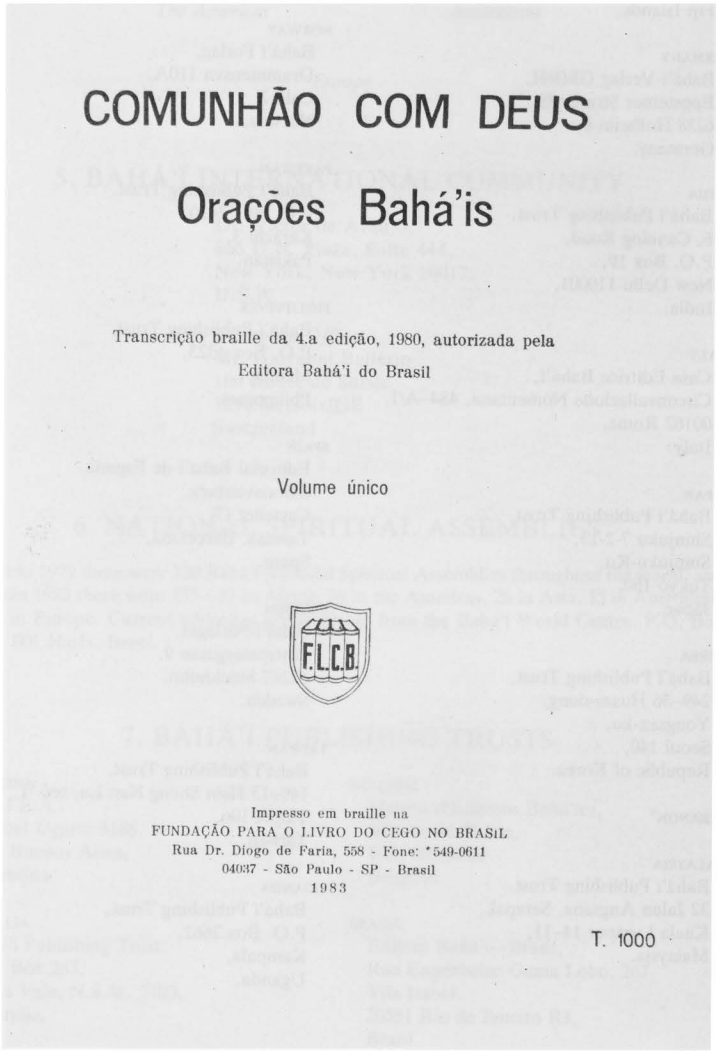
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Taiwan.

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Kampala,
Uganda.

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England.

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Bahá'í Publishing Trust,
415 Linden Avenue,
Wilmette, Illinois 60091,
U.S.A.



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Kitáb-i-Aqdas (Most Holy Book).
Kitáb-i-Badí'.
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Lawḥ-i-'Abdu'l-Vahháb.
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Lawḥ-i-Ṭibb.
Lawḥ-i-Tuqá.

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Súriy-i-Amín.
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Súriy-i-A'ráb.
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Súriy-i-Ẓuhúr.
Tafsír-i-Hú.
Tafsír-i-Ḥurúfát-i-Muqaṭṭa'ih.
Tafsír-i-Súriy-i-Va'sh-Shams.
Tajallíyát (Effulgences).
Ṭarázát (Ornaments).
Zíyárat-Námih (The Tablet of Visitation).
Zíyárat-Námiy-i-Awlíyá.
Zíyárat-Námiy-i-Bábu'l-Báb va Quddús.
Zíyárat-Námiy-i-Bayt.
Zíyárat-Námiy-i-Maryam.
Zíyárat-Námiy-i-Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá.

(*Note*: the works of Bahá'u'lláh, translated into English by Shoghi Effendi, are listed on p. 837. under the subheading, 'Translations'.)

COMPILATIONS IN ENGLISH

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas

2. THE BÁB'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

The Arabic Bayán.
Commentary on the Súrih of Kawthar.
Commentary on the Súrih of Va'l-'Aṣr.
Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih.
Epistles to Muḥammad Sháh and Ḥájí Mírzá Áqásí.
Khasá'il-i-Sab'ih.
Kitáb-i-Asmá'.
Kitáb-i-Panj-Sha'n.
Kitábu'r-Rúḥ.
Lawḥ-i-Ḥurúfát.
The Persian Bayán.

Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'.
Risáliy-i-'Adlíyyih.
Risáliy-i-Dhahabíyyih.
Risáliy-i-Fiqhíyyih.
Risáliy-i-Furú'-i-'Adlíyyih.
Ṣaḥífatu'l-Ḥaramayn.
Ṣaḥífy-i-Ja'faríyyih.
Ṣaḥífiy-i-Makhzúnih.
Ṣaḥífiy-i-Raḍavíyyih.
Súriy-i-Tawḥíd.
Tafsír-i-Nubuvvat-i-Khāṣṣih.
Zíyárat-i-Sháh-'Abdu'l-'Aẓím.

(*Note*: The Báb Himself states in one passage of the Persian Bayán that His writings *comprise no less than 500,000 verses.*)

COMPILATIONS IN ENGLISH

Selections from the Writings of the Báb

3. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

IN PERSIAN AND ARABIC

Ad'íyyih va Munáját.
Alváḥ-i-Tablíghí-i-Imríká.
Alváḥ-i-Vaṣáyá.
Khitábát dar Urúpá va Imríká.
Lawḥ-i-Aflákíyyih.
Lawḥ-i-'Ahd va Mithāq (Imríká).
Lawḥ-i-'Ammih.
Lawḥ-i-Áyát.
Lawḥ-i-Du-Nidáy-i-Faláḥ va Najáḥ.
Lawḥ-i-Dr. Forel.
Lawḥ-i-Haft Sham'.
Lawḥ-i-Hizár Baytí.
Lawḥ-i-Khurásán.
Lawḥ-i-Láhih.
Law-i-Maḥfil-i-Shawr.
Lawḥ-i-Muḥabbat.
Lawḥ-i-Tanzíh va Taqdís.
Lawḥ-i-Tarbíyat.
Madaníyyih.
Makátíb-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá.
Maqáliy-i-Sayyáḥ.
Mufávaḍát.
Sharḥ-i-Faṣṣ-i-Nigín-i-Ism-i-A'ẓam.
Sharh-i-Shuhadáy-i-Yazd va Iṣfahán.
Síyásíyyih.
Tadhkiratu'l-Vafá.
Tafsír-i-Bismi'lláhi'r-Raḥmáni'r-Raḥím.
Tafsír-i-Kuntu Kanzan Makhfíyyan.
Zíyárat Námih.

IN ENGLISH

The Secret of Divine Civilization. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette Illinois, 1957. Originally published by Cope & Fenwick, London, 1910, under the title *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization.* Subsequently published by Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1918.

Some Answered Questions. First printed by Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., London, 1908. Subsequently published by Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1918, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Tablet to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, the Hague. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930.

Tablet to Dr. Forel. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930.

Tablets of the Divine Plan. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1959.

A Traveller's Narrative. Translated into English by Edward Granville Browne under the title *A Traveller's Narrative written to illustrate The Episode of the Báb.* Cambridge University Press, 1891. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930.

Will and Testament. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1925, 1935. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944, 1968, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Memorials of the Faithful. Translated from the original Persian and annotated by Marzieh Gail. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1971.

COMPILATIONS IN ENGLISH

Foundations of World Unity; a selection of letters and public addresses. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1945.

Paris Talks; a compilation of His addresses in Paris. G. Bell and Son Ltd., London, 1923. Subsequently published by Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 10th edition 1961; and in the United States under the title *The Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*; Brentano's, New York, 1924.

The Promulgation of Universal Peace, vols. I, II, a compilation of His addresses in Canada and the United States in 1912. Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1922 and 1925.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; compiled from His correspondence with individual believers, groups and Assemblies of the East and West. World Centre Publications, 1978.

Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, vols. I, II, III; a compilation of His letters to individual believers in America. Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1909, 1915, 1916.

4. SOME COMPILATIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, THE BÁB AND 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

The Bahá'í Revelation. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1955.

Bahá'í World Faith. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1943, 1956.

The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1950; revised, 1963.

The Divine Art of Living. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944; revised, 1960.

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1939, 1952, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1938, 1954, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

The Reality of Man. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1931; revised, 1962.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb. World Centre Publications, 1976.

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. World Centre Publications; 1978.

(*Note*: A large number of Prayer Books compiled of prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá has been published by Bahá'í Publishing Trusts and National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world.)

5. SHOGHI EFFENDI'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. February, 1929.

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, Further Considerations. March, 1930.

The Goal of a New World Order. November, 1931.

The Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. March, 1932.

America and the Most Great Peace. April, 1933.

The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh. February, 1934.

The Unfoldment of World Civilization. March, 1936.

(*Note*: The above seven essays have been published in one volume entitled *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.* Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1938. Revised edition, 1955; second printing, 1965.)

The Advent of Divine Justice. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1939.

The Promised Day is Come. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1941.

God Passes By. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944.

TRANSLATIONS (see note p. 834).

The Dawn-Breakers, by Muḥammad-i-Zarandí, surnamed Nabíl-i-A'ẓam. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1932, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, by Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1941, 1953, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1939, 1952, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh (Arabic and Persian). Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1924. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, London, 1932, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Kitáb-i-Íqán, by Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1931, 1950, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1938, 1962, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Tablet to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, The Hague, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, dated December 17, 1919. Published as a leaflet by Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London.

Tablet to Dr. Forel, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Published in *Star of the West*, vol. XIV, no. 4, July 1923, p. 101. Subsequently published as a leaflet by various Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

Tablet of the Holy Mariner, by Bahá'u'lláh. Published in *Star of the West*, vol. XIII, no. 4, May 1922, p. 75. Subsequently published in Prayer Books and other compilations.

The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1925, 1935. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944, 1968, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

SOME COMPILATIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS

Bahá'í Administration. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1928, 1960.

Messages to America (1932–1946). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1947.

Messages to the Bahá'í World (1950–1957). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1958.

Principles of Bahá'í Administration. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, England, 1950.

Guidance for Today and Tomorrow. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1953.

Citadel of Faith (Messages to America 1947–1957). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1965.

Messages to Canada. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, 1965.

Letters from the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand (1923–1957). National Spiritual Assembly of Australia, 1970.

Dawn of a New Day—Messages to India (1923–1957). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, New Delhi, 1970.

Directives from the Guardian. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, New Delhi, 1970.

High Endeavours: Messages to Alaska. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Alaska, 1976.

Call to the Nations. World Centre Publications, 1977.

6. LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE ACHIEVEMENTS

Riḍván 1979–Riḍván 1983

PREVIOUS volumes of *The Bahá'í World* list more than 650 languages, major dialects and scripts into which the Sacred Writings and other literature of the Bahá'í Faith have been translated; the total number has now reached more than 725. The promotion of such translations has been an important objective of the international teaching plans conducted by the Bahá'í world community over the years, with the purpose of making available to the believers in many lands the Scriptures of their faith in their own tongues. Information about the languages in which Bahá'í literature is currently available may be obtained from the Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, 31 001 Haifa, Israel.

Listed below, in alphabetical order by continent of origin, are the languages, dialects and scripts in which translations of Bahá'í literature have definitely been made, whether for the first time or enriching available literature, during the period between Riḍván 1979 and Riḍván 1983. These accomplishments include translations, publications and recordings on tape, although not all have been achieved in each of the languages named. Literature in each dialect and each different script has been treated as a separate achievement, as each is assumed to reach a different public. This is a minimum listing; other reports, some elements of which are still ambiguous, remain under investigation.

Usage and spelling chosen for primary listings and indication of dialect relationships follow, where possible, C. F. and F. M. Voegelin, *Classification and Index of the World's Languages*,[1] even when this differs from generally recognized usage or that of the speakers themselves. Some variant names and spellings, including variants previously reported, appear in parentheses; listings in quotation marks (' ') have not yet been identified from this reference, or there is some ambiguity regarding exact identification.

The major countries, islands or territories where the languages are spoken are shown in italics. Where no such entry is given, the language is spoken in so many widely scattered territories that to list them would be unwieldy; many of these languages are found worldwide. Languages officially used in countries in more than one continent are grouped separately at the head of the list.

The number of languages, dialects and scripts listed here as achievements of the Plan to date total 334. Of these, 66 are new languages, dialects or scripts never before reported, and 17 others may also prove to be new when accurate identification or date of achievement has been established.

A. LANGUAGES IN INTERNATIONAL USE

New Script:

1. English: 'Rújano' script

Insufficient Information (Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following represent a new accomplishment or enrichment of existing literature):

1. Portuguese: Braille text

[1] Foundations of Linguistics Series; Elsevier, New York and Amsterdam; 1977.

Literature Enriched:

1. Arabic
2. * Dutch
3. * English
4. * English: Braille text
5. * French
6. * Portuguese
7. * Spanish
8. Spanish: Braille text

B. INVENTED LANGUAGES

Literature Enriched:

1. Esperanto

C. AFRICA

First Translations Made:

1. Amharic: Braille text (new script) (*Ethiopia*)
2. BANDA: Baba dialect (*Benin*)
3,4 BIHARI: 'Mauritian Bhojpuri' (2 scripts) (*Mauritius*)
5. * Bobo (Bwamou) (*Upper Volta*)
6. CREOLE, INDIAN OCEAN: Seychelles dialect ('Kreol') (*Seychelles*)
7. Dai (Daye) (*Chad*)
8. * Dyula (Jula, 'Djoula') (*Upper Volta*)
9. Fadambo (Fa d'Ambo, Pagalu) (*Anabon Island*)
10. Kabre (Kabye) (*Togo*)
11. Komoro (Comorian) (*Comoro Islands*)
12. Lam(b)a (*Togo*)
13. ici-Lamba (*Zambia*)
14. ki-Lega (ki-Rega) (*Zaïre*)
15. *Lyele (Lele; L'élé) (*Upper Volta*)
16. Mandankwe (*Cameroons*)
17. Mbai (Mbaye) (*Chad*)
18. Mbati (Issongo, Lissongo) (*Central African Republic*)
19. NAMA: Damara dialect (*Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
20. se-TSWANA: se-Kgalagadi dialect (*Botswana*)
21. ki-TUBA: Monokutuba dialect (*Zaïre*)
22. YASA: Kombe dialect (*Equatorial Guinea*)

Insufficient Information (Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following represent new accomplishments or enrichment of existing literature):

1. † 'Baka' (*Cameroons*)
2. † 'Basoundi' (*Congo*)
3. Fang (*Equatorial Guinea*)
4. † 'Kyakonde' (*Malawi*)
5. † 'Ngoni' (*Malawi*)
6. ci-Sena (*Mozambique*)
7. ce-Venda (*Southern Africa*)

Literature Enriched:

1. * Afrikaans (*South Africa*)
2. AKAN: Fante dialect (*Ghana*)
3. AKAN: Twi (Akwapem) dialect (*Ghana*)
4. Akoli (*Sudan; Uganda*)
5. Amharic (Amarigna) (*Ethiopia*)
6. Bambara (*Mali; Sénégal; Upper Volta*)
7. Bamoun (*Cameroons*)
8. Bargu (Bariba) (*Benin; Nigeria; Togo*)
9. Bassa (Gbasa) (*Liberia*)
10. Bassa (Koko; Mvele) (*Cameroons*)
11. e-Beembe (Kibembe) (*Zaïre*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the Seven Year Plan.
† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

12. ici-Bemba (Wemba) (*Zaïre; Zambia*)
13. Bini (Edo) (*Nigeria*)
14. Bulu (Boulou) (*Cameroons*)
15. Ciokwe (Chokwe) (*Angola; Zaïre*)
16. Dagbani (Dagbane, Dagomba) (*Ghana; Togo*)
17. Dan (Gio; Yacouba) (*Ivory Coast; Liberia*)
18. DIOLA (JOLA): Fogny dialect (Jóola Fóoni) (*The Gambia; Guinea; Sénégal*)
19. Duala (Douala) (*Cameroons*)
20. Efik (*Cameroons; Nigeria*)
21. † 'Ewe' (*Benin; Ghana; Togo*)
22. Ewondo (Beti; 'Yaounde') (*Cameroons*)
23. *Fõ (Fon; Dahoméen) (*Benin*)
24. Ful (Fula; Fulani; Peulh) (*West and Upper West Africa*)
25. Gambai (Sara-Ngambaye) (*Chad*)
26. olu-Ganda (*Uganda*)
27. Gbaya (Baya) (*Central African Republic; Cameroons; Congo*)
28. *† 'Goun' (*Benin*)
29. * Gurma (Gourmantche) (*Togo; Upper Volta*)
30. eke-Gusii (Kisii) (*Kenya*)
31. lu-Gwere (Lugwere) (*Uganda*)
32. Hausa (*West Africa*)
33. Herero (Otjiherero) (*Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
34. Igbo (Ibo; Igho) (*Nigeria*)
35. Kaba (Sara Kaba) (*Central African Republic; Chad*)
36. ke-Kamba (Kikamba) (*Kenya*)
37. * Kasem (Kassème; Kasena) (*Ghana; Upper Volta*)
38. Kikuyu (*Kenya*)
39. Kongo (Kikongo) (*Angola; Congo; Zaïre*)
40. KONGO: Kimanianga dialect (*Zaïre*)
41. Krahn, Western (Ngere, Guéré) (*Ivory Coast*)
42. Krio (*West Africa*)
43. † 'Kru' (*Liberia*)
44. oci-Kwanyama (Kuanjama; Ovambo) (*Angola; Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
45. Kweni (Gouro) (*Ivory Coast*)
46. Logooli (Luragoli; Maragoli) (*Kenya*)
47. LOSENGO: Mangala (Lingala) dialect (*Zaïre*)
48. ki-Luba-Katanga (Kiluba) (*Zaïre*)
49. Luba-Lulua (Tshiluba; Ciluba) (*Zaïre*)
50. LUBA-LULUA: Luba-Kasai dialect (Tshiluba of Kasai) (*Zaïre*)
51. Lugbara (*Uganda; Zaïre*)
52. LUHYA: lu-Tiriki dialect (*Kenya*)
53. ci-Lunda (*Angola; Zaïre; Zambia*)
54. ci-LUNDA: Ndembo dialect (*Zaïre*)
55. Luo (DhoLuo) (*Kenya; Tanzania*)
56. Lwo (*Sudan; Uganda*)
57. Maka (Makaa) (*Cameroons*)
58. ci-Makonde ('Shimakonde') (*Mozambique; Tanzania*)
59. i-Makua (Makhuwa) (*Malawi; Mozambique*)
60. * Malagasy (Malagache) (*Madagascar*)
61. Mandinka (*West & Upper West Africa*)
62. Mano (*Guinea; Liberia*)
63. Masa (Massa) (*Chad; Cameroons*)
64. MASABA (LUMASABA): ulu-Bukusu dialect (*Kenya; Uganda*)
65. Mashi (*Zaïre; Zambia*)
66. † 'M'Baka' (*Central African Republic*)
67. ke-Mero (Kimeru; Meru) (*Kenya*)
68. Moba (*Ghana; Togo; Upper Volta*)
69. MONGO-NKUNDO: Ekondo-Mongo dialect ('Lomongo') (*Zaïre*)
70. *Moré (Mossi) (*Ghana; Togo; Upper Volta*)
71. Nandi (*Kenya; Tanzania; Uganda*)
72. NANDI: Kipsigis dialect (*Kenya*)
73. * Nankanse (Nankani) (*Ghana; Upper Volta*)
74. *si-Ndebele (Sindebele) (*Zimbabwe*)
75. oci-Ndonga (Ambo; Ochindonga) (*Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
76. NGUNI: isi-Swati (Siswati; Swazi) dialect (*Swaziland; South Africa*)
77. *NGUNI: isi-Xhosa (!Xhosa; Kaffir) (*Botswana; Transkei; South Africa*)
78. * NGUNI: Zulu dialect (*South Africa*)
79. † 'Nkhonde' (*Malawi*)
80. Nyang (Kenyang) (*Cameroons*)
81. ci-Nyanja (*Malawi; Zambia*)
82. *ci-NYANJA: ci-Cewa (Chichewa) dialect (*Malawi; Zambia*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the Seven Year Plan.
† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

83. olu-Nyole (*Kenya*)
84. shi-Ronga (Shironga) (*Mozambique; South Africa*)
85. Ruanda (Kinyarwanda) (*Rwanda*)
86. * iki-Rundi (*Burundi*)
87. * Sango (*Central African Republic; Chad; Congo*)
88. SARA: Sara-Majingai dialect (*Central African Republic; Chad*)
89. SARA: Sara Ngama dialect (*Central African Republic; Chad*)
90. Serer (Serere) (*The Gambia; Sénégal*)
91. * Shona (*Mozambique; Zimbabwe*)
92. Sidamo (Sidamigna) (*Ethiopia*)
93. Somali (*Somalia*)
94. Sotho, Northern (se-Pedi) (*South Africa*)
95. Sotho, Southern (se-Sotho) (*Lesotho; South Africa*)
96. Swahili (*East and Central Africa*)
97. Temen (Themne) (*Sierra Leone*)
98. Teso (*Kenya; Uganda*)
99. Tigrinya (*Ethiopia*)
100. Tiv (*Nigeria*)
101. ci-Tonga, Zambian (Plateau Tonga) (*Zambia*)
102. shi-Tsonga (Shangaan) (*Mozambique; South Africa*)
103. se-Tswana (*Botswana; South Africa; Zimbabwe*)
104. Tumbuka (ci-Tumbuka) (*Malawi; Tanzania; Zambia*)
105. * Wolof (Jolof; Oulof) (*Gambia; Mauritania; Sénégal*)
106. ci-Yao (*Malawi; Mozambique; Tanzania*)
107. Yoruba (*Benin; Nigeria; Togo*)

AFRICAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

*Arabic *French
*English Spanish

D. THE AMERICAS

First Translations Made:

1. Amuzgo (*Mexico*)
2,3 † CHINANTEC: 2 dialects (*Mexico*)
4. Cocopa (*United States*)
* CREOLE, LESSER ANTILLES:
5. Guadelupéen dialect (*Guadeloupe*)
6. Martiniquais dialect (*Martinique*)
7. Cuicatec (*Mexico*)
8. Fox: Kickapoo dialect (*Mexico; United States*)
9. Huave (*Mexico*)
10. † MIXE: 1 dialect (*Mexico*)
* MIXTEC:
11. dialect of San Antonio Huitepec, Zaachila District (*Mexico*)
12. dialect of San Miguel Piedras, Nochistlán District (*Mexico*)
13. 'de la Canada', dialect of San Juan Coatzaspan, Teotitlán del Camino (*Mexico*)
14. 'de la Costa', dialect of Pinotepa Nacional, Jamiltepec District (*Mexico*)
15. 'de la Mixteca Alta', dialect of Yosondúa, Tlaxiaco District (*Mexico*)
16. 'de la Mixteca Baja', dialect of Santa Inés del Río, Nochistlán District (*Mexico*)
17. Mocoví (*Argentina*)
18. * Patois (*Windward Islands*)
19. Paya (*Honduras*)
20. Saramaccan (*Suriname*)
21. Thompson (*Canada*)
22. * Totonac (*Mexico*)
* ZAPOTEC:
23. dialect of Betaza, Villa Alta District (*Mexico*)
24. dialect of Lachigolóo (*Mexico*)
25. dialect of San Juan Tagui, Villa Alta District (*Mexico*)
26. dialect of Tlalixtac (*Mexico*)
27. 'de la Sierra', dialect of Ixtlan District (*Mexico*)
28. 'de la Sierra', dialect of San Bartoloméo Zoogocho, Villa Alta District (*Mexico*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the Seven Year Plan.
† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

29. 'de la Sierra', dialect of Villa Hidalgo, Villa Alta District (*Mexico*)
30. 'del Sur', dialect of Pochutla District (*Mexico*)
31. 'del Sur', dialect of San Pedro Mixtepec, Miahuatlán District (*Mexico*)
32. 'del Sur', dialect of San Vicente Cuatlán, Ejutla District (*Mexico*)
33. 'del Valle', dialect of San Mateo and San Miguel Mixtepec, Zimatlán District (*Mexico*)
34. Zoque (*Mexico*)

Insufficient Information (Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following represent new accomplishments or enrichment of existing literature):

1. Cree (*Canada*)
2. MAZATEC: dialect of San Antonio Eloxochitlán (*Mexico*)
3. * MIXE: 1 dialect (*Mexico*)
4. Paez (*Colombia*)
5. Yupik, St. Lawrence Island (*Alaska*)

Literature Enriched:

1. * Aymará (*Bolivia; Peru*)
2. * Cakchiquel (*Guatemala*)
3. Cayapa (*Ecuador*)
4,5. † CHINANTEC: 2 dialects (*Mexico*)
6. 'CHOCO: Panamanian' (Embera) • (*Panama*)
7. * Creole, Haitian (Criole) (*Haiti*)
8. * Cuna (Kuna) (*Panama* (*San Blas Islands*))
9. † 'Garifuna' (*Belize*)
10. Guajiro (*Colombia; Venezuela*)
11. * Guaymí (*Panama*)
12. Jicaque (Xicaque) (*Honduras*)
13. * Kekchí (*Belize; Guatemala*)
14. * Mam (*Guatemala; Mexico*)
15. Mapuche (*Argentina; Chile*)
16. Mataco (*Argentina; Bolivia; Paraguay*)
17. * Maya (*Belize; Guatemala; Mexico*)
18. MAYA: Mopan dialect (*Belize; Guatemala*)
19. MISKITO: Nicaraguan dialect (*Nicaragua*)
20. Navajo (*United States*)
21. Otomi (*Mexico*)
22. † OTOMI: dialect of Amealco (*Mexico*)
23. Papiamento (*Aruba; Bonaire; Curaçao*)
* QUECHUA:
24. † unspecified Bolivian dialect (*Bolivia*)
25. † unspecified Ecuadorian dialect (*Ecuador*)
26. Shuara (Jivaro) (*Ecuador; Peru*)
27. Sranan (Sranan Tongo; Surinamese; Taki-Taki) (*Suriname*)
28. Toba (*Argentina*)
29. * TUPI: Guarani dialect (*Argentina; Brazil; Paraguay*)
30. Tzeltal (*Mexico*)
31. * Yaqui (*Mexico; United States*)
32. † 'Yukpa' (*Colombia; Venezuela*)
* ZAPOTEC:
33. 'del Istmo', dialect of Tehuantepec and Juchitlan Districts, (*Mexico*)
34. 'del Valle', dialect of Mitla, Tlocolula District (*Mexico*)
35. 'del Valle', dialect of San Baltazar Chichicapan, Ocotlán District (*Mexico*)

AMERICAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

English
French
Laotian
Persian
* Portuguese
Portuguese Braille
* Spanish
Spanish Braille
Vietnamese

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the Seven Year Plan.
† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

E. ASIA

Insufficient Information (Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following represent new accomplishments or enrichment of existing literature):

1. Mundari ('Mundra') (*India*)
2. Semelai (*Malaysia*)

Literature Enriched:

1. Balochi (Baluchi) (*Baluchistan*)
2. * Bengali (*Bangladesh; India*)
3. * BENGALI: Assamese dialect (*North-eastern India*)
4. Burmese (*Burma; Bangladesh*)
5. * Chinese, Modern
6. DAYAK, LAND ('BIDAYUH'): Bukar Sadong dialect (*Borneo; Sarawak*)
7. DAYAK, LAND ('BIDAYUH'): Jagoi (Biratak) dialect (*Borneo; Sarawak*)
8. Dayak, Sea (Iban) (*Borneo; Sarawak*)
9. DUSUN (KADAZAN): Penampang dialect (*Sabah*)
10. * Gujarati (*India*)
11. * Hindi, Western (Hindi; 'Hindustani') (*India; Africa; Americas; Fiji*)
12. Ilocano (*The Philippines*)
13. * Japanese
14. Japanese: Katakana script
15. * Kannada (Kanarese) (*India*)
16. Khasi (*India*)
17. Khmer
18. * Korean (*Korea; China; Japan*)
19. * Lao (Laotian) (*Laos; Thailand; et al.*)
20. * Lepcha (*Bhutan; India; Nepal*)
21. * Malay ('Bahasa Malaysia') (*Malaysia*)
22. MALAY: 'Bahasa Indonesia' dialect (*Indonesia*)
23. * Malayalam (*India, incl. Laccadive Is.*)
24. * Marathi (Maharatti) (*India*)
25. MARATHI: Konkani dialect (*India*)
26. Meithei (Manipuri) (*India*)
27. * Nepali (Nepalese) (*Nepal*)
28. * Oriya (*India*)
29. Palu (Kaili) (*Indonesia*)
30. Pampangan (*The Philippines*)
31. * Panjabi (Punjabi) (*India; Pakistan*)
32. Pashto (Pushtu) (*Afghanistan; Pakistan*)
33. Persian (Farsi) (*Írán; et al.*)
34. * Sanskrit (*India*)
35. Sebuano (Cebuano) (*The Philippines*)
36. * Sindhi (*India; Pakistan*)
37. * Sinhalese (*Sri Lanka*)
38. Tagalog (Filipino) (*The Philippines*)
39. * Tamil (*India; Sri Lanka; et al.*)
40. * Telugu (*India*)
41. Thai (*Thailand*)
42. * Tibetan (*India; Tibet*)
43. * Turkish (*Cyprus; Turkey; et al.*)
44. * Urdu (*India; Pakistan*)
45. Vietnamese (*Vietnam; et al.*)

ASIAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

English

F. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

First Translations Made:

1. Chimbu (Kuman) (*Papua New Guinea*)
2. CHIMBU: Gumine (Golin) (*Papua New Guinea*)
3. ENGA: Laiap dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)
4. German, Rabaul Creole ('Unserdeutsch') (*Papua New Guinea*)
5. Lamalanga (North Pentecost) (*Vanuatu*)
6. Marina (Big Bay) (*Vanuatu*)
7. SIANE: Arango dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the Seven Year Plan.
† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

Insufficient Information (Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following represent new accomplishments or enrichment of existing literature):

1. † 'Woleanian' (*The Caroline Islands*)

Literature Enriched:

1. Chamorro (*Guam; Mariana Islands*)
2. EFATE (EFATESE): Erakor dialect (*Vanuatu*)
3. Fijian (*The Fiji Islands*)
4. Gilbertese (*Kiribati; et al.*)
5. Hawaiian (*The Hawaiian Islands*)
6. Kosrean (Kusaiean) (*The Caroline Islands*)
7. Lau (*Malaita, Solomon Islands*)
8. Maori, Cook Islands (Rarotongan) (*The Cook Islands*)
9. Maori, New Zealand (*New Zealand*)
10. Marshallese (*The Marshall Islands*)
11. MELE: Fila dialect ('Ifira') (*Vanuatu*)
12. * Motu, Hiri (Police Motu) (*Papua New Guinea*)
13. Nengone (Maréen) (*The Loyalty Islands*)
14. Niuean (*Niue Island*)
15. Palauan (Palau) (*The Caroline Islands; Guam*)
16. * Pidgin, Neo-Melanesian ('Tok Pisín') (*Papua New Guinea*)
17. Pidgin, Solomon Islands (*The Solomon Islands*)
18. Pidgin, Vanuatu (Bislama) (*Vanuatu*)
19. Ponapean (*Eastern Caroline Islands*)
20. * Samoan (*Samoa; et al.*)
21. TANNA: Lenakel dialect (*Vanuatu*)
22. TANNA: Nupuanmen ('Whitesands') dialect (*Vanuatu*)
23. * Tongan (*Tonga Islands; et al.*)
24. Trukese (*The Caroline Islands*)
25. Tuvaluan (Ellicean) (*Tuvalu; Nauru; et al.*)
26. Yapese (*The Caroline Islands*)

AUSTRALASIAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

Arabic
English
Greek
Japanese (Katakana script)
Persian
Vietnamese

G. EUROPE

First Translations Made:

1. Friulian (*Italy*)
2. * RUMANIAN: Moldavian dialect (*Moldavia*)

Insufficient Information (Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following represent new accomplishments or enrichment of existing literature):

1. † INUIT: Greenlandic, 'West Central' dialect (*Greenland*)

Literature Enriched:

1. * Albanian (*Albania; et al.*)
2. ARABIC: Maltese dialect (*Malta*)
3. * Basque (*France; Spain*)
4. * Czech (*Czechoslovakia; et al.*)
5. * Danish (*Denmark; et al.*)
6. * Estonian (*Estonia; et al.*)
7. * Faeroese (*Faeroe Islands*)
8. * Finnish (*Finland; et al.*)
9. * FRISIAN: West Frisian dialect ('Frysk') (*Frisian Islands; et al.*)
10. Gaelic, Scottish (*Scotland*)
11. * German (*Austria; Germany; Switzerland; et al.*)
12. * GERMAN: Luxemburgian (Letzeburgische) dialect (*Luxembourg*)
13. * Greek, Modern (*Cyprus; Greece; et al.*)

* Language specifically named as a translation goal of the Seven Year Plan.
† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

14. * Hungarian (*Hungary; et al.*)
15. * Icelandic (*Iceland; et al.*)
16. INUIT: Greenlandic (*Greenland*)
17. * Italian (*Italy; Switzerland; et al.*)
18. Ladin (*Italian and Swiss Tyrol*)
20. * Lithuanian (*Lithuania; et al.*)
* NORWEGIAN:
21. Nynorsk (Landsmål) (*Norway*)
22. Riksmål (Bokmål) (*Norway*)
23. * Polish (*Poland; et al.*)
* ROMANSCH:
24. * Romanian (*Romania; et al.*)
25. Sursilvan dialect (*Switzerland*)
26. * Russian
27. * Slovak (*Czechoslovakia; Hungary; Yugoslavia; et al.*)
28. * Swedish (*Sweden; Finland; et al.*)
29. Welsh (Cymraeg) (*Wales; et al.*)

EUROPEAN ASSEMBLIES HAVE ALSO REPORTED ACHIEVEMENTS IN:

Arabic Persian

H. TOTAL BY CONTINENTS

	First Translations	*Needing Further Identification*	*Literature Enriched*
World Languages	1	1	8
Invented Languages	—	—	1
Africa	22	7	107
The Americas	34	5	35
Asia	—	2	45
Australasia	7	1	26
Europe	2	1	29
	66	17	251



His Worship Raúl Salmón, Mayor of La Paz, Bolivia, (third from right) visiting the Bahá'í exhibit at the La Paz book fair; July 1981.

7. TRANSLATIONS OF THE SHORT OBLIGATORY PRAYER



Short Daily Obligatory Prayer in Arabic and English.

ABOVE is the original Arabic with its translation into English of one of the prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and prescribed for fulfilment of the daily obligatory prayer. It is known as the Short Obligatory Prayer, and when used is recited once in twenty-four hours, at noon.

In previous volumes of *The Bahá'í World* translations of this prayer were published in almost 400 languages, dialects or scripts. These are listed below, by continent, with corrected designations where possible, followed by the texts of new or improved translations which became available in the period Riḍván 1979–1983, bringing the total to 501. In some instances identification is provisional, and in others alternative translations may appear pending final approval of the relevant National Spiritual Assemblies. Not all the Braille texts available are shown. There exist some oral translations made on tape recordings which are not reflected in these pages.

The usage and spelling chosen for primary listings, and indication of dialect relationships, follow, where possible, C. F. and F. M. Voegelin, *Classification and Index of the World's Languages*. It is recognized by the compilers of this list that these designations, therefore, sometimes do not reflect the name by which a particular language or dialect is best known, or the designation preferred by those who speak it. Some variant names and spellings, including variants previously reported, appear in parentheses.

Exceptions to Voegelin & Voegelin's usage have been made in a few cases: where the name of a language has been officially changed in the country in which it is spoken; where Voegelin & Voegelin's primary listing is known to be considered pejorative by speakers of the language or dialect; and in a few other instances. Also, certain of the European dialects of Scandinavian and Netherlandic-German have been listed as separate languages, on the basis of their long separate histories as literary languages.

A. AFRICA

* Denotes revised translations. † Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOLUMES (128)

1. Adangme (*Ghana*)
2. Afrikaans (*Southern Africa*)
3. AKAN: Asante (Ashanti) dialect (*Ghana*)
4. AKAN: Fante dialect (*Ghana*)
5. AKAN: Twi (Akwapem) dialect (*Ghana*)
6. Amharic (Amarigna; Amarinya) (*Ethiopia*)
7. Awing (*Cameroons*)
8. † 'Bakuba' (*Zaïre*)
9. Bambara (*Mali; Sénégal; Upper Volta*)
10. Bamoun (*Cameroons*)
11. Bassa (Gbasa) (*Liberia*)
12. ici-Bemba (Wemba) (*Zaïre; Zambia*)
13. Berba (*Benin*)
14. Bulu (Boulou) (*Cameroons*)
15. Chiripon-Lete-Anum (Cherepong; Guan) (*Ghana*)
16. Ciokwe (Chokwe) (*Angola; Zaïre*)
17. * CREOLE, INDIAN OCEAN: Mauritian dialect (*Mauritius*)
18. Dagbani (Dagbane; Dagomba) (*Ghana; Togo*)
19. Diola (Jola) (*Upper West Africa*)
20. DIOLA (JOLA): Fogny (Jóola Fóoñi) dialect (*The Gambia; Guinea; Sénégal*)
21. Duala (Douala) (*Cameroons*)
22. * Efik (*Nigeria*)
23. EKOI: Ejagham dialect (*Cameroons; Nigeria*)
24. † 'Ewe' (*Benin; Ghana; Togo*)
25. EWE: Gē (Mina) dialect (*Benin; Togo*)
26. EWE: Watyi (Ouatchi, Waci) dialect (*Benin; Togo*)
27. Fō (Fon; Dahoméen) (*Benin*)
28. Ful (Fula; Fulani; Fulfulde; Peul; Toucouleur) (*West Africa*)
29. FUL: Torado dialect (*Sénégal*)
30. GĀ: Accra dialect (*Ghana; Togo*)
31. Gambai (Ngambai; Ngambaye) (*Chad*)
32. olu-Ganda (Luganda) (*Uganda*)
33. Gbaya (Baya) (*Central African Republic; Cameroons; Congo*)
34. † 'Goun' (*Benin*)
35. Gurma (Gourma: Gourmantche) (*Togo*)
36. Gurma (Gourma; Gourmantche) (*Upper Volta*)
37. * G//wi (!kwi) (*Botswana*)
38. HAUSA: unidentified Nigerian dialect
39. Herero (*Namibia/South West Africa*)
40. ≠ Hûâ, Eastern (≠ Hõã (*Botswana*)
41. ≠ Hua (!xo) (*Botswana*)
42. Igbo (Ibo, Igho) (*Nigeria*)
43. Kaba (Sara Kaba) (*Central African Empire; Chad*)
44. Kanuri (*Chad; Niger; Nigeria*)
45. Kasem (Kassem; Kasena) (*Ghana; Upper Volta*)
46. e-Kele (Lokele) (*Zaïre*)
47. Kikuyu (Gikuyu) (*Kenya*)
48. † 'Kimpin (Kipindi)' (*Zaïre*)
49. † 'Kinande' (*Zaïre*)
50. KONGO (Kikongo): ki-Tuba (Kituba) dialect (*Angola; Congo; Zaïre*)
51. KONGO: 'Kimanianga' dialect (*Zaïre*)
52. KONGO: ki-Ntaandu (Kintandu) dialect (*Zaïre*)
53. KONGO: ki-Zombo (Kizombo) dialect (*Angola; Zaïre*)
54. Kpelle (*Guinea; Liberia*)
55. Krio (*West Africa*)
56. Kusal (Kusaal) (*Ghana; Upper Volta*)
57. Kwakum (Bakoum) (*Cameroons*)
58. oci-Kwanyama (Kuanjama; Kuanyama) (*Angola; Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
59. Logo (Logoti) (*Sudan; Zaïre*)

60. LOSENGO: Mangala (Lingala) dialect (*Zaïre*)
61. si-Lozi (*Zambia*)
62. ki-Luba-Katanga (Kiluba) (*Zaïre*)
63. Luba-Lulua (Tshiluba, Ciluba) (*Zaïre*)
64. ci-Lunda (*Angola; Zaïre; Zambia*)
65. ci-LUNDA: Ndembo dialect (*Zaïre*)
66. Luo (*Kenya; Tanzania*)
67. ki-Luuwa (Kiluwa) (*Zaïre*)
68. Lwo (*Uganda*)
69. ci-Makonde (Shimakonde) (*Mozambique; Tanzania*)
70. † i-Makua (Makhuwa) (*Mozambique; Malawi*)
71. Malagasy (*Malagasy Republic*)
72. Mandinka (Mandingo) (*Upper West Africa*)
73. Masa (Massa) (*Chad; Cameroons*)
74. MASABA: ulu-Bukusu (Lubukusu) dialect (*Kenya; Uganda*)
75. Mashi (*Zaïre; Zambia*)
76. † 'ki-MBUNDU (Kimbundu)' (*Angola*)
77. * i-MBUTI: 'Batua (Lutua-Bambote)' dialect (*Zaïre*)
78. * Mbuun ('Embun (Kibunda)') (*Zaïre*)
79. MENDE: Kpa dialect (*Liberia; Sierra Leone*)
80. Moré ('Mossi') (*Ghana; Togo; Upper Volta*)
81. NAMA: Damara dialect (*Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
82. isi-Ndebele (Sindebele) (*Zimbabwe*)
83. oci-Ndonga (Ambo; Ochindonga) (*Southwest Africa/Namibia*)
84. NGUNI: isi-Swati (SiSwati, Swazi) dialect (*Swaziland; South Africa*)
85. NGUNI: isi-Xhosa (!Xhosa) dialect (*Botswana; Transkei; South Africa*)
86. NGUNI: Zulu dialect (*Southern Africa*)
87. eke-NYAKYUSA: Ngonde (Konde) dialect (*Malawi; Tanzania*)
88. ki-Nyamwesi (Nyamwezi) (*Tanzania*)
89. Nyang (Kenyang) (*Cameroons*)
90. ci-Nyanja (Chinyanja) (*Malawi; Zambia*)
91. ci-NYANJA: ci-Cewa (Chichewa) dialect (*Malawi; Zambia*)
92. oru-Nyoro (Runyoro-Rutoro) (*Uganda*)
93. Oromigna (Galla) (*Ethiopia; Kenya*)
94. Riff (Tarifit) (*Algeria; Morocco*)
95. shi-Ronga (Shironga) (*Mozambique; South Africa*)
96. Ruanda (Kinyarwanda; Runyarwanda) (*Rwanda*)
97. iki-Rundi (Kirundi) (*Burundi*)
98. Sango (Sangho) (*Central African Republic; Chad; Congo*)
99. SARA: Sara-Majingai (Madingaye) dialect (*Central African Republic; Chad*)
100. Sara: Sara Ngama dialect (*Central African Republic; Chad*)
101. Shona (*Mozambique; Zimbabwe*)
102. SHONA: Kalanga dialect (*Botswana; Zimbabwe*)
103. Shua (*Botswana*)
104. Sidamo (Sidamigna) (*Ethiopia*)
105. Somali (*Somalia; Djibouti; Kenya; Ethiopia*)
106. lu-Songe (Kisonge) (*Zaïre*)
107. SONGHAI: Zarma (Djerma) dialect (*Niger; Nigeria*)
108. Sotho, Northern (se-Pedi) (*South Africa*)
109. Sotho, Southern (se-Sotho, Sesotho) (*Lesotho; South Africa*)
110. ki-Sukuma (*Tanzania*)
111. Swahili (*Central and East Africa*)
112. SWAHILI: 'Mashingoli' dialect (*Somalia*)
113. Temen (Temne, Themne) (*Guinea; Sierra Leone*)
114. Teso (Ateso) (*Kenya; Uganda*)
115. Tigrinya (*Eritrea*)
116. Tiv (*Nigeria*)
117. Tobote (Busari, Bassar) (*Ghana; Togo*)
118. ci-Tonga, Malawian (Kitonga, Siska) (*Malawi*)
119. ci-Tonga, Zambian (Plateau Tonga) (*Zambia*)
120. * shi-Tswa ('Phikahni') (*Mozambique; Zimbabwe*)
121. se-Tswana (Chuana; Setswana) (*Botswana; Bophuthatswana; South Africa; Zimbabwe*)
122. Tumbuka (Timbuka; Chitumbuka) (*Malawi; Tanzania; Zambia*)
123. Wolof (Jolof; Oulof) (*The Gambia; Mauritania; Sénégal*)
124. ci-Yao (Chiyao) (*Malawi; Mozambique; Tanzania*)
125. † 'Yaouré (Yahore)' (*submitted from Ivory Coast*)

126. Yoruba (*Benin; Nigeria*)
127. Zande (*Central African Republic; Congo; Sudan; Zaïre*)
128. olu-Ziba (olu-Haya) (*Tanzania*)

IMPROVED TRANSLATIONS (2)

1. KIKUYU (*Kenya*)

Ndina uira, Wee Ngai wakwa, ati Wee wanyumbire nigetha ngumenye na ngukumagie. Na ndina uira thiini wa kahiinda gaaka iguru ria wagi uhoti wakwa na iguru ria uhoti waku, iguru ria uthiini wakwa na iguru ria utonga waku.

Gutiri Ngai ungi tiga Wee, Uria Muteithia wa Ugwaati -ini, Uria Wirugaimie.

2. ci-MAKONDE (Shimakonde) (*Mozambique; Tanzania*)

Nilikumanya, wako Nungu wangu, doni undingumba nikumanye nikupambedye Wako. Niku-kumanyia kwa wakati hau, kudidimanga kwangu na chakulula Chako, na umasikini wangu na uhumu Wako.

Apali Nungu junji ni Wako, Wakupwazela Mu-mauvilo Muwikala Umwene wa uti.

ADDITIONAL TEXTS (NOT PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN *THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD*) (24)

1. BARGU (BARIBA) (*Benin; Nigeria; Togo*)

Na sãa seeda (Yareru), nɛn gusunɔ, mɛ a man taka kuawa na n nun yɛ̃ kpa na n nun sãamɔ. Tɛ̃ na yɔ̃ mi na nɛn dam sariru yɛ̃, ma na wunɛn yiko yɛ arumani yɛ̃ Gusunɔ goo maa sari ma n kun wunɛ, wunɛ wi a ra faaba ko gɔban di—Wunɛ wi a wãa wunɛn tii sɔɔ.

2. BIHARI: 'Mauritian Bhojpuri' dialect—Devanagari (?) script (*Mauritius*)

हे ईश्वर । हम गवाही देत हईं कि तोहके चिन्हे के, और तोहर पूजा करे खातिर तू हम के पैदा कइले हवअ । हम हई छड़ी मानत हईं कि हम बहुत कमजोर हईं और तू सब सकती से भरल हवअ । हम गरीब हईं और तू सब परकार के धन-दौलत से भरपूर हवअ ।

तोहके छोड़के दूसरा कोई परमात्मा ने ह । तू ही संकट से छोड़ावे ओला हवअ और तू ही सब जगह में समाइल बाड़अ ।

3. BIHARI: 'Mauritian Bhojpuri' dialect—Latin script (*Mauritius*)

Hai Ishwar! Hum gawaahi det haïn ki Tohké chinhé ká aür tohur pooja karé khatir Tou hamké païda kaïlé hawa. Hum haï ghari ma nat haïn ki hum bahout kamjor haïn aur tou sab sakti se bharam hawa. Hum garib haïn aur Tou sab parkaar ké dhan-dawlat se bharpour hawa.

Tohké chorké dousra koyi Parmãtmã naï ha. Touhi sankat sé chorawé aula hawa aur Touhi sab Jagah mein samaail baara.

4. BOBO (BWAMOU) (*Upper Volta*)

Donbeeni. N lee sɛɛra bio Un lera mi yi, á nan zun-wo, à loo ɓaani-wo. N ta n bidamu le wo paanka boo han laana waan, án loo mun ta n khemu le wo paanmamu boo.

Donbeeni bwin binnian mían ka mu yinan Wote, Yan na yii fueni mu bosoa yi, Yan na wi mí hakuru yɛrɛ paanka kasi yi.

5. CREOLE, INDIAN OCEAN: Seychelles dialect (Kreol) (*Seychelles*)

Mon port temwagnaz, O mon Dye, ki Ou'n kre mwan pou rekonnet e ador Ou.

Mon sertifye, an se moman, ki mwan mon feb, e Ou ou For, ki mwan mon pov, e Ou ou Ris.

Napa lot Dye ki Ou, Sekour-dan-Danze, Legzistans Lib-e-Endepandan.

6. DYULA (JULA) (*Upper Volta*)

n lani b' a la ko ele ye ne dan n tigi ala, janko n' ka se k' i lɔn, k' i bato.

n' be n' ka sebaliya kasi, ka i ka kotigiya tando.

n be hami ni n ka fantanya ye, ka i ka fɛɛ ntigiya jamu.

ala wɛ rɛ te yen n' e ala kelen tɛ, min bi se ka mɔgɔ tanga koo jugu ma min kelen y' a yɛrɛ dan.

7. EWONDO (*Cameroons*)

Na mem, a Zamba wom, ne onga kom ma ne me yem Wò me lugu fe wò. Étié te, ma yebe évodi dzam ayi ngul dzoë, mebua mam ayi akuma doë.

Zambe mfë avegan ki ai Wò, Nkè a mbedzam, enyo ato'o ai émen.

8. FANG (*Equatorial Guinea*)

Me ne ngañia, ha Zama, na wua onga vele ma ná meyem wua ya kang wua. Me ne ngañia eyondji nfá kaa ngu djam ya en ngu djue, ateiñ dam ya acum due.

Zama nfe ases alorané wua, eñi avoro eyong otere abé ya naa wua fe wuaning ya en ngu djue.

9. FRAFRA (*Ghana*)

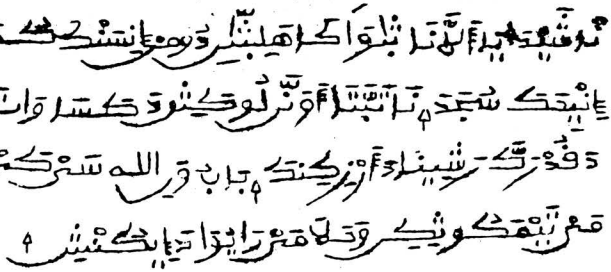
Nbo fo poorum, O nminga Winne, ti fo inge man ti nmina fom la n'puusa fo, mam sake lelewa ti manka ta panga dee Fom tari, ti man dela nasa dee Fo de tibsa.

Win disere ka le bona, Fo ma, vom songra, nbo wuu.

10. † 'GBEN' (BEN) (*Togo*)

N two k gaal—o n Yêdu—k fî n tag'n k ban'a k biɛ gi pug'a. N two, yog mba k be nɛ' k n k mɔk siɛla paŋ ama fî pa lkul' k n be talat niŋ ama k ŋalmaam kultie a yal. Yêdu k be k kât a po, fî ywa mba tie tot-daâ yubɔn niŋ. Fî tie ywa mba tun k pag u kwa.

11. HAUSA (Arabic script) (*West Central Africa*)



12. KABRE (KABYE) (*Togo*)

Hayı mɛ-ɛsɔ, mɛnkɛ aseɣɖedu. ŋlabı-m se mansımı-ŋ nɛ mansamı-ŋ. Manaɣ leɛleyɔ se mɛnkɛ ɛjamtu nɛ ŋkɛ ɖondu, mentisi man-kuñɔŋ yɔɔ nɛ ña-ñım yɔɔ.

Ɛsɔ nɔɔyu fɛyı ɖɔɖɔ pıtasına-ŋ; ɛzı ñe-ɖeke. Ña weyi ŋlızıɣ ɛyu kuñɔŋ taa yɔ, Ña weyi ŋwɛ ña-tı yɔɔ yɔ.

ŋyakı ɛyaa ñuŋ kaɖɛ taa.

13. KOMORO (COMORIAN) (*Comoro Islands*)

Ngami chahidi be mnyezi mgu ukaya humi umbu yili nihudjuwe yirudi nihu tweyi.

Ngam kubali he wakati rile nuwo he wangu wahangu no ushindzi wahaho, wo wumasikini wahangu no utadjiri wahaho.

Kapvatsi mgu wasaya yitso ndawe, ye wu sayidio harumwa wo utaabifu ye wu djitosho ayece.

14. LUHYA: lu-Tiriki dialect (*Kenya*)

Ndi ni lirola, Oh Nyasaye wanje, shijira Wanomba Khukhumanya nuk-khusaala Yiwe. Ndolekhitsanya, khu inyinga yinu, vudedekhere vwanje nu khutsingulu Tsiotsio, khuvudakha vwanje na khuvuruji Vwovwo.

Shaliho Nyasaye wundi na akhali Yiwe, Mukhonyi mu shivi, na Umenyanga Wonyene.

15. LYELE (LÉLÉ) (*Upper Volta*)

Nyɔ̌ɔ cò à wɔ nyèbyǎcìbál, o àmyé yi wɔ mmyè n zùrhinè, s'a luár m pàrà n córhóyílæ̀. À yé à jɛ̆ŷ-muru ǹdé mmyé wònó, à yízhìl ndè mmye dɔ̀ pàrà yi dòn k'é ténè ɛge d'mye dùdù mmyé n wɔ várnà a nónò weŷ bè zùrhná, zìě.

16. MBAI (*Chad; Central African Republic*)

Toy i yan kajim o alla lom nda kam doiti i ki lom ndi bor kadi-te i yan kem-sa tar lom kok

roiti i mad kram U koum to ndo lom anei i yan kajim ho, i yan ngom-m ho kam douniante nei ho kam kon-be-te loi ho.

Rota i alla ke maj, nan yan-guer loi i ke boo nan toi degue toube.

17. † MBAKA (*Central African Republic*)

Ma wa gomokouyo, ô mokomé gna; gbapo mo méné ma na kokobo ma hilo, na tétékélélo. Ma yé ngayolonmaté kpékpéké, kpékpéké ngamo pa yégbo; ma vo na gnomo omitè yaya ngamo.

Ga mokomé kpii o wodé, walo, kpaa, mo a vona é élé vo ogbo gnomo mo a volon a hinga kapan vo kpaa dénon.

18. MBATI (ISSONGO, LISSONGO) (*Central African Republic*)

Ngoyé mondo dola, ô, Moténgbé gna, mbètè hokia moumo mémbo, mou mo sékékoundio. Ngoyo mou nzonzonzo na boli gna, na lomba Nzio, ikèlé gna na louélé ma Nzio.

Moténgbé gna wé; mo kalissia bando lo na, Ndaha mossiki iko mou kini.

19. NAMA (*Southwest Africa/Namibia*)

Tita ge ra ≠an-!gâ, Ai ti Elotse Sats ge a guru te !Khaisa. Satsa tani ≠an tsî Øgore Øîse, tita gera !khō!gâ ti Øgai-o-!nâsib, tsî sa Øgaiba. Ti Øgâtsisib tsî Sa !khusiba. Sats oseï ge Ønî Eloë Hâ tama hâ. Hui-aots tsu-!gâb !nâ, ØØî-aitsania mâbasen hâtsa.

20. NANKANSE (NANKANI) (*Ghanaian dialect*)

Mam bangeya, Winne, it Fom inge man ti n'bange dee puusa Fom, man tiise sira, leleewa, ti man ka tari panga dee Fon tari, man dela nassa dee Fon de tibsa.

Winne deyilla ka le bonna dee Fon ma, songra kum puom, daalum bonna woo.

21. NANKANSE (NANKANI) (*Upper Volta dialect*)

O Nahaba Ouinnè, man tarr kassèto ti fou naha-man, tin bang'fo, nong'fo, la indoss'fo.

Mam ziin wan, mam mi intorrogo la fou pangân mam mi in'nongôn la fou tar'son.

Ouinnè Kaboï san dag'na foum, foum dé Sèka insongri yél bééro pooam, seka inka tarr'danna.

22. SÉRÈRE (SERER) (*The Gambia; Sénégal*)

Seede a mi e, wo Roog, wo bindaxam ndax um andoñ soo bugoñ.

Mixe seede a ndik, o ñak o waages, fo waag'of, o ñakes fo jeg'of.

Roog fa leñ jeegee faa refeerna wo, wo ñufiga we ndefna na sabab, oxaa na ñoowaa o ñoon xooxum.

23. ki-TUBA: Monokutuba dialect ('Kikongo Monokutuba') (*Zaïre*)

Mono ikele mbangi, eh Nzambi na mono, na kuzaba nde: nge gangaka mono, sambu na kuzaba nge ti kupesa nge lukumu, se-sepi yayi, mono ke ndima bufioti na mo-no ye bunene na nge, bunsukami na mono, ye bumvwama na nge.

Na ntwala na nge, Nzambi ya nkaka i-kele ve, ya ke gulusaka na bigonsa, yina ya ke zingaka na ngolo na yandi mosi kaka.

24. ce-VENDA (*Venda; South Africa*)

Ndi a ṱanziela yawee Mudzimu wanga, uri Wo ntsika u U ḓivha na u U luvha. Ndi ṱanziela zwino, u shaya nungo hanga na maaṋḓa. Au, vhushai hanga na lupfumo Lwau.

A hu na muṅwe Mudzimu e si Iwe, Mufarisi Milingoni, Muḓiitelazwoṱhe.

B. THE AMERICAS

* Denotes revised translation.

† Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOLUMES (89)

1. Alacaluf (*Chile*)
2. ALEUT: Eastern dialect (Cyrillic script) (*Alaska; Aleutian Islands; Siberia*)
3. Amuesha (*Peru*)
4. APACHE: Mescalero dialect (*United States*)
5. † 'Araucan' (*submitted from Panama*)
6. † 'Arhuaco' (*Colombia*)
7. Aymara (*Bolivia; Peru*)
8. Bauré (*Bolivia*)

9. Bribri (*Costa Rica; Panama*)
10. Cakchiquel (*Guatemala*)
11. Campa (*Peru*)
12. CARIB: Galibi (Cariña, Karinja) dialect (*Brazil; French Guiana; Guyana; Suriname; Venezuela*)
13. † 'CARIB: Moreno dialect' (*submitted from Honduras*)
14. † 'Carib, Island (Caribe)' (*submitted from Honduras*)
15. † 'Catio' (*Colombia; Panama; Venezuela*)
16. Cherokee (*United States*)
17. Chipaya (Pukina) (*Bolivia*)
18. † 'Chiquitano' (*Bolivia*)
19. † 'Choco, Colombian' (*Colombia*)
20. * Choco, Panamanian (Ẹpẹra, Northern) (*Panama*)
21. CONIBO: Shipibo dialect (*Peru*)
22. Creole, Haitian (*Haïti*)
23. Cuna (Kuna) (*Colombia; Panama*)
24. DAKOTA (SIOUX): Lakota dialect (*Canada; United States*)
25. Diegueño (Kum-Yíy) (*Mexico; United States*)
26. Goajiro (Guajiro) (*Colombia; Venezuela*)
27. Guahibo (Guajibo) (*Colombia; Venezuela*)
28. Guaymi (*Panama*)
29. Haida (*Alaska; Canada*)
30. INUIT (INUPIAQ): Barren Grounds dialect (*Canada*)
31. INUIT (INUPIAQ): Barrow (North Slope) dialect (*Alaska*)
32. INUIT (INUPIAQ): Keewatin dialect (*Canada*)
33. INUIT (INUPIAQ): Kobuk (Kotzebue) dialect (*Alaska*)
34. INUIT (INUPIAQ): South Baffin Island dialect (Eastern Arctic syllabics) (*Canada*)
35. Jicaque (Xicaque) (*Honduras*)
36. KALISPEL (SALISH): Flathead dialect (*United States*)
37. Koyukon (*Alaska*)
38. Kuchin (Kutchin) (*Alaska*)
39. KUCHIN: Fort Yukon dialect (*Alaska*)
40. KUCHIN: Loucheux dialect (*Canada*)
41. Lokono (Continental Arawak) (*Guyana; French Guiana; Suriname*)
42. Machiguenga (*Peru*)
43. Mapuche (Araucanian) (*Argentina; Chile*)
44. † MAPUCHE: unidentified Chilean dialect (*Chile*)
45. MASCO: Huachipairi (Amaracaeri) dialect (*Peru*)
46. Mascoy: Lengua dialect (*Paraguay*)
47. Mataco (*Argentina; Bolivia; Paraguay*)
48. Maya (*Belize; Guatemala; Mexico*)
49. Micmac (*Canada*)
50. MISKITO: Nicaraguan dialect (*Honduras; Nicaragua*)
51. Mohawk (*Canada; United States*)
52. † 'Motilon' (*Venezuela*)
53. Moxo: Trinitarios dialect (*Bolivia; Brazil; Paraguay*)
54. Navajo (*United States*)
55. OJIBWA (CHIPPEWA): Mississagi dialect (*Canada*)
56. OJIBWA (CHIPPEWA): Salteaux dialect (*Canada; United States*)
57. OJIBWA (CHIPPEWA): Woodlands dialect (*Canada; United States*)
58. Otomi (*Mexico*)
59. Papiamento (*Aruba; Bonaire; Curaçao*)
60. Piro (*Peru*)
61. † QUECHUA: Unidentified Bolivian dialect (*Bolivia*)
62. QUECHUA: Cuzqueño dialect (*Peru*)
63. † QUECHUA: Unidentified Ecuadorian dialect (*Ecuador*)
64. Quiché (*Mexico; Guatemala*)
65. Salish, Puget Sound (*United States*)
66. Shoshoni (Shoshone) (*United States*)
67. SHUARA (JIVARO): Aguaruna dialect (*Peru*)
68. Sirionó (*Bolivia*)
69. Sranan (Sranan-Tongo; Surinamese; Taki-Taki) (*Suriname*)
70. SUMO: 'Musawas' dialect (*Honduras; Nicaragua*)
71. SUMO: Twahka dialect (*Nicaragua*)
72. † 'Tacana' (*Bolivia; Peru*)
73. Tanana (*Alaska*)
74. TANANA: Tanacross dialect (*Alaska*)
75. TEWA: Santa Clara Pueblo dialect (*United States*)
76. Tlingit (*Alaska; Canada*)
77. Toba (*Argentina*)
78. Tucuna (Ticuna) (*Brazil; Colombia; Peru*)
79. TUPI: Chiriguano (Chahuanco) dialect (*Argentina; Bolivia*)
80. TUPI: Guarani dialect (*Argentina; Brazil; Paraguay*)

81. TUPI: Guarayú dialect (*Bolivia*)
82. Yagua (*Brazil; Colombia; Peru*)
83. Yaqui (*Mexico; United States*)
84. Yaruro (*Venezuela*)
85. † 'Yukpa' (*Colombia; Venezuela*)
86. YUPIK, Central Alaskan: Kuskokwim dialect (*Alaska*)
87. YUPIK, Central Alaskan: Yuk dialect (*Alaska*)
88. Zamucoan, Northern (Ayoré, Ayoreo) (*Bolivia; Paraguay*)
89. * Zapotec: dialect of Mitla (*Mexico*)

IMPROVED TRANSLATIONS (1)

1. ZAPOTEC: dialect of Mitla, Tlacolula district (*Mexico*)

Narä nacä testigw, Oh Xtioze, de que Luj bazalaajslu narä te gumbee Luj ne ganelaazä Luj. Narä nacä testigw naa impoténs xtena ne xpoderlu, xquel probe ne xquel nazaa'clu. Xeti ru ste Dios más que Luj, ni racnee nen pelígr, ni yu la gac por laani.

ADDITIONAL TEXTS (NOT PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN *THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD*) (42)

1. AMUZGO (*Mexico*)

Ja ndíaa, uu Totzón, uu sináje cuána chi cuaná'nguu ndo ndza nangngjó uu. Ja baná'ng xhingbá xhejatakinjója ndóuu tóung nanjóuu, ja tsá'an ndía'ja ndu uutáuu. Tánang cuíchi Totzón chiuu, uunang mati'ndí xhi'nabán cuínang dontá, uunang manchí'ncu nchuba ma'n.

2. CHINANTEC: dialect of Ayotzintepec, Tuxtepec district (*Mexico*)

Nah lan testigo, quian Dio, Ne me cuahnah ma leh quiun Ne, ma leh nanNe.

Nah fant judzo na ga jiuh sachabe cha quien Ne cha poder quia, nah ñian ne la'da jeu qui la je. Sa chan ñia Dio más que Ne, siempre me ayudar la man go quiente, Ne chan ñian.

3. CHINANTEC: dialect of Valle Nacional, Tuxtepec district (*Mexico*)

Ning testigo, nin Diú yha ning ca quianiug comoni calawni canognin. Nin a nog gio moy lala calajig y juini y tiñeni. Ya sha sia Diú ja nin va sha no chio may lay sha mog chiu guia cuñia.

4. CHINANTEC: dialect of Mano Marquéz, Tuxtepec district (*Mexico*)

Laa testigo, Oh Diu quia, de que Niy ca mi chaa ni jun ruguhe Niy jun mooni adorar Niy. Moo testigo cu lue naa sa vee niy y Niy vee, ti ñeni y Niy chi quia.

Tza chaa y ja Diu mas ja Niy ba, tza mi ay jay y hue, tza ca la chaa cu iho.

5. CHINANTEC:[1] dialect of Usila (*Mexico*)

Niahg^{25} Saihg^{15} Neigh^{35} Hau^{2} La^{3}, Neigh^{4} Jon^{4}dai^{1} Guianh^{35}, Guieh^{1} Neigh^{5} Ajuhg^{25} Niahg^{35} Ca^{1}ca^{2} La^{1} Jonhg^{3} Li^{1} Jm^{4} Nèihg^{5} I^{1} Ma^{2} Congh^{1}. Sainhg^{3} Neihg^{35} Ti^{1} La^{2} Sa^{1} Jcuagh^{3} I^{1} Juhg^{3} Neigh^{25}, Ti^{1} Ñeihg^{3} I^{1} Lang^{25} Neigh^{25}. Sion^{35} Jon^{4}dai^{1} Asainhg^{5} Siah^{15} Neigh^{3} Pa^{2}, Ama^{2} On^{3} Chie^{35} I^{1} Lahg^{2}, Asiahg^{45} Con^{3} Juahg^{2} Ñiahg^{3}.

6. COCOPA (*United States*)

Ña'ch mat pay pach ñawe wich oyach, O' Małquayak, mapuch nap ñem sa'ch ñemuyach muyach mesquap. Ñem meech ñach mechkeeñap mapill nap ñawe yew kich p'warr pin map nap ñawey, yew quax'chelpin napuch mu yax. Małquayak pa'as yow low-waym-lax ushet nemam ñem ma'k, ñaway kam lay Małquayak pich ushet nemam ṣupeck eñamcha.

[1] The numerals are a guide to pronunciation, differentiating between the five possible tones for each word.

7. CREOLE, LESSER ANTILLES: Dominican dialect (*Dominica*)

Mwen sé témwen'w, Bondyé mwen, ki Ou fé mwen pou konnét Ou épi adowé'w.

Mwen ka testifyé, atjwélman, ki mwen féb ek Ou fò, ki mwen pòv épi Ou wich.

I pa ni dòt Bondyé ki'w, ki ka endé nou en denjé, ki sa viv pa kò'w yonn.

8. CREOLE, LESSER ANTILLES: Guadaloupéen dialect (*Guadeloupe*)

O Bondyé, mwen ka témwagné Ou mété mwen asi latè pou mwen konnèt ou é pou mwen adoré'w. Mwen ka testé con ié la fòs en mwen pa ka bòdé ta'w, sa mwen tini pa ayen koté sa ou tini.

Ou sé sèl Bondyé qui tini, sé Ou ki ka pòté soukou adan tout' danjé, sé Ou ki ka doubout asi pwa a kò'w menm.

9. CREOLE, LESSER ANTILLES: Martiniquais dialect (*Martinique*)

Bondyé O, man ka témwagné Ou mété mwen asou latè, pou man pé sa konnèt ou é pou man pé sa adoré'w. Man ka testé tou kon man la a, fòs mwen pa ka bòdé bò ta'w, sa man ni pa ayen koté sa ou ni.

Ou sé sèl Bondyé ki ni, Wou ki ka pòté soukou adan tout' danjé, Wou ki ka doubout asou pwa kò'w menm.

10. CREOLE, LESSER ANTILLES: St. Lucian dialect ('Patois') (*St. Lucia*)

Mwen ka sèmanté, mon Dié, komkwé Ou fè mwen pou konèt Ou épi adowé Ou.

Mwen ka tèstifié atjwèlman komkwé mwen fèb épi sé Ou ki ni tout fòs èvèc pouvwa, mwen pòv épi tout wishès sé sa Ou.

La pa ni piès dòt Dié apa di Ou, Ou ki ka pòté soukou an tout danjé, Ou ka èksisté pa Kòw Tousel.

11. CUICATEC (*Mexico*)

U testigo yami Dios nyi tachi did u nae trichi di y di adorar.

Atestiguo di mniño ama impotencia did ama poder, u pobre u tedy riqueza. Utá ama Dios amandy diivo did ayudar nae ama peligro, chi ama nuy yi idiñas.

12. HUAVE (*Mexico*)

Shic testigo, oh sha Dios, de que Ik teran shic para mayaj embás y nataj adorarte. De nataj atestiguar canacu sha impotencia y mi poder, sha pobreza y mi tomieun. Ngo majleik a lo nap Dios más que Ik, el que ataj ayudar ush ajhik peligro, nhu que subsiste por nhowey ano.

13. INUIT: Barren Grounds dialect (Eastern Arctic Syllabics) (*Canada*)

ᐅᓪᓗᒃ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᖅᓯᒃᓗᒃ ᑕᕐᒪ ᔫᑎᐸ ᓴᓇᑕᐅᖅᓯᒪᒪᓐᓗᒃ ᐃᓐᒥᓂᒃ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᒪᓐᓇᖅᑐᑦ ᑐ ᓴᕐᐊᐱᕆᖅᑐᓇᖅᑐᓂᓪ.

ᑐᑭᓯᖅᓯᔨᓗᓄ ᒪᓂᒥᖅ ᐱᖅᔪᓂᖃᓐᓇᕐᓂᓂᒃ ᑕᕐᒪ ᐱᖅᔪᓂᖃᓐᓇᓚᓂᖅ, ᐊᑲᓗᓄᓚᓂᓪ ᐊᑲᓗᐃᓂᓚᓂᖅ.

ᐊᕐᓇᓂᒃ ᔫᑎᑕᖃᓐᓇᒥᓐ ᐃᓗᐱᖅ ᑭᓯᐱᖅ, ᐃᒃᓴᐅᑕᐅᔭᕆᐊᖃᓂᖅ ᐃᓐᓇᓂᖅ ᐊᕐᓇᑦᑎᐊᖃᓂᖅ.

14. MAZATEC: dialect of San Antonio Eloxochitlán (*Mexico*)

Nga'ána testigo, Nainá na, ngáji tziguindána nga ske xhkonla kongá kotzaquela. Koxhía ndikondí tzina ngaño kongaje tíeli, nimé tina ko ngajiiní niá kuyjié. Tidzí ijngó sani Nainá tanga jíene, jera basíko yáinda chá, jera tijé ta jngó tináni.

15. MIXE: dialect of Mixe district (*Mexico*)

ʉts nundenáby', ʉtsen Dios, ku Mets xhacójy' nexhcápet ʉs nzóky-ut. Chamsnundán cham kat ʉts mʉgajten mʉda exh tam Mets mʉkʉ, ʉts ayób ʉs Mets am-uk tixh miede. Kat jadúk Dios tenn xhtan Mets, Mets xhpʉdéque ko ayón yakpáyk, Mets nayúk kajudúk ten pʉn bʉdúkik.

16. MIXE: dialect of Zacatal, Juchitan district (*Mexico*)

Nafʉmbyech, ʉdxen Dios, kich Midx ʉdx tʉxhkyunúxh nixh a dampy' y huingudzʉgʉhuámpy'.

Nafʉmbyech jadunájta kudxʉ mʉk ngayapáky' y Midx je tukya mʉk y mʉj, ayobʉdx ñapáyk y Midx mayʉj myapáyk. Caba Dios ji huinpa yajpáyk más que Midx, pʉn pubedʉp maná jiandxkyen miajayña, pʉn ti kayamayájp.

17. MIXTEC: dialect of San Antonio Huitepec, Zaachila district (*Mexico*)

Ndɨhu gachi, nah Dios, ye datuu nuñahu junuñahe te chinañahe.

Ndɨhu ncachi, ntihu vinna, ye yehu te ndahbe ndiu.

Atu nga Dios yee chindiaha ichi ndɨuh, yoho chintecu mediu.

18. MIXTEC: dialect of San Miguel Piedras, Nochistlán district (*Mexico*)

Súhu testigüe, oh Dius sue, de que Yóhóni dáhontahuénisue para niniñáhasue y adorarte.

Atestígüesue nabiúhu coñánda due'uesue y Yóho téécu, yecondáhabisue y yecocuícao.

Atú uenca ííllan Dius duebueniyóho, Duebueni-meo chinteñaho nádacá-nundóho, El Que medíni yóho ndécu.

19. MIXTEC 'de la Cañada': dialect of San Juan Coatzaspam, Teotitlán del Camino (*Mexico*)

Shuú testigú, iña Shuvacó, e dín tashiín-co nushndí detecue quiniúo y diocoó. Shuú ne testigú veví e do canún de cadencube, shuú ne ndaviu y dín ne canu. Natií thsucú Shuvacó e dí ca canuñá e diín, din ne canadan-có mi dun shuvía, din e cadacuve mií.

20. MIXTEC 'DE LA COSTA': dialect of Pinotepa Nacional, Jamiltepec district (*Mexico*)

Yúu testigu, yóo Dió, bati Yoho sacuá nuchi chábana ndacótechun taba cúniyuchun. Sacótechun í a hora bati yúu lúi ta Yoho ca'nu cugúm, yúu ndábiyu ta Yoho díí cha iochun. Ñiáni inga Dió taba Yoho, ratínde nu peligru, taba Yoho ingtú'u máun.

21. MIXTEC 'DE LA MIXTECA ALTA': dialect of Yosondúa, Tlaxiaco district (*Mexico*)

Cuna testigu, Yandios, ja ni sa'rarúu ñama na nanacuniri Roó ti sari adorar Róo.

Rúu sari testigu bijnañú'ni rúu tu'íyo potenciari ti Róo chi'íyo, rúu ndáuri ti Róo rícura. Tu'íyo inga Yandios ja Róo, macujasa'a ayudar nu peligru, macujasá'a subsistir siáni.

22. MIXTEC 'DE LA MIXTECA BAJA': dialect of Santa Inés del Río, Nochistlán district (*Mexico*)

Méni yicuni testigo, oh Yandioxhié, meni xhebañiá ja xhiñiñáani ja cuiniñani. Xhedecuendañá'ana nicu bidna acu jadañá'ana ja cu tenu, dxicu jandá'bina zhi cuni cá'nu. Atiu ina Yandioxhe maca jamén, te taxhi ayuda nicu peligru, yicuni valimeni.

23. MOCOVÍ (*Argentina*)

Jaỹim lagataxanaxanec ñi Dios hua nagui que jaỹim vi'ichi' ñachalataxaq que ya'yi'iñite' que qami sashila'.

Paraque jaỹim racataxanaxanqui' nagui quenataxa' que ra iqalaxa chaqai requesaxanxai da ỹoxoric chaqai raresallaxai.

Qaica ca lya Dios que que qami napacaleq.

Qami ỹotavañi que na elchiqo'.

Qami qaica viñire'a.

24. OTOMI: dialect of Amealco (*Mexico*)

T'ʉ sadi mahyoni.

Da handi, gue a juą gue go ga tegagui njabʉ dą pa'i da ma'i di ma nubia ma ts'edi y ri ts'edi, ma nhyoya ne ri ndunthi nhyo, jo'o ma ná ra zi dada ngu'i ngue'a gui faxte ja ya ñanthi, to'o dinte sehe.

25. SARAMACCAN (*Suriname*)

Mi ta djula mi Gaan Gadu, taa Ju mbei mi fu sabi Ju, noo da I gaandi. Awaa mi ta konda taa me a kaakiti, I a taki a hii sembe liba, mi ta pena, noo I a gudu. Na wan kodo Gadu de boiti Ju, di Hepi-Man a fuka, di Seepi-Kiia-Wan.

26. THOMPSON (Nlka7kápmxtsín) (*Canada*)

As kw'áṅsna ta ts'íya wus ha7 szaytn, Olh xa7 lh Kwúkwpi7 lhn sḵáts'za7, áwi7 ta7s ha7wís tsutsámxw. A a7 s-hakstsín as tsutána ta tsíya wus aslhḵ'emtayp pilaxentsút kn ts7aylh áwi7 ta támas tá7a han szuġwzúġwt, ta ts'íya wus ha skwankwánt ta tákmus ha7 szuġwzuġwt.

Tăwi7 ta7 xwúỷtsu7h-kwúkwpi7 tlu7 tsukw ha7wí, ta Sknúxwatip, tatą7a sentsuḵwmína ta7 wa7áx tlu7 tsukw ha7wí.

27. TOTONAC (*Mexico*)

Qui lakatin, oh qui Dios, wish qui malakastaknita la qui nak lakapazan chu nak lakachiscuhuiyan. Qui lakatin chiyó qui nitu lipawan chu mi li liguaka, qui litamaxcat chu mi li langa.

Nitu tanu Dios mas qui wish, ticu mactayanan nicu we tapikwa chu saxtu tamactayi.

28. TZELTAL (*Mexico*)

Joon Testigo, Oh chultatic, jalat la coleson yuun yaj navat a va soc yash ochat ta cotan. Joon testigo viti ayoti, joon mayuc yhipal y jahat yhipalal mayuc vin hay cuun y jalat a culejal. Mayuc yan chultatic, ja nash jahat, jhaat sha coltayotic vin ayotic ta gocol.

29. ZAPOTEC: dialect of Betaza, Villa Alta district (*Mexico*)

Dzonliládxa, Dios tsiá, Lué béno yeláa man tsiá náa gombiá Lué en goxhenládxa Lué. Dzeyómbia náateque yela nexhj' tsiá en yela hual Tsió, yela yaché tsiá en yela uniáa Tsió.

Notnó zuádze yeto Dios zeláuze Lué, Bne dzacléno yogoté da mal, Bene notnó ziádxlo.

30. ZAPOTEC: dialect of Lachigolóo (*Mexico*)

Naré na testigo, oh Dadvid xhtena, de que Liú bénu na par gumbé Liú ne par guna adorar Liú.

Naré runa atestiguar, nangaré, impotens xhtena ne poder xhtenu, hgal prob xhtena ne hgal ricu xhtenu.

Cut stubi Dadvid más que Liú, ni racne bel yu peligr, ni run subsistir por láizbu.

31. ZAPOTEC: dialect of San Juan Taguí, Villa Alta district (*Mexico*)

Nedi zuá testigo, oh Dios quiá, de que Lué bzénilo nedi para gumbeá Lué len para yéqueda Lué.

Nedi naca atestiguar nánteca be diá valor len Lué nápalu poder, naca bayechi len Lué diá quió. Be zuá itu Dios más que Lué, laga rungue yudare lo yago neza, bene narungue subsistir tuhuelase.

32. ZAPOTEC: dialect of Tlalixtac (*Mexico*)

Na nái testigo, oh Dadvid xhtena, de que Li dáu na par gumbéi Li ne guna adorar Li. Na runa atestiguar angá dó'o chita na nái impoténte ne Li náu poderós, na nái prob ne Li náu ricu.

Cachi stub Dadvid masru que Li, níi racne lo tuv pelígr, níi yúu por lá'azi níi.

33. ZAPOTEC 'DEL ISTMO': dialect of Tehuantepec and Juchitán districts (*Mexico*)

Naacá testigu, sti Diuxhi, xhilá Lii bisinisilu naa para gunebiaya Lii ne para gana xhiee Lii. Naa rune testiguar nagasii impotencia stinee ne poder stilu, enda pobre stinee ne riqueza stilu. Gástiru sti Diuxhi casi Lii, ni raca nee lu peligru, ni ribánii pur lacalaa.

34. ZAPOTEC 'DEL SUR': dialect of Pochutla district (*Mexico*)

Na nac testíg, Dios lona, de que Luu mbli crear na para yolón Luu ne yolazna Luu. Na nac testíg naya quienta fuers ne Luu ten poder, na nac pobr ne Luu nac ric. Nquienta tib Dios más que Luu, parli ayudar el yatí, parli tzite lecaler.

35. ZAPOTEC 'DEL SUR': dialect of San Pedro Mixtepec, Miahuatlán district (*Mexico*)

Na nac testigw, oh Xtios na, ne Luu bzaana par gumbei na Luu ne gantzi na Luu. Rneli na merni nahor por ne lepna ne xpoderlu, xquiel probna ne xquiel riclu. Guiende sti Dios más que Luu, mene run yudar lo guielnze'b, mene mban por lee me.

36. ZAPOTEC 'DEL SUR': dialect of San Vicente Cuatlán, Ejutla district (*Mexico*)

Nac testíg, oh Dios na, de que Luu mazá'ana para yagundona Luu y ya'anquiána Luu. Nac testíg gornat impoténs tenna y poder tenluu, noguielzíj tenna y ric tenluu. Ná'an stub Dios más que Luu, nana dacnó ndo guieluzhéb, dub men ndxo por labá'tsa.

37. ZAPOTEC 'DE LA SIERRA': dialect of Ixtlán district (*Mexico*)

Nca testigo, Dios qui, de que Lu bedo neti que ni gumbia Lu lan catsite Lu. Ca seguro nate impotencia qui lan poder co, pobreza qui lan riqueza co. Anuru atu Dios más que Lu, beni rum culani lan peligru, beni do lanye mismu.

38. ZAPOTEC 'DE LA SIERRA': dialect of San Bartolomé Zoogocho, Villa Alta district (*Mexico*)

Naca testigo, oh Dios dxiá, de que Re beno nedá yelambán par gúmbiare na gácdare. Nedá guná atestiguar nátguenaa impotencia dxiá na poder chu, yela yaxhe dxiá na yela uniá chu. Bi zuá yetu Dios más que Re, bene dxacrén lu peligro, bene zuácse por leze.

39. ZAPOTEC 'DE LA SIERRA': dialect of Villa Hidalgo, Villa Alta district (*Mexico*)

Nadá naca testigo, Dios quiá, de que Rué bennó gubiará Rué na xhierá Rué. Zuá testigo nastque porbihué quiá na ra'da naclazhnaú, yel yach quiá na yel uniaco. Bi zu itú Dios ka Rué, ben xhacrén nau yel zhazheiráu, ben zhazué turase.

40. ZAPOTEC 'DEL VALLE': dialect of San Baltazar Chichicapan, Ocotlán district (*Mexico*)

Naan taschigu, oh Schiosa, de que Yí banilu guelnaba'án par dxunbuán Yí ne gan tzin Yí. Ná'a runán probi ne Yí nal ricu. Ay stubi Chiosa más que Yí, nin runí ayuda chinnú tuvi de mala, nin naba'án tusiñi.

41. ZAPOTEC 'DEL VALLE': dialect of San Mateo Mixtepec, Zimatlán District (*Mexico*)

Naca testigo, Diusiá, de que Lé'u uléquiu lé'a te ne che yolóa Lé'u nu zaca Lé'u. Naca testigo haaré que núlea nendaa nu Lé'u huachu, nu naca vene letsí nu Lé'u nacu vene zhene. Laca stucui Diuse más que Lé'u, lee quiecu ríu ayuda nu peligro, lee quiecu nzuu lagá quiú stucui.

42. ZOQUE (*Mexico*)

Desh enn nempa, oh vi denn Dios, que Mish yake tzekque pa Mishenn izhspekpa y Mishenn teehpa. Enn nempa que enn ye jhaama desthenn peehpa vim amkinócuy, vi deen pobreza y vim jahamatinn. Nenntí heháa Dios más que Mish, el que ayutzekpa enn tum peligru, el que gejhpáa por ney cuenta.

c. ASIA

* Denotes revised translation. † Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOLUMES (90)

1. † 'Agta' (*Philippines*)
2. † 'Agusanon (Agusan)' (*Philippines*)
3. Aklanon (*Philippines*)
4. † 'Antiqueño' (*Philippines*)
5. † 'Apayao' (*Philippines*)
6. Arabic
7. Armenian
8. Azerbaijani (Azeri) (*Írán, Soviet Azerbaijan*)
9. BAGOBO: Gianga (Guianga) dialect (*Philippines*)
10. Bajau (Badjao) (*Borneo; Celebes; Sulu Archipelago*)
11. Bengali (*Bangladesh; India*)
12. BENGALI: Assamese dialect (*Northeast India*)
13. BIHARI: Bhojpuri dialect (*India*)
14. Bikol (Bicol) (*Philippines*)
15. Bilaan (*Philippines*)
16. Bisaya (*Sarawak; Borneo; Brunei*)
17. Bukidnon (*Philippines*)
18. Burmese (*Burma; Bangladesh*)
19. Chinese
20. Cuyunon (*Philippines*)
21. † 'Dangi' (*India*)
22. DAYAK, LAND (BIDAYUH): Bau dialect (*Sarawak*)
23. DAYAK, LAND (BIDAYUH): Bukar Sadong (Tebakang) dialect (*Sarawak; Borneo*)
24. Dayak, Sea (Iban) (*Sarawak; Borneo*)
25. Gaddang (*Philippines*)

26. Garhwali (*India*)
27. GONDI: Bethul dialect (*India*)
28. Gujarati (*India; Pakistan*)
29. Hebrew
30. Hindi (*India*)
31. HINDI, EASTERN: Chhattisgarhi dialect (*India; Nepal*)
32. Ilocano (*Philippines*)
33. Ilonggo (Hiligaynon) (*Philippines*)
34. Jahai (*Malaysia; Thailand*)
35. Jakun (*Malaysia*)
36. Japanese
37. Kalinga (Kalingga) (*Philippines*)
38. Kannada (Kanarese) (*India*)
39. Kashmiri (*India; Pakistan*)
40. Kayan (*Borneo; Sarawak*)
41. Khalkha (Mongolian) (Cyrillic script) (*Mongolia; China; Tibet; U.S.S.R.*)
42. Khmer (Cambodian) (*Kampuchea; Thailand; Vietnam; et al.*)
43. Korean (*China; Japan; Korea*)
44. Kui (Khondi) (*India*)
45. Kumauni (Koumani; Kumaoni) (*India; Nepal*)
46. Kurdish (*Afghanistan; Armenian S.S.R.; Írán; 'Iráq; Syria; Turkey*)
47. † 'Lambadi' (*India*)
48. Lao (Laotian) (*Laos; Thailand; et al.*)
49. Malay (*Malaysia; Indonesia*)
50. Malayalam (*India, including Laccadive Islands*)
51. Maldivian (Divehi Bas) (Divehi script) (*Maldives; Minicoy Island*)
52. Maldivian (Divehi Bas) (Latin script) (*Maldives; Minicoy Island*)
53. † 'Manobo' (*Philippines*)
54. Marathi (*India*)
55. MELANAU: Mukah dialect (*Sarawak*)
56. MELANAU: Oya/Dalat dialect (*Sarawak*)
57. Nepali (Nepalese) (*Nepal; Sikkim*)
58. Oriya (*India*)
59. ORIYA: Halbi (Halabi) dialect (*India*)
60. Palawanon (*Philippines*)
61. Pangasinan (*Philippines*)
62. Panjabi (Punjabi) (Gurmukhi script) (*India; Pakistan*)
63. Panjabi (Punjabi) (Persian script) (*India: Pakistan*)
64. Pula ('Mangyanpula') (*Philippines*)
65. Portuguese, Malacca Creole (Papia Kristang) (*Malaysia*)
66. RAJASTHANI (*India; Pakistan*)
67. RAJASTHANI: Gujuri dialect (*India; Pakistan*)
68. Rajasthani: Marwari dialect (*India; Pakistan*)
69. Samal (Samal Bahasa) (*Philippines*)
70. Sanskrit (*India*)
71. Sebuano (Cebuano; Visayan) (*Philippines*)
72. Senoi: Semai (Central Sakai) (*Malaysia; Indonesia*)
73. Senoi: Temiar (Northern Sakai) (*Malaysia*)
74. Sindhi (*India; Pakistan*)
75. Sinhalese (Sinhala) (*Sri Lanka*)
76. Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino) (*Philippines*)
77. Tagbanua (*Philippines*)
78. Tamil (*India; Malaysia; Sri Lanka*)
79. Taw Sug (Joloano Sulu) (*Philippines; Borneo*)
80. Telugu (*India*)
81. * Temuan (*Malaysia*)
82. Thai (*Thailand*)
83. TIBETAN, CENTRAL (BHOṬIA): Lhasa (Dbus) dialect (*Tibet; India*)
84. Tiruray (*Philippines*)
85. † 'Tripuri (Kok-Borok)' (*India*)
86. * Tulu (*India*)
87. Turkish
88. Turkmen (Turkoman) (*Afghanistan; Írán; Turkmen S.S.R.*)
89. Vietnamese (*Indochina*)
90. Waray (Samar-Leyte; Samareño; Waraywaray) (*Philippines*)

ADDITIONAL TEXTS (NOT PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN *THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD*) (21)

1. BALUCHI (*Baluchistani and elsewhere*)

من شاهدی دئین ـ ایے منی خدا ـ تو مناوتی
پَچ آری او د سبندیءِ و استا بیدا کُرتے
من اے وهدا ـ وتی عاجزی او تَهی ءِ اقت و
وتی پخیری او تَهی بادشاهی او وتی نزوری
او تَهی کل واکیءِ شاهدیءِ دئین ـ که اَبید
اَش تو کسے خدا نه انت تُو مُهمین و قیوم
استے ـ

2. BIHARI: Nagpuri dialect ('Nagapuria') (*India*)

हम गवाह देवीला, हे हमर ईश्वर,
कि तोंके जानेक आउर तोर अराधना कारेक ले
तोंय हमके पैदा काइर हीस।
हम ई बेरा आपन शक्तिहीनता
आउर तोर शक्तिमानता,
आपन दरिद्रता
आउर तोर सम्पन्नता कर गवाह हीं।
तोंके छोड़ के दोसर कोई ईश्वर नखैं,
तोंहें आहिस संकट में सहायक, स्वयंजीवो!

3. BRAHUI ('Brohi') (*Pakistan; Írán; Afghanistan*)

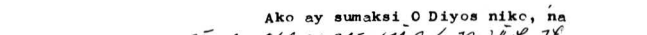
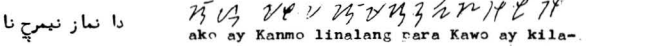
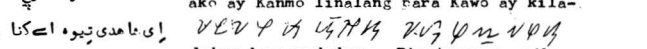
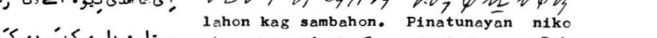
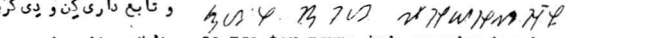
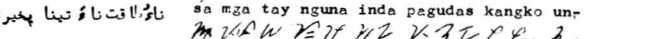
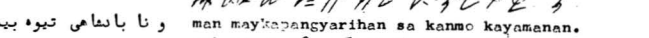
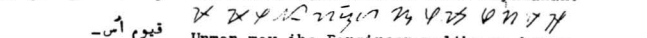
دا نماز نیمرچ نا ءُ ختانے خوانیگے ـ
اِی شاهدی تِیوه اے کنا رب که نی کنے تینا سربندی
و تابع داری کِن ءُ دِی کرَیں ـ ای دا وختا تینا عاجزیءُ
ناءُ اقت ناءُ تینا پخیریءُ نا عهنشاهیءُ تینا نزوری
و نا بادشاهی تیوه بین معبود آف ولے نی مهیمن و
قیوم اُس ـ

4. † 'CHIN' (*Burma; India*)

O Topa Ka Pathian, Nangsia, Nangma honghe thei tu a kei hong vawtpa na hi sia a pha tak in katel hi. Katha zawnna te ah Nang thahatna kong suang a, kazawnna te ah Nang hauna kong suang hi. Pathian a dang om ngawl a Nangbek na hi a, a kiting tawntung Honghu tawntungpa na hi hi.

5. HANUNÓO (Hanunóo script) (*Philippines*)

6. HANUNÓO (Latin script) (*Philippines*)

Ako ay sumaksi O Diyos niko, na

ako ay Kanmo linalang para Kawo ay kila-

lahon kag sambahon. Pinatunayan niko

sa mga tay nguna inda pagudas kangko un-

man maykapangyarihan sa kanmo kayamanan.

Unman may iba Fangincon maliba sa kanmo

na Kawo timagtulong sa tanan mga mada-

la kag unman maykatapusan.


7. KURUKH (Oraon, 'Kudukh') (*India*)

ए-न गवाह चिह्नःदन, हे एग्रैं उर्बय,
का निंगन अख़आगे अरा निंग्रैं ओहमा ननागे
नौन एंगन कमेचकय।
एन ईं बेड़ा तंगआ पाया मल्का
अरा निंग्रैं उर्भी नू सौंगिया
तंगआ मल्का
अरा निंग्रे उर्भी नू उरुब मन्ना ही गवाह तलद्दन।
निंगन अम्बर नन्नर ने हूं
उर्बर मल्कर, नीनीम तलद्दय तकलीफ नू सह्राड़ा,
तंगआ नू उज्जू।

8. LEPCHA (*Bhutan; Nepal; Sikkim*)

ᰛ ᰵᰛᰪᰛᰣᰛ ᰚᰪᰐᰛ ᰓ, ᰛᰤ ᰎᰪᰛ ᰔᰩ ᰁᰳ
ᰁᰪᰛᰤᰛᰎᰛ ᰛᰳᰩ ᰁᰛᰔᰩ ᰎᰪᰤᰛ ᰁᰩ ᰁᰛᰔᰩᰛᰤ
ᰓ ᰛᰪᰤᰛ ᰁᰛᰓᰛᰤ, ᰛᰤ ᰎᰪᰛ ᰔᰛᰵᰛᰤ ᰓ ᰛᰪᰤᰛ ᰛᰤ
ᰁᰛᰤᰛ ᰁᰛᰤ, ᰛᰪᰛ ᰛᰤ ᰛᰤ ᰔᰛᰪᰛᰪᰛᰔᰩ ᰔᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ
ᰁᰩ ᰁᰛᰤᰛ ᰁᰪᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ, ᰛᰤ ᰎᰪᰛ ᰁᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ ᰁᰩ
ᰁᰛᰤᰛᰛ ᰛᰳᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ ᰁᰩᰛᰓ ᰔᰛᰳᰛᰤᰩᰓ
ᰓ ᰛ

ᰩ ᰳ ᰛᰤ ᰁᰛᰓᰛ ᰁᰛᰵᰛᰤ ᰁᰛᰤᰛ
ᰁᰩᰛᰤᰛ, ᰛᰓᰛᰓ ᰁᰪᰛᰵᰛᰪᰩᰓ, ᰁᰛᰩ ᰔᰳᰪᰩ
ᰛᰤ ᰁᰪᰛᰛ ᰛᰓᰛᰓ ᰁᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ ᰛ ᰁᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ ᰁᰩ ᰁᰛᰵᰛᰓᰩ

14. MUNDARI (*India*)

आइंग गोवाइंग पेरेः जदा
हे आइंगाः दुलाड़ ईश्वर
चि अम के सरी नगेन ओड़ोः अमाः सुनुसार नंग अम
अइंग केम वैआ कदिगा । अइंग ने घड़ी अईंगाः वपुड़ोः
दशा ओड़ोः अमाः मपरंग खुर्जी को नगेनतेओ गोवाइंग
पेरेः जदा ।

अम के वगी केमेते जेता एटाः ईश्वर वंगैआ, अमगे दुकु
दिपली रेन देंगा नीः जनव-जनव रेन ईश्वर तनमे ।

15. † MUNDARI (*India*)

हे सिङ·बोंगा अमइङ· लेल उरूममेका आद
सिङ·बुरूमेका मेनतेम सिरजउकिअ: नेअरअ: गोअइङ·
ओमजदा ।
नाअ:गे, अइङ· लिचुरकननि:, अमदो सोबेन
पेड़ेअकननि:, अइङ· रेंगेअकननि:, अमदो किसड़ुंनि:
मेनेअ: सबुतूइङ· ओमजदा ।
अमेते चेतन ओड़ी: जेतए पोरमेसोर को
बड़·कोअ,सोबेन सीकोटोरे अमगे देंगानि: तनमे,
अपनतेगे तइनतननि: ।

16. † MUNDARI (*India*)

हे सिङ·बोंगा अमइङ· लेल उरूममेका आद
सिङ·बुरूमेका मेनतेम सिरजउकिअ: नेअरअ: गोअइङ·
ओमजदा ।
नाअ:गे, अइङ· लिचुरकननि:, अमदो सोबेन
पेड़ेअकननि:,
अइङ· रेंगेअकननि:, अमदो किसड़ुंनि: मेनेअ:
सबुतूइङ· ओमजदा ।
अमेते चेतन ओड़ी: जेतए पोरमेसोर को अइ·कोअ,
सोबेन सीकोटोरे अमगे देंगानि: तनमे, अपनतेगे
तइनतननि: ।

17. PAMPANGAN (*Philippines*)

Patutuanan cu, O Guinu cu, Ica ing linalang canacu ba racang aquilala at samban. Patutuan cu caniting oras a iti, ing canacung que inan, at qng Quecang Cayupayan, qng canacung cacaluluan, at qng quecang pibandian.

Alang aliuan Dios nung e mu Ica, ing casaupan qng Pañganib, ing alang angga.

18. PASHTO (Pushtu) (*Afghanistan; Pakistan*)

ای زما ربه! شهادت وکړم چې دی دښه لاګی اوستا
ذات د پېژندګلوی دپاره پیدا کړی یم، زه په وخت کې د
خان په عجز ستا په قوت زما په درویږګی ستا په پاچاهی، دخان
پرضعف اوستا په قدرت شهادت وکړم. اونشته بل د
عبادت وړ یکدستا واحد ذات څخه مخینې اوقیوم.

19. RAJASTHANI: Malvi dialect (*India*)

"हे म्हारा भगवान, में इनी बात को गवा हूं के तूने म्हारे थारे जानबा और थारी पूजा करने का ई वास्ते जनम दियो है । इनी बखत हूं या गवाई दूं हैं के म्हारी ताकत कई भी नी है और थारी ताकत बड़ी हैं । हूं गरीब हूं और तू धनवान है ।"

"थारा सिवाय और कोई भगवान नी हैं, तू मुसीबत को सहारो है और तू खुद ही सतवान् है ।"

20. SANTALI (Oriya script) (*India*)

ଡେ ପ୍ରଭୁ ବଙ୍ଗା ! ଇଞ୍ଜିଞ୍ ସାର୍ ସ୍ୱେଃ ଆ ଯେ, ଇଞ୍ଜ ଦ
ଆମ ବାଡ଼ାପ୍ ଲ୍ଗିଦ୍ ଆମ ଠେନ୍ ଜେନ୍ଦର ଲ୍ଗିଦ୍ ଗେମ୍
ସିର୍ଜାର ଆକାବଞ୍ଜା । ଇଞ୍ଜ ଦ ବାଞ୍ଜ୍ ବାଲେପ୍ୱାନା, ଆମ୍ ଦ
ଆଃଗେମ୍ ବାଲେ ପ୍ୱାନା । ଇଞ୍ଜ୍ ହୁଁୱାର୍ ରେଞ୍ଜେଜ୍, ଆର୍
ଆମ୍ ଦମ୍ ଜଗାଣ ଗେପ୍ୱା ।

ଦୁଖ ବିପଦରେ ଦୂଃ କାଞ୍ଜ୍ ମେ । ଆମ ଦ ଆମ ତେଗେମ୍
କେନାଓଁ କଃ ଆ, ଇଞ୍ଜ୍ ଦ ଆମେମ୍ କେନାଓଁ ଞ୍ଜା । ଆମ୍
ବାଗି କାତେ ଇଞ୍ଜ୍ ଜନ୍ ଦ ଅଳପ୍ୱ ଦଁ କାନୁଃ କଆ ।

21. URDU (*India; Pakistan*)

میں اس بات کی شہادت دیتا ہوں
کہ تونے مجھے اس لئے پیدا کیا ہے کہ میں تجھے
پہچانوں، اور تیری پرستش کروں، میں اس
وقت اپنے عجز اور تیری قوت اپنے فقر اور تیری
غنا اور اپنے ضعف اور تیرے اقتدار کا
اقرار کرتا ہوں، بے شک تیرے سوا کوئی
خدا نہیں، تو ہی ہے محافظ اور مہیمن
اے خدا۔

D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

* Denotes revised translation. † Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOLUMES (31)

1. Baining (*New Britain Island, Papua New Guinea*)
2. Chamorro (*Guam and other Mariana Islands*)
3. Easter Island (Pascuense) (*Easter Island*)
4. † 'Efate (Efatese)' (*Vanuatu*)
5. Fijian (*Fiji Islands*)
6. Futuna (*Futuna [Hoorn] Islands*)
7. Gilbertese (*Kiribati; Nauru; Ocean Island*)
8. Hawaiian (*Hawaiian Islands*)
9. Kosraean (Kusaiean) (*Eastern Caroline Islands*)
10. * KWENYI: Kapone dialect ('Vaho') (*New Caledonia*)
11. Lau (*Solomon Islands*)
12. Lifu (Lifouan) (*Loyalty Islands*)
13. Maori, Cook Islands (Rarotongan) (*Cook Islands*)
14. Maori, New Zealand (*New Zealand*)
15. Marshallese (*Marshall Islands*)
16. MELE: Fila dialect (Ifira) (*Fila and Efate Islands, Vanuatu*)
17. Motu, Hiri (*Papua New Guinea*)
18. Nengone (Maréen) (*Loyalty Islands*)
19. Palauan (*Western Caroline Islands; Guam*)
20. Pidgin, New Hebrides (Bislama; Bichelamare) (*Vanuatu*)
21. * Pidgin, Neo-Melanesian (*Papua New Guinea*)
22. Ponapean (*Eastern Caroline Islands*)
23. Rotuman (*Rotuma Island*)
24. Samoan (*Samoa; New Zealand*)
25. Tahitian (*Society Islands, et al.*)
26. TANNA: Nupuanmen (Weasisi, Whitesands) dialect (*Tanna Island, Vanuatu*)
27. Tongan (*Tonga Islands*)
28. Trukese (*Eastern Caroline Islands*)
29. Uripiv (*Malekula Island, Vanuatu*)
30. Uvea, West (Ouvéan) (*Uvea Island, Loyalty Islands*)
31. Yapese (*Western Caroline Islands*)

ADDITIONAL TEXTS (NOT PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN *THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD*) (12)

1. CHIMBU (KUMAN) (*Papua New Guinea*)

Na prekan erika, O Anetu, ene na beke yenga, i siragl pre, na ene singinkangin pre kangin ake—mitna imbo endenaglka pre. Na etne mengigl i dinongugl ending'ga, na yombra ta paikrum, ene yombuglo nem, na siragl ta kanekri, ene sigragl prapra nem.

Yomba singiongo tata moglkrim, ene suwara mot'nga, ene yomba akeple nem, ene siragl prawono nem yagl.

2. CHIMBU: Gumine (Golin) (*Papua New Guinea*)

O na God, na i pilere, kanire te beten di iterama di erienga. Na malia wen di iteiwa. Na niminin ta milekiwa, i niminin go milinwa. Na kalkan ta paina tekimua, i kal muru wen paitomua.

God ta ta milekimua, i teran wen milinwa. Talame Ugain ateral de erune i kenin erinwa. I ibal ta ta erionga milekinwa, i inin kaia mile paingal painwa.

3. ENGA: Laiap (Liapo) dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)

O Kamogo God, nabame kinigi lelo. Embame naba wasii, nabame emba lao masatale lao wasii, nambame emba lao maso loma satale lao wasii.

Nabame idupa gii ogonya pudu kaliipi ko minao katalo. Embae putakigi ogome naba kamepipi. Embamee naba iso katape, ebae oa pii auu pipae dupa dipi. Yu tara upa pitakae

God emba yalee mede nakalyamo—emba iki, embame naba pudupi, mana kooyape pilyo ogopa nisigi. Emba Kamogo God, medeme wasala nae. Emba me kataoka karege.

4. GADSUP (*Papua New Guinea*)

Maken teūnku. Teuti Goti, en teni uwandaū. Temi uwanda nai enau rotu te ena inde. Make wani teūnku. Makē eranda iyen ruke eni eraran mana teūnku. Makē teni eyen rukana eyan rukanami.

Byawa ena Goti wami eya ō wam nami. Anda kim wana tiya-ya nom wanam mi. Wanana wana mi.

5. GERMAN, RABAUL CREOLE (*Papua New Guinea; Australia*)

I bezeugen, O mein Gott, Du has geshaffen mi fi erkennen du und fi beten zu du. I bezeugen in diese Moment mein Schwäche und dein Mach, mein Armut und dein Reichtum. Is ni ein anders Gott, nur Du, de Helfer in Gefahr, de Selbstbestehender.

6. ILIAURA: Eastern Aranda dialect (*Australia*)

The itelareme, ingarte atyenhe, unte yenge mpwareke thengenhe worshipemiletyenenge. He testifyirreme, lyete nhenhe, yenge weak, unte rlterrke nthurre. Yenge arrangkwe aneme, unte akngerre nthurre akerte.

Ingkarte arrpenhe anetyekenhe, unte nyente, unte helpemilintye akngerre, rntarntarelhintye akngerre.

7. ILIAURA: Western Aranda dialect (*Australia*)

Alte ngkenyele ngketyekerte, athe telereme ba tnekeme Ingkarte nwvekė unte yengenhe mparekele ba ngkwenge urekwerrekintye netyeke. athe alpemileme lyarte nwekerenye tye kerlte nemenge ba kerlte ngwengenheke ire kngirre nemenge.

I ngkarte arrpenhe tye neme unte nymte ngirre, Unte tangetyele nenyetye kngirre arrpenhe kernhe tye.

8. LAMALANGA (NORTH PENTECOST; NORTH RAGA) (*Vanuatu*)

Nam bev masigi nogu, God, be gigo gon loliau be nav ilogo i nav tataro lalai nigo. La mahavan velvele geki nam bev masigi la nogu mura mura riholhole la nom mura mura wasi. Imulei nam bevea be inau rosoku sigai take gigo rosoma ivusi.

God dolua nusigai take gigo. Gigo buluiana lol taron lolovono, i mulei gigo gov togo dumi vataha mahavana ma gahema.

9. MANUBARA (MARIA) (*Papua New Guinea*)

NA HINA RA, AONE BAI NIBITA, NA HORAERE, IAIAU NA REBITA CAU DIBAREA MA IA NOUNA UMUDE HENIA REKE REBITA. NA NIBITA GUVA NA DOA MA IA GOADA IAU NA OGOGAMI NA IA KOHU 'A'.

HORAERE EBEI IDE, IAMA'A DURUA NONOA BAIA, INA M'A AIBO HORAERE.

10. PIDGIN, SOLOMON ISLANDS (Pijin) (*Solomon Islands*)

Mi talem tru, O God bilong mi, dat Iu nao i wokem mi fo mi save long Iu, an mi prea long Iu. Long disfela taem mi talem tru, dat mi wik too mas an Iu nao i strong too mas, mi pua too mas an Iu i ris too mas.

No moa eni other God bat Iu; Iu save help long taem trabol hem kam, an Iu save duim evri samting an stap seleva.

11. SIANE: Arango dialect (*Papua New Guinea*)

Ne'mo hem'bo'ka lo'we, A'nu'tu, he'mo ka'fo ne'mo li'e'fe lo'nen'da'ne, ho'lihu'mu'to mo'no lo hu'mu'nom'bo gu'nu. Ne'mo hem'bo'ka nem'ba lo'we o'ne'sa aum'ba'ne mi'na'min'do'ya in'do he'mo aum'ba'ka ne, ne'mo in'da'wa ho'na'mo'we he'mo'ko a'no'fa ho'na'ne. He'mo'ko A'nu'tu mi'na'ne ma mi'na'ma, ha'me'na no'sa'mim'bo ha'me'na hi'yam'ba nen'do'to in'do hei'mo'ka aum'ba'ka'lo mi'na'ne.

12. TUVALUAN (*Tuvalu; et al.*)

Au e fakamaoni atu toku Atua meia Koe ne faite ne ia au Ke iloa ne au Koe ko aku ke tapuaki atu kite Koe.

Au e fakatalitonu atu ite taimi nei ona Ko toku vaivai fakatusa ki Tou malosi. Ko toku mativa fakatusa ki Tou maumea. E seai aka foki se Atua na ko Koe. Te fesosoani i mea faigata, Te la fua ia Ia.

E. EUROPE

* Denotes revised translation. † Efforts to obtain exact identification continue.

PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOLUMES (49)

1. Albanian
2. Arabic: Maltese dialect
3. * BASQUE: Labourdin or Lower Navarrese dialect (*France*)
4. * BASQUE: Guipuzcóan dialect (*Spain*)
5. Bielorussian (Byelorussian; White Russian)
6. Breton (*Northwestern France*)
7. Catalán (*Andorra; Balearic Islands; France; Sardinia; Spain*)
8. Croatian (Serbocroatian, Latin script)
9. Czech
10. Danish
11. Dutch
12. English
13. Estonian
14. Faroese
15. Finnish
16. French
17. * FRISIAN: West Frisian dialect (Frysk) (*Netherlands*)
18. Gaelic, Irish (Erse; Irish)
19. Gaelic, Scottish
20. German
21. GERMAN: Alsatian dialect (*France*)
22. GERMAN: Luxembourgian dialect (Luxembourgisch) (*Luxembourg*)
23. Greek
24. Hungarian
25. Icelandic
26. † INUIT (INUPIAQ): 'Greenlandic' dialect
27. Italian
28. ITALIAN: Corsican dialect
29. ITALIAN: Piedmontese dialect
30. ITALIAN: Sardinian dialect
31. NORWEGIAN: Nynorsk (Landsmål)
32. NORWEGIAN: Riksmål (Bokmål)
33. Polish
34. Portuguese
35. Romanian
36. ROMANSCH: Upper Engadine (Puter) dialect (*Switzerland*)
37. Romany
38. ROMANY: Anglo-Romany dialect
39. ROMANY: Sinto dialect
40. Russian
41. SAME: Lulesamiska (Lule Lapp) (*Swedish Arctic*)
42. SAME: Nordsamiska (Northern Lapp)
43. SAME: Sydsamiska (Southern Lapp)
44. Slovak
45. Slovene
46. Spanish
47. Swedish
48. Ukrainian
49. Welsh (Cymraeg)

ADDITIONAL TEXTS (NOT PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN *THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD*) (9)

1. BULGARIAN

„Свидетелствувамъ о, Господи Боже мой, че Ти си ме създалъ за да те позная и обожавамъ. Свидетелствувамъ въ този моментъ за своята слабость и Твоята мощь, за моята бедность и Твоето Богатство. Нѣма другъ Богъ, освенъ Тебе, Защитникътъ, Пазителътъ."

2. FRIULIAN ('Ladine-furlane') (*North eastern Italy; Switzerland*)

O fâs testemoneance, ô Diu gno, che Tu tu mi âs fat vivi par cognossiTi e adorâTi. O pant in chest moment la mê debilece e la Tô potence, la mê puaretât e la Tô ricjece. No vin un altri Diu fûr di Te, Jutori tal Pericul, Cui Ch'al Esist di par Sé.

3. LADIN (*Switzerland; Italy*)

Eu sun perdütta, o meis Dieu, cha Tü m'hast creà per At cugnuoscher e per T'adorar. Eu attest in quist mumaint mia deblezza e Tia pussanza, mia povertà e Tia richezza. I nu da ingün oter Dieu arsalv Tai, Tü chi güdast in privel, Tü chi consistast in Tai svessa.

4. PROVENÇAL (OCCITAN): Languedocian (Lengadociana) dialect (*France*)

Pòrti testimòni, ò mon Dieu, que m'as creat per Te conéisser e T'adorar. Atesti, a-n-aquesta ora, la meuna impoténcia e lo Teu poder, la meuna pauretat e la Teuna riquesa.

N'i a pas d'autre Dieu que Tu, Lo qu'ajuda dins lo perilh, Lo qu'existís per Se meteis.

5. PROVENÇAL (OCCITAN): Limousin (Lemosina) dialect (*France*)

Pòrte testmonhatge, ò mon Diu, que m'as creat per te coneisser e t'adorar. Acerte en queste moment lo meu despoder e lo teu poder, la mia paubretat e la toa richesa.

N'i a pas d'autre Diu màs Tu, Lo que pòrta secors dins lo dangier, lo qu'existís per Eu-mesme.

6. PROVENÇAL (OCCITAN): 'Sarladaise' dialect (*France*)

Pòrti testmonhatge, ò mon Diu, que m'as creat per te coneisser e t'adorar. Acert en aqueste moment mon despoder e ton poder, ma pauretat e ta richesa.

N'i a pas d'autre Diu màs Tu, lo que pòrta secors (ajuda) dins lo dangièr, lo qu'existís per El-mesme.

7. ROMANIAN: Moldavian dialect (Cyrillic script)

Еу сунт марторул, Доамне Думнезеуле, кэ ту м'ай креат пентру а те куноаште ши а те юби. Еу рекуноск ын ачест момент непутинцэ мя ши путеря та, сэрэчия мя ши богацыа та.

Ну екзистэ алт Думнезеу афарэ де тине.

8. ROMANSCH: Sursilvan dialect

Jeu dun perdetga, o miu Diu, che Ti has creau mei per renconuscher Tei e per adurar Tei.

Jeu attestel en quel mument mia fleivlezia e Tia pussonza, mia paupradad e Tia rihezia. Ei dat negin auter Diu dano Tei, il qual gida el prighel, il qual subsista en sesez.

9. SERBIAN (Serbo-Croatian, Cyrillic script)

Ја се исповедам, О Господе, мој Боже! Да си ме Ти створио, да бих Те познао и обожавао Те. Ја исповедам у овом тренутку своју слабост и Твоју Моћ, своје сиромаштво и Твоје Богатство. Нема Бога ван Тебе, Заштитника, Јединосушнога!

F. INVENTED LANGUAGES

PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOLUMES (2)

1. Esperanto
2. Interlingua

G. MISCELLANEOUS

1. English Braille

8. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE WORKS ON THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH: SELECTIONS

Compiled by William P. Collins
Bahá'í World Centre Library

INTRODUCTION

A NUMBER of attempts have been made to compile a bibliographic record of Bahá'í literature and published references to the Bahá'í Faith. Of particular interest are the entries in the 'Bahá'í Bibliography' section in successive volumes of *The Bahá'í World* from volume I, 1925–1926 (called *The Bahá'í Year Book*), through volume XVI, 1973–1976. Volume XVII, 1976–1979, of that reference work included valuable contributions by Robert Cadwalader and Maureen Thur, to whom the present bibliographer owes a debt of gratitude for the preliminary work.

The bibliography section of this volume of *The Bahá'í World* includes: published English language books and pamphlets containing translations of works by or passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá; works of Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice; and a selection of other major works about the Bahá'í Faith. These comprise sections I–VI and portions of section VII of a more comprehensive bibliography of literature on the Bahá'í Faith in English, on which the compiler is currently working, and which will shortly be published in full with annotations by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of the United States. A number of sections of the complete bibliography have not been included here, such as Braille materials, periodicals, works containing reference to the Faith, and articles.

Entries in parts I–VI are arranged alphabetically by title. Entries in part VII are arranged alphabetically by author's last name where one is known or specifically mentioned in the publication. If no author is known, the item is entered alphabetically under title, ignoring initial articles. Each entry follows standard bibliographic format, using familiar abbreviations: n.p. means 'no place of publication' and n.d. signifies 'no date'. The Latin *idem* means identical or the same, referring to repetition of the same bibliographic information as in the immediately previous item. Information enclosed in square brackets [ ] is information which is known or surmised, but which is not actually shown on the publication. Where no paging is shown, the bibliographer has been unable to examine the publication directly.

A separate entry is done for: each title; each edition of a specific title; each printing where the publisher or place of publication has changed; or where a printing shows itself to be an entirely new bibliographic item because of significant variation in paging. If a number of unchanged reprintings have been done, and none of the above indications for separate entry apply, the dates of the reprintings are all listed under the single entry. Where a succeeding printing shows only a small variation in paging, the variant is included in the same entry as the previous printing(s) with a note of the paging difference. Notes are also added about other physical variations such as two sizes, or different covers in a single printing. A reference, 'See # ——', has been added to some entries, in order to relate items which have the same text, which are selections from another text, or which are differently titled editions of the same work. Book reviews which appeared outside of Bahá'í journals, and which mentioned the Bahá'í Faith, are listed in a paragraph with the entry of the particular item being reviewed.

In order to give some idea of the availability of some of these works in a few other major languages, at the end of entries the following codes will appear when that item has been published in translation: Fr = French; Ge = German; It = Italian; Po = Portuguese; Sp = Spanish.

It is to be hoped that in future issues of *The Bahá'í World*, or in other Bahá'í publications, there will appear bibliographies of publications on the Bahá'í Faith in other languages, with a view to establishing, in time, coverage of all publications on the Faith.

The overwhelming majority of items listed herein are held in the Bahá'í World Centre Library. Where it has not been possible to verify completely the existence of an item, it has been decided not to include it until further information becomes available.

A. THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

1.1. *The Bahá'í Faith: Selections from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. Introduction by Shoghi Effendi. Banjul: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Gambia, 1980. 46 p.

1.2. *Baha 'U'llah's Hidden Words*. trans. Ameen U. Fareed. San Diego: J. E. Gazvini, 1931. 59 p. See #1.40–1.63.

1.3. *Bahá'u'lláh's Long Healing Prayer and Qad ihtaraqa'l-mukhlisún, the 'Fire Tablet'*. [Kingston]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Jamaica, [1979 or 1980]. [20]p. See #1.24–1.28, 1.38, 1.76, 1.87, 1.88, 1.106, 4.111.

1.4. *Blessed Is the Spot*. il. Anna Stevenson. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1958. 32 p.

1.5. *Blessed Is the Spot*. il. Mark Fennessy. [Wilmette]: National Teaching Committee, n.d. [197–?]. 16 leaves.

1.6. *The Book of Assurance*. trans. Ali Kuli Khan. New York: Brentano's, [1924]. vi, 190 p. See #1.7–1.9, 1.67–1.73.

1.7. *idem*. New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1929. vi, 190 p.

1.8. *The Book of Ighan*. trans. Ali Kuli Khan. New York: George V. Blackburne Co., 1904. viii, 190 p. See #1.6, 1.67–1.73.

1.9. *idem*. Chicago: Bahai Publishing Society, 1907, 1915. viii, 190 p.

1.10. *The Book of the Covenant, Kitab-el-ahd Revealed by the Blessed Perfection*. New York: Board of Counsel, [1901?]. 4 p. See #1.66.

1.11. *A Compilation of Passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. comp. Universal House of Justice. New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980. 94 p.

1.12. *idem*. [Manila]: Bahá'í Publishing Trust of the Philippines, 1980. 59 p.

1.13. *A Compilation of Published Extracts from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. (Wilmette]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, 1973. 10 p. See #1.22–1.23, 1.65, 6.22.

1.14. *The Dawn of World Civilization*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1945, n.d. 8 p.

1.15. *Deepening the Spiritual Life*. [Santurce]: Puerto Rico Bahá'í Teaching Committee, 1976. 41 p. Compilation of daily meditations.

1.16. *A Drop from the Ocean: Words of Bahá'u'lláh*. selected by G. Faizi. New Delhi: Bahá'í Centre, [1975?]. 28 p.

1.17. *The Earth Is God's*. [London]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles, [1938?]. 4 p. Excerpts from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, presented by Shoghi Effendi in *The Advent of Divine Justice*. See #1.18, 1.64, 1.79–1.81.

1.18. *idem*. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1947. 4 p.

1.19. *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*. trans. Julie Chanler. New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1928. vi, 140 p. See #1.20–1.21.

1.20. *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*. trans. Shoghi Effendi. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1941, 1953. xix, 193 p. See #1.19. Fr, Ge, It, Sp.

1.21. *idem*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1962, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1976, 1979. xix, 193 p.

1.22. *Excerpts from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas Already Published in Authorized Bahá'í Publications*. n.p., n.d. [196–]. 17 p. See #1.13, 1.23, 1.65, 6.22.

1.23. *Extracts from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, the Most Holy Book of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*. trans. Shoghi Effendi Rabbani. n.p.: [National Bureau of the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith of the United States and Canada, 197–?]. 31 leaves. See #1.13, 1.22, 1.65, 6.22.

1.24. *The Fire Tablet*. Thornhill: Bahá'í Canada Publications, [1980]. 8 p. See #1.3, 1.25–1.28, 1.88–1.89, 1.106, 4.111. Fr, Ge, It, Sp.

1.25. *idem*. Managua: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Nicaragua, [1981]. 6 p.

1.26. *Fire Tablet. Long Healing Prayer*. Auckland: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of New Zealand, 1980. 6, 6 p. See #1.3, 1.24–1.25, 1.27–1.28, 1.77, 1.88–1.89, 1.106, 4.111.

1.27. *The 'Fire Tablet' and the Long Healing Prayer*. [Manila: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Philippines, 1980?]. 6 p.

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3.87. *The Secret of Divine Civilization*. trans. Marzieh Gail. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1957. xi, 116 p. See #3.67. Fr, Ge.
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3.104. *idem*. 1964 ed. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1964, 1968, 1970, 1971. xxi, 350 p.
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3.106. *idem*. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, n.d. [196–]. xiii, 292 p.
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3.116. *Table Talks with Abdel-Baha-Abbas Regarding Reincarnation, Mystery of Self-Sacrifice and Other Subjects*. n.p., n.d. [1900?]. [14] p.

3.117. *A Tablet Concerning the Building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, To the Friends and Maidservants of the Merciful in America*. n.p., n.d. [1908?]. 7 p.

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D. WORKS COMPILED FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, THE BÁB AND 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ
(including items with quotations from Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice)

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4.2. *America's God-Given Mission: A Compilation for Round-Table Study*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1952. 49 p.

4.3. *Arise to Serve: A Compilation*. New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971. 122 p.

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4.10. *Baha'i Family Life: A Compilation*. comp. by Mary K. Radpour, n.p., n.d. [196–?]. 38, [3] p.

4.11. *Bahá'í Institutions: A Compilation*. New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973. 140 p.

4.12. *Bahá'í Marriage and Family Life: Selections from the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith*. Thornhill: Bahá'í Canada Publications, 1983. 82 p.

4.13. *Bahá'í Meetings, the Nineteen Day Feast*. comp. the Universal House of Justice. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976, 1980. iii, 33 p. See #4.146, 4.195.

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4.19. *idem*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1949, 1952. 121 p.

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4.21. *idem*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1969, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1978, 1981. 189 p.

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5.101. *Principles of Bahá'í Administration*. 1st ed. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1950. 125 p. Fr, It, Sp.

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5.110. *idem*. Bombay: Bahá'í Assembly of Bombay, 1942. 176 p.

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F. WORKS AND MESSAGES OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

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6.3. *Analysis of the Seven Year Plan, 1979–1986: Second Phase Goals, 1981*. Haifa: Universal House of Justice Statistics Department, 1981. iii, 128 p.

6.4. *The Bahá'í Faith, Statistical Information 1844–1968: Including the Current Status of the Goals of the Nine Year International Teaching Plan, 1964–1973*. Haifa: Universal House of Justice, 1968. 104 p.

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6.8. *The Constitution of the Universal House of Justice*. Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1972. 16 p.

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6.14. *Local Spiritual Assemblies: Further Extracts Issued with the Naw-Rúz Message 1979*. [London: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom, 1979?]. 6 p.

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6.16. *Messages from the Universal House of Justice 1968–1973*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976. x, 139 p.

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6.18. *Politics, the Bahá'í Viewpoint*. London: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom, [1979]. 11 p.

6.19. *The Seven Year Plan*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980, 1981. 23 p.

6.20. *The Seven Year Plan, 1979–1986: Statistical Report, Ridván 1983*. Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1983. 110 p.

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G. WRITINGS ON THE BÁBÍ AND BAHÁ'Í FAITHS

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7.2. Abu'l-Fadl Gulpáygání, Mírzá. *The Bahäi Proofs, Hujaj'ul Behäyyeh*. trans. Ishtael-ebn-Kalenter. [Ali Kuli Khan]. 2nd ed. Chicago: the Grier Press, 1914. 288 p.

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7.5. ——. *Hujaj'ul Beheyyeh (The Behai Proofs)*. trans. Ali Kuli Khan. New York: J. W. Pratt Co., 1902. 310 p.

7.6. ——. *Miracles and Metaphors*. trans. and annotated by Juan Ricardo Cole. Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1981. xx, 210 p.

7.7. Afnan, Ruhi. *Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation*. New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1934. 80 p.

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7.9. ——. *Personal Recollections of a Bahá'í Life in the Hawaiian Islands: Forty Years of the Bahá'í Cause in Hawaii, 1902–1942*. Honolulu: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands, n.d. [1971?]. 113 p.

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7.12. Assad'Ullah, Mirza. *Explanations Concerning Sacred Mysteries*. trans. Dr. Fareed. Chicago: Behais Supply and Publishing Board, 1902. 159 p. (Cover title: *Sacred Mysteries*).

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7.17. ——. *idem*. Hythe, Kent: Volturna Press, 1977. 128 p.

7.18. *The Bahá'í Centenary 1844–1944: a Record of America's Response to Bahá'u'lláh's Call to the Realization of the Oneness of Mankind to Commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of the Bahá'í Faith*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1944. xix, 254 p.

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7.22. Balyuzi, Hasan M. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. London: George Ronald, 1971, 1972, 1973. xiii, 560 p. Ge.

7.23. ——. *The Báb, the Herald of the Day of Days*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1973, 1973, 1974, 1975. xiv, 256 p.

7.24. ——. *Bahá'u'lláh: A Brief Life*. London; Oxford: George Ronald, 1963, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976. 134 p. Po.

7.25. ——. *Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1980. xiii, 539 p.

7.26. ——. *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá'í Faith*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1970, 1975, 1980. ix, 142 p.

7.27. Blomfield, Lady [Sara Louisa]. *The Chosen Highway*. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, n.d. [1940], x, 265 p.

7.28. ——. *idem*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, n.d. [ca. 1950]. x, 264 p.

7.29. ——. *idem*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, n.d. [196–?], 1967. x, 260 p.

7.30. Bowes, Eric. *Great Themes of Life*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1958. xii, 83 p.

7.31. ——. *These Things Shall Be*. Sydney: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1980. viii, 151 p.

7.32. Braun, Eunice. *A Crown of Beauty: The Bahá'í Faith and the Holy Land*. concept and design by Hugh Chance. Oxford: George Ronald, 1982. 103 p. Ge.

7.33. ——. *From Strength to Strength*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1978. viii, 74 p.

7.34. ——. *idem*. New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1979. viii, 74 p.

7.35. Brown, Ramona Allen. *Memories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Recollections of the Early Days of the Bahá'í Faith in California*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980. xxiii, 144 p.

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7.37. Carden, Hugh. *Bahá'í Writings, A Concordance*. [Auckland]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of New Zealand, Feb. 1975, Aug. 1975, Jan. 1976, Sep. 1976, 1979, 180 p.

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10. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THESES RELATING TO THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Compiled by William P. Collins

This bibliography is an attempt to bring together all theses and dissertations relating to the Bahá'í Faith which have been required for obtaining university degrees, whether Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral. Entries are arranged alphabetically by author's last name. Each thesis is assigned a number in sequence which begins with TH. In future volumes of *The Bahá'í World*, additional theses will continue this numbering, and any corrections will likewise refer to the unique number assigned in this first instalment.

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Partial view of the Bahá'í exhibit at the International Book Fair held in Frankfurt from 6 to 11 October 1982 in which publications of the German Bahá'í Publishing Trust and nineteen other Bahá'í publishers from seventeen countries were displayed.

III

ORIENTAL TERMS

1. TRANSLITERATION OF ORIENTAL WORDS FREQUENTLY USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

'Abá
Ábádih
'Abbás
'Abdu'l-Bahá
'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd
'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn
'Abdu'lláh
Abhá
Abu'l-Faḍl
'Adasíyyih
Aḍhán
Ádhirbáyján
Afnán
Aghṣán
'Ahd
Aḥmad
Aḥsá'í
Ahváz
Akbar
'Akká
'Alá'
'Alí
'Alí-Muḥammad
Alláh-u-Abhá
Alváḥ
Alváḥ-i-Salátín
Amatu'l-Bahá
Amín
Amír
Amír-Niẓám
Amru'lláh
Ámul
Anzalí
Áqá
Aqdas
'Arabistán
Asmá'
Astarábád
'Avásḥiq
Ayádí
Azal
'Aẓamat
'Azíz

Báb
Bábí
Bábu'l-Báb
Baghdád
Bahá
Bahá'í
Bahá'u'lláh
Bahíyyih
Bahjí
Balúchistán
Bandar-'Abbás
Báqir
Baqíyyatu'lláh
Bárfurúsh
Baṣrih
Báṭúm
Bayán
Bayt
Big
Bírjand
Bisḥárát
Bismi'lláh
Bukhárá
Burújird
Búshihr
Bushrú'í
Bushrúyih

Chihríq

Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih
Dárúghih
Dawlat-Ábád
Dhabíḥ
Duzdáb

Fará'id
Fárán
Farmán
Farrásh-Báshí
Fárs
Farsakh
Fatḥ-'Alí
Firdaws
Firdawsí

Ganjih
Gílán
Gul
Gulistán
Gurgín

Ḥabíb
Ḥadíth
Ḥaḍrat
Ḥájí
Ḥájí Mírzá Áqásí
Ḥájj
Hamadán
Ḥaram
Ḥasan
Hawdaj
Ḥaydar-'Alí
Haykal
Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds
Ḥijáz
Hijrat
Himmat-Ábád
Ḥujjat
Ḥusayn

Ibráhím
Íl
'Ilm
Imám
Imám-Jum'ih
Imám-Zádih
Íqán
Írán
'Iráq
'Iráqí
'Iráq-i-'Ajam
Iṣfahán
'Ishqábád
Ishráqát
Ishtihárd
Islám
Ismá'ílíyyih
'Izzat

Jalál
Jamádíyu'l-Avval
Jamál
Jamál-i-Mubárak
Jamál-i-Qidam
Jásb
Jubbih

Ka'bih
Kad-Khudá
Kalántar
Kalimát
Kamál
Karand
Karbilá
Káshán
Kashkúl
Kawmu'ṣ-Ṣa'áyidih
Kawthar
Káẓim
Káẓimayn
Khalkhál
Khán
Khániqayn
Khaylí Khúb
Khurásán
Khuy
Kirmán
Kirmánsháh
Kitáb-i-'Ahd
Kitáb-i-Aqdas
Kitáb-i-Asmá'
Kitáb-i-Badí'
Kitáb-i-Íqán

Kuláh
Kurdistán

Láhíján
Lár
Lawḥ
Luristán

Madrisih
Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá
Mahd-i-'Ulyá
Máh-Kú
Maḥmúd
Maláyir
Man-Yuẓhiruhu'lláh
Maqám
Marághih
Marḥabá
Marv
Masá'il
Mashhad
Mashíyyat
Mashriqu'l-Adhkár
Masjid
Maydán
Mázindarán
Mihdí
Miḥráb
Mílán
Mi'ráj
Mírzá
Mishkín-Qalam
Mu'adhdhin
Muftí
Muḥammad
Muḥammad-'Alí
Muḥammarih
Muḥarram
Mujtahid
Mulk
Mullá
Munírih
Muṣṭafá
Mustagháth
Muẓaffari'd-Dín

Nabíl
Nabíl-i-A'ẓam
Najaf
Najaf-Ábád
Náqiḍín
Naṣír
Náṣiri'd-Dín
Navváb
Naw-Rúz
Nayríz
Níshápúr
Nuqṭih
Núr

Pahlaví
Párán

Qáḍí
Qádíyán
Qahqahih
Qá'im
Qájár
Qalyán
Qamṣar
Qaṣr-i-Shírín
Qawl
Qayyúm
Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'
Qazvín
Qiblih
Qúchán
Quddús
Qudrat
Qum
Qur'án
Qurbán
Qurratu'l-'Ayn

Rafsanján
Raḥím
Raḥmán
Raḥmat
Ra'ís
Ramaḍán
Rasht
Rawḥání
Riḍván
Rúhu'lláh

Sabzivár
Sadratu'l-Muntahá
Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán
Ṣaḥífatu'l-Ḥaramayn
Sa'íd
Salsabíl
Samarqand
Sangsar
Sárí
Saysán
Sha'bán
Sháh
Shahíd
Shahmírzád
Sháhrúd
Sharaf
Sharí'ah
Shaykh
Shaykh-Ṭabarsí
Shaykhu'l-Islám
Shí'ah (Shí'ih)
Shíráz
Shúshtar
Simnán
Sístán
Síyáh-Chál
Siyyid
Ṣúfí
Sulaymán
Sulṭán
Sulṭán-Ábád
Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá'
Sunní
Súratu'l-Haykal
Súrih
Súriy-i-Damm
Súriy-i-Ghuṣn
Súriy-i-Ra'ís
Súriy-i-Ṣabr

Ṭabarsí
Tabríz
Ṭáhirih
Tajallíyát
Tákur
Taqí
Ṭarázát
Tarbíyat
Táshkand
Tawḥíd
Thurayyá
Ṭihrán
Túmán
Turkistán

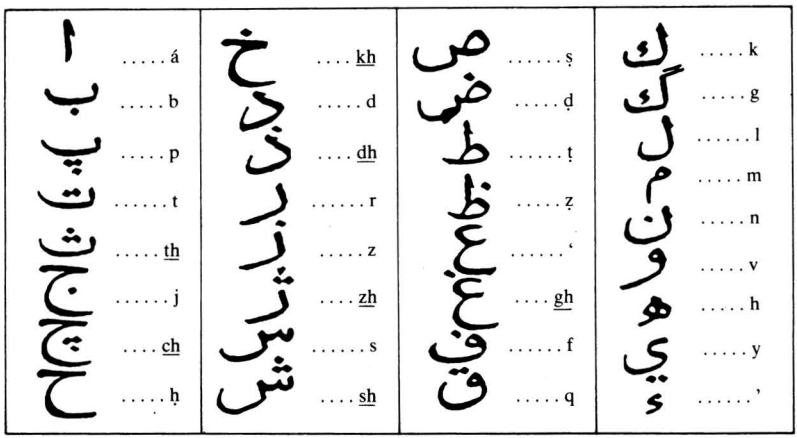
'Ulamá
Urúmíyyih
'Uthmán

Vaḥíd
Valí
Valí-'Ahd
Varqá
Vazír (also Vizír)

Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá
Yaḥyá
Yazd

Zanján
Zarand
Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín

2. GUIDE TO TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION OF THE PERSIAN ALPHABET



a ... as in account á ... as in arm	i ... as (e) in best í ... as (ee) in meet	u ... as (o) in short ú ... as (oo) in moon	aw ... as in mown

The ‘í’ added to the name of a town signifies ‘belonging to’. Thus Shírází means native of Shíráz.

3. NOTES ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF PERSIAN WORDS

The emphasis in Persian words is more or less evenly distributed, each syllable being equally stressed as in French. For example, do not say *Tab*ríz or Ṭ*abarsí*; stay as long on one syllable as on the next; Tabríz; Ṭabarsí. (While there are many exceptions to this rule, it is the most generally correct method of treating the question of stress.)

A frequent mistake is the failure to distinguish between broad and flat ‘a’s.’ This differentiation makes the language especially musical and should be observed: in the word Afnán, for example, pronounce the first ‘a’ as in account, and the second syllable to rhyme with on. Americans are apt to pronounce short ‘a’ plus ‘r’ like the verb form are; this is a mistake; ‘ar’ should be pronounced as in the word hurry—cf. Tarbíyat.

The same differentiation should be observed in the case of long and short ‘i’ and long and short ‘u’. As the guide to the transliteration indicates, short ‘i’ is like ‘e’ in best, and long ‘í’ like ‘ee’ in meet; for example, Ibráhím is pronounced Eb-ráheem; Islám is Ess-lahm. Short ‘u’ being like ‘o’ in short, and long ‘ú’ like ‘oo’ in moon, the following would be pronounced:

Quddús—Qod-dooss; Bárfurúsh—Bár-foroosh.

Pronounce 'aw' to rhyme with low, or mown; Naw-Rúz is No-Rooz.

The following consonants may be pronounced like z: dh, z, ẓ, ḍ.

The following consonants may be pronounced like ss: th, s, ṣ.

Zh is pronounced like the 's' in pleasure. Kh is pronounced like 'ch' in Scottish *loch* or German *nacht*. Do not pronounce it as 'k'. Westerners often experience difficulty pronouncing 'gh' and 'q'; a guttural French 'r' will serve here; otherwise use hard 'g' as in good.

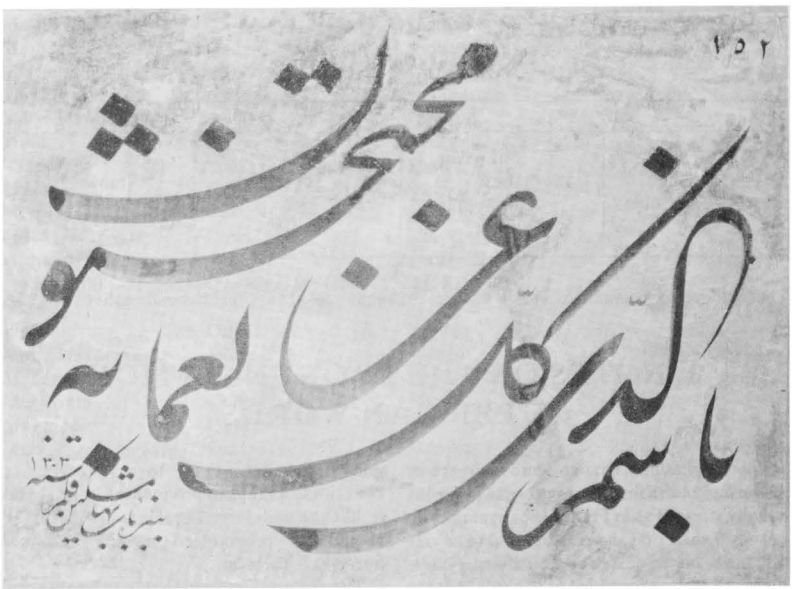
H and ḥ, approximately like the English aspirate 'h', should never be dropped. Ṭihrán is Teh-ron; madrisih is mad-res-seh; Miḥráb is Meh-rob.

In the case of double letters pronounce each separately: 'Ab-bás.

The character transliterated (') represents a pause; it is not unlike the initial sound made in pronouncing such a word as every. The word Bahá'í is phonetically as follows: 'a' as in account; 'á' as in hall; ('), pause; 'í' as ee in meet.

The character transliterated (') may also be treated as a pause.

N.B. As Persian often indicates no vowel sounds and as its pronunciation differs in different localities throughout Persia and the Near East as well as among individuals in any given locality, a uniform system of transliteration such as the above, which is in use by Bahá'í communities all over the world, is indispensable to the student.



An example of Mishkín-Qalam's calligraphy, dated AH 1303 (1885), to be seen in the house at Mazra'ih.

4. DEFINITIONS OF SOME OF THE ORIENTAL TERMS USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

Ab *Father*

Abá (See **Abú**.)

'Abá A loose, sleeveless cloak or mantle, open in front.

'Abd *Servant, bondsman; worshipper (of God).*

'Abdu'l-Bahá *Servant of Bahá*: title of the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh, and Centre of His Covenant.

Abhá *Most Glorious.* (See **Alláh-u-Abhá**; **Bahá'u'l-Abhá**.)

Abí (See **Abú**.)

Abjad notation System whereby each letter of the Arabic alphabet is assigned a specific numerical value.

Abú, Abá, Abí *Father of.*

Adhán Muslim call to prayer.

Adíb *Refined, cultured, learned; writer, scholar, man of letters.* Title of one of the early Hands of the Cause.

'Adl *Justice.* (See **Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam**.)

Afnán Literally *Twigs*: the Báb's kindred; specifically, descendants of His three maternal uncles and His wife's two brothers.

Ághá Originally *lord, nobleman; officer, commander*: placed after a woman's name *Ághá* is a courtesy title comparable with **Áqá**; may also form part of a compound proper name.

Aghṣán Literally *Branches*: denotes sons and male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh.

A.H. *Anno Hegirae (in the year of the Emigration)*: denotes the Muslim Era, reckoned from the year of Muḥammad's flight from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622. (See **Hijrat**.)

'Ahd *Covenant, bond, treaty; The Covenant (of God).*

Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ Literally *The Best of Stories*: a name for the Súrih of Joseph. *Tafsír-i-Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ*: the Báb's *Commentary on the Súrih of Joseph*, the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*.

Akbar *Greater, greatest.* (See **Alláh-u-Akbar**; **Kabír**.)

Al- The definite article in Arabic.

A'lá *Most Exalted.* (See **Ḥaḍrat-i-A'lá**; **Qalam-i-A'lá**.)

'Alá' *Loftiness*: nineteenth month of the Badí' calendar. (See **Há**.)

Al-Abhá *The Most Glorious.* (See **Bahá'u'l-Abhá**.)

'Alí The first Imám and rightful successor of Muḥammad; also the fourth Caliph according to the **Sunnah**.

Alláh *God.*

Alláh-u-Abhá *God is Most Glorious*: The Greatest Name, adopted during the period of Bahá'u'lláh's exile in Adrianople as a greeting among the Bahá'ís.

Alláh-u-Akbar *God is Most Great*: Muslim salutation, and opening words of the call to prayer, superseded by **Alláh-u-Abhá** as a greeting among the Bahá'ís during the Adrianople period.

Al-Madínah Literally *The City (of the Prophet)*. (See **Mecca**.)

Amih *Maid(servant), handmaid(en).* **Amatu'l-Bahá**: *Maidservant of* **Bahá**; **Amatu'lláh**: *Handmaiden of God.*

Amín *Faithful, trustworthy, honest; trustee.* Title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on Ḥájí Sháh-Muḥammad-i-Manshádí and Ḥájí Abu'l-Ḥasan-i-Ardikání, first trustees of the **Ḥuqúqu'lláh**.

Amír *Prince, ruler; commander, governor.*

Anís Literally *companion, friend, associate*: appellation given by the Báb to Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Zunúzí, the youthful disciple who shared His martyrdom.

Áqá *Master; The Master*: title given by Bahá'u'lláh to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Also used, preceding a name, in an honorific sense: *Mister, Sir.* (See **Sarkár-Áqá**.)

Aqdas *Most Holy.* (See **Kitáb-i-Aqdas**.)

Arḍ *Earth, land, territory.* (See **Ṣád**; **Shín**; **Sirr**; **Ṭá**.)

'Áshúrá Tenth day of the month of **Muḥarram**, anniversary of the martyrdom of the Imám Ḥusayn.

Asmá' *Names*: ninth month of the Badí' calendar.

Ayádí Literally *hands; Hand(s) of the Cause.*

Ayyám *Days.* (See **Há**.)

A'ẓam *Greatest.* (See **Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam**; **Ism-i-A'ẓam**; **Ṣadr-i-A'ẓam**.)

'Aẓamat *Grandeur*: fourth month of the Badí' calendar.

'Aẓím Literally *mighty, great, glorious*: title

given by the Báb to Mullá Shaykh 'Alí of Khurásán.

Báb *Gate*: title assumed by Mírzá 'Alí-Muḥammad after the declaration of His Mission in Shíráz on 23 May 1844.

Bábí Follower of the Báb.

Bábu'l-Báb *The Gate of the Gate*: title of Mullá Ḥusayn, the first Letter of the Living.

Badí' *Wonderful*: (1) Title of Áqá Buzurg of Khurásán, the seventeen-year-old bearer of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh. (2) Style of the new nineteen-month calendar of the Bahá'í Era. (See **B.E.**)

Bagum *Lady (of rank), dame, begum*: placed after a woman's given name *Bagum* is a courtesy title comparable with **Big**.

Bahá *Glory, splendour, light*: (1) The Greatest Name. (See **Bahá'u'lláh**.) (2) First month of the Badí' calendar.

Bahá'í Follower of Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahá'u'l-Abhá *The Glory of the Most Glorious*. **Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!** *O Thou the Glory of the Most Glorious!*

Bahá'u'lláh *The Glory of God*: title of Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alí: born in Ṭihrán on 12 November 1817; ascended in Bahjí, near 'Akká, on 29 May 1892.

Bahjí Literally *delight, gladness, joy*: denotes that part of the Plain of 'Akká where the Shrine and Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh are situated.

Baní-Háshim Literally *Sons of Háshim (great grandfather of Muḥammad)*: clan of Quraysh from which Muḥammad was descended.

Baqíyyatu'lláh *Remnant of God*: traditional appellation of the **Qá'im**, derived from the Qur'án; designation of the Báb as the Promised One of Islám, and applied by Him to Bahá'u'lláh.

Bayán Literally *exposition, explanation, lucidity, eloquence, utterance*: title given by the Báb to His Revelation, and to two of His Writings, one in Persian, the other in Arabic.

Bayt *House*.

Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'ẓam *The Supreme House of Justice*: a title of the Universal House of Justice.

B.E. *Bahá'í Era*: denotes the Badí' calendar, reckoned from the year of the Báb's declaration of His Mission in 1844.

Big Literally *lord, prince; governor, bey*: placed after the given name, *Big* was used as a courtesy title for middle-ranking officials. (See **Khán**.)

Bishárát *Glad Tidings*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.

Bismilláhi'r-Raḥmáni'r-Raḥím *In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*: invocation prefixed to all but the ninth **súrih** of the Qur'án, and composed (in Arabic) of nineteen letters.

Caliph *Vicar, deputy*: successor of the Prophet Muḥammad, supreme civil and spiritual head of the Islamic world, a title claimed by successive dynasties.

Caravanserai, -sera, -sary (See **Khán**.)

Dárúghih *High constable*.

Darvísh *(Religious) mendicant, dervish, Muslim mystic*. (See **Ṣúfí**.)

Dawlih *State, government*.

Dayyán Literally *conqueror, ruler; Judge* (an epithet of the Godhead): title conferred by the Báb on Mírzá Asadu'lláh, learned divine of Khuy.

Dhabíḥ Literally *slain, sacrificed, offered up*: (1) Designation of Áqá Siyyid Ismá'íl-i-Zavárí'í, enraptured follower of Bahá'u'lláh. (2) Title given by Bahá'u'lláh to Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ismá'íl-i-Káshání, ardent early teacher of the Cause.

Dhi'b *The Wolf*: appellation applied by Bahá'u'lláh to Shaykh Muḥammad-Báqir who, together with Mír Muḥammad-Ḥusayn (the **Raqshá**), precipitated the deaths of the King and Beloved of Martyrs, and instigated the martyrdom of many other Bahá'ís, particularly in Iṣfahán and Yazd. (See **Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá**; **Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá**.)

Dhikr *Mention, remembering; remembrance of God; praise and thanksgiving; recital of the names of God, religious exercise or ceremony; The Qur'án, The Word of God*. (Plural: **Adhkár**; see **Mashriqu'l-Adhkár**.)

Dhi'l-Ḥijjih Twelfth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Dhi'l-Qa'dih Eleventh month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

El-Abhá (See **Al-Abhá**.)

Farmán *Order, command, firman, edict, royal decree*.

Farrásh *Footman, lictor, attendant*. **Farrásh-**

Báshí The head-farrásh.

Farsakh Unit of measurement, approximately 3–4 miles or nearly 5.5 kilometres.

Fáṭimih Daughter of the Prophet, wife of the Imám **'Alí** and mother of the Imám **Ḥusayn**.

Fatvá A legal pronouncement or decree by a Muslim **muftí**.

Firdaws *Garden; Paradise.*

Firmán (See **Farmán**.)

Ghuṣn Literally *Branch*: son or male descendant of Bahá'u'lláh. (Plural: **Aghṣán**.)

Ghuṣn-i-Aṭhar *The Purest Branch*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mírzá Mihdí, brother.of 'Abdu'l-Bahá who died in the Most Great Prison in 'Akká.

Ghuṣn-i-A'ẓam *The Most Great Branch*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on **'Abdu'l-Bahá**.

Há The thirty-first letter of the Persian alphabet, with a numerical value of five. **Ayyám-i-Há** Literally *The days of Há*: the Intercalary Days, so named by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, where He also ordained that they should immediately precede the month of 'Alá', the month of fasting which closes the Bahá'í year. Every fourth year the number of the Intercalary Days is raised from four to five to accommodate the extra day of the leap year.

Ḥadíth Literally *report, account; Prophetic Tradition.* The whole body of the sacred tradition of the Muslims is called the Ḥadíth. (Plural: **Aḥádíth**.)

Ḥaḍrat Literally *presence.* Placed before a name, in the form of *Ḥaḍrat-i-* —, the word is a courtesy title signifying 'His Majesty', 'His Holiness'.

Ḥaḍrat-i-A'lá *His Holiness, The Most Exalted One*: a title of the Báb.

Ḥájí, Ḥájj A Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Ḥaram *Sanctuary, sacred precinct or court.* (See **Ḥill**.)

Ḥaram-i-Aqdas *The Most Holy Court*: a designation given by the Guardian to the north-western quadrant of the garden surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.

Hawdaj *Howdah*: a litter carried by a camel, mule, horse or elephant for travelling purposes.

Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds *The Sacred Fold*: official title designating headquarters of Bahá'í administrative activity in a particular country or region.

Hijrat, Hijra(h) Literally *Emigration; Hegira*: the date of Muḥammad's flight from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622: the basis of Islamic chronology.

Ḥill Non-sacred ground, an antonym of **Ḥaram**.

Howdah (See **Hawdaj**.)

Ḥujjat Literally *proof, argument, reason*: title of Mullá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Zanjání, hero of the Zanján upheaval.

Ḥuqúqu'lláh *Right of God*: payment by the believers, instituted in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.

Ḥusayn The third Imám, second son of 'Alí and Fáṭimih, martyred on the plains of Karbilá on 10 Muḥarram A.H. 61 (A.D. 680).

Ḥusayníyyih A place where the martyrdom of the Imám Ḥusayn is mourned, or where Muslim passion-plays may be presented. The term is the designation that was given to Bahá'u'lláh's Most Great House in Baghdád after its forcible occupation by the Shí'ah community.

-i- Sound inserted in pronunciation (though not represented in Persian script) at the end of a word to indicate that the following word stands in a possessive or adjectival relation to it.

Ibn *Son.*

Íl *Clan, tribe.*

'Ilm *Knowledge*: twelfth month of the Badí' calendar.

Imám *Head, chief, leader.* (1) Muslim cleric who leads the congregation in prayer. (See **Imám-Jum'ih**.) (2) Title applied by the Shí'ahs to each of the twelve successors of Muḥammad in the line of 'Alí. (See **'Alí**; **Ḥusayn**.)

Imám-Jum'ih Muslim clergyman who performs the Friday prayers, the leading imám in a town or city; chief of the mullás, who recites the Friday prayers for the sovereign.

Imám-Zádih Descendant of an Imám or his shrine.

In-shá'a'lláh *If God wills.*

Íqán Literally *Certitude*: title of Bahá'u'lláh's Epistle to Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid Muḥammad, a maternal uncle of the Báb.

Ishráqát *Splendours*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.

Ism *Name*. (Plural: **Asmá'**.)

Ism-i-A'ẓam *The Greatest Name*.

Ismu'lláh Literally *The Name of God*: title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on a number of believers.

Isráfíl Angel who sounds the trumpet on the Day of Judgement.

'Izzat *Might*: tenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Jabal *Mountain*. **Jabal-i-Básiṭ** *The Open Mountain*, **Jabal-i-Shadíd** *The Grievous Mountain*: the Báb's allusions to the fortress of Máh-Kú and the castle of Chihríq respectively.

Jáhilíyyih *The Age of Ignorance*: denotes the state of paganism prevailing in Arabia before the advent of Muḥammad.

Jalál *Glory*: second month of the Badí' calendar.

Jamádíyu'l-Avval Fifth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Jamádíyu'th-Thání Sixth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Jamál *Beauty*: third month of the Badí' calendar.

Jamál-i-Mubárak Literally *The Blessed Beauty*: a title of Bahá'u'lláh.

Jihád Literally *striving, endeavour; crusade; holy war*, enjoined in the Qur'án, abrogated by Bahá'u'lláh.

Jináb Literally *threshold*: placed before a name, in the form *Jináb-i-* —, the word is a courtesy title signifying 'His Excellency', 'His Honour'.

Jubbih An outer coat or cloak.

Ka'bih *The Kaaba*: ancient shrine at **Mecca**, chosen by Muḥammad to be the centre of pilgrimage for Muslims. The most holy shrine in Islám and **Qiblih** of the Muslim world.

Kabír Literally *great, big, old*. (See **Akbar**.)

Kad-Khudá Chief of a ward or parish in a town; headman of a village.

Kalántar *Mayor*.

Kalím *Speaker, interlocutor*. Title given by Bahá'u'lláh to His faithful brother, Mírzá Músá. (See **Kalímu'lláh**.)

Kalimát *Words*: seventh month of the Badí' calendar.

Kalímu'lláh *He Who Conversed With God*: title of Moses, given to Him in the Islamic Dispensation.

Kamál *Perfection*: eighth month of the Badí' calendar.

Karbilá'í Style of a Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Karbilá; as a title it is placed before the given name.

Kawthar Literally *plentiful, abundant, sweet (potion)*: a river in Paradise, whence all other rivers derive their source.

Khádimu'lláh *Servant of God*: title of Mírzá Áqá Ján, amanuensis of Bahá'u'lláh.

Khalífih (See **Caliph**.)

Khalíl *Friend*: (1) (See **Khalílu'lláh**.) (2) Title of Ḥájí Muḥammad-Ibráhím-i-Qazvíní, conferred on him by the Báb.

Khalílu'lláh *Friend of God*: title given to Abraham in the Qur'án.

Khán (1) *Prince, lord, nobleman, chieftain*. Originally used as a courtesy title for officers and high-ranking officials, *Khán* came to denote—placed after a given name—simply 'gentleman'. (See **Big**.) (2) *Exchange, market; inn, caravanserai*: an inn constructed around a central court where caravans (trains of pack animals) may rest for the night.

Khánum *Lady; wife*. Placed after a woman's given name, *Khánum* is a courtesy title meaning 'gentlewoman' comparable with **Khán**.

Khiḍr *The Green One*: a prophet, companion of Moses according to Islamic tradition, associated with the unnamed personage mentioned in Qur'án 18:60–82; believed to have drunk from the fountain of life and to be its custodian, he symbolizes the true guide.

Khuṭbih Sermon delivered in the mosques on Fridays at noon by the **imám**.

Kiblah (See **Qiblih**.)

Kitáb *Book*.

Kitáb-i-Aqdas *The Most Holy Book*: title of Bahá'u'lláh's Book of Laws and Ordinances.

Kitáb-i-Íqán (See **Íqán**.)

Koran (See **Qur'án**.)

Kuláh The Persian lambskin hat worn by government employees and civilians.

Kull-i-Shay' Literally *all things*: the term, whose numerical value is 361, signifies 19 cycles of 19 years in the Badí' calendar.

Lawḥ Literally *slate, sheet, table; Tablet*. (Plural: **Alváḥ**.)

Madínih (See **Medina**.)

Madrisih *Seminary, school, religious college.*

Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá *Beloved of Martyrs*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mírzá Muḥammad-Ḥusayn, martyred in Iṣfahán together with his brother, the **Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá**. (See **Dhi'b**.)

Mahdí (See **Mihdí**.)

Makkih (See **Mecca**.)

Man-Yuẓhiruhu'lláh *He Whom God Will Make Manifest*: title given by the Báb to the Promised One.

Marḥabá *Welcome! Bravo! Well done!*

Masá'il *Questions*: fifteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Mashhadí Style of a Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mashhad; as a title it is placed before the given name.

Mashíyyat *Will*: eleventh month of the Badí' calendar.

Mashriqu'l-Adhkár Literally *The Dawning-place of the Praise of God*: title designating a Bahá'í House of Worship.

Masjid *Mosque*: a Muslim place of worship.

Maydán A square or open place.

Mecca Birthplace of the Prophet Muḥammad and scene of the early, difficult years of His ministry before His emigration to **Medina**. (See **Hijrat**; **Ka'bih**.)

Medina The 'City of the Prophet', Muḥammad's adoptive home after His flight from **Mecca**, and scene of the latter years of His ministry, during which His Faith spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula, and its social teachings were promulgated. (See **Hijrat**.)

Mihdí Literally *directed, guided; one who is rightly guided; The Mahdi*: a designation of the Twelfth **Imám**; title of the Manifestation expected by Islám.

Miḥráb A niche in the wall of a mosque indicating the direction of Mecca, before which the **imám** stands when leading the congregation in prayer; the most important part of a mosque.

Mír A contraction of **amír**, used, when prefixed to a name, to denote descent from the House of the Prophet. (See **Siyyid**.)

Mi'ráj *The Ascent*: Muḥammad's mystic vision of the 'night journey' in which He ascended into heaven.

Mírzá A contraction of *amír-zádih*, meaning 'son of an **amír**'. When affixed to a name it signifies 'Prince'; when prefixed, it either denotes a clerk, secretary, scribe or scholar, or conveys a merely honorific sense: *Mister*.

Mishkín-Qalam Literally *the musk-scented pen*: title applied to Mírzá Ḥusayn-i-Iṣfahání, a distinguished Bahá'í calligraphist.

Mu'adhdhin *Muezzin*: the one who sounds the **adhán**, the Muslim call to prayer.

Mubárak *Blessed*. (See **Jamál-i-Mubárak**.)

Muftí Expounder of Muslim law; gives a **fatvá** or sentence on a point of religious jurisprudence.

Muḥarram First month of the Muslim lunar calendar, the first ten days of which are observed by the Shí'ahs as part of their mourning period for the Imám **Ḥusayn**, whose martyrdom occurred on the tenth day, 'Áshúrá.

Mujtahid Muslim doctor-of-law. Most of the mujtahids of Írán have received their diplomas from the most eminent jurists of Karbilá and Najaf.

Mulk *Dominion*: eighteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Mullá Muslim trained in theology and Islamic jurisprudence; theologian, priest.

Mustagháth *He Who Is Invoked (for Help), God*: term used by the Báb in reference to the advent of Bahá'u'lláh on the Day of the Latter Resurrection.

Mutaṣarrif *Governor*: lower in rank than a **válí**.

Nabíl *Learned, noble*: title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on a number of the believers, most prominent among whom were Mullá Muḥammad-i-Zarandí, author of *The Dawn-Breakers* (Nabíl-i-A'ẓam), and Mullá Muḥammad-i-Qá'iní (Nabíl-i-Ákbar).

Navváb An honorific implying *Grace, Highness*: title of Ásíyih Khánum, wife of Bahá'u'lláh and mother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Naw-Rúz Literally *New Day*: Bahá'í New Year's Day, date of the vernal equinox; according to the Persian calendar, the day on which the sun enters Aries.

Nuqṭih *Point*.

Nuqṭiy-i-Úlá *The Primal Point*: a title of the Báb.

Núr *Light*: fifth month of the Badí' calendar.

Pahlaván *Athlete, champion*: term applied

to brave and muscular men.

Páshá Honorary title formerly given to a Turkish officer of high rank such as military commander or provincial governor.

Písh-Kish *Present, tip, douceur.*

Qádí Muslim judge—civil, criminal, or ecclesiastic.

Qá'im *He Who Shall Arise*: title designating the Promised One of Islám.

Qalam *Pen.*

Qalam-i-A'lá *The Pen of the Most High*: a designation of Bahá'u'lláh.

Qalyán *Narghile, hookah, hubble-bubble pipe.* Oriental pipe in which the smoke is drawn through water in a vase by means of a long tube.

Qawl *Speech*: fourteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Qayyúmu'l-Asmá' (See **Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ**.)

Qiblih Literally *that which faces one; prayer-direction; point of adoration*: the focus to which the faithful turn in prayer. The Qiblih for Muslims is the **Ka'bih** in Mecca; for Bahá'ís, the Most Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí: 'the Heart and Qiblih of the Bahá'í world.'

Quddús Literally *Pure, Holy, Blessed*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mullá Muḥammad-'Alíy-i-Bárfurúshí, last of the eighteen Letters of the Living at the Conference of Badasht.

Qudrat *Power*: thirteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Qur'án *The Reading; The Recitation; That Which Ought To Be Read.* The Book revealed to Muḥammad: The Koran, Holy Book of the Muslims.

Qurbán *Sacrifice.*

Qurratu'l-'Ayn Literally *Solace of the Eyes*: a term applied to an object of affection. (1) Title conferred upon **Ṭáhirih** by Siyyid Káẓim of Rasht. (2) Term used by the Báb in the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* to refer both to Bahá'u'lláh and to Himself.

Rabb-i-A'lá *Exalted Lord*: one of the designations of the Báb.

Rabí'u'l-Avval Third month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Rabí'u'th-Thání Fourth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Raḥmat *Mercy*: sixth month of the Badí' calendar.

Ra'ís *President, head, leader.* **Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís**: Tablet addressed by Bahá'u'lláh to 'Álí Páshá, the Ottoman Grand Vizier.

Rajab Seventh month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Ramaḍán Ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar in which the Fast is observed.

Raqshá *The She-Serpent*: appellation applied by Bahá'u'lláh to Mír Muḥammad-Ḥusayn, the **Imám-Jum'ih** of Iṣfahán, accomplice of Shaykh Muḥammad-Báqir. (See **Dhi'b**.)

Riḍván Literally *good-pleasure, favour, acceptance; garden, Paradise*; name of the custodian of Paradise. The holiest and most significant of all Bahá'í festivals, commemorating Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration of His Mission to His companions in 1863, a twelve-day period extending from 21 April to 2 May, and celebrated annually.

Ṣád The seventeenth letter of the Persian alphabet. **Arḍ-i-Ṣád** Literally *Land of Ṣád*: Iṣfahán.

Sadratu'l-Muntahá *The Divine Lote Tree, The Tree beyond which there is no passing*: symbolic of the Manifestation of God. (See **Sidrih**.)

Ṣadr-i-A'ẓam *Grand Vizier, Prime Minister.*

Ṣafar Second month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán *Lord of the Age*: one of the titles of the promised **Qá'im**. **Yá Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán!** Rallying-cry of the early Bábís.

Salám *Peace, salutation.* **Salámun 'Alaykum** *Peace be with you!* a greeting among Muslims. **Va's-Salám** *And peace (be with you)*: formula used to conclude an epistle or dissertation, indicating that the author has nothing further to say.

Salsabíl *Pure, limpid water.* A fountain in Paradise.

Samandar Literally *salamander; phoenix.* A mythical creature indestructible by fire. Title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on Shaykh Káẓim-i-Samandar of Qazvín.

Sarkár-Áqá Literally *The Honourable Master.* A designation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Sha'bán Eighth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Sháh *King*, especially of Írán.

Sháh-Bahrám World Saviour and Promised One of the Zoroastrians, identified by Bahá'ís with Bahá'u'lláh.

Shahíd *Martyr*. (Plural: **Shuhadá**; see **Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá**; **Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá**; **Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá**.)

Sharaf *Honour*: sixteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Sharí'at, Sharí'ah Literally *path, way; custom, law*. Muslim canonical law.

Shavvál Tenth month of the Muslim lunar calendar.

Shaykh *Venerable old man; tribal or village chief, patriarch, sheik; learned man, elder, professor; clerical dignitary, superior of dervish order*. (See **Shaykhu'l-Islám**.)

Shaykhí (Follower) of the school founded by Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í. Among his doctrines, in addition to the imminent dual Advent, was that the Prophet Muḥammad's material body did not ascend to heaven on the night of the **Mi'ráj**.

Shaykhu'l-Islám *High Priest, Grand Muftí*: highest rank in the Muslim religious hierarchy; also, title of the head of a religious court, appointed to every large city by the Sháh.

Shí'ah, Shí'ih Literally *faction, party, sect*: partisans of 'Alí and of his descendants as the sole lawful 'Vicars of the Prophet'. The Shí'ahs reject the first three Caliphs, believing that the successorship in Islám belonged by divine right to 'Alí (first Imám and fourth Caliph) and to his descendants. Originally, the successorship was the vital point of difference, and Islám was divided because Muḥammad's (albeit verbal) appointment of 'Alí was disregarded. (See **Sunnah**; **Imám**.)

Shí'í, Shiite Member of the Shí'ah (or Party) of 'Alí; Muslim of the Shí'ah branch of Islám.

Shín The sixteenth letter of the Persian alphabet. **Arḍ-i-Shín** Literally *Land of Shín*: Shíráz.

Sidrih *Lote tree*. (See **Sadratu'l-Muntahá**.)

Ṣirát Literally *path, way; The Way of God; The Religion of God; 'The Bridge'* leading to heaven. Denotes the True Faith of God.

Sirr *Secret, mystery*. **Arḍ-i-Sirr** Literally *The Land of Mystery*: Adrianople.

Sirru'lláh *The Mystery of God*: a designation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, conferred on Him by Bahá'u'lláh.

Síyáh-Chál *Black Pit*: the subterranean dungeon in Ṭihrán to which Bahá'u'lláh was consigned in August 1852. Here, chained in darkness three flights of stairs underground, in the company of some 150 thieves and assassins, He received the first intimations of His world Mission; regarded by Bahá'ís as the holiest place in Írán's capital.

Siyyid Literally *chief, lord, prince*: descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá *Prince of Martyrs*: title of the Imám Ḥusayn.

Ṣufí An exponent of Sufism, a Muslim mystic or **darvísh**.

Sulṭán *Sovereignty*: (1) Seventeenth month of the Badí' calendar. (2) *King, sovereign, monarch, sultan*.

Sulṭánu'sh-Shuhadá *King of Martyrs*: title conferred by Bahá'u'lláh on Mírzá Muḥammad-Ḥasan, martyred brother of the **Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá**.

Sunnah Literally *way, custom, practice; The Way of the Prophet* as reported in the **Ḥadíth**. Designates by far the largest sect of Islám, which includes the four so-called orthodox sects: Hanbalites, Hanafites, Malikites and Shafiites. Sunnis accept the Caliphs as legitimate, believing that the position of Caliph is elective. (See **Shí'ah**; **Caliph**.)

Sunní, Sunnite Muslim of the Sunnah branch of Islám.

Súrih Name of a chapter of the Qur'án; used by the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in the titles of some of Their Own Writings.

Súriy-i-Mulúk *Súrih of the Kings*. Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh while in Adrianople.

Ṭá The nineteenth letter of the Persian alphabet, with a numerical value of nine. **Arḍ-i-Ṭá** Literally *Land of Ṭá*: Ṭihrán.

Ṭáhirih Literally *The Pure One*: title conferred on **Zarrín-Táj** by Bahá'u'lláh at the Conference of Badasht.

Táj Literally *crown*. Tall felt head-dress adopted by Bahá'u'lláh in 1863, on the day of His departure from His Most Holy House in Baghdád.

Tajallíyát *Effulgences*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.

Takyih *Religious house, monastery; hostel for pilgrims; religious theatre* for presenting

Muslim passion-plays; place at which the martyrdom of Ḥusayn is commemorated. (See **Ḥusayníyyih**.)

Ṭarázát *Ornaments*: title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.

Túmán Discontinued unit of Iranian currency.

'Ulamá Literally *learned men, scholars; clerical authorities, theologians, divines*: the Muslim religious hierarchy. (Singular: **'Álim**.)

Umm *Mother*.

'Urvatu'l-Vuthqá *The Sure Handle, Firm Cord*: a Qur'anic term, used in the Bahá'í Writings to symbolize the Covenant and Testament.

Ustád *Teacher, professor; mechanic, artisan, craftsman*.

Vaḥíd *Single, unique, peerless*: title of Siyyid Yaḥyáy-i-Dárábí, hero of the Nayríz upheaval.

Váḥid Literally *unity; one, single, unique; The One, Indivisible God*. The word, whose numerical value is nineteen, denotes: (1) A 'unity' or section of the *Bayán*. The Persian *Bayán* consists of nine Váḥids of nineteen chapters each, except the last, which has only ten chapters. (2) The eighteen Letters of the Living (the Báb's first disciples) and the Báb Himself, who together constitute the first Váḥid of the Bábí Dispensation. (3) Each cycle of nineteen years in the Bádí' calendar. (See **Kull-i-Shay'**.)

Valí *Guardian*.

Válí *Governor* (of a province).

Valí-'Ahd *Crown prince, heir to the throne*.

Varaqih *Leaf*; often used metaphorically in the Bahá'í Writings to refer to a woman.

Varaqiy-i-'Ulyá Literally *The Most Exalted Leaf; The Greatest Holy Leaf*: title of Bahá'íyyih (or Bahíyyih) Khánum, saintly daughter of Bahá'u'lláh and 'the outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation'.

Varqá *Bird, nightingale; The Heavenly Dove*.

Va's-Salám (See **Salám**.)

Vazír *Vizír, minister (of state), vizier*. **Vazír-i-A'ẓam**: *Grand Vizier, Prime Minister*.

Viláyat *Guardianship*.

Waqf Literally *bequeathing (for charitable uses); pious bequest, religious endowment, estate held in mortmain*. Denotes landed property endowed to the Muslim community; in Írán, the estate of the expected Imám.

Yá Vocative particle meaning 'O'. (See **Bahá'u'l-Abhá**; **Ṣaḥibu'z-Zamán**.)

Zádih *Born; offspring, son*. Used as a suffix after a proper name it means 'Son of —'. (See **Imám-Zádih**; **Mírzá**.)

Zarrín-Táj Literally *Crown of Gold*: title by which Fáṭimih, daughter of Mullá Ṣáliḥ-i-Baraqání of Qazvín—better known as **Ṭáhirih**—was designated by her family and kindred.

Zawrá' A term signifying Baghdád.

Zamzam Literally *copious (water)*: sacred well within the precincts of the Great Mosque in Mecca. Though salty, its water is much esteemed for pious uses, such as ablutions, and drinking after a fast.

Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín Literally *Ornament of the Near (or Favoured) Ones*. Title bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh on Mullá Zaynu'l-'Ábidín of Najaf-Ábád, faithful apostle and trusted scribe.

PART SEVEN

LITERARY AND MUSICAL WORKS

I
ESSAYS AND REVIEWS

1. MEMORIES OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

'Alí M. Yazdí

'Alí M. Yazdí (1899–1978), a noted Bahá'í lecturer and writer, served on many national committees of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and was, for thirty years, chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Berkeley, California. Marion Carpenter Yazdí, whom he married in 1926, has commemorated his life and service in *Youth in the Vanguard: Memoirs and Letters Collected by the First Bahá'í Student at Berkeley and at Stanford University* (Wilmette: United States Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982). The following reminiscence is adapted from a longer work, *Prophetic Days: Memories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, written by 'Alí M. Yazdí in 1975 and compiled by Marion Yazdí.

IN 1856, or thereabouts, even as the little city of Yazd, in the very heart of Persia, was carrying on its lackluster existence, something was astir. The town's population for the most part lived in poverty and ignorance, unaware of what was happening in the rest of the world. But there was something stirring. There was hushed talk of the Báb, the new Prophet Who had been martyred, and of the Message He had brought. There were people secretly spreading the news at the risk of their lives.

A youth, only fourteen, came into contact with these people, heard the Message and wholeheartedly accepted it. Only fourteen years of age! His name was Shaykh 'Alí.[1] He was the eldest son of the well-to-do and highly respected Ḥájí 'Abdu'r-Raḥím Yazdí. The family was alarmed. The boy was in grave danger. His allegiance could bring ruin to the whole family. But Shaykh 'Alí was ablaze. To distract him from the Bábí Faith, his family sent him to Kirmán with enough goods to start a business. The shop was successful but soon rumors floated back that he was meeting with the Bábís. 'Abdu'r-Raḥmín went to Kirmán and brought him home.

In Yazd the boy again attended the secret meetings and took aid to the beleaguered Bábís who were imprisoned there. One night he was so late returning home that his mother, terribly worried, waited for him at the door and when he came in, slapped him, without saying a word. In silence he took her hand, kissed it tenderly, and gazed at her with deep love.

Throughout this difficult time, in the face of the calumnies and persecutions heaped upon the Bábís by their enemies, Shaykh 'Alí displayed a kindness and fearlessness remarkable in one so young. As time passed, his character, his behavior, his attitude and his actions gradually won over the whole family. One by one they joined the Faith. Now meetings were held in the Yazdí home though the need for secrecy remained paramount. Teachers came from other cities, each with new tales. Some who came from Baghdád spoke of Bahá'u'lláh. Later they came from Adrianople, and then from 'Akká.

My father, Ḥájí Muḥammad, who like his brother had joined the Faith when he was fourteen, left for the Holy Land with a friend, a donkey, lots of faith and very little money. He and his companion set out to see Bahá'u'lláh and traveled over steep, rugged mountains and across hot, arid plains until they arrived in 'Akká, around 1870. Other mem-

[1] The uncle for whom 'Alí M. Yazdí was named by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Later, while still a young man, he was sent by Bahá'u'lláh to Khartoum to help Mírzá Ḥaydar-'Alí. He stayed on to teach, and died there.

bers of the family followed later. Ḥájí 'Abdu'r-Raḥím, my grandfather, left Yazd after he had been tortured, beaten and bastinadoed. The story of this 'precious soul', as the Master called him, his arrival in 'Akká, and his life there, is told with tender compassion by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Memorials of the Faithful.*[1] Each member of the Yazdí family was given an assignment by Bahá'u'lláh and sent out to accomplish it. Ḥájí Muḥammad, my father, and two other youthful believers were sent to Egypt where they worked hard for many years and eventually built up a prosperous business. Through these believers—all young people—the Faith was first established in Alexandria, Cairo and Port Said. Although they were not free to openly teach the Faith they were on good terms with the population and were generally well-liked and respected.

My family and I lived in a suburb of Alexandria called Ramleh, a beautiful and peaceful residential district on the edge of the Mediterranean. The house in which I was born, and where I lived until I was about four or five, had a separate guest house and a large garden surrounded by a wall of rough-hewn stone. Within the garden there were many lime, sweet lemon, orange and pomegranate trees as well as rose bushes. In the summer a tropical scent hung in the air. The house to which we then moved also had a large garden. Jasmine grew over the veranda, a large open porch adjoining the garden. Here our family often had breakfast, with father presiding at the samovar and dispensing glasses of hot tea to the adults and, to the children, hot water with a drop of tea floating on top. Before breakfast, however, we chanted our morning prayers and heard father tell wonderful stories about his experiences with Bahá'u'lláh and the Master, or read the latest communications from the Holy Land.

It was in this setting, when I was a child of eleven, that I heard the news of the coming of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Ramleh. The news came suddenly, without warning. The Master had left Haifa without notice on a steamer bound for Europe. Because of ill health and fatigue, He had stopped in Port Said and was coming on to Alexandria. Then the news came that *He was coming to Ramleh! To Ramleh where we lived! What a miracle!* There was intense joy within the Bahá'í community, within my family, within me. Of all the places in the world, He happened to choose Ramleh as His headquarters for His trips to Europe and America during the period 1910–1913. Excitement, curiosity, anticipation swirled through my mind. All I knew about 'Abdu'l-Bahá was what my father had told us. No one in the immediate family except father and grandfather had seen Him. The only photograph was an early one taken when He was a young man in Adrianople. He was a prisoner beyond our reach, a legendary figure. Now He was free and coming to Ramleh! The Bahá'í Faith was an integral part of me, not something superimposed. In Ramleh I was surrounded by it, lived it, believed it, cherished its spiritual concepts and goals and principles. I realized its fundamental importance, its necessity for the world today. Yet my studies at the French school which I attended had opened other areas to my mind. The discoveries of science fascinated me and I believed they provided us with effective tools for the implementation of the teachings of the Faith. I prayed that I might be guided to play some role in this endeavor. I sensed that my contact with 'Abdu'l-Bahá would provide the inspiration and the impetus to move in this direction. So I waited eagerly for the day of His arrival.

There was a crowd gathered in front of the Hotel Victoria. Suddenly there was a hush, a stillness, and I knew that He had come. I looked. There He was! He walked through the crowd—slowly, majestically, smiling radiantly as he greeted the bowed heads on either side. I could only get a vague impression as I could not get near Him. The sound of the wind and surf from the nearby shore drowned out His voice so I could hardly hear Him. Nevertheless, I went away happy.

A few days later, a villa was rented for the Master and His family, not far from the Hotel Victoria, in a lovely residential section that lay right next to the beautiful Mediterranean and the beaches. Like all the villas in that area, it had a garden with blossoms and flowering shrubs. It was there that 'Abdu'l-Bahá chose to receive His guests—a great variety of notables, public figures, clerics, aristocrats, writers, as well as poor and despairing people.

[1] *Memorials of the Faithful*, trans. Marzieh Gail. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971, pp. 64–66.

I went there often, sometimes on the way home from school, sometimes on weekends. When I was not in school I spent most of my time in His garden. I would wait to catch a glimpse of Him as He came out for His customary walk, or conversed with pilgrims from faraway places. To hear His vibrant and melodious voice ringing in the open air, to see Him, somehow exhilarated me and gave me hope. Quite often, He came to me and smiled and talked. There was a radiance about Him, an almost unlimited kindness and love that shone from Him. Seeing Him, I was infused with a feeling of goodness. I felt humble and, at the same time, exceedingly happy.

I had many opportunities to see the Master —as we always called Him—at meetings and on festive occasions. I especially remember the first time He came to our house to address a large gathering of believers. The friends were all gathered, talking happily, waiting. Suddenly all grew quiet. From outside, before He entered the room, I could hear the voice of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, very resonant, very beautiful. Then He swept in, with His robe flowing! He was straight as an arrow. His head was thrown back. His silver-gray hair fell in waves to His shoulders. His beard was white; His eyes were keen; His forehead, broad. He wore a white turban around an ivory-colored felt cap.

He looked at everyone, smiled and welcomed all with *Khushámadíd! Khushámadíd!* (Welcome! Welcome!) I had been taught that in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, I should sit or stand with my hands crossed in front of me, and look down. I was so anxious to see Him that I found myself looking up furtively now and then. He often spoke—I was privileged to hear Him speak on many subjects. For nine months it seemed like paradise. Then He left us and sailed for Europe. How dismal everything became. But there was school and there were duties. Exciting news came from Europe, and there were memories!

'Abdu'l-Bahá came back four months later. Paradise returned. He spoke to me on several occasions, calling me Shaykh 'Alí, the name He Himself had given me, after my uncle who was the first member of the family to join the Faith. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to me, I would look into His eyes—blue, smiling and full of love.

Again He left us, this time for America. I will never forget the scene of His departure as He came out of the house and turned to wave His last farewell to His disconsolate family gazing down from the veranda above. They were greatly concerned about His safety and well-being. He was sixty-eight years old. He had suffered many hardships and endured severe trials. He had been in prison for forty years of His life and now He was undertaking this journey to a far-off country utterly different from any to which He was accustomed. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá had made up His mind and nothing could turn Him back. He walked out of the garden gate and never looked back again. He walked for several blocks near the shore to take the electric train to Alexandria where He would board the ship that was to take Him to New York. He was followed by about thirty believers who walked silently behind Him. I was one of them. What 'Abdu'l-Bahá accomplished in America is now history. He went to Europe and came back to Ramleh on 3 July 1913, to remain until the following December. Then He left for Haifa, never to return.

That was the first chapter of my experience with 'Abdu'l-Bahá when I was a child between the ages of eleven and fourteen. In 1914 my family moved to Beirut, Lebanon, only a short distance north of Haifa. This opened the second chapter when I was privileged to be in the presence of the Master again, but only on special occasions. I was at that time a student at the American University of Beirut, then known as the Syrian Protestant College. In the summer of 1917 I spent my summer vacation with my uncle, Mírzá Ḥusayn Yazdí, in his house on Mt. Carmel, a memorable two months for me. Every evening before sunset I had the bounty of being in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I would join the other believers gathered in front of the Master's house. The entrance had an iron gate and then a garden. He would come out with a cheerful and warm greeting, welcome all, and take His seat on the platform at the head of the wide stairs. The sun was going down, and it was very quiet. Sometimes He sat in a relaxed attitude and didn't speak at all. Usually, however, He spoke. He talked in His commanding voice, looking straight ahead, as if He were addressing posterity. He talked about Bahá'u'lláh, about His Teachings, and about significant

events in the history of the Faith. He told stories sprinkled with humor. Often, however, He talked of the believers around the world and of their progress in spreading the Faith. Then He would become wistful. For three years, while World War I raged, He had little news from abroad. The isolation and constraint weighed heavily upon Him. Now and then He would address individuals in the audience, ask them about their families, their work, their problems; He would offer advice and help. Toward the end, He would ask one of the believers to chant verses from the poems of Bahá'u'lláh. When the chanting ended, the meeting was over. 'Abdu'l-Bahá would arise and enter the house. Dusk would have descended over Haifa.

There were frequent visits to the Shrine of the Báb. 'Abdu'l-Bahá would ride the old horse-drawn, bus-like vehicle up the mountain. The rest of us would walk along the rocky road, past the Pilgrim House, to the terrace overlooking the city of Haifa, the blue bay beyond and, in the distance, the hazy outline of 'Akká. We would gather there until 'Abdu'l-Bahá appeared and entered the Shrine. He would chant the Tablet of Visitation. Sometimes He asked Shoghi Effendi to chant this prayer. And when it was all over and the believers began to leave the Shrine, He would stand at the door with a bottle of rose water and put a little in each one's hand. There were also trips—less frequent—to 'Akká and Bahjí, and visits to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. There were also times that summer when 'Abdu'l-Bahá went in the horse-drawn carriage to Tiberias, Lake Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee, of Biblical renown. His purpose on these trips was to oversee the grain crops which the believers, under His supervision, had planted in the Jordan Valley. The grain the Master had stored in ancient Roman pits was to be distributed to everyone who needed it, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í alike. On 27 April 1920, in the garden of the Military Governor of Haifa, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was invested with the insignia of the Knighthood of the British Empire in recognition of His humanitarian work during the war for the relief of distress and famine.

I would sometimes go into 'Abdu'l-Bahá's garden and talk with Ismá'il Áqá, the gardener, an old man beloved by the Master. On one of my visits to the Master's garden I noticed that everyone was quiet. When I asked why, I was told that a commission of inquiry was interrogating 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His room. I could hear 'Abdu'l-Bahá's clear, commanding voice through the open window above our heads. He spoke to the members of the commission with dignity and authority as if *He* were the investigator and they the suspected culprits. Although He was humble in many ways, 'Abdu'l-Bahá never really bowed to anyone; at the right time, and in the right way, He was proud. He would not compromise the Cause of God. Somehow, the confidence with which the Master spoke gave me confidence and faith that He would be spared. Those were dangerous and difficult days. The violators were active and Jamál Páshá had vowed that he would crucify 'Abdu'l-Bahá when he returned victorious from his campaigns. When he did return, however, he was fleeing in defeat and humiliation. Despite the turbulence of this period the Master conferred upon the Bahá'ís of the west their world mission by revealing the Tablets of the Divine Plan, eight in 1916 and six in 1917.

I remember other little details from the summer of 1917, such as eating at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's table. He ate very simply, but He insisted on others having the proper amount of food. Quite often He would come behind the guests and speak to them. I remember His standing behind my chair saying, 'Why aren't you eating?' I was hungry, but my shyness prevented my eating. 'Why aren't you eating, Shaykh 'Alí?' And He placed a generous portion of rice on my plate. I had to eat it! One day, when I was walking along a curved street up the hill toward the House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, I turned the corner and there He was! I saw the Master walking down the hill, followed by two of the believers. As was the custom, I stepped to one side and bowed. The Master stopped and walked over to me, stopped right in front of me, and looked me straight in the eyes. I shall never forget having seen 'Abdu'l-Bahá face to face.

What was He like? His bearing was majestic, and yet He was genial. He was full of contrasts: dominant, yet humble; strong, yet tender; loving and affectionate, yet He could be very stern. He was intensely human, most keenly alive to the joys and sorrows of this

life. There was no one who felt more acutely than He did the sufferings of humanity.

At the end of the summer I went to see my family in Damascus before going back to college to graduate. Then I returned home. The war seemed to drag on and on, but finally the end came. Our great concern was Haifa: what had happened there? But soon the news arrived: General Allenby and the British had occupied Haifa and the Master was safe. As the doors to the outside world opened again we began to make plans. There was much thinking and counting of pennies. I had studied civil engineering and had been hired as a draftsman by the government. From my earnings I had saved a little, but it wasn't enough to enable me to go on with my graduate studies. News of this reached 'Abdu'l-Bahá through my uncle, Mírzá Ḥusayn, and the Master offered me one hundred pounds which, in those days, was the equivalent of about $500.00. That made it possible for me to go. I wasted no time. In the autumn of 1919 I went to Haifa in order to say farewell to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I was on my way to Europe—Switzerland and then Germany—for my graduate studies. I was twenty years old. This was to be my last experience with 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

I was in Haifa for two or three days. Just before I left 'Abdu'l-Bahá called me to His room. I was there alone with Him; the only other person was Shoghi Effendi, who was in and out. The Master invited me to be seated and He asked Shoghi Effendi to bring me some tea. He spoke to me, gave me instructions on how to live, mentioned that He had hopes for me. He said, 'You are a good boy, Shaykh 'Alí.' The tea that Shoghi Effendi brought in a glass was boiling hot. I tried to drink it, but couldn't. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'Drink! Drink your tea!' So I had to drink it! It didn't matter! At the very end He gave me His blessing. Then He stood up and beckoned me to Him. I went to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and He put His arms around me and kissed me on both cheeks. I never saw Him again.

Two years later, when I was at the University of California studying civil engineering, I learned of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ascension. Looking back, I can see that the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá marked the end of an era. He was passionately devoted to the single goal of spreading the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. It was His mission to establish the brotherhood of man on earth in fact, as well as in principle. Nothing stopped Him; nothing deflected Him from His purpose. And yet it was not easy, for despite His high station, He was also intensely human, and He suffered a great deal. He was often *very* happy, and He always asked the Bahá'ís to be happy. *Be happy! Be happy!* That was His counsel to the believers, and He set the example. But there were times when I would see Him with the burdens of the whole world upon His shoulders.

There is something I learned from 'Abdu'l-Bahá which I feel should not be forgotten. His life was not really His life alone; it was the life of every one of us. It was an example for every one of us. A new generation of Bahá'ís is being attracted to the Faith, and a new generation is growing up within the Bahá'í community. They will acquire knowledge of the Faith from books. But this is a living Faith. The Manifestation of God has appeared and initiated a new era. Bahá'ís have lived and worked and died for this Cause. The Faith is not something extraneous; it is not merely something beautiful, logical, just and fair—it is the very blood and fiber of our being, our very life. If men and women all over the world were to arise in ever-increasing numbers and make 'Abdu'l-Bahá's way of life their own, each pursuing His path with zest and confidence, what would the world be like? Would not these individuals be a new race of men?

2. LIFE AS METAPHOR[1]

JOHN S. HATCHER

IN contrast to most institutionalized religious thought, the Bahá'í Faith teaches that spiritual reality is logical and that man should examine that reality with the same rational faculties and rigorous standards which he uses in probing the phenomenal world. In support of this approach, the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá provide clear, forthright, and logically based responses to virtually every major philosophical and theological question.

There is one question, however, that rarely gets asked, not because the answer is unavailable in the Bahá'í Writings, but because most people probably do not think to ask it. The question concerns the moral rationale for physical reality—why it exists and how it functions in relation to spiritual goals. Sometimes the matter is dealt with on a superficial level: since God fashioned the physical world and since He has intended that we should evolve spiritually, then phenomenal reality must be a benevolent creation which somehow facilitates our development. Such a response may be initially comforting, but it does not penetrate to the heart of the matter where the question is conceived in the first place: it hardly resolves the myriad philosophical and pragmatic dilemmas which confront us daily in our desire to cope intelligently with a world that often seems to make little sense.

To some, even the Bahá'í writings may appear enigmatic regarding this matter. On the one hand, Bahá'u'lláh admonishes us to be detached from the physical world: *Abandon not the everlasting beauty for a beauty that must die, and set not your affections on this mortal world of dust.*[2] On the other hand, He commands us to pay close attention to our physical actions, to have a vocation, to be whole-heartedly involved in the phenomenal world: *The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds.*[3]

Since there are no explicit contradictions in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh regarding this subject and since Bahá'u'lláh has provided us with the necessary laws and institutions to direct the temporal affairs of men, this question may seem superfluous. Quite possibly this is why the question is rarely verbalized. The result of the unasked question remaining unanswered is that many accept a vision of themselves as precariously tottering between two worlds and most approach things physical with confusion or at least some vague but haunting sense of guilt or anxiety.

Bahá'u'lláh does give us clear permission to partake of the material bounties of the world: *Should a man wish to adorn himself with the ornaments of the earth, to wear its apparels, or partake of the benefits it can bestow, no harm can befall him, if he alloweth nothing whatever to intervene between him and God . . .*[4] We still find ourselves trying to live simultaneously in two disparate worlds, one of which, we are told, has the power to impede our spiritual progress. We still sense within us two natures, one spiritual and transcendent, the other appetitive and mundane, and more often than not, the fulfillment of one seems to deny fulfillment of the other.

I

Historically there have emerged three general perceptions of man's proper relationship to physical reality. The first of these attitudes is that man is essentially spiritual in nature and that to attain his highest destiny, man must reject the physical world and the appetites, passions and other debasing kinds of involvement in that reality. Such a view implies that since man is essentially spiritual,

[1] Adapted by the author from his 'The Metaphorical Nature of Physical Reality', published in *Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, November 1977 (copyright © 1977, Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith, and reprinted by permission). The original article also appeared with the author's revisions in *World Order*, vol. 11, no. 4, Summer 1977 (copyright © 1977, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States).

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, rev. ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1954), p. 26.

[3] ibid., p. 51.

[4] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956), p. 28.

he should avoid any activity which detracts from his spiritual concerns. Clearly the purest expression of such a view would be the various forms of asceticism. Antithetical to this view is the notion that man is essentially an animal who is happiest when he devotes himself to the physical world and the bounties it can offer and discards the vain and frustrating attempts to become something more transcendent. Such a perception may be reflected in a range of philosophical stances, from hedonism to humanism, but however it is expressed, the essentially existential tenor of this attitude reflects an emphasis on the physical man and the present tense. Between these extremes are the various attempts to live successfully while participating in both worlds. In general, such views attempt either to find a middle path wherein physical action is governed by spiritual guidelines or to discover an integration of the two realities wherein the physical world is perceived as a Platonic analogue to or reflection of spiritual reality.

To one who peruses cursorily the Bahá'í Teachings, it might appear that the Bahá'í point of view could affiliate with any one of the three categories I have described. The emphasis on practical solutions to world problems, such as world government, world economic systems, and universal education, might seem to imply that the Bahá'í Faith is existentially oriented, particularly with regard to the emphasis in the Bahá'í Writings on deeds:

> *The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds; he whose words exceed his deeds, know verily his death is better than his life.*[1]

Other passages from the Writings, taken by themselves, would seem to indicate a complete disregard for the physical world and a suppression of all material concerns:

> *Blind thine eyes, that thou mayest behold My beauty; stop thine ears, that thou mayest hearken unto the sweet melody of My voice; empty thyself of all learning, that thou mayest partake of My knowledge; and sanctify thyself from riches, that thou mayest obtain a lasting share from the ocean of My eternal wealth.*[2]

Taken as a whole, the Teachings of the Faith might seem to imply a careful balance, a sort of Aristotelian mean between the extremes of attachment to the physical world and asceticism. A closer examination of the Bahá'í Writings, however, reveals a perception of physical and spiritual reality as one integral, harmoniously functioning construct. From this point of view, physical reality is not an arbitrary creation, nor is it something with which we should be only incidentally concerned as we devote ourselves to another realm. What the Bahá'í Writings do provide are specific and logical responses to questions about the spiritual significance of the physical world.

Throughout the Bahá'í Writings, Bahá'u'lláh states that the physical world has the capacity to reflect or manifest spiritual qualities. This capacity is not confined to mankind, however, but is valid as well for all phenomenal objects and relationships among those objects:

> *Know thou that every created thing is a sign of the revelation of God. Each, according to its capacity, is, and will ever remain, a token of the Almighty. Inasmuch as He, the sovereign Lord of all, hath willed to reveal His sovereignty in the kingdom of names and attributes, each and every created thing hath, through the act of the Divine Will, been made a sign of His glory. So pervasive and general is this revelation that nothing whatsoever in the whole universe can be discovered that doth not reflect His splendor.*[3]

Furthermore, He asserts that this capacity is the essential reality of the phenomenal world and that without it, phenomenal reality would cease to exist:

> *Were the Hand of Divine power to divest of this high endowment all created things, the entire universe would become desolate and void.*[4]

In another passage, Bahá'u'lláh states that man can perceive this relationship, i.e. the

[1] Bahá'u'lláh in *Bahá'í World Faith: Selected Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, rev. ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956), p. 141.

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, p. 25.

[3] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, rev. ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1952), p. 184.

[4] ibid., p. 184.

way in which phenomenal objects mirror forth spiritual attributes:

> . . . *each and every created thing hath, according to a fixed decree, been endowed with the capacity to exercise a particular influence, and been made to possess a distinct virtue.*
>
> *He is really a believer in the Unity of God who recognizeth in each and every created thing the sign of the revelation of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, and not he who maintaineth that the creature is indistinguishable from the Creator.*[1]

In still other passages, Bahá'u'lláh explains that the capacity of the physical world to reflect the divine attributes and the capacity of man to recognize this correlation are not coincidental; it is the explicit function of the physical world to educate man:

> *Out of the wastes of nothingness, with the clay of My command I made thee to appear, and have ordained for thy training every atom in existence and the essence of all created things.*[2]

Metaphorically, the Writings depict physical reality as a classroom replete with teaching devices, the physical objects themselves. The Bahá'í Writings also make clear that the student is not left to his own intuition to utilize this educational environment. He is provided with teachers, the Manifestations, who explain the objectives of that education and the means by which they can be achieved. In short, the Manifestation relates the physical experience to spiritual growth, though like the wise teacher He is, He forces the student to participate in discerning these correlations.

The complexity of the Manifestation's task is partly evident in the fact that He must work on two levels in order to make us understand the nature of where we aspire to be, a spiritual realm, and of where we are, the physical world. Consequently, the Manifestation has two corresponding aspects of His identity. As He reiterates the eternal, changeless attributes of the spiritual world, He is a Revelator, an Unveiler of divine reality and moral law. In this context, religious law transcends the usual connotation of the imposition of order on disorder. Properly understood, moral or spiritual law assumes the same objective authority as scientific law: just as scientific law describes relationships among phenomenal entities, so spiritual and moral law describe the relationships among spiritual entities. In this sense, moral law is not an arbitrary prescription; it is objective description. So it is that we ascribe to Newton the virtue of having discovered and formulated the law of mutual attraction of masses, not of having contrived or invented this property of matter. Similarly, the Manifestation does not create divine reality or the laws governing that reality: He reveals them to us and promulgates compliance with them. Likewise, just as advances in scientific understanding render more and more complete our descriptions of the phenomenal world, so the progression of revelation by the Manifestations renders our understanding of the spiritual reality and its laws more and more accurate and complete.

But the Manifestation is not only a describer or revealer. He actively affects the degree to which the physical world reflects the spiritual world. In this capacity, He becomes more than an instructor who helps us to understand and utilize our physical classroom; He becomes a creative force which puts in motion the energies and laws that will cause that spiritual reality to be actuated in the phenomenal world.

For example, when Bahá'u'lláh instituted the concept of the equality of men and women, He was both revealing a spiritual verity which has always existed, and pronouncing to what extent the physical world is ready to manifest that reality. Likewise, when Bahá'u'lláh speaks of the unity of science and religion, He is revealing an objective reality, a universal law, that these two bodies of learning are probing the same organic construct and therefore are not in conflict. At the same time, Bahá'u'lláh is admonishing the human institutions which embody these areas of human investigation to become aware of this verity and to implement it in their own actions so that man may live more successfully.

From the Bahá'í perspective, then, there is no conflict between the physical world and the spiritual world, nor should there be a problem with man's participation in either. That is, in theory if one follows the guidelines which the

[1] ibid., p. 189.
[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, p. 32.

Manifestation provides, the study of and participation in one world will enhance and facilitate one's perception of and capable utilization of the other. Furthermore, the Bahá'í point of view renders invalid the traditional distinction between the methods used to probe these two facets of our experience. Instead of perceiving religious belief as being beyond and impervious to rational investigation, the Bahá'í Writings state that the same standards which are valid for examining scientific belief are equally appropriate to religious conviction:

> *God has endowed man with intelligence and reason whereby he is required to determine the verity of questions and propositions. If religious beliefs and opinions are found contrary to the standards of science they are mere superstitions and imaginations; for the antithesis of knowledge is ignorance, and the child of ignorance is superstition. Unquestionably there must be agreement between true religion and science. If a question be found contrary to reason, faith and belief in it are impossible and there is no outcome but wavering and vacillation.*[1]

II

Bahá'u'lláh's statements about the educational value of phenomenal reality portray the essential unity of the physical and spiritual realms, but in order to understand how spiritual education takes place on the individual level, we must first understand the metaphorical relationship between the two aspects of reality.

First of all, metaphor is one of several kinds of analogical devices, all of which function more or less the same—they compare two essentially dissimilar things. The objects compared may be people, situations, relationships, abstractions, or any sort of material thing, but always there is an implicit or explicit statement of similarity between these essentially different subjects. Secondly, whether the analogical device is metaphor, simile, allegory, conceit, symbol, or some other type of figure, it will contain three basic parts: the *tenor*, that which is being described; the *vehicle*, that which is compared to the tenor; and the *meaning*, that area of similarity between the tenor and vehicle.

The term *metaphor* is often used to designate this process in general, though strictly speaking, the metaphor is a relatively short, implicit analogical device. Sometimes the term *figure* or the term *image* is also used in this general sense, *figure* denoting *figure of speech* or *rhetorical device*, and *image* designating *figurative image*. But whatever term one uses, and regardless of whether the device is a one-word metaphor or an elaborate parable, a particularly interesting process must occur if the device is to work effectively. The reader or listener must be made to think, to be a bit creative, because he must complete the final and most important part of the process himself. He is responsible for determining in what way the tenor and vehicle are similar.

Take the simple metaphor 'Jane is a lovely flower'. The analogical equation is established because the tenor 'Jane' is essentially different from the vehicle 'flower'. (Had we compared Jane to Mary, the tenor and the vehicle would be essentially the same, both being women, and no analogy would occur.) The reader or listener must now finish the process by deciding what the tenor and vehicle have in common. If the metaphor is completely obvious or trite, then the mind may go from the tenor to the meaning without the least examination of the vehicle. So everyday similes such as 'cold as ice' or 'hard as a rock' require no mental examination of the vehicle because no resistance is offered and the process is short circuited. Description has occurred, but the device has not caused the reader to participate significantly.

The value or function of the analogical process is immense. On the obvious level, it is a useful way to explain the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, the abstract in terms of the concrete. In addition, it has the capacity to compress a great deal of meaning into a few words, and because it offers a variety of meanings, it can be an expansive description rather than a limiting or restrictive one. But probably the most important feature of the analogical process is its ability to educate. That is, when one is forced to examine the vehicle in order to understand the tenor, he is exercising one of his most important capacities as a human being:

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 240.

> Metaphor is a process of comparing and identifying one thing with another. Then, as we see what things have in common, we see the general meaning they have. Now the ability to see the relationship between one thing and another is almost a definition of intelligence. Thinking in metaphors . . . is a tool of intelligence. Perhaps it is the most important tool.[1]

In addition to exercising this faculty of discernment, one is also extracting the meaning for himself instead of having meaning imposed on him. Thus, the analogical process is indirect and objective in that the teacher is one step removed from the teaching device. In effect, if one is to obtain meaning, he must exercise his volition and examine the two ingredients. When he gets the meaning on his own, he will not feel that he has been told what to think, though he may be grateful to the one who was creative enough to conceive the equation.

One can hardly discuss the use of the analogical process with regard to religion without mentioning at least one more important asset of this device: it is a safeguard against dogmatism. For example, when Christ states that He is the 'Bread of Life',[2] He means something positive by it; that He is valuable, a source of sustenance, of spiritual nutrition, and a variety of other things. But there is no one 'correct' translation of the equation. To view the metaphor as having one meaning is to miss the analogical equation, mistake the vehicle for the tenor, and to end up believing that Christ was actually a piece of bread.

But perhaps the clearest sign of the importance of this process in human development is that without this ability we would not be able to ascend for even a moment from the physical world, because abstract thought is impossible without the use of metaphor. Therefore in order to discuss or understand or perceive spiritual qualities, we must first relate them to a concrete form:

> . . . *human knowledge is of two kinds. One is the knowledge of things perceptible to the senses . . . The other kind of human knowledge is intellectual—that is to say, it is a reality of the intellect, it has no outward form and no place, and is not perceptible to the senses . . . Therefore to explain the reality of the spirit, its condition, its station, one is obliged to give explanations under the forms of sensible things, because in the external world all that exists is sensible.*[3]

'Abdu'l-Bahá goes on to give examples of this mechanism of human intellect as it enables us to communicate the knowledge of abstract thought:

> *For example, grief and happiness are intellectual things; when you wish to express those spiritual qualities you say: 'My heart is oppressed; my heart is enlarged'; though the heart of man is neither oppressed nor enlarged. This is an intellectual or spiritual state, to explain which you are obliged to have recourse to sensible figures. Another example: you say, 'such an individual made great progress,' though he is remaining in the same place; or again, 'such an one's position was exalted,' although like every one else, he walks upon the earth. This exaltation and this progress are spiritual states and intellectual realities; but to explain them you are obliged to have recourse to sensible figures, because in the exterior world there is nothing that is not sensible. So the symbol of knowledge is light, and of ignorance, darkness; but reflect, is knowledge sensible light, or ignorance sensible darkness? No, they are merely symbols.*[4]

Hand in hand with the faculty for inductive logic, the analogical sensibility enables the child to pass beyond the Pavlovian or Skinnerian reflex and to conceptualize himself and the world around him. Wittingly and unwittingly, a child collects the data from his daily experience, perceives the similarity among these experiences, and induces an abstract belief about those experiences. For example, the child is punished or corrected for various actions, essentially different actions, and he perceives the similar ingredients of rules, authority, obedience. He then induces the generalizations about those concepts—that there are rules which require his obedience to authority, or, if there is no consistency to the

[1] Louis Simpson, *An Introduction to Poetry* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967), p. 6.

[2] *John* 6:35; Citations from the Bible in my text are to *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1953).

[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, trans. and ed. Laura Clifford Barney, rev. ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1964), p. 95.

[4] ibid., pp. 96–97.

rules of their application, that authority is capricious, unjust, frightening.

From such initial stages of abstract thought, the child can progress without limit to larger, more expansive and encompassing abstractions, since the concept will always be in a relative state of being perceived. For example, once having perceived authority as it is dramatized in the familial relationship, the child may inductively collect and store other dramatizations of this abstraction, perhaps in a teacher, or in a public official. As he continues to expand the data he collects, he may perceive authority elsewhere; a belief in truth, honesty, or kindness, for example, may represent authority to some people more powerfully than any human figure of authority.

The point is that there is no final or complete perception of the abstraction; it can always be more acutely perceived or more exquisitely dramatized in the phenomenal world. Of course, the idea of limitless growth is not confined to the individual. Society itself can manifest a collective awareness of authority, justice, honesty, and as its awareness of these attributes expands, society is capable of implementing that understanding more completely in social action.

Viewed in this context, the metaphorical process is an educational tool which can help provide unlimited development, even if one has no precise moral code or established theological belief. However, within the context of the Bahá'í perception of man's nature and destiny, this process assumes a much greater significance—not only does this endeavor bring immediate fulfillment and happiness by utilizing the physical metaphor as it was created to be used; it also results in the gradual improvement of the soul itself as, incrementally, particular attributes are habituated and assimilated.

III

The improvement of the soul by dramatizing spiritual attributes is hardly a new notion. The allegorical fable has long been recognized as an effective device for teaching children. Likewise in the medieval era, the Christian church used allegorical theater (morality plays) to teach an unlearned and predominately illiterate populace the essential doctrine of their Faith. In fact, virtually all drama, including classical tragedy, ultimately derives from this same impetus and origin. Common among all these forms was the attempt to give tropological expression to metaphysical concepts—to express spirituality in concrete form.

This is not to imply that all such devices can be distilled into one common process, but all do share essentially the same ingredients or steps. First, one must understand the nature of the attribute by observing how this quality might be made manifest in physical action. Secondly, one must decide to acquire this attribute by determining to carry out this action. Third, one must fulfill his noble intentions, not once, but consistently, repeatedly until the response is habitual, instinctive. When a particular dramatization of the attribute has been habituated, we can assume that the soul has, to some degree, assimilated that quality. It is then possible for one to perceive that same attribute on a higher level and to implement this understanding with a repetition of the same sequence of responses. In this manner, the human soul can continue to progress, whether in this world or the next, without ever reaching a final stage of perfection because, according to the Bahá'í Writings, the human soul has the capacity for infinite growth:

> *When man reaches the noblest state in the world of humanity, then he can make further progress in the conditions of perfection, but not in state; for such states are limited, but the divine perfections are endless.*
>
> *Both before and after putting off this material form, there is progress in perfection, but not in state. So beings are consummated in perfect man. There is no other being higher than a perfect man. But when he has reached this state he can still make progress in perfections but not in state, because there is no state higher than that of a perfect man to which he can transfer himself.*[1]

The physical metaphor, then, functions on this plane as an integral and inextricable part of man's efforts to fulfill his primary goal, spiritual development. It provides the means by which he perceives spiritual qualities in the

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 274.

first place, and it is the means by which he may express and acquire that attribute once it is understood. Even as the process of spiritual growth attains higher levels of response, man never completely relinquishes on this plane this reciprocal relationship between the conception of spirituality and the implementation through metaphorical act.

Take the example of cleanliness. A child may first understand this abstraction in terms of seeing the similarity among diverse acts of cleanliness he is required to perform—cleaning his room, washing his body, putting his toys in order. In the beginning, these acts are received as separate commands: each requires understanding, volition, and action, until it becomes habituated. At some point, the child may perceive the analogical relationship that unites these acts, and instead of having to learn so many specific regulations, he will be able to reverse the process—to apply his understanding of the quality of cleanliness to other ostensibly unrelated situations and to habituate more and more specific manifestations of this quality. As each level of understanding is implemented through habit and discipline, the child is liberated and enabled to apply his volitional energies to ever more sophisticated levels of understanding—cleanliness of thought, purity of motive, chastity of conduct.

Even such a brief treatment of how this process works makes apparent several important factors related to spiritual growth through physical action. First, it is almost inevitably true that spiritual growth is gradual, painstaking, difficult. There are, no doubt, moments of great insight, visions of great change, and possibly days and weeks of rapid advancement. But the enduring and effective change of the human soul is attained slowly, meticulously, wittingly. Secondly, it becomes clear that habit and discipline instead of being restrictive or limiting, are, when applied positively to the formation of attributes, agents of liberation and advancement. Without some capacity for self-discipline, one cannot become released from one level of response in order to ascend to the next level. Consequently, the early training of a child in the formation of good habits and the use of discipline is, when properly taught, a key to freedom and not a stifling of the creative spirit. Once accustomed to the rewards of applied habit and discipline, one will be less likely to be overwhelmed by a third factor in this process, the negative feedback that is incurred when one struggles against the natural inertia and resistance to growth. That is, if we are looking for spiritual growth without discomfort, we will fare about as well as a marathon runner trying to become conditioned without the willingness to endure days of strain and breathlessness.

If we are not accustomed to persisting in spite of anxiety and discomfort, if we have not experienced analogous efforts where we have persisted and have been rewarded by positive results, then the abstract understanding of the value of our efforts may not be enough impetus to ensure success. This verity explains the problem with seeking a religion which feels good, the assumption being that the seeker is where he should be, already perfected, and any belief which feels uncomfortable by implying he should struggle to change is clearly erroneous.

IV

If the metaphorical process is the best device by which spiritual growth is initiated in the physical world, then it would seem logical that this process would be evident in the methods of the Manifestations, since they are perfect teachers sent to direct our spiritual development. And what we find when we examine the teaching techniques of the Manifestations is that the metaphorical devices constitute the core of Their methodology as reflected in Their actions, language, and laws.

First of all, the actions, even the identity of the Manifestation involve the metaphorical process. Besides being an Emissary, the Manifestation is also an Exemplar, a perfect reflection of the attributes of God. This capacity relates directly to man's twofold purpose in life: *The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and to attain His Presence.*[1] Since the Bahá'í Writings depict God as essentially Unknowable, then the most effective means of knowing God is through the Manifestation who portrays that Essence to us.

[1] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 70.

It is clear, however, that attaining the Presence of God does not imply physical proximity,[1] but changing the spiritual condition of our souls so that we are ever more completely acquiring the spiritual attributes of God thereby becoming more like Him. As we have already seen, however, acquisition cannot take place without understanding. What a study of the Writings quickly reveals, in other words, is that knowing God and attaining His Presence are aspects of one process. As Bahá'u'lláh points out in His initial statement in the *Aqdas*, one cannot sever the recognition of the Manifestation from obedience to His laws: *These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is acceptable without the other.*[2]

Recognition of the Manifestation, then, is a necessary prerequisite for spiritual advancement; it is not sufficient to follow some pattern of behavior. And recognition of the Manifestation implies more than perceiving the validity of His description of the universe and the pragmatic value of His ordinances; it involves perceiving the way in which the Manifestation metaphorizes or dramatizes God to us. In this way, the Manifestation is clearly distinct from every other spiritual teacher, no matter how astute their teachings or wise their laws. To know God is to know the Manifestation first, and to know the Manifestation is to understand the way in which He manifests the qualities of God.

In responding to Philip's request to see the Father, Christ states:

> 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, "Show us the Father"?'[3]

Of course, it is important not to confuse the tenor with the vehicle, not to take the metaphor at its literal value, but to extract the meaning by discerning the similarity between the two components, between the vehicle (Christ) and the tenor (God). Clearly the similarity between these essentially different entities is not physical, since the Manifestation is not necessarily physically impressive and since God is not a physical being. The similarity is not in physical power, since none of the Manifestations aspires to earthly ascendancy. Clearly the commonly held qualities are spiritual powers and capacities. To confuse the literal or physical nature of the vehicle, the person or personality of the Manifestation, with the tenor it represents, the nature of God, is to do more than misuse an analogy. To miss the metaphorical nature of the relationship between the Manifestation and God is to utterly misunderstand the nature of the Manifestation, to fail to understand God Himself, and to confuse the whole educative process by which the Manifestation is attempting to instruct us.

It is no doubt because of this confusion that the Manifestations expend such energy in trying to make this analogical relationship quite clear. For example, even though Christ states that no one can understand God except by first understanding Christ, He makes it clear that He is essentially different from God: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.'[4] Furthermore, throughout His teaching, He explains that He is not the authority behind the Revelation, but a reflection of the Deity Who is:

> 'He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me.'[5]
>
> 'For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak.'[6]
>
> 'The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.'[7]

Similarly, Bahá'u'lláh clearly explains the relationship of the Manifestation to God, and repeatedly enunciates this same theme—that He is a tool which God uses to educate men:

> *This thing is not from Me, but from One Who is Almighty and All-Knowing. And He bade Me lift up My voice between earth and heaven . . .*[8]
>
> *This is but a leaf which the winds of the will of Thy Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised, have stirred . . .*[9]

[1] ibid., p. 184.
[2] Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in *A Synopsis and Codification of The Kitáb-i-Aqdas: The Most Holy Book of Bahá'u'lláh* [comp. The Universal House of Justice] (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1973), p. 11.
[3] *John* 14:9.
[4] *John* 15:1.
[5] *John* 12:44.
[6] *John* 12:49.
[7] *John* 14:10.
[8] Bahá'u'lláh quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944), p. 102.
[9] ibid.

By My Life! Not of Mine own volition have I revealed Myself, but God, of His own choosing, hath manifested Me.[1]

One example of the disastrous results of not recognizing the metaphorical process at work in the nature of the Manifestation is evident in the far-reaching effects of the vote taken at the Council of Nicea in 325. The followers of Athanasius had come to believe that the tenor and the vehicle were one—that Christ and God were the same essence. The followers of Arius believed that Christ was essentially inferior to God. Arius lost. The institution of the Church sanctioned the theology of Athanasius, condemned as heresy the views of Arius, and effectively severed itself from Christ's fundamental teaching for all time. As Muḥammad pointed out to the Christians, to equate Christ with God was to add Gods to God, in effect, to believe in more than one God, as the idolators did in Muḥammad's day:

> 'Infidels now are they who say, "God is the Messiah, Son of Mary;" for the Messiah said, "O children of Israel! worship God, my Lord and your Lord." Whoso shall join other gods with God, God shall forbid him the Garden, and his abode shall be the Fire; and the wicked shall have no helpers.'[2]

The use of metaphor is also the key to unlocking the meaning of the physical acts of the Manifestations. Since none of the Manifestations aspire to physical authority or dominion, then clearly any expression of physical power has little importance as a literal phenomenon. In healing the sick, Christ was not attempting to rid the nation of disease or demonstrate innovative medical technique. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, the miraculous acts of the Manifestations had as their primary and essential value the metaphorical or analogical dramatization of a spiritual action:

> *The outward miracles have no importance for the people of Reality. If a blind man receive sight, for example, he will finally again become sightless, for he will die, and be deprived of all his senses and powers. Therefore causing the blind man to see is comparatively of little importance, for this faculty of sight will at last disappear. If the body of a dead person be resuscitated, of what use is it since the body will die again? But it is important to give perception and eternal life, that is the spiritual and divine life . . .*
>
> *Whenever in the Holy Books they speak of raising the dead, the meaning is that the dead were blessed by eternal life; where it is said that the blind receive sight, the signification is that he obtained the true perception . . . This is ascertained from the text of the Gospel where Christ said: 'These are like those of whom Isaiah said, They have eyes and see not, they have ears and hear not; and I healed them.'*
>
> *The meaning is not that the Manifestations are unable to perform miracles, for they have all power. But for them the inner sight, spiritual healing, and eternal life are the valuable and important things.*[3]

It is with obvious wisdom, therefore, that Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá exhort the Bahá'ís not to place any emphasis on the miracles associated with Bahá'u'lláh. First of all, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá points out, the act is valuable only to those who witness the event, and even those may doubt what they have seen:

> *I do not wish to mention the miracles of Bahá'u'lláh, for it may be said that these are traditions, liable both to truth and to error . . . Though if I wished to mention the supernatural acts of Bahá'u'lláh, they are numerous; they are acknowledged in the Orient, and even by some strangers to the Cause . . . Yes miracles are proofs for the bystander only, and even he may regard them not as a miracle but as an enchantment.*[4]

In the second place, there is an obvious temptation on the part of the followers of a Manifestation to praise Him for these physical acts and perceive Him as a figure of temporal power instead of spiritual authority. In other words, it is too easy for the followers to become attached to the metaphorical vehicle, the Manifestation Himself or the literal act He performs, instead of perceiving the essential value of these metaphors, the similarity

[1] ibid., p. 102.
[2] Muḥammad, *The Koran*, trans. J. M. Rodwell (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1953), p. 494. Sura V: 'The Table', verse 76.
[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 116–117.
[4] ibid., p. 44.

between these Vehicles and what They metaphorize.

The incident of Christ's feeding the five thousand is a particularly instructive example of this problem. After He performed the miracle of feeding the masses with only five barley loaves and two fishes, the people believed He was a Prophet. When Christ perceived that they wanted to take Him by force and make Him king, He fled to the hills by Himself. His reason for this evasive action He explained to His disciples the next day when they found Him on the other side of the sea of Galilee:

> 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal.'[1]

When the people missed the essential meaning or inner significance of His act, and wanted to follow Him for the literal value of the physical action, He left them. The patience with which He afterwards tried to explain the analogical value of His actions is evident in the continuation of His explanation:

> 'Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Lord, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst." '[2]

If we think that Christ belabors this imagery, we are wrong; even when He repeats and extends this conceit, the Jews are not able to perceive the analogical process He is using:

> 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.'
>
> 'The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" '[3]

Having been raised in a legalistic religious tradition, the Jews had difficulty understanding teachings which were communicated through analogy, even though most of their own ritual was, in its original intention, metaphorical dramatization. In a very real sense, the actions and teaching methods of Christ were aimed at breaking through this literalistic tradition in order to teach His followers to think analogically, to sense the spirit behind the works. As one of His last actions among His disciples, for example, He continued the bread imagery at the Last Supper:

> 'Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." '[4]

In this case, a verbal metaphor was not sufficient; Christ has His own disciples act out the analogy.

The life of Bahá'u'lláh also contains many actions with obvious analogical meaning. The conference at Badasht is perhaps one of the most intriguing. The occasion was the need to 'implement the revelation of the Bayán by a sudden, a complete and dramatic break with the past—with its order, its ecclesiasticism, its traditions, and ceremonials.'[5] In order to act out this transition, Bahá'u'lláh rented three gardens, one for Himself, one for Quddús, a third for Ṭáhirih. According to a pre-arranged plan,[6] Quddús and Ṭáhirih publicly quarreled during the conference, Quddús advocating a conservative view that the followers of the Báb not disassociate themselves from the religion of Islám and Ṭáhirih urging a complete break with Islám:

> 'It was Bahá'u'lláh Who steadily, unerringly, yet unsuspectedly, steered the course of that memorable episode, and it was Bahá'u'lláh Who brought the meeting to its final and

[1] *John*, 6:25.
[2] *John* 6:31–35.
[3] *John* 6:51–52.
[4] *Matthew* 26:26–28.
[5] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 31.
[6] See *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabíl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahá'í Revelation*, trans. and ed. Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1962), p. 294, n. 1.

dramatic climax. One day in His presence, when illness had confined Him to bed, Ṭáhirih, regarded as the fair and spotless emblem of chastity and the incarnation of the Fáṭimih, appeared suddenly, adorned yet unveiled, before the assembled companions, seated herself on the right-hand of the affrighted and infuriated Quddús, and, tearing through her fiery words the veils guarding the sanctity of the ordinances of Islám, sounded the clarion-call, and proclaimed the inauguration of a new Dispensation.'[1]

This dramatic event no doubt had many figurative meanings, not the least of which was a transition from one 'garden', Islám, to a completely new 'garden', the Bábí Revelation. We may also find symbolism in the fact that Bahá'u'lláh occupied a third 'garden', possibly His Revelation:

Proclaim unto the children of assurance that within the realms of holiness, nigh unto the celestial paradise, a new garden hath appeared, round which circle the denizens of the realm on high and the immortal dwellers of the exalted paradise.[2]

Possibly the most obvious use of metaphor by the Manifestations is in the language They use. Whether it is the allegorical myths of the Old Testament, the parables of Christ, or the exquisite poetic imagery of Bahá'u'lláh's verses, the language of the Manifestations frequently relies on figures drawn from the phenomenal world in order to translate abstract concepts into terms that men can understand. To render a comparative analysis of the types of imagery used by the successive Manifestations would require volumes, but several general observations will help to demonstrate how essential metaphor is in the language of these Teachers.

As Bahá'u'lláh explains in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, the Manifestations do not always use language which is veiled, illusive, analogical; the way They speak depends on the exigencies of the situation:

It is evident unto thee that the Birds of Heaven and Doves of Eternity speak a twofold language. One language, the outward language, is devoid of allusions, is unconcealed and unveiled; that it may be a guiding lamp and a beaconing light whereby wayfarers may attain the heights of holiness, and seekers may advance into the realm of eternal reunion. Such are the unveiled traditions and the evident verses already mentioned. The other language is veiled and concealed, so that whatever lieth hidden in the heart of the malevolent may be made manifest and their innermost being be disclosed . . . In such utterances, the literal meaning, as generally understood by the people, is not what hath been intended.[3]

An illustration of Bahá'u'lláh's statement might be the distinction we would make between the language with which the Manifestation reveals His laws and the language with which He inspires and explains spiritual attributes.

Of course, there are no exact rules regarding when a Manifestation will speak metaphorically and when He will not. As we look at the Old Testament, for example, we can only guess how literally the followers of Abraham or Moses perceived the anthropomorphic descriptions of God and the physical evidences of His intervention in the lives of men. But two major uses of metaphorical language seem relatively consistent, at least with Christ and Bahá'u'lláh.

The first recurring use is to convey concepts of spirituality, for which purpose Christ used the parable. Like the other analogical devices, the parable forces the listener to participate, to decide the meaning. But being an extended analogy in the form of a story, the parable has the further advantage of working on various levels with multiple analogical equations, and of holding the listener's interest, since it is also a dramatic story. Thus while Christ was establishing an intimacy with the literal story by using characters and situations familiar to His audience (laborers in vineyards, sowers of seed, etc.), He was also teaching His followers to think abstractly, to escape the literalism of their past beliefs and to understand the spiritual or inner significance of His words. Instead of an elaborate canon of law, He left them with a treasury of memorable stories, though He left laws as well. Each of these stories could operate on a level of applicability

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 32.
[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, p. 27.
[3] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán: The Book of Certitude*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, 2nd ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1950), p. 255.

appropriate to anyone searching for understanding and enlightenment. Those who could not penetrate the literal story could not understand His teachings; those who had not already penetrated the literalism of their own Messianic prophesies probably did not recognize the authority of Christ in the first place:

> 'Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing, they do not hear, nor do they understand." '[1]

Christ later told His disciples that 'the hour is coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures but tell you plainly of the Father,'[2] and certainly Bahá'u'lláh fulfills this promise in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*. Without veiled language or indirection Bahá'u'lláh reveals a highly structured exposition on God's divine plan, describes the nature of the Manifestations, and clarifies the logical basis for the teaching methods of the Manifestations.

Bahá'u'lláh does use imagery when it is called for and He uses it with unsurpassable skill and magnificence. In His meditative Writings, in most of the prayers, in mystical treatises such as *The Seven Valleys and The Four Valleys* which rely heavily on metaphor and allegory, in the second half of the *Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* and in various other poetic and allusive tablets, Bahá'u'lláh has bequeathed to us a storehouse of metaphor and symbol which mankind will study for some time to come before scratching the surface of possible meanings. In fact, in describing those utterances in which *the literal meaning, as generally understood by the people, is not what hath been intended*,[3] Bahá'u'lláh states:

> *Thus it is recorded: 'Every knowledge hath seventy meanings, of which one only is known amongst the people. And when the Qá'im shall arise, He shall reveal unto men all that which remaineth.' He also saith: 'We speak one word, and by it we intend one and seventy meanings; each one of these meanings we can explain.'*[4]

But it is not only in the more abstruse tablets that Bahá'u'lláh uses imagery. Even in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, which is a relatively straightforward essay, or in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, which contains the laws of Bahá'u'lláh, there appears image upon image, sometimes only a word or a phrase, but often several lines in length. To give even the most cursory treatment of these images would be difficult in so short a space; to survey them would be impossible. One need only glimpse a few of the numerous images that appear in the opening passages of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* to understand the problem:

> *Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants, and the keys of My mercy for My creatures.*
>
> *Think not that we have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power.*
>
> *Whenever My laws appear like the sun in the heaven of Mine utterance, they must be faithfully obeyed by all, though My decree be such as to cause the heaven of every religion to be cleft asunder.*[5]

In these excerpts from some of Bahá'u'lláh's prefatory remarks about His laws, we see the laws compared to lamps, keys, choice wine, and the sun, and these are but a meager sampling of the quantity, the quality and complexity of imagery in the language of Bahá'u'lláh's less metaphorical Writing.

But besides using metaphor in the language of Their teachings, the Manifestations utilize metaphor in the language of prophecy. Many Christians are still trying to discover the figurative meaning of the metaphorical terms with which Christ describes His return, or the key to the symbols used in *Revelations*. Likewise, the scholars of Islám have devoted themselves to interpreting the veiled traditions regarding the Promised Qá'im, just as the Jews have looked for the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy.

[1] *Matthew* 13:10–13.
[2] *John* 16:25.
[3] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 255.
[4] ibid.
[5] Bahá'u'lláh, *A Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, pp. 11–12.

Perhaps because prophecy is such an important link from one Revelation to the next, Bahá'u'lláh devotes a good portion of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* to a study of the nature of prophecy. In fact, because it is replete with examples of how recurring metaphors are used and because it discusses the rationale behind the use of prophecy, the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* could almost be considered a textbook study on the subject. Specifically, Bahá'u'lláh discusses the use of metaphorical language as He explains vehicles such as 'suns', 'heaven', 'clouds', 'smoke', and 'angels'; but more interestingly, He discusses some of the reasons for this intentional obfuscation.

Clearly the failure to describe the exact time and place and personality of the next Manifestation is not due to a lack of knowledge on the part of God or His Messengers, but if people were to follow a name or physical aspect only, they would not actually understand what it was they sought. Some might turn to the Manifestation because they wished to achieve fame or use His power for their benefit. Those who already possessed authority and power might view a Manifestation as a threat to their esteem. But because the Manifestation is hidden, one must be spiritually aware in order to discover Him. If one understands authority and power in literal terms, if he looks for a physically impressive figure or someone who aspires to temporal power, he will not be able to discover the meaning of the figurative language of prophecy.

In order to be changed by the spiritual power which emanates from the Manifestation, one has to be spiritually receptive, in the same way that a television receiver can take the invisible signals which surround us and translate them into intelligible pictures. If one examines prophetic language, or confronts the Manifestation, and does not have spiritual receptivity, he may perceive some power, but he will not be able to translate its meaning. In this sense, prophetic language is essentially metaphorical so that we will be obliged to educate ourselves spiritually in order to benefit from God's Messengers.

In the laws of the Manifestation one can find another use of metaphor, though generally not in the language of the laws. For the most part, the Manifestations describe their laws and the actions of men through these laws in clear, straight-forward language, but the actions they require do have metaphorical value, or inner significance. That is, besides the pragmatic benefits which the laws may bestow, they also force us to act out dramatically in the physical world what we are trying to accomplish in the spiritual world.

This correlation may not be so apparent with the laws which are basically restrictive and prohibitive in nature, but it is there all the same. For example, the Jews may have thought the Mosaic dietary laws to be arbitrary, but they followed them anyway, and in doing so they practiced reverence for the authority of Moses and His beneficent intentions. Now that science has described how various diseases are contracted, we can understand the scientific basis for the Mosaic laws and perceive that these so-called restrictions were actually a source of liberation. In this sense, perceiving this divine logic and learning to follow the prescribed conduct which the Manifestations reveal is training ourselves to have faith in the ultimate liberation which this ostensible restriction imposes. It is then possible to apply this lesson to our compliance with spiritual laws; no longer are these exhortations viewed as incidental. Like their counterparts (the physical laws) they are pragmatic, logical, sources of liberation. The training we experience in complying with laws governing our physical action transfers into the realm of spiritual action, and the end result is that we understand dramatically and metaphorically the beneficence of God's laws:

> *Say: True liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His Will, that pervadeth all created things.*[1]

Understood in the light of this statement by Bahá'u'lláh, the laws of the Manifestation never prevent the full and complete utilization of the physical experience. On the contrary, even those laws which imply restriction ulti-

[1] ibid., p. 25.

mately encourage the most fulfilling use of the physical metaphor. Stated another way, the laws of the Manifestation enable one to experience the metaphorical value of the physical world, even when the follower is unaware that he is doing anything other than obeying divine authority.

The laws which provide creative use of physical experience are perhaps even more obviously re-enforcing the metaphorical value of the physical experience than are the laws of admonition and prohibition. In the first place, these laws change constantly from one Manifestation to the next so that they accurately describe the relative progress of man. As I have already attempted to show, this progress itself is essentially metaphorical in nature in that it is a literal societal construct which figuratively portrays a spiritual condition. When the law creates institutions, organizational structure, and codes of behavior which foster metaphorical advancement, it is an integral part of man's efforts to dramatize or act out spiritual progress. But besides this long-range benefit, the law has the immediate effect of creating for the individual at that moment in time an atmosphere or environment conducive to spiritual growth. The profound influence that physical environment can have on mental and spiritual outlook we are only beginning to understand, but the Manifestation has always understood this reality and has reflected as much in His laws. Thus, whether the law describes how people organize, carry out human relationships, care for their bodies, worship, or perform any other literal act, it is helping to effect spiritual development:

> *External cleanliness, although it is but a physical thing, hath a great influence upon spirituality. For example, although sound is but the vibrations of the air which affect the tympanum of the ear, and vibrations of the air are but an accident among the accidents which depend upon the air, consider how much marvelous notes or a charming song influence the spirits!*[1]

As the law gradually enhances man's ability to manifest spiritual concepts through dramatic, analogical physical action, it participates in the largest and most important metaphorical exercise on the planet, the establishment of a spiritual kingdom expressed in terms of a societal structure. Seen in this light, the entire Bahá'í administrative order, its institutions and procedures are dramatic physical expressions of this spiritual process.

Finally, many of the laws themselves are directly metaphorical exercises. When Christ wished to teach the abstract concept of love to His followers, He ordained a law that dramatizes this quality:

> 'You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you . . . For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even tax collectors do the same?'[2]

Likewise, while Bahá'u'lláh teaches us the abstract concepts of the spiritual equality of men and the unity of mankind, He also provides us through His creative laws the dramatic institutions which enable us to act out that spiritual reality with physical action. Properly understood and perceived, many of the laws of the Manifestations are similarly dramaturgical in nature, metaphorical devices by which we express with literal action what we wish to feel and understand on a spiritual level. Sometimes the understanding precedes the dramatization; sometimes the reverse is true. The point is that whether in studying the nature of the Manifestation Himself, His actions, His language, or His laws, we can observe the analogical tie between spiritual growth and physical action as each re-enforces the other in a pattern of continuous growth.

V

If we can assume, then, that we have ascertained the validity of physical reality as a metaphorical teaching device and the fundamental logic underlying its structure, we can proceed to the final consideration, the

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 334.

[2] *Matthew* 5:38–46.

necessity for such a process. For even if this process of spiritual development and enlightenment works quite capably, why could there not be a simpler, easier, less painful method of accomplishing the same task? Stated another way, if God is omnipotent and can create us in whatever way He wishes, why did He not create us already spiritualized, already in a state of understanding?

If the question seems presumptuous, especially in the light of having examined the divine bestowals of this creation, it is not; Bahá'u'lláh treats this question when He explains the following:

> *He Who is the Day Spring of Truth is, no doubt, fully capable of rescuing from such remoteness wayward souls and of causing them to draw nigh unto His court and attain His Presence. 'If God had pleased He had surely made all men one people.' His purpose, however, is to enable the pure in spirit and the detached in heart to ascend, by virtue of their own innate powers, unto the shores of the Most Great Ocean, that thereby they who seek the Beauty of the All-Glorious may be distinguished and separated from the wayward and the perverse.*[1]

In effect, to create already spiritualized creatures is to produce automatons incapable of appreciating what they have because they have not discovered it nor have they experienced anything else. Likewise, were the spiritual reality more apparent on this plane, man would have no sense of personal recognition and perception, since this reality would be obvious to all alike. By veiling spiritual reality in a physical garb, by removing the essential reality of things one step from the vision of men, God has enabled us to have every opportunity to come to this knowledge and also have the bounty of recognition together with an awareness of the contrast between illusion and reality. This change from darkness to light, from ignorance to understanding, can provide more than a few moments of elation and reward; it can provide us with the impetus to continue our ascent and the tools of discernment with which to achieve that objective.

But perhaps the most important justification for the necessity of physical reality is the nature of the next world. For example, were there only two levels of existence in the next world, a Heaven for those who succeed and a Hell for those who fail, or even if there were various sorts of Dantean circles within these categories, then possibly God could create us already spiritual, and we would not have lost much. In fact, in view of the literal pitfalls we might avoid, such a creation would be much preferred. But in the Bahá'í Writings we are told that there is no static existence in the next world, no relegation to an eternal abode within some fixed state of existence. Whether in this world or the next, we are constantly changing, it is to be hoped in a positive way, and the point of transition we call *death* does not end the process of spiritual development nor does it end our need to utilize the important and essential faculty of discernment with its accompanying tools of volition and action. There is no end point, no state in which we are finally and completely perfected:

> *Both before and after putting off this material form, there is progress in perfection, but not in state . . .*
>
> *Hence, as the perfections of humanity are endless, man can also make progress in perfections after leaving this world.*[2]

Even if we have not used well these necessary tools of spiritual growth, even if we have in this life neglected our essential nature, it may be possible to develop these faculties in the next world:

> *It is even possible that the condition of those who have died in sin and unbelief may become changed . . . Thus as souls in this world, through the help of the supplications, the entreaties, and the prayers of the holy ones, can acquire development, so is it the same after death. Through their own prayers and supplications they can also progress; more especially when they are the object of the intercession of the Holy Manifestations.*[3]

This distinction between the concept of the afterlife as depicted in the Bahá'í Writings and the traditional conceptions of other religions is a crucial one. Were man's destiny to attain one unchanging state of being, one explicit

[1] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 158.

[2] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 274.

[3] ibid., p. 269.

level of growth, then such development could conceivably be accomplished by the provision of an exacting canon of rules and guidelines. However, since we are as human souls, whether in this world or the next, always in a state of becoming, a set code of behavior would be impossible for several reasons. First of all, we must constantly aim higher. What was admirable, impressive, and progressive yesterday may be regressive today. Secondly, no two situations or people are exactly the same, and no guidelines, no matter how tediously drawn, could take into account all of these variables. Third, what is frequently required of us for our advancement is not a bold and courageous surpassing of our previous day's goals, but a finely chosen path of moderation or balance between two unhealthy extremes of response, such as the courage that lies between foolhardiness and cowardice, the joy between oppressive seriousness and insipid frivolity, or the wise guidance between unfeeling judiciality and permissive laxity.

In each of these cases what is clearly required is a faculty of discernment and judgment, not a blind adherence to dogma. Bahá'u'lláh admonishes us to evaluate our progress on a daily basis, and with each new assessment, we must decide what is progressive and yet not so far beyond our grasp that we will unwisely frustrate our determination to strive. Likewise, no handbook to personal conduct can take into account the exigencies of every situation, and perhaps this accounts for the fact that Bahá'u'lláh revealed relatively few specific laws regarding personal behavior. What He did create are decision-making institutions which have the capacity to consider the variables in a given situation, and He left an abundance of instructional Writings which can help to foster this same capacity in the individual.

Simply to follow a code of laws would require great effort and sacrifice, but to nurture the faculties of judgment, discernment, and understanding, in addition to adhering to basic laws, requires a completely different kind of effort. At the same time, it can yield a wholly different kind of reward, the recognition of Him Whose Presence we strive to attain, and this understanding, as we have already observed, is part of the avowed purpose of our creation.

It becomes clear, then, that our development is almost completely contingent on our utilization of this metaphorical process which has been provided for our advancement. What becomes equally clear is that to learn how to use this device, we must rely on our own volition and, at least in the initial stages of our growth, participate actively, enthusiastically, but wisely in the physical reality which contains these analogies.

No doubt there are a myriad justifications for the wisdom of the physical universe and its capacity to teach us, but one final requisite for the proper use of this instructional device should be mentioned. Our association with the metaphorical world must incorporate detachment, which is both a quality and a process. As a quality, the term *detachment* denotes the capacity to use the physical analogues without becoming infatuated with them. As a process, the term implies a gradual relinquishing of our reliance on the physical vehicle to accomplish spiritual development.

In other words, detachment requires that our reliance on the physical experience be purposely short-lived. Like the water that primes a pump, the physical lessons serve to initiate understanding and other essential spiritual tools. But as our growth progresses, we should relate less and less directly to the physical analogue in order to understand the abstraction and express our development. In the beginning we are like young lovers, attracted to the literal vehicle which has conveyed the abstract feelings and emotions. We find it difficult to disassociate the idea from the metaphorical vehicle just as the lovers cannot differentiate their love from the physical expression of that feeling. But as the lovers mature, they must relinquish their dependency on the bodies to convey this spiritual bond and must recognize the true source of their attraction to one another. So must we in our development become more and more aware of the reality that is expressing itself through the physical world, and thus become less and less needful of relating to that spiritual reality through the phenomenal metaphor.

For example, we are told in the Writings of all religions that one of the most dangerous distractions and detriments to our advance-

ment is the love of self, which is expressed metaphorically by attachment to the physical metaphor for self, our body. When we become overly concerned about our physical appearance, we may be forgetting that our ultimate reality is the soul which is temporarily expressing itself through that corporeal metaphor. When we love that vehicle for itself or see it as synonymous with the tenor, we are becoming attached to the metaphor and forgetting the analogy.

To safeguard against just such a misuse of the physical experience, the Creator has provided us with a number of metaphorical reminders of our true nature and essential reality. The most intriguing of these is the aging process. At almost the precise point when our physical bodies have reached their peak, we are as intellectual and spiritual beings just beginning to comprehend fully what we are supposed to be accomplishing on this plane of existence. Stated simply, just as we begin to strive for spiritual growth, our metaphorical self begins to crumble before our eyes. We may miss the point of our earthly mission and attempt to become attached to the metaphorical self, but this divinely ordained process is daily teaching us that our attachment is doomed, that we are in the long run going to be detached whether we like it or not.

Thus, if we desire growth as our goal in life, the only kind of growth available that has any lasting value is spiritual growth, and if this development progresses as it can and should, the deterioration of the physical self together with the deterioration of our capacity to relate to the entire physical classroom, will parallel a corresponding increase in our spiritual faculties so that at the moment of transition from the physical world to the 'real world', our final detachment from the worn-out metaphor will occur at the precise instant that we can no longer use it anyway:

> *The nature of the soul after death can never be described, nor is it meet and permissible to reveal its whole character to the eyes of men. The Prophets and Messengers of God have been sent down for the sole purpose of guiding mankind to the straight Path of Truth. The purpose underlying their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High.*[1]

[1] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 156–157.

3. REMEMBERING BERNARD LEACH

TRUDI SCOTT

'IF you had your life to live all over again, what would you change?'

This question was put to Bernard Leach during the last year of his life. His instantaneous reply: 'Nothing, except myself, I hope.'

'A change for the better?'

'Of course. Deeper, wider, truer, more loving. When I went into hospital nine years ago and very nearly died, what did I learn? That I had never been as kind as those who were kind to me. And I felt shame at myself for not having been more thoughtful, more kind, more generous. It did make a difference.'

The interview was for a 'Profile' of Bernard Leach C.H., C.B.E., for the overseas service of the British Broadcasting Corporation which was broadcast to over forty countries.

Many times I have been asked what I remember most about Bernard Leach: it was his humility. He used to say, pointing his long finger upwards, 'It's the "I", not the I.'

I remember vividly his miraculous recovery from that serious illness in 1969. The doctors and the specialist did not expect him to live. He was eighty-three. But those Bahá'ís who were close to him at the time had no doubts. This was a spiritual progression. There was even a Bahá'í nurse who had just arrived at the hospital to take part of her training. I was committed to a demanding job that weekend in August. I knew he was gasping for breath with the help of oxygen. My prayers took me to the typewriter. 'You are suffering like the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh for the love of God because He has great things for you to do. Be content with the love of God. Everyone, everywhere is praying for you and willing you to get better.' This message I sent in large type, to be read to him by a very dear friend. I was told that he changed colour afterwards. In the evening I received the wording of a cable from the Universal House of Justice assuring Bernard of loving prayers. Early the next morning I was allowed into his hospital room for the few minutes I needed.

'I've been very ill,' he said between gasps for breath.

'I know,' I said. 'Don't talk, listen.' I placed my hand on his shoulder. 'Everyone is praying for you on Mount Carmel. They are praying at the Holy Shrines for your recovery.' Then I left him, knowing that he would draw comfort from the thought of those prayers. About a week or so later when I visited him he showed me the following lines that he had written:

In Gratitude

Oh, let me out
Into the garden there
I want to put down
My shrunken hand
To the green grass
Yet once again
Before I lie quiet
Under the sod.
Many voices rose gently
To Him, the Lord God,
Who looked down in mercy
And said, 'Spare the rod.'
In this room
Where I have known
Such pain and joy
I felt the tremor
Of those prayers
All the way from
Here to Carmel.
O God, wilt Thou
Accept my thanks
From here to Heaven?

When Bernard Leach was born in Hong Kong in 1887 his mother died, and he was taken by his grandparents to live with them in Kyoto where his grandfather was a professor of English at the university. Bernard was educated in England, and at the Slade School of Art in London he met his life-long friend, Reginald Turvey whom the Guardian later referred to as 'the spiritual father of the

Bahá'ís of South Africa'. When Bernard returned to Japan in 1909 with the first etching press ever to reach that country (he planned to make a living teaching etching) he wanted to find out more about Eastern art and life. He speaks of his experience in 1911 when he met a group of artists and poets and first saw pots being made. 'One was taken out from the kiln, red hot, with long-handled tongs, dipped into a bucket of cold water, and it did not break. I thought, "Isn't it exciting! I want to do that; I believe I could learn to do that. I wonder if I could get a teacher? I did . . ." '

Before he left Japan in 1920 some of his friends presented him with a book entitled *An English Artist in Japan*. The prophetic tribute written by Soetsu Yanagi, the founder of the Japanese Craft Movement, concludes with these words:

'When he leaves us we shall have lost the one man who knows Japan on its spiritual side. I feel very sad that he is going, but I hope when he returns to his own land he will be able to represent the East in a more just way than has yet been done, and that not only in words will he be able to show his affection, but in his works. I consider his position in Japan, and also his mission in his own country, to be pregnant with the deepest meaning. He is trying to knit the East and West together by art, and it seems likely that he will be remembered as the first to accomplish as an artist what for so long mankind has been dreaming of bringing about . . .'

I desire distinction for you . . . were the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to the Bahá'ís.

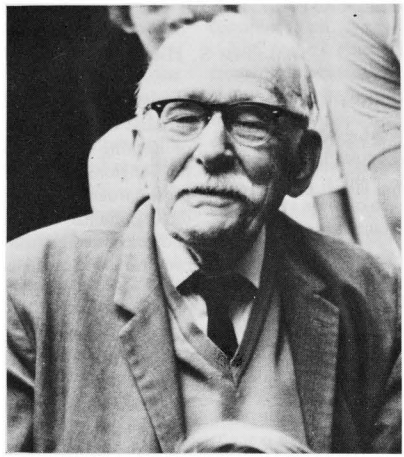
Fifty years after Bernard Leach left Japan he was honoured by the World Crafts Council at a gathering in Dublin. In 1974 he received the Japan Foundation Cultural Award; he had already been given, in 1966, the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Second Class, the highest honour the Japanese government bestows upon a foreigner. He was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1962 and, in 1973, in an audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace, he was made a Companion of Honour.

During these later years retrospective exhibitions of his work were held both in Japan (1966) and in England (1977). During the opening week of his exhibition in London's Victoria and Albert Museum printed invitations were made available to visitors for a Bahá'í talk given by him at the Commonwealth Institute on 'My life, my work and my belief'. Many people attended that meeting and mention of the Bahá'í Faith was made in some of the press reports.

These years also saw the publication of several books written by Bernard Leach including *Drawings, Verse and Belief* in 1973 and, in 1978, *Beyond East and West*, which he considered to be his most important literary work. This book, the last two chapters of which are devoted to the Faith—'The Mountain of God' and 'Stepping Stones of Belief'—was also published in America and has been translated into Japanese. Many seeds must have been and still are being sown through this testament of faith. Reviews of *Beyond East and West* in many countries mentioned his Bahá'í belief and paid tribute to him. The reviewer of the *Birmingham Post* wrote:

'I have never met Bernard Leach . . . I feel that, having seen this last exhibition and having enjoyed every page of this enlightening and loving book, and having as it were travelled with him through time, sharing his feelings and experiences and friendships, I now already do know, and intimately, this great man, respected and indeed honoured all the world over . . . It is a book to be delighted in, not just by potters such as Leach himself, or even by artists and craftsmen in general, but by anyone who cares about the joy of the one life we all share—all roads meeting, as we are reminded, on the mountain of God . . .'

It was not possible for Bernard in his book of memoirs to include all his Bahá'í activities over the years. Wherever he travelled he tried to keep some time for talks on the Faith. While exhibiting in South America—in Caracas and Bogota—he was tendered a special reception in Colombia to which several Bahá'ís were invited. His pamphlet, *My Religious Faith*, written in Japan in 1953, has been translated into Japanese and is still being used. A copy was presented to Princess Chichibu by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum when she visited her while touring Japan in 1978.



Bernard Leach; July 1977.

The blindness which came to Bernard in 1974 opened another door. On 30 December 1973 he scrawled with a thick pen:

Blindness

Come blindness
With the dawn this day.
Not to see a human face again.
Not to see a line on paper drawn.
Warning, yes, but both this day.
Groping along walls,
Premonitory steps.
Awake, awake, the inner eyes,
Love more, not less,
The memories of human sight,
See *with*, not *through*.

The spiritual awareness which grew with his blindness was an inspiration to visitors who came from far and wide to see him. He talked much about the Faith. One potter declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh upon returning to America after spending a few days with him in St. Ives, Cornwall.

It was important to him to leave this world with all work done. 'Death as a friend, death as a doorway', he wrote to a Bahá'í friend after completing his manuscript of *Beyond East and West*. It was a long time since 1914 when he had first heard of the Bahá'í Faith from Agnes Alexander in Japan and, in that same year, had written:

'I have seen a vision of the marriage of East and West, and far off down the Halls of Time I heard the echo of a child-like Voice: "How long? How long?" '

4. THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITUALITY[1]

WILLIAM S. HATCHER

Introduction

HUMAN history has witnessed the birth, proliferation, and death of countless religions, belief systems, and philosophies. Though the generating impulse for each of these systems is undoubtedly related to numerous particular cultural and psychological factors, there runs through virtually all of them the common idea that man is not, in his naturally given human state, whole or complete. The concomitant to this belief is the idea that man must undergo some process of completion, some discipline of self-definition. Such a process is usually regarded by its exponents as the basic purpose of man's existence, for through it man is seen to acquire or develop what is essential and universal, and not merely accidental and local, within the range of human potentiality. By this process, he defines what he truly is by becoming what he most truly can be. The process is often described as one of 'salvation', of being lifted above the condition of unregeneration (or spiritual death) to the plane of a superior reality.

The revealed religions have been major sources of such salvation concepts, spiritual philosophies, and spiritual disciplines. Historically, the revealed religions would seem to be united in affirming, each in its own particular way, that there is an objectively real spiritual dimension to the universe, and that this spiritual dimension of existence is for man the most fundamental and the most important aspect of reality. However, the revealed religions also appear, at least at first glance, to exhibit a disturbing degree of difference in their respective views of the exact nature of this spiritual reality and of how man should relate properly to it. Moreover, most of the traditional systems of religious belief appear now to have crystalized into rigid social patterns and dogmatic attitudes of thought and belief with which the modern ethos of rapid social and intellectual change seems incompatible.

The changes in modern-day society are being wrought primarily by a highly efficient, powerful, and established science which owes little or nothing to established religion. Whereas the religions, for the most part, continue to press harder and harder their mutually contradictory claims each to possess an absolute and unchanging truth which admits no compromise, science is based squarely on the idea that truth is relative and progressive, that what is useful and productive in the realm of ideas and techniques today may be obsolete and unproductive tomorrow. Thus, traditional religion has come to abhor and fear change while science thrives upon it.

Yet, science and technology have not given man the sense of wholeness he has so long been seeking, even though they have given him a vastly increased power to control and manipulate his physical environment. The sense of incompleteness and the conscious need for transcendence, for contact with some deep spiritual reality, are widespread in our society. Indeed, hardly at any other time of history or in any other culture has the sense of spiritual inadequacy been so acute as is currently the case in industrialized, high-technology, Western culture. But if contemporary man turns to religion for enlightenment, he too often finds dogmatism, which his mind cannot accept, or mindless emotionalism, which is not worthy of acceptance.

From the modern perspective, each of the great religions appears as a system which was largely successful in satisfying the spiritual and social needs of a certain people or culture during a previous era of history, but which is no longer adequate to meet the needs of humanity in the present critical period of history. Thus, modern man is caught in a serious dilemma with regard to fundamental spiritual questions. On the one hand, the highly efficient science he has so successfully developed serves in part to deepen his moral and spiritual needs—needs that science alone cannot satisfy.[2] On the other hand, most of

[1] Reprinted by permission of the author from *Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 11, 1982. © 1982 Association for Bahá'í Studies, Ottawa, Canada.

[2] For example, powerful new techniques for manipulating such things as the human genetic endowment raise novel and acute ethical questions concerning their proper and responsible use.

the traditional religious forms, attitudes and concepts now appear obsolete and irrelevant.

This modern dilemma is addressed by several of the fundamental principles of the historically recent Bahá'í Faith. The Bahá'í principle of the unity of science and religion holds that religious truth, like scientific truth (or truth in general), is relative and progressive. It accepts unreservedly that '*If religious beliefs and opinions are found contrary to the standards of science they are mere superstitions and imaginations.*' . . .[1] In particular, with regard to spiritual questions the Bahá'í Faith rejects a dogmatic approach: It affirms that there are spiritual realities governed by lawful relationships, and it invites each individual to assume a scientific attitude and to seek out and test for himself these spiritual truths.[2]

Concerning the great world religions, the Bahá'í Faith teaches that they all derive from one common source, namely, that one, ultimate, creative force responsible for the phenomena of the universe, that force we call God. Bahá'ís hold that the founding figures of these great religious systems (e.g., Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster, Muḥammad) were all chosen channels or true spokesmen for this unique God, and that differences in Their teachings are due primarily to the varying requirements of the cultures and ages in which these systems were originally promulgated. Other significant doctrinal differences among these systems, as they are currently elaborated, are attributed to inaccuracies and distortions gradually introduced by their followers in the course of their evolution as social systems after the death of their Founders.[3] However, the essential spiritual message of these systems is affirmed to be universal and common to all.

The Bahá'í Faith views itself as deriving from the most recent of these revelation events, as the latest chapter in the (unending) book of religion, so to speak. Bahá'u'lláh (1817–1892), Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, put forth these and other teachings in a series of over 100 books and manuscripts written primarily between 1853 and His death in 1892.

Thus, Bahá'ís feel that traditional religions are perceived by modern man as so unsatisfactory partly because some of their teachings are laden with culture-bound patterns and concepts (e.g., the dietary and penal laws of Judaism and Islám) and partly because of man-made distortions and corruptions which have crept in over the years. Religious dogmatism represents the arrogant attempt to transform a relative and partial conception of truth into an absolute and unchanging system, binding the whole of mankind for all human history. According to the Bahá'í understanding of the dynamics of God-created human nature, no such fixed system could ever be adequate for mankind. The Bahá'í system itself is viewed as responding to the needs of mankind in the present hour, but not for all future history.

Bahá'ís hold that the basic spiritual message common to the revealed religions is progressively elaborated and more fully articulated in each successive revelation. One would therefore expect that the Bahá'í Faith, if it is indeed the most recent divinely inspired articulation of spiritual truth to mankind, would contain a fuller elaboration and a deeper expression of this truth.

I believe that such is the case, and in the following pages I have quoted liberally, and sometimes at length, from the Bahá'í Writings in an effort to convey to the reader some of the incredible spiritual riches they contain. Yet, all of the ideas and opinions expressed herein should be strictly regarded as nothing beyond the attempt of one mind to grasp some of the deeper meanings latent in the profound Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi. In an effort to limit the scope of this monograph to reasonable proportions and to achieve an orderly exposition, I have consistently focused on the concept of spiritu-

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Bahá'í World Faith* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956), p. 240.

[2] The present article consists in a rather detailed discussion of certain aspects of the Bahá'í conception of these spiritual truths and realities, but with little or no attempt to explain the basis upon which such a conception rests. This latter task was the objective of a previous effort by the present writer, published as 'The Science of Religion,' *Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 2, rev. ed., 1980.

[3] Also, one should not forget that, except for the more historically recent of these systems (such as Islám), we have no direct access to the exact words or the pure form of the original teachings as given by the Founder. Moreover, the various interpretations which theologians and thinkers have subsequently attached to those written records which do exist are conditioned and limited by various cultural factors and cannot, therefore, be regarded as surely authentic representations of the thought of the Founder.

ality, that is, on an intellectual and logical understanding of spirituality. This work does not attempt in any way to be a manual for attaining spirituality but seeks only to gain, insofar as is possible, a clearer conception of what is implied in attaining it.

Of course, attaining any goal is easier when we have a clear conception of what its attainment involves. I have offered the present text for publication only in the hope that it may contribute in some measure to the common task we all have of trying to express our spiritual understanding to each other, especially as I have already richly benefited from the insights and reflections of so many in this regard.

I. The Nature of Man

1. The Basic Components of Man's Character

The Bahá'í Writings articulate a model of human nature and functioning which sees man as the product of two basic conditions, the physical (material) and the spiritual (nonmaterial). The physical dimension of man's existence derives from his genetic endowment, determined at conception, plus the interaction of this configuration with the environment. This interaction produces an internal, physical milieu which is unique to each individual, though sharing common features with all members of the human species. The spiritual dimension of man's nature derives from the existence of a nonmaterial entity, the soul, which is individualized, it is explained, at the moment of conception. Just as the physical body of man has various physical capacities, so the soul has its capacities, called *spiritual* capacities of man. Among the most important spiritual capacities mentioned in the Bahá'í Writings as characteristic of man are those of the intellect or understanding, the heart or feeling capacity, and the will (the capacity to initiate and sustain action).

The interactions of the individual with his environment affect not only his body but his soul as well. They develop both the genetically given physical capacities and the initially given spiritual capacities. These interactions may be called *learning* or *education*, and they give rise to a third aspect of man's total character, an aspect that is both physical and spiritual.

In sum, there are three essential aspects of the character of man: his genetic endowment, which is purely physical; his soul and its capacities, which are purely spiritual; and education, which is both physical and spiritual.[1]

In *Some Answered Questions*, 'Abdu'l-Bahá speaks of these three basic aspects of man's character:

> '*He* [man] *has the innate character, the inherited character, and the acquired character which is gained by education.*
>
> '*With regard to the innate character, although the divine creation is purely good, yet the varieties of natural qualities in man come from the difference of degree; all are excellent, but they are more or less so, according to the degree. So all mankind possess intelligence and capacities, but the intelligence, the capacity and the worthiness of men differ . . .*
>
> '*The variety of inherited qualities comes from strength and weakness of constitution—that is to say, when the two parents are weak, the children will be weak; if they are strong, the children will be robust . . .*
>
> '*But the difference of the qualities with regard to culture is very great, for education*

[1] According to the Bahá'í conception, the soul of each individual is eternal while the body, composed as it is of elements, is subject to physical decomposition, i.e., death. Thus, the soul is the true source of the individual's consciousness, personality, and self. The soul does not depend on the body but rather the body is the instrument of the soul during the period of earthly existence when the soul and the body are linked together. The Bahá'í Writings also make unequivocally clear the Bahá'í belief that each human soul is not preexistent but is 'individualized' at the moment of conception. Bahá'ís do not, therefore, believe in reincarnation—the doctrine that the same individual soul returns in different bodies to live different or successive earthly lives. It is explained rather that the soul's progress after the death of the physical body is towards God and that this progression takes place in other, purely spiritual (i.e. nonmaterial) realms of existence.

Of course, we cannot see the soul since it is not physical, but we can deduce its existence from the observable effects it produces. Roughly speaking, we can observe that the physical endowments of the higher apes, and, in particular, their central nervous systems, do not differ substantially from man's. Yet such beings seem incapable of the conscious, self-aware, deliberate intellection which characterizes man. At best, they seem capable only of 'reactive' conditioned response rather than the imaginative, self-initiated thought of man, involving as it does long chains of deduction, and anticipation of and adaptation to imagined future events (i.e., hypotheses).

has great influence . . . Education must be considered as most important, for as diseases in the world of bodies are extremely contagious, so, in the same way, qualities of spirit and heart are extremely contagious. Education has a universal influence, and the differences caused by it are very great.'[1]

From this, and other similar passages in the Bahá'í Writings, it is clear that the innate character derives from the capacities of the soul while the inherited character derives from the individual's genetic endowment. Once fixed, these two elements of man's character remain unchanged, but the process of education enables man to develop these capacities either to a relatively high degree or to a relatively low degree, thus producing significant differences in character not attributable solely either to heredity or to innate spiritual capacity.

2. Spirituality Defined

We have used the word 'capacity' in referring both to the spiritual and to the physical endowments of the individual. The word connotes a potential, something to be fulfilled or accomplished (and something that is capable of fulfillment and accomplishment). Indeed, it is clear that the individual, at his birth into this world, is capable of manifesting very few of the qualities possessed by the mature adult human being. We know, moreover, that unless the infant is properly cared for and provided with a host of support systems and a growth-inducing milieu, he will never exhibit such qualities. Life, then, is a growth process. Man begins the process as a little bundle of potential and proceeds, for better or worse, to develop his potential through the process of education (considered broadly as the sum of all environmental influences on the individual plus the individual's reaction to these influences).

According to Bahá'í teachings, the very purpose of man's life is the proper, harmonious, and full development of spiritual capacities. This is the most worthwhile possible goal since spiritual capacities, being part of the immortal soul (see note 1), will eternally endure while the body and its capacities will not. However, the body is the instrument of the soul's development in this earthly life, and so physical health and development cannot be safely neglected but rather must be made to serve the primary goal of fostering the soul's progress.

Bahá'u'lláh expresses this truth succinctly and powerfully:

'*Through the Teachings of this Day Star of Truth* [The Manifestation or Prophet of God] *every man will advance and develop until he attaineth the station at which he can manifest all the potential forces with which his inmost true self hath been endowed. It is for this very purpose that in every age and dispensation the Prophets of God and His chosen Ones have appeared amongst men, and have evinced such power as is born of God and such might as only the Eternal can reveal.*'[2]

The process of developing one's spiritual capacities is called *spiritual growth* or simply *spirituality*. We can thus formulate a working (operational) definition of the concept of spirituality as follows: Spirituality is the process of the full, adequate, proper, and harmonious development of one's spiritual capacities. Unspirituality, by contrast, is either the lack of development of these capacities, their imbalanced or inharmonious development (e.g., the development of one to the exclusion of others), or else the false (improper) development and/or use of these capacities.

With this definition of spirituality in mind, we can also formulate a working definition of Bahá'í morality: That which fosters and advances the process of spiritual development is good, and that which tends to inhibit it is bad. Every law, counsel or behavioural norm contained in the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith can be understood in large measure from this perspective.

3. The Duality of Human Nature

The only component of man's character capable of change is that which is acquired through education, where the latter term is understood broadly to mean the sum of all influences on the individual resulting from his encounters with and reactions to his environment. However, the human situation is such

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1981), pp. 212–214.

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971), p. 68.

that not every influence, and most certainly not every one of our reactions to these influences, is conducive to spiritual progress. Thus, the process of spiritual growth involves learning how to make appropriate responses to various circumstances and how to initiate certain kinds of actions: spiritual growth is an educational process of a particular sort.

The experience of our life during the period when the body and the soul are linked is one of a tension between contradicting and opposing forces. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that this tension results from the duality of the physical and the spiritual in man's nature. On the one hand, man's body has legitimate physical needs which cry for satisfaction: food, shelter, companionship, and protection from threatening forces. However, in seeking to satisfy these needs, man is easily led to be possessive, aggressive, and insensitive to the needs of others. On the other hand, man's soul also has intrinsic needs that demand satisfaction. These needs are metaphysical and intangible. They incite the individual to seek meaning and purpose in life and to establish the proper relationship with God, with himself, and with his fellow humans. Though this proper relationship may, and indeed must, be expressed through physical means, it also is essentially intangible. It involves submission to the will of God, the acceptance of our dependence on a power higher than ourselves. It implies self-knowledge, the discovery both of our limitations and of our particular talents and capacities. And it requires recognition of and respect for the rights of others. This means that we realize and understand that all other men have needs similar to our own and that we accept all the implications of this fact in our relations with and actions towards others.

Of course, the Bahá'í Faith is certainly not the first belief system to recognize this duality in man's nature. But the Bahá'í view of this duality is significantly different from certain views frequently attributed to other belief systems, for the Bahá'í Faith does not superimpose an absolute (good–evil) value judgement upon the duality, viewing all things spiritual as good and all things material as bad. The Bahá'í Writings make clear that man can misuse his spiritual faculties just as easily as he can misuse his material ones. At the same time, the material faculties of man (indeed all of man's natural capacities) are viewed as God-given and therefore intrinsically (metaphysically) good. As moral categories, good and evil are relative terms: A given action on the part of an individual is relatively less good than another action if that other action would have been more favourable to the process of spiritual growth. Moreover, the Bahá'í Writings lead us to understand that God judges human actions only with regard to those actions which are truly logically possible for the individual in the given circumstances. To judge otherwise would be tantamount to requiring of man that which is beyond his capabilities or, paraphrasing words of Bahá'u'lláh, to tasking a soul beyond its power.[1]

In other words, only the direction of the spiritual growth process is given absolutely: it is towards the (unattainable) ideal of God-like perfection. But the process itself is lived relatively by each individual according to his spiritual and material endowments plus the free will choices he makes in dealing with the particular circumstances of his life. Since only God knows truly what these endowments and circumstances are for any individual, only God can judge the degree of moral responsibility of the individual in any situation.[2]

Here is the way that 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains the essential and intrinsic goodness of all of man's capacities, material or spiritual:

> *'In creation there is no evil; all is good. Certain qualities and natures innate in some men and apparently blameworthy are not so in reality. For example, from the beginning of his life you can see in a nursing child the signs of greed, of anger and of temper. Then, it may be said, good and evil are innate in the reality of man, and this is contrary to the pure goodness of nature and creation. The answer to this is that greed, which is to ask for something more, is a praiseworthy quality provided that it is used*

[1] See ibid., p. 106.

[2] This observation explains the time-honoured injunction expressed by virtually all religious prophets and thinkers that no man is capable of judging the spiritual or moral worth of any other individual. This has nothing to do with society's right to protect itself against antisocial behaviour whether perpetrated deliberately by morally insensitive individuals, or involuntarily by sick or misguided individuals.

suitably. So if a man is greedy to acquire science and knowledge, or to become compassionate, generous and just, it is most praiseworthy. If he exercises his anger and wrath against the bloodthirsty tyrants who are like ferocious beasts, it is very praiseworthy; but if he does not use these qualities in a right way, they are blameworthy.

'Then it is evident that in creation and nature evil does not exist at all; but when the natural qualities of man are used in an unlawful way, they are blameworthy.'[1]

Thus, the main function of the body is to serve as an instrument of the soul during the time when the immortal soul is linked to the mortal body. This period constitutes the first stage of an eternal growth process. The body's capacities, when properly used, contribute to the process of spiritual growth. These material capacities are no more intrinsically bad than the capacities of the soul itself. Both material and spiritual capacities become harmful if they are misused through false or improper development.

However, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá do stress the fact that the material capacities must be rigorously disciplined (not suppressed) if they are to serve their intended purpose as vehicles for spiritual growth. Since satisfying our physical needs can easily incite us to become aggressive towards others and insensitive to their needs, the individual must engage in a daily struggle with himself to maintain the proper perspective on life and its spiritual meaning.[2]

More will be said later about the nature of this daily spiritual discipline. The main point here is that the tension between the material and the spiritual in man is a creative tension purposely given by God, a tension whose function it is constantly to remind the individual of the necessity of making an effort in the path of spiritual growth. Moreover, the existence of the material body with its needs provides daily opportunities for the individual to dramatize through action the degree of spirituality he has attained and to assess realistically his progress.[3]

If man did not have the spiritual-material duality in his nature, he would be spared the unpleasant tension that often accompanies the struggle to take a step along the path of spiritual growth, but he would also be denied the opportunities for growth provided by this very duality.

4. Metaphysical Considerations

We have seen how the Bahá'í concept of spirituality flows naturally and logically from a coherent concept of the nature of man and of God's purpose for man. It must be admitted, however, that a paradox seems to lie at the heart of this process, or at least of our experience of the process during this earthly life. The paradox is that God has given man immediate and easy access to material reality while denying him such immediate access to spiritual realities. This seems a curious thing for God to have done if, in fact, the most important aspect of reality is the spiritual one and if our basic purpose in life is spiritual. If the spiritual dimension of man's existence is

[1] *Some Answered Questions*, p. 215.

[2] Also, the Bahá'í Writings make totally clear the Bahá'í disbelief in the objective existence of Satan or of any such evil power or force (cf. *Some Answered Questions*, 'The Nonexistence of Evil,' pp. 263–264). It is explained that what man perceives as evil within himself is simply the absence of some positive quality (which lack is perhaps perceived in a particularly acute way if the individual suddenly finds himself in a situation where the missing quality would have been very useful). Similarly, strong or irrational urges are not, it is affirmed, the result of the action on us of some extrinsic evil force, but rather of subjective desires arising from within ourselves, possibly due either to a prior lack of proper discipline or to the existence of some deep need which we may have neglected to fulfil in a healthy way (or which has not, in any case, been properly fulfilled). 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that improper development can pervert our intrinsically good, natural (God-given) capacities into negative and destructive acquired capacities: '. . . *capacity is of two kinds: natural capacity and acquired capacity. The first, which is the creation of God, is purely good . . . but the acquired capacity has become the cause of the appearance of evil. For example, God has created all men that they are benefited by sugar and honey and harmed and destroyed by poison. This nature and constitution is innate, and God has given it equally to all mankind. But man begins little by little to accustom himself to poison by taking a small quantity each day, and gradually increasing it, until he reaches a point that he cannot live without a gram of opium each day. The natural capacities are thus completely perverted. Observe how much the natural capacity and constitution can be changed until by different habits and training they become entirely perverted. One does not criticize vicious people because of their innate capacities and nature, but rather for their acquired capacities and nature.*' ibid., pp. 214–215.

[3] For example, since everyone knows what the physical sensation of hunger is like, anyone who willingly sacrifices his own physical well-being to help feed others commands a certain respect and communicates a spiritual reality to others in a way that far transcends preaching or philosophical discourse.

ultimately the most real, then why are we given immediate perception only of the less substantial portion of total reality? Why, in short, are we called upon by God to pursue a spiritual purpose while being immersed in a sea of materiality?

To many people, this basic perception of our human condition is not just a paradox but an outright contradiction. It is impossible, they say, that there could be a world of unseen and unobservable spiritual realities so much less accessible than the world of material reality: the most obvious explanation for the inaccessibility of spiritual reality is that it does not exist. Whether or not the paradox is stated this strongly, it remains the basic stumbling block to atheists, agnostics, materialists, and positivists of whatever philosophical stripe in their approach to spiritual questions. For, even if one becomes convinced that there is a significant, nonmaterial dimension to objective reality, the rationale for its having been deliberately hidden from immediate access by a God who nevertheless holds us responsible for relating properly to it remains obscure.

Fortunately for our attempts to grasp the deeper significance of the Bahá'í concept of spirituality, Bahá'u'lláh has explained in clear terms the divine purpose underlying this fundamental feature of the human situation. The explanation lies in the principle of 'separation and distinction' by which God wishes individual moral and spiritual attainment to be the result of the individual's self-responsible and self-directed efforts. Bahá'u'lláh affirms unequivocally that God could certainly have rendered spiritual truth and spiritual reality as irrefutably evident and as immediately accessible to our spiritual senses as is material reality to our physical senses. But, had He done so, all men would have been forever bereft of one important experience: the experience of the state of spiritual deprivation. As the universe is now ordered, everyone can have the experience of moving from a position of relative doubt, insecurity, uncertainty, and fear towards a position of relative certitude, security, knowledge and faith.

On this journey, we learn important lessons which would otherwise be denied us. We value true spirituality the more for having experienced, to whatever degree, its lack, and we are grateful for the privilege of having participated in and contributed to the process of its attainment. All of this would not be possible if spiritual knowledge and perfection were simply our natural state of being from the moment of our creation.

Here is one passage in which Bahá'u'lláh explains the principle of separation and distinction:

> *'The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and to attain His Presence. . . . Whoso hath recognized the Day Spring of Divine guidance and entered His holy court hath drawn nigh unto God and attained His Presence. . . . Whoso hath failed to recognize Him will have condemned himself to the misery of remoteness, a remoteness which is naught but utter nothingness and the essence of the nethermost fire. Such will be his fate, though to outward seeming he may occupy the earth's loftiest seats and be established upon its most exalted throne.*
>
> *'He Who is the Day Spring of Truth is, no doubt, fully capable of rescuing from such remoteness wayward souls and of causing them to draw nigh unto His court and attain His Presence. 'If God had pleased He had surely made all men one people.' His purpose, however, is to enable the pure in spirit and the detached in heart to ascend, by virtue of their own innate powers, unto the shores of the Most Great Ocean, that thereby they who seek the Beauty of the All-Glorious may be distinguished and separated from the wayward and perverse. Thus hath it been ordained by the all-glorious and resplendent Pen. . . .*
>
> *'That the Manifestations of Divine justice, the Day Springs of heavenly grace, have when they appeared amongst men always been destitute of all earthly dominion and shorn of the means of worldly ascendancy, should be attributed to this same principle of separation and distinction which animateth the Divine Purpose. Were the Eternal Essence to manifest all that is latent within Him, . . . none would be found to question His power or repudiate His truth. Nay, all created things would be so dazzled and*

thunderstruck by the evidences of His light as to be reduced to utter nothingness.'[1]

From this passage, we can understand that the intangibility of spiritual realities is not an accident but rather a deliberate and fundamental aspect of God's purpose for man. Of course, if God had created us with no spiritual inclinations or perceptions whatever, if He had denied us immediate access to any part of reality, material or spiritual, or if He had created us with spiritual and metaphysical longings impossible of genuine fulfillment, we would be unable to succeed in our basic task. By starting the eternal spiritual growth process as spiritual-material hybrids, having immediate access to material reality and being endowed with significant physical and intellectual powers, we are able to learn the subtleties of spiritual development gradually. By experiencing first-hand the order and the lawfulness of the physical creation, we come to understand that the unseen spiritual realm is similarly ordered and governed by lawful, cause-and-effect relationships. At first intuitively, then explicitly and intellectually, and finally through genuine spiritual experience and inner development, we learn to participate consciously in this spiritual order of things. It becomes a day-to-day reality having an immediacy equal to and even greater than the immediacy of physical experience. Indeed, as Bahá'u'lláh explains, if we fulfill our responsibilities and learn our lessons well, we will be ready at the time of our physical death to pass easily into the purely spiritual realm. We will already have become familiar with its basic laws and modes of functioning and will therefore be prepared to take up our lives in that new realm and proceed with our growth process in a harmonious and satisfying manner:

'*The Prophets and Messengers of God have been sent down for the sole purpose of guiding mankind to the straight Path of Truth. The purpose underlying their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High.*'[2]

[1] *Gleanings*, pp. 70–72.

II. The Process of Spiritual Growth

1. Prerequisites for Spiritual Growth

Spirituality is the process of the proper development of man's innate spiritual capacities. But how does this process start and how is it carried on? What is the relationship between spiritual development and other kinds of development processes (e.g. formal schooling)? Why do there seem to have been so few people who have thus conceived the purpose of their lives and dedicated themselves to the pursuit of spirituality? Answers to these and other similar questions are given in the Bahá'í Writings, but we need to proceed systematically to gain perspective.

Clearly the prime condition for embarking on the process of spiritual development is the awareness that the process is useful, necessary, and realistically possible: the individual must become fully alert to the objective existence of the spiritual dimension of reality. Since such spiritual realities as God, the soul, and the mind are not directly observable, man has no immediate access to them. He has only indirect access through the observable effects that these spiritual realities may produce. The Bahá'í Writings acknowledge this situation and affirm that the Manifestation (or Prophet) of God is the most important observable reality which gives man access to intangible reality:

'*The door of the knowledge of the Ancient of Days being thus closed in the face of all beings, the Source of infinite grace . . . hath caused those luminous Gems of Holiness to appear out of the realm of the spirit, in the noble form of the human temple, and be made manifest unto all men, that they may impart unto the world the mysteries of the unchangeable Being, and tell of the subtleties of His imperishable Essence. These sanctified Mirrors, these Day-springs of ancient glory are one and all the Exponents on earth of Him Who is the central Orb of the universe, its Essence and ultimate Purpose.*'[3]

[2] ibid., pp. 156–157. For a parallel discussion of some of these points see 'The Metaphorical Nature of Physical Reality', by John S. Hatcher, *Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, 1977.

[3] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Book of Certitude* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1954), pp. 99–100.

In another passage, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said:

'The knowledge of the Reality of the Divinity is impossible and unattainable, but the knowledge of the Manifestations of God is the knowledge of God, for the bounties, splendours and divine attributes are apparent in Them. Therefore, if man attains to the knowledge of the Manifestations of God, he will attain to the knowledge of God; and if he be neglectful of the knowledge of the Holy Manifestations, he will be bereft of the knowledge of God.[1]

Thus, the Manifestations constitute that part of observable reality which most readily leads man to the knowledge and awareness of the spiritual dimension of existence. Of course, only those living in the lifetime of a Manifestation can observe Him at first hand, but His revelation and His Writings constitute permanent observable realities which enable us to maintain objective content in our beliefs, concepts and practices:

'Say: The first and foremost testimony establishing His truth is His own Self. Next to this testimony is His Revelation. For whoso faileth to recognize either the one or the other He hath established the words He hath revealed as proof of His reality and truth.'[2]

Elsewhere in the Bahá'í Writings, it is explained that everything in observable reality, when properly perceived, reveals some aspect of God, its Creator. However, only a conscious, willing, intelligent being such as man can reflect (to whatever limited degree) the higher aspects of God. The Manifestations of God, being the *'most accomplished, the most distinguished, and the most excellent'*[3] of men, endowed by God with transhuman spiritual capacities, represent the fullest possible expression of the divine in observable reality.

Thus, the first step in the path of spiritual growth is to become as intensely aware as possible of the reality of the spiritual realm of existence. The principal key to such an awareness is knowledge of the Manifestations of God.

Indeed, since the Manifestations constitute such a unique link between man and the unseen world of spiritual reality, knowledge of the Manifestations is the foundation of the whole process of spiritual development.[4] This is not to say that real spiritual progress cannot take place before one recognizes and accepts the Manifestation.[5] However, the Bahá'í Writings do affirm that in order to progress beyond a certain level on the path of spirituality, knowledge of the Manifestation is essential. Sooner or later (in this world or the next), knowledge and acceptance of the Manifestation must occur in the life of each individual.

The question naturally arises as to what step or steps follow the recognition of the Manifestation. Here again Bahá'u'lláh is quite clear and emphatic:

'The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Day Spring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof, hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. It behoveth every one who reacheth this most sublime station, this summit of transcendent glory, to observe every ordinance of Him Who is the Desire of the world. These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is acceptable without the other.'[6]

Thus, even though the recognition of the Manifestation of God is described as equal to 'all good,' recognition alone is not a sufficient basis for spiritual growth. The effort to con-

[1] *Some Answered Questions*, p. 222.
[2] *Gleanings*, p. 105.
[3] ibid., p. 179.
[4] In this regard, Bahá'u'lláh has said: *'Neither the candle nor the lamp can be lighted through their own unaided efforts, nor can it ever be possible for the mirror to free itself from its dross. It is clear and evident that until a fire is kindled the lamp will never be ignited, and unless the dross is blotted out from the face of the mirror it can never represent the image of the sun nor reflect its light and glory.'* *Gleanings*, p. 66. He goes on to point out that the necessary 'fire' and 'light' are transmitted from God to man through the Manifestations.
[5] In one of His works, Bahá'u'lláh describes the stage leading up to the acceptance of the Manifestations as 'the valley of search.' It is a period during which one thinks deeply about the human condition, seeks answers to penetrating questions, and sharpens and develops one's capacities in preparation for their full use. It is a period of increasing restlessness and impatience with ignorance and injustice.
[6] *Gleanings*, pp. 330–331.

form oneself to the standards of behaviour, thought, and attitude expressed by the various laws ordained by the Manifestation is also an intrinsic, inseparable part of the process.[1]

The idea that great effort is necessary to the prosecution of the spiritual growth process occurs throughout the Bahá'í Writings:

> *'The incomparable Creator hath created all men from one same substance, and hath exalted their reality above the rest of His creatures. Success or failure, gain or loss, must, therefore, depend upon man's own exertions. The more he striveth, the greater will be his progress.*[2]
>
> *'Know thou that all men have been created in the nature made by God, the Guardian, the Self-Subsisting. Unto each one hath been prescribed a pre-ordained measure, as decreed in God's mighty and guarded Tablets. All that which ye potentially possess can, however, be manifested only as a result of your own volition.*[3]
>
> *'. . . He hath entrusted every created thing with a sign of His knowledge, so that none of His creatures may be deprived of its share in expressing, each according to its capacity and rank, this knowledge. This sign is the mirror of His beauty in the world of creation. The greater the effort exerted for the refinement of this sublime and noble mirror, the more faithfully will it be made to reflect the glory of the names and attributes of God, and reveal the wonders of His signs and knowledge . . .*
>
> *'There can be no doubt whatever that, in consequence of the efforts which every man may consciously exert and as a result of the exertion of his own spiritual faculties, this mirror can be so cleansed . . . as to be able to draw nigh unto the meads of eternal holiness and attain the courts of everlasting fellowship.'*[4]

'Personal effort is indeed a vital prerequisite to the recognition and acceptance of the Cause of God. No matter how strong the measure of Divine grace, unless supplemented by personal, sustained and intelligent effort it cannot become fully effective and be of any real and abiding advantage.'[5]

This last statement, from Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith from 1921 until his death in 1957, makes clear that recognition of and faith in the Manifestation of God are not simply unidirectional 'gifts' from God to man. Rather, both involve a reciprocal relationship requiring an intelligent and energetic response on the part of the individual. Nor is true faith based on any irrational or psychopathological impulse.[6]

2. The Nature of the Process

We have seen how the spiritual growth process may begin by acceptance of the Manifestation and obedience to his laws and principles. We need now to gain a measure of understanding of the nature of the process itself.

We have characterized spiritual growth as an educational process of a particular sort for which the individual assumes responsibility and by which he learns to feel, think, and act in certain appropriate ways. It is a process through which the individual eventually becomes the truest expression of what he has always potentially been.

Let us consider several further quotations from the Bahá'í Writings which confirm this view of the spiritual growth process.

[1] Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá stress that mankind has undergone a collective process of evolution by which it has now arrived at the threshold of maturity. God now requires more of man, in particular that he assume responsibility for the process of self-development: '*For in this holy Dispensation, the crowning of bygone ages, and cycles, true Faith is no mere acknowledgement of the Unity of God, but the living of a life that will manifest all the perfections implied in such belief.*' 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Divine Art of Living* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974), p. 25.

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 81–82.

[3] ibid., p. 149.

[4] ibid., p. 262.

[5] Shoghi Effendi in *The Bahá'í Life* (Toronto: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, undated), p. 6.

[6] See 'Abdu'l-Bahá. *Bahá'í World Faith*, 2nd ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956), pp. 382–383, where faith is *defined* to be conscious knowledge: '*By faith is meant, first, conscious knowledge, and second, the practice of good deeds.*' Of course, whenever man gains knowledge which contradicts his preconceived notions, he experiences inner conflict and may therefore initially perceive the new knowledge (and thus the new faith) as irrational in that it contradicts what he previously assumed to be true. But this initial perception is gradually overcome as continued experience further confirms the new knowledge, finally leading to an integration of the new with whatever was correct and healthy in the old. But this model of faith stands in significant contrast to the widely-held view that religious faith is essentially or fundamentally irrational (and blind) in its very nature.

'Whatever duty Thou hast prescribed unto Thy servants of extolling to the utmost Thy majesty and glory is but a token of Thy grace unto them, that they may be enabled to ascend unto the station conferred upon their own inmost being, the station of the knowledge of their own selves.'[1]

Here the 'duties' which God has prescribed for man are seen not as ends in themselves but rather as 'tokens,' in other words, as symbols for and means towards another, ultimate end. This end is characterized as being a particular kind of knowledge, here called self-knowledge.

In the following, Bahá'u'lláh speaks similarly of self-knowledge:

'O My servants! Could ye apprehend with what wonders of My munificence and bounty I have willed to entrust your souls, ye would, of a truth, rid yourselves of attachment to all created things, and would gain a true knowledge of your own selves—a knowledge which is the same as the comprehension of Mine own Being.'[2]

One significant aspect of this passage is that true knowledge of self is identified with knowledge of God. That knowledge of God is identical with the fundamental purpose of life for the individual is clearly stated by Bahá'u'lláh in numerous passages. For example:

'The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will ever be, to enable him to know his Creator and to attain His Presence. To this most excellent aim, this supreme objective, all the heavenly Books and the divinely-revealed and weighty Scriptures unequivocally bear witness.'[3]

Thus, while acceptance of the Manifestation of God and obedience to His ordinances is a necessary step which each individual must accomplish at some point in the spiritual growth process, these and other such duties are means to an ultimate end which is described as true self-knowledge. This quality of self-knowledge is equated with knowledge of God, and knowledge of God is considered by Bahá'u'lláh as constituting the essential reason for man's existence.

All of this would seem to say that religion, in the final analysis, represents a cognitive discipline of some sort. But what kind of cognitive discipline could involve the full development of all man's spiritual capacities, and not just the mind? What kind of knowledge is meant by the true knowledge of self and how can such knowledge be tantamount to knowledge of God?

Bahá'u'lláh gives the key to answering these important questions in an explicit statement clearly describing the highest form of knowledge and development accessible to man:

'Consider the rational faculty with which God hath endowed the essence of man. Examine thine own self, and behold how thy motion and stillness, thy will and purpose, thy sight and hearing, thy sense of smell and power of speech, and whatever else is related to, or transcendeth, thy physical senses or spiritual perceptions, all proceed from, and owe their existence to, this same faculty. . . .

'Wert thou to ponder in thine heart, from now until the end that hath no end, and with all the concentrated intelligence and understanding which the greatest minds have attained in the past or will attain in the future, this divinely ordained and subtle Reality, this sign of the revelation of the All-Abiding, All-Glorious God, thou wilt fail to comprehend its mystery or to appraise its virtue. Having recognized thy powerlessness to attain to an adequate understanding of that Reality which abideth within thee, thou wilt readily admit the futility of such efforts as may be attempted by thee, or by any of the created things, to fathom the mystery of the Living God, the Day Star of unfading glory, the Ancient of everlasting days. This confession of helplessness which mature contemplation must eventually impel every mind to make is in itself the acme of human understanding, and marketh the culmination of man's development.'[4]

This passage seems to indicate that the ultimate form of knowledge available to man is represented by his total awareness of certain limitations which are inherent in his very

[1] *Gleanings*, pp. 4–5.
[2] ibid., pp. 326–327.
[3] ibid., p. 70. See also note 9.
[4] ibid., pp. 164–165.

nature or at least in the fundamental relationship between his nature and the phenomena of existence (including his own being and that of God). In particular, man must assimilate in some profound way the truth that the absolute knowledge of God and even of his own self lie forever beyond his reach. His realization of this truth is consequent to his having made a profound and accurate appraisal of his God-created capacities and potentialities. Thus, in the last analysis, true self-knowledge appears as a deep and mature knowledge of both the limitations and the capacities of the self. Let us recall that attaining to this knowledge is said to require strenuous effort on the part of man and to involve the development of '*all the potential forces with which his inmost true self hath been endowed.*'[1]

To gain a broader perspective on this question, let us compare the self-knowledge described here with human knowledge in general, hoping that such a comparison will help us to understand more clearly what is particular to true self-knowledge. In general terms, a 'knowing situation' involves a subjectivity (in this case that of man), some phenomenon which is the object of knowledge, and finally those means and resources which the subject can mobilize in order to obtain the understanding he seeks. If we agree to lump these last aspects of the knowing process under the general term 'method,' we arrive at the following schema:

knowing subject $\xrightarrow{\text{method}}$ phenomenon

Quite clearly, the knowledge which is ultimately obtained from this process will depend on all three fundamental aspects of the knowing situation. It will depend on the nature of the phenomenon being studied (e.g., whether it is easily observable and accessible, whether it is complex or simple), on both the capacities and limitations of the knowing subject, and on the method used. In particular, the knowledge which results from this process will necessarily be relative and limited unless the knowing subject possesses some infallible method of knowledge. In this regard, it is important to note that the Bahá'í Writings stress repeatedly that human beings (other than the Manifestations) have no such infallible method of knowledge and that human understanding of all things is therefore relative and limited.[2]

For example, in a talk given at Green Acre near Eliot, Maine in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá discusses the different criteria '*by which the human mind reaches its conclusions*'.[3] After a discussion of each criterion, showing why it is fallible and relative, 'Abdu'l-Bahá states: '*Consequently, it has become evident that the four criteria or standards of judgement by which the human mind reaches its conclusions are faulty and inaccurate.*' He then proceeds to explain that the best man can do is to use systematically all of the criteria at his disposal.[4]

In another passage, 'Abdu'l-Bahá affirms:

> '*Knowledge is of two kinds. One is subjective and the other objective knowledge—that is to say, an intuitive knowledge and a knowledge derived from perception.*
>
> '*The knowledge of things which men universally have is gained by reflection or by evidence—that is to say, either by the power of the mind the conception of an object is formed, or from beholding an object the form is produced in the mirror of the heart. The circle of this knowledge is very limited because it depends upon effort and attainment.*'[5]

'Abdu'l-Bahá then explains that the first kind of knowledge, that which is subjective and intuitive, is the special consciousness of the Manifestations: '*Since the Sanctified Realities, the supreme Manifestations of God, surround the essence and qualities of the creatures, transcend and contain existing realities and understand all things, therefore, Their knowledge is divine knowledge, and not acquired—that is to say, it is a holy bounty; it is a divine revelation.*'[6]

[1] ibid., p. 68, previously quoted in Section I.2

[2] It is interesting that modern science and modern scientific philosophy take essentially the same view of human knowledge. I have elsewhere treated this theme at some length (see *Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 2, 'The Science of Religion,' 1980), but will not enter into the discussion of such questions here.

[3] He explicitly mentions sense experience, reason, inspiration or intuition, and scriptural authority.

[4] The quoted passages are from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of the Universal Peace* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2nd ed., 1982), pp. 253–255.

[5] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 157.

[6] ibid., pp. 157–158.

Here again we see that 'Abdu'l-Bahá expresses the limited character of all human knowledge (in contrast to the unlimited knowledge of the Manifestations deriving from their special superhuman nature). In yet another passage 'Abdu'l-Bahá puts the matter thus:

> *'Know that there are two kinds of knowledge: the knowledge of the essence of a thing and the knowledge of its qualities. The essence of a thing is known through its qualities; otherwise, it is unknown and hidden.*
>
> *'As our knowledge of things, even of created and limited things, is knowledge of their qualities and not of their essence, how is it possible to comprehend in its essence the Divine Reality, which is unlimited?*
>
> *'. . . Knowing God, therefore, means the comprehension and the knowledge of His attributes, and not of His Reality. This knowledge of the attributes is also proportioned to the capacity and power of man; it is not absolute.'*[1]

It would seem clear from these and other similar passages from the Bahá'í Writings that whatever distinctive characteristics the true knowledge of self (or, equivalently, the knowledge of God) may have, it does not differ from other forms of knowledge with regard to degree of certainty. It is not less certain than other forms of knowledge since all human knowledge (including the knowledge of God and of 'created and limited things') is relative and limited. Nor does it differ from these other forms of knowledge by being more certain, as is clear from the passage above and from the passages of Bahá'u'lláh previously cited.[2]

However, if we compare knowledge of God with other forms of knowledge, not from the point of view of degrees of certainty, but rather from the standpoint of the relationship between man as knowing subject on the one hand, and the phenomenon which is the object of study on the other, we can immediately see that there is a tremendous difference. In all sciences and branches of knowledge other than religion, the object of study is a phenomenon which is either inferior to man in complexity and subtlety (in the case of physics and chemistry) or on a level with man (in the case of biology, psychology, and sociology). In either case, for each of these sciences the human knower is in a position of relative dominance or superiority which enables him to manipulate to a significant degree the phenomenon being studied. We can successfully use these phenomena as instruments for our purposes. But when we come to knowledge of God, we suddenly find ourselves confronted with a phenomenon which is superior to us and which we cannot manipulate. Many of the reflexes and techniques learned in studying other phenomena no longer apply. Far from learning how to manipulate God, we must learn how to discern expressions of God's will for us and respond adequately to them. It is we who now must become (consciously acquiescing) instruments for God's purposes.[3]

[1] ibid., pp. 220–221.

[2] Some mystics and religious philosophers have contended that our knowledge of God is absolute and for that reason superior to the relative and limited knowledge obtained by science. Such thinkers offer mysticism as an alternative discipline to science. It is important to realize that the Bahá'í Faith does not lend support to such a view. In particular, concerning the inherent limitations of the individual's intuitive powers, however disciplined or well-developed, Shoghi Effendi has said:

> 'With regard to your question as to the value of intuition as a source of guidance for the individual; implicit faith in our intuitive powers is unwise, but through daily prayer and sustained effort one can discover, though not always and fully, God's Will intuitively. Under no circumstances, however, can a person be absolutely certain that he is recognizing God's Will, through the exercise of his intuition. It often happens that the latter results in completely misrepresenting the truth, and thus becomes a source of error rather than of guidance. . . .'

Moreover, the Bahá'í Writings clearly recognize that the human mind has a capacity for self-generated illusion which, if not recognized by the individual, can lead him into serious error:

> 'You yourself must surely know that modern psychology has taught that the capacity of the human mind for believing what it imagines, is almost infinite. Because people think they have a certain type of experience, think they remember something of a previous life, does not mean they actually had the experience, or existed previously. The power of their mind would be quite sufficient to make them believe firmly such a thing had happened.'
>
> (This latter passage is also by Shoghi Effendi and both statements are quoted in a letter written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual Bahá'í.)

[3] In particular, the Manifestations of God represent objective and universally accessible expressions of God's will. Humanity's interaction with the Manifestations provides an important opportunity to experience concretely a phenomenon which man cannot manipulate or dominate. The Manifestations likewise provide a challenge to each individual's capacity to respond adequately to the divine will.

Viewed in this perspective, the distinctive characteristic of knowing God, as compared with all other forms of (human) knowledge, is that the human knower is in a position of inferiority with respect to the object of knowledge. Rather than encompassing and dominating the phenomenon by aggressive and manipulative techniques, man is now encompassed by a phenomenon more powerful than himself.

Perhaps, then, one of the deep meanings of the true knowledge of self (which is equivalent to the knowledge of God) is that we are here confronted with the task of learning novel, and initially unnatural, patterns of thought, feeling, and action. We must retrain ourselves in a wholly new way. We must not only understand our position of dependence on God, but also integrate that understanding into our lives until it becomes part of us, and indeed until it becomes us, an expression of what we are.

In other words, the full, harmonious, and proper development of our spiritual capacities means developing these capacities so that we may respond ever more adequately, and with increasing sensitivity and nuance, to the will of God: The process of spiritual growth is the process by which we learn how to conform ourselves to the divine will on ever deeper levels of our being.[1]

From this viewpoint, conscious dependence upon God and obedience to His will is not a capitulation of individual responsibility, a sort of helpless 'giving up,' but rather an assumption of an even greater degree of responsibility and self-control. We must learn through deep self-knowledge, how to be responsive to the spirit of God.

The ability to respond to God in such a whole-hearted, deeply intelligent and sensitive way is not part of the natural gift of any human being. What is naturally given to us is the capacity, the potential to attain to such a state. Its actual achievement, however, is consequent only to a persistent and strenuous effort on our part. The fact that such effort, and indeed suffering, are necessary to attain this state of spirituality makes life often difficult.[2] But the fact that it is truly possible makes of life a spiritual adventure a hundredfold more exciting than any other physical or romantic adventure could ever possibly be.

George Townshend, a Bahá'í renowned for the spiritual quality of his personal life, has given a description of this state of spiritual-mindedness. One senses that Townshend's statement is based on deep personal experience as well as intelligent contemplation:

> 'When the veils of illusion which hide a man's own heart from himself are drawn aside, when after purgation he comes to himself and attains self-knowledge and sees himself as he truly is, then at the same moment and by the same act of knowledge he beholds there in his own heart His Father who has patiently awaited His son's return.
>
> 'Only through this act of self-completion, through this conclusion of the journey which begins in the kingdom of the senses and leads inward through the kingdom of the moral to end in that of the spiritual, does real happiness become possible. Now for the first time a man's whole being can be integrated, and a harmony of all his faculties be established. Through his union with the Divine Spirit he has found the secret of the unifying of his own being. He who is the Breath of Joy becomes the animating principle of his existence. Man knows the Peace of God.'[3]

One of Bahá'u'lláh's major works, *The Book of Certitude*, is largely devoted to a detailed explanation of the way in which God has provided for the education of mankind through the periodic appearance in human history of a God-sent Manifestation or Revelator. At one point in His discussion of these questions, Bahá'u'lláh gives a wonderfully explicit description of the steps and stages involved in the individual's progress

[1] Another important dimension of spirituality is service to the collectivity. The development of one's spiritual and material capacities makes one a more valuable servant. More will be said about this in a later section.

[2] Concerning the necessity of such suffering in the pursuit of spirituality, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said: '*Everything of importance in this world demands the close attention of its seeker. The one in pursuit of anything must undergo difficulties and hardships until the object in view is attained and the great success is obtained. This is the case of things pertaining to the world. How much higher is that which concerns the Supreme Concourse!*' *Divine Art of Living*, p. 92.

[3] George Townshend, *The Mission of Bahá'u'lláh* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1952), pp. 99–100.

towards full spiritual development. This portion of *The Book of Certitude* has become popularly known among Bahá'ís as the 'Tablet to the True Seeker,' although Bahá'u'lláh does not Himself designate the passage by this or any other such appellation.

In general terms, a 'true seeker' is anyone who has become aware of the objective existence of the spiritual dimension of reality, has realized that spiritual growth and development constitute the basic purpose of existence, and has sincerely and seriously embarked on the enterprise of fostering his spiritual progress. It is quite clear from the context of the passage that Bahá'u'lláh is primarily addressing those who have already reached the stage of accepting the Manifestation of God and obeying His commandments.

Bahá'u'lláh begins by describing in considerable detail the attitudes, thought patterns, and behaviour patterns that characterize a true seeker. He mentions such things as humility, abstention from backbiting and vicious criticism of others, kindness and helpfulness to those who are poor or otherwise in need, and the regular practice of the discipline of prayer and of meditation. He concludes this description by saying '*These are among the attributes of the exalted, and constitute the hallmark of the spiritually-minded . . . When the detached wayfarer and sincere seeker hath fulfilled these essential conditions, then and only then can he be called a true seeker.*'[1] He then continues by describing both the quality of effort necessary to the attainment of spirituality and the state of being which this attainment secures to the individual:

> '*Only when the lamp of search, of earnest striving, of longing desire, of passionate devotion, of fervid love, of rapture, and ecstasy, is kindled within the seeker's heart, and the breeze of His loving-kindness is wafted upon his soul, will the darkness of error be dispelled, the mists of doubts and misgivings be dissipated, and the lights of knowledge and certitude envelop his being. At that hour will the mystic Herald, bearing the joyful tidings of the Spirit, shine forth from the City of God resplendent as the morn, and, through the trumpet-blast of knowledge, will awaken the heart, the soul, and the spirit from the slumber of negligence. Then will the manifold favours and outpouring grace of the holy and everlasting Spirit confer such new life upon the seeker that he will find himself endowed with a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind. He will contemplate the manifest signs of the universe, and will penetrate the hidden mysteries of the soul. Gazing with the eye of God, he will perceive within every atom a door that leadeth him to the stations of absolute certitude. He will discover in all things the mysteries of divine Revelation and the evidences of an everlasting manifestation.*'[2]

Nor should the achievement of such a degree of spiritual development be considered an ideal, static configuration from which no further change or development is possible, as the following two passages from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá make clear:

> '*As the divine bounties are endless, so human perfections are endless. If it were possible to reach a limit of perfection, then one of the realities of the beings might reach the condition of being independent of God, and the contingent might attain to the condition of the absolute. But for every being there is a point which it cannot overpass—that is to say, he who is in the condition of servitude, however far he may progress in gaining limitless perfections, will never reach the conditions of Deity. . . .*
>
> '*For example, Peter cannot become Christ.*

[1] *The Book of Certitude*, p. 195.

[2] ibid., pp. 195–196. Bahá'u'lláh's reference in this passage to 'absolute certitude' might be perceived at first as contradicting the strong statements regarding the limitations on human knowledge which we have earlier quoted. However, this superficial perception is relieved when we reflect that 'certitude' refers to a (psychological) state of being whereas the notion of 'degree of certainty' (and in particular the question of whether knowledge is relative or absolute) is concerned rather with the criteria of verification available to man as knowing subject. Thus, Bahá'u'lláh would seem to be saying that man can attain to a sense of absolute certitude even though his criteria of verification, and thus his knowledge, remain limited. Also, it is clear that such phrases as 'the eye of God' should be taken metaphorically and not literally. This metaphor, together with other such phrases as 'new life' and 'absolute certitude,' convey a strong sense of the discontinuity between the respective degrees of understanding possessed by the individual before and after his attainment of true self-knowledge.

All that he can do is, in the condition of servitude, to attain endless perfections . . .[1]

'*Both before and after putting off this material form, there is progress in perfection but not in state. . . . There is no other being higher than a perfect man. But man when he has reached this state can still make progress in perfections but not in state because there is no state higher than that of a perfect man to which he can transfer himself. He only progresses in the state of humanity, for the human perfections are infinite. Thus, however learned a man may be, we can imagine one more learned.*

'*Hence, as the perfections of humanity are endless, man can also make progress in perfections after leaving this world.*'[2]

3. The Dynamics of the Spiritual Growth Process

After contemplating Bahá'u'lláh's description of the state of being resulting from the attainment of true self-knowledge, it would be only natural to wish that this state could be achieved instantaneously, perhaps through some supreme gesture of self-renunciation, or whatever. However, the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith make it plain that this is not possible. By its very nature, true spirituality is something which can only be achieved as the result of a certain self-aware and self-responsible process of development.

'Abdu'l-Bahá often responded to Bahá'ís who felt overwhelmed by the task of refining their character by stressing the necessity of patience and daily striving. '*Be patient, be as I am,*' He would say.[3] Spirituality was to be won '*little by little; day by day*'.[4] And again:

'*He is a true Bahá'í who strives by day and by night to progress and advance along the path of human endeavor, whose most cherished desire is so to live and act as to enrich and illuminate the world, whose source of inspiration is the essence of Divine virtue, whose aim in life is so to conduct himself as to be the cause of infinite progress. Only when he attains unto such perfect gifts can it be said of him that he is a true Bahá'í.*'[5]

This last passage in particular would seem to indicate that one of the signs of an individual's maturity is his acceptance of the gradual nature of the process of spiritual growth and of the necessity for daily striving. Indeed, psychology has established that one important measure of maturity is the capacity to delay gratification, i.e., to work for goals whose attainment is not to be had in the short term. Since spirituality is the highest and most important goal anyone can possibly have, it is natural that its achievement should call forth the greatest possible maturity on the part of the individual.[6]

In a similar vein, Shoghi Effendi has said that the Bahá'ís:

'. . . should not look at the depraved condition of the society in which they live, nor at the evidences of moral degradation and frivolous conduct which the people around them display. They should not content themselves merely with relative distinction and excellence. Rather they should fix their gaze upon nobler heights by setting the counsels and exhortations of the Pen of Glory as their supreme goal. Then it will be readily realized how numerous are the stages that still remain to be traversed and how far off the desired goal lies—a goal which is none other than exemplifying heavenly morals and virtues.'[7]

In describing the experience of the individual as he progresses towards this goal, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said: '*Know thou, verily, there are many veils in which the Truth is enveloped; gloomy veils; then delicate and transparent veils; then the envelopment of Light, the sight of which dazzles the eyes.*' . . .[8] Indeed, one of Bahá'u'lláh's major works, *The Seven Valleys,* describes in poetic and powerfully descriptive language the different stages of spiritual perception through which an individual may pass in his efforts to

[1] *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 230–231.
[2] ibid., p. 237.
[3] *The Dynamic Force of Example* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974), p. 50.
[4] ibid., p. 51.
[5] *Divine Art of Living*, p. 25.
[6] This point of view on spirituality is in sharp contrast with the viewpoint found in many contemporary cults and sects which stress instant gratification and irresponsibility in the name of honesty and spontaneity.
[7] *The Bahá'í Life*, p. 2.
[8] *Divine Art of Living*, p. 51.

attain to the goal of spirituality.[1] In the *Tablet of Wisdom*, Bahá'u'lláh says simply: '*Let each morn be better than its eve and each morrow richer than its yesterday.*'[2] Elsewhere, Bahá'u'lláh has urged man to live in such a way that each day his faith increases over the previous day. All of these passages strongly reinforce the notion that spirituality is to be won only through a gradual process and is not to be attained by any once-and-for-all act of faith.

We want now to understand the dynamics of this process. How do we even take one step forward? Also, we need to understand how a gradual process can produce a change as radical as that described by Bahá'u'lláh in the passage quoted in the previous section (see note 41).

The answer to this last consideration is that the rate of change produced by the process is not constant. In technical language, the process is exponential and not linear. To say that a growth process is linear means that the *rate* of growth is unchanging. In an exponential process, on the other hand, the rate of growth is very small in the beginning but gradually increases until a sort of saturation point is reached. When this point is passed, the rate of growth becomes virtually infinite, and the mechanism of the process becomes virtually automatic. There is, so to speak, an 'explosion' of progress.[3] As we examine the dynamics of the process of spiritual development we will see precisely how the exponential nature of the process can be concretely understood. Let us turn, then, to an examination of these dynamics.

The main problem is to understand how the various capacities of the individual—mind, heart, and will—are to interact in order to produce a definite step forward in the path towards full development. Basic to our understanding of this obviously complex interaction are two important points that Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá both stress regarding the growth process. The first is that no one faculty acting alone is sufficient to produce results.[4] The second point is that there is a hierarchical relationship between these faculties in which knowledge is first, love is second, and will is third. Let us discuss each of these points in turn.

As we have seen in Section I on the nature of man, each individual has certain basic, innate spiritual capacities, but in a degree and in a proportion which are unique to him. Moreover, the initial development of these innate capacities takes place under conditions over which the individual has very little control (e.g., the conditions of the family into which he is born, the social and physical surroundings to which he is exposed). An important consequence of this universal, existential situation is that each one of us arrives at the threshold of adulthood having developed a more or less spontaneous and unexamined pattern of responses to life situations. This pattern, unique to each individual, is an expression of his basic personality at that stage of his development.[5]

[1] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, rev. ed., 1954).

[2] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh* (Haifa, Israel: compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, 1978), p. 138.

[3] In an exponential process, the rate of growth at any given stage of the process is directly proportional to the total growth attained at that stage. Thus, as the process develops and progress is made, the rate of progress increases. An example would be a production process such that the total amount produced at any given stage is double the total amount produced at the previous stage (imagine a reproduction process in which bacteria double each second, starting with one bacterium). Since the double of a large number represents a much greater increase than the double of a small number, doubling is an example of an exponential law of progress.

[4] Bahá'u'lláh has stressed that the merit of all deeds is dependent upon God's acceptance (cf. *A Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas of Bahá'u'lláh*, [Haifa, Israel: the Universal House of Justice, 1973], p. 52), and 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said that '*good actions alone, without the knowledge of God, cannot be the cause of eternal salvation, everlasting success, and prosperity, and entrance into the Kingdom of God.*' *Some Answered Questions*, p. 238. On the other hand, knowledge without action is also declared to be unacceptable: '*Mere knowledge of principles is not sufficient. We all know and admit that justice is good but there is need of volition and action to carry out and manifest it.*' 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Foundations of World Unity* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1945), p. 26. At the same time, love and sincere good intentions alone are also insufficient for spiritual progress, for they need to be guided by knowledge and wisdom and expressed through action. Moreover, without true self-knowledge we may sometimes mistake physical attraction or self-centred emotional need as love and act upon it with negative results.

[5] At this point in our development, it is difficult if not impossible to know how much of our mode of functioning is due to our innate qualities and how much is due to the cumulative influence of external conditions. Thus, our spontaneous response pattern may be a reasonably authentic expression of our true selves or it may contain significant distortions. It is only by moving on to the next

Given the limited and relative nature of our innate spiritual capacities as well as the conditions under which they will have developed up to this point in our lives, our personal response pattern will necessarily involve many imbalances, immaturities and imperfections. Moreover, because of the largely spontaneous and unselfconscious nature of our pattern, we will be unaware of many aspects of it. Thus, our attainment of true self-knowedge will involve our becoming acutely aware of the internal psychic mechanisms of our response pattern. We must take stock of both the strengths and the weaknesses of our pattern and make deliberate efforts to bring it into harmony, balance, and full development. We must also begin to correct false or improper development.

This is the beginning of a transformation or growth process for which we assume responsibility. Until this point in our lives, our growth and development has been primarily in the hands of others. Though we have collaborated in the process with some degree of consciousness, nevertheless the major part has been beyond our control and indeed beyond our awareness. We have been the relatively passive recipients of a process to which we have been subjected by others. Now we must become the agents and prime movers of our own growth process. This self-directed process is a continuation of the previously unconscious one, but it represents a new and significant stage in our lives.

This new, self-directed growth process is going to take time. Moreover, it is sometimes going to be painful, and in the beginning stages at least, very painful. The new, more balanced functioning for which we begin to strive will appear at first to be unnatural since the spontaneous pattern we will have previously developed is the natural expression of our (relatively undeveloped and immature) selves.

In fact, one of the major problems involved in starting the process of spiritual growth is that we initially feel so comfortable with our spontaneous and unexamined mode of functioning. This is why it often happens that an individual becomes strongly motivated to begin the spiritual growth process only after his spontaneous system of coping has failed in some clear and dramatic way.

The realization that failure has occurred may come in many different forms. Perhaps we are faced with a 'test,' a life situation that puts new and unusual strain on our defective response system and thus reveals to us its weakness. We may even temporarily break down, i.e., become unable to function in situations which previously posed no difficulties. This is because we have become so disillusioned by our sudden realization of our weakness that we put the whole framework of our personalities into doubt. Perceiving that things are wrong, but not yet knowing just how or why, we suspend activity until we can gain perspective on what is happening.[1]

Or, the perception of the inadequacy of our spontaneous system of functioning may result from our unanticipated failure at some endeavour. We are then led to wonder why we anticipated a success that we were unable to deliver.[2]

stage of self-aware, self-directed growth that we can gain insight into this question.

[1] If a person has been fortunate in the quality of spiritual education he has received during his formative years, his spontaneous system of functioning may be very good indeed compared with others in less fortunate circumstances. If his spiritual education has been especially good, he will have already learned and understood the necessity of assuming the responsibility for his own spiritual growth process (and will have already begun to do so as an adolescent). In such cases as these, the individual will not need any test or dramatic setback in order to awaken him to spiritual realities of which he is already aware. Indeed, the Bahá'í Writings explain that the very purpose of the spiritual education of children and youth is to lead them to such an understanding of spiritual realities that, upon reaching adulthood, they will be naturally equipped to take charge of their own lives and spiritual growth processes. Spiritual education of this quality is extremely rare (in fact virtually nonexistent) in our society today, but the Bahá'í Writings contain many principles and techniques for the spiritual education of children and affirm that the application of these principles will, in the future, enable the majority of people to attain the age of adulthood with a clear understanding of the dynamics of the spiritual growth process. Though this state of affairs will not eliminate all human suffering (in particular suffering which comes from physical accidents or certain illnesses), it will eliminate that considerable proportion of human suffering which is generated by the sick, distorted, and destructive response patterns and modes of functioning so widespread in current society.

[2] The answer may be that our expectations were unreasonable to begin with. In this way, failure to obtain some particular external goal can lead to success in gaining valid knowledge and insight into our internal processes, thus fostering spiritual growth. Indeed, there is very little that happens to us in life that cannot be used to give us new self-insight and hence contribute to fulfilling the basic purpose of prosecuting the spiritual

The frequency with which the perception of inadequacy and the consequent motivation to change is born through fiery ordeal has led some to build a model of spiritual growth in which such dramatic failures and terrible sufferings are considered to be unavoidable and necessary aspects of the growth process. The Bahá'í Writings would appear to take a middle position on this question. On the one hand, they clearly affirm that tests, difficulties, and sufferings are inevitable, natural concomitants of the spiritual growth process. Such painful experiences, it is explained, serve to give us deeper understanding of certain spiritual laws upon which our continued growth depends.[1] On the other hand, many instances of human suffering are simply the result of careless living and are therefore potentially avoidable. Bahá'ís are taught to pray to God for preservation from violent or extreme tests. Moreover, the Bahá'í Writings strictly forbid asceticism and any other similar philosophies or disciplines which incite the individual actively to seek pain or suffering in the path of spiritual growth. The growth process itself involves enough pain without our seeking more through misguided or thoughtless living. But the deep sufferings and dramatic setbacks are potentially there for everyone who feels inclined to learn the hard way.[2]

Of course, even dramatic failures and sufferings may sometimes not be enough to convince us of our weaknesses and immaturities. We may put up various 'defences,' i.e., we may resist seeing the truth of the matter even when it is plain to everyone but ourselves. We engage in such strategies of self-illusion primarily when, for whatever reason, we find some particular bit of self-revelation unusually hard to take. If we do not learn the lesson from the situation, we may blindly and adamantly persist in the same behaviour or thought patterns which continue to produce new and perhaps even more painful situations. We are then in a 'vicious circle' in which our resistance to accepting the truer picture of reality actually increases with each new bit of negative feedback. Regarding such vicious circle situations, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said:

> *'Tests are a means by which a soul is measured as to its fitness, and proven out by its own acts. God knows its fitness beforehand, and also its unpreparedness, but man, with an ego, would not believe himself unfit unless some proof were given to him. Consequently his susceptibility to evil is proven to him when he falls into tests, and the tests are continued until the soul realizes its own unfitness, then remorse and regret tend to root out the weakness.'*[3]

Let us sum up. We start the process of conscious spiritual development by becoming aware of how we function at our present level of maturity. We assess as realistically as possible the level of intellectual, emotional, and behavioural maturity we have attained at present. As we perceive imbalanced development, underdevelopment, or improper development, we begin the job of correcting the perceived inadequacies.

It is at this stage, in particular, that the Bahá'í view of the nature of man becomes so important in fostering our spiritual growth and progress.[4] Suppose we perceive, for

growth process. It sometimes happens that a person whose spontaneous level of functioning is quite weak and defective is soon led to discover this fact while a person whose spontaneous level of functioning is rather high (due to favourable circumstances in early life or to exceptional natural endowments) persists for many years in his spiritually unaware state, making no spiritual progress whatever. In this way, the person whose spontaneous level of functioning is weak may take charge of his growth process much sooner than others and thereby eventually surpass those with more favourable natural endowments or initial life circumstances.

[1] Regarding the spiritual meaning and purpose of suffering, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said: *'Tests are benefits from God, for which we should thank Him. Grief and sorrow do not come to us by chance, they are sent to us by the Divine mercy for our own perfecting. . . . The mind and spirit of man advance when he is tried by suffering . . . suffering and tribulation free man from the petty affairs of this worldly life until he arrives at a state of complete detachment. His attitude in this world will be that of divine happiness. . . . Through suffering (one) will attain to an eternal happiness which nothing can take from him. . . . To attain eternal happiness one must suffer. He who has reached the state of self-sacrifice has true joy. Temporal joy will vanish.' Divine Art of Living*, pp. 89–90.

[2] Naturally, it is heartening to see examples of murderers, thieves, rapists, or drug addicts who turn themselves around and become useful members of society and occasionally morally and intellectually superior human beings. But one can also deplore the fact that people with such potential and talents must waste so many years and cause so much suffering to themselves and others before realizing their potential.

[3] Quoted in Daniel Jordan, *The Meaning of Deepening* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1973), p. 38.

[4] Of course, if our parents and educators have also had the Bahá'í viewpoint of the nature of man, this will have

example, that we have a tendency to be very wilful, aggressive, and dominant in our relations with others. From the Bahá'í viewpoint, we would not consider the negative features of this pattern as inherently evil or sinful or as arising from some evil part of ourselves, a part which must be despised and suppressed. We are free to recognize the positive potential of this aspect of our character. After examination, we might find that we have not sufficiently developed our feeling capacity and are, therefore, sometimes insensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Or perhaps we often act impulsively and need to develop also our understanding capacity so as to act more reflectively and wisely. Or again, we might find that our mode of relating to others represents an attempt to satisfy in an illegitimate way some need within us (a need for security or self-worth perhaps) that we have not succeeded in meeting legitimately. We will then understand that we have been engaging in an improper (and unproductive) use of will and must, therefore, set about redeploying our psychic forces in a more productive manner. As we gradually succeed in doing this, we will satisfy our inner need legitimately and improve our relationships with others at the same time.[1]

In other words, the model of human spiritual and moral functioning offered by the Bahá'í Faith enables us to respond creatively and constructively once we become aware that change is necessary. We avoid wasting precious energy on guilt, self-hatred, or other such unproductive mechanisms. We are able to produce some degree of change almost immediately. This gives us positive feedback, makes us feel better about ourselves, and helps generate courage to continue the process of change we have just begun.

We now come to the important question of the mechanism by which we can take a step forward in the path of spiritual progress. What we need to consider is the hierarchical relationship between knowledge, love, and action.

4. Knowledge, Love, and Will

A close examination of the psychology of the spiritual growth process as presented in the Bahá'í Writings indicates that the proper and harmonious functioning of our basic spiritual capacities depends on recognizing a hierarchical relationship among them. At the apex of this hierarchy is the knowing capacity.

> '*First and foremost among these favors, which the Almighty hath conferred upon man, is the gift of understanding. His purpose in conferring such a gift is none other except to enable His creature to know and recognize the one true God—exalted be His glory. This gift giveth man the power to discern the truth in all things, leadeth him to that which is right, and helpeth him to discover the secrets of creation. Next in rank, is the power of vision, the chief instrument whereby his understanding can function. The senses of hearing, of the heart, and the like, are similarly to be reckoned among the gifts with which the human body is endowed.*
>
> . . .
>
> '*These gifts are inherent in man himself. That which is preeminent above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, is the gift of Divine Revelation. Every bounty conferred by the Creator upon man, be it material or spiritual, is subservient unto this.*'[2]

contributed to our development during our formative years. However, our future growth and development will depend on whatever attitudes and viewpoints we personally maintain. Nevertheless, we will continue to be significantly affected by our interactions with others and therefore by the attitudes and viewpoints which they have. More will be said about this point in a later section.

[1] This hypothetical example serves to stress an important point concerning the Bahá'í view of human nature. To say that human nature, in both its material and spiritual aspects, is good means that all of man's natural needs and urges are God-given. Since Bahá'ís also believe that God's purpose for mankind is positive and beneficial, it follows that there is a legitimate, God-given (and truly satisfactory) way of meeting every natural internal human need (see the quotation in note 6). Such a view contrasts sharply with the idea that some of man's basic urges are intrinsically evil and/or inherently socially (and self) destructive. The Bahá'í view of man certainly recognizes that the perversion of a natural capacity or need can lead to virulent social, psychological, moral and spiritual ills, and that dealing with people or groups so afflicted can be extremely difficult. Nevertheless, in effecting a cure even of these terrible spiritual pathologies, it is helpful to realize that the process is based on teaching (and learning) detachment from the false pattern and attachment to the healthy one rather than the purely negative attempt to suppress unacceptable behaviour.

[2] *Gleanings*, pp. 194–195.

In the last chapter of *Some Answered Questions*, 'Abdu'l-Bahá elaborates even further on this theme. He explains that right actions and moral behaviour are not in themselves sufficient for spirituality. Alone, such actions and behaviour constitute '. . . *a body of the greatest loveliness, but without spirit.*'[1] He then explains: '. . . *that which is the cause of everlasting life, eternal honour, universal enlightenment, real salvation and prosperity is, first of all, the knowledge of God.*'[2] He continues, affirming: '*Second, comes the love of God, the light of which shines in the lamp of the hearts of those who know God.*' . . .[3] and '*The third virtue of humanity is the goodwill which is the basis of good actions . . . though a good action is praiseworthy, yet if it is not sustained by the knowledge of God, the love of God, and a sincere intention, it is imperfect.*'[4]

In another passage, 'Abdu'l-Bahá expresses the primacy of knowledge with respect to action as follows: '*Although a person of good deeds is acceptable at the Threshold of the Almighty, yet it is first "to know" and then "to do". Although a blind man produceth a most wonderful and exquisite art, yet he is deprived of seeing it. . . . By faith is meant, first, conscious knowledge, and second, the practice of good deeds.*'[5] In yet another passage, 'Abdu'l-Bahá describes the steps towards the attainment of spirituality:

> '*By what means can man acquire these things? How shall he obtain these merciful gifts and powers? First, through the knowledge of God. Second, through the love of God. Third, through faith. Fourth, through philanthropic deeds. Fifth, through self-sacrifice. Sixth, through severance from this world. Seventh, through sanctity and holiness. Unless he acquires these forces and attains to these requirements he will surely be deprived of the life that is eternal.*'[6]

In the above passages, and in many others not quoted, the hierarchical ordering of spiritual faculties is the same: Knowledge leads to love which generates the courage to act (i.e., faith) which forms the basis of the intention to act (i.e., motive and good will) which in turn leads to action itself (i.e., good deeds). Of course, the knowledge which starts this psycho-spiritual chain reaction is not just any kind of knowledge, but the knowledge of God which is equivalent to true self-knowledge.

As we begin to take charge of our own spiritual growth process, one of the main problems we face is that our existing perception of ourselves—of what we are and of what we should be—is bound to be distorted and inadequate in various ways, for this self-perception (or self-image) is the very basis of the spontaneous response pattern we have inherited from our childhood and early youth. Indeed, our mode of functioning at any given stage of our development is largely just a dramatization of our basic self-image; it is the projection of this self-image onto the various life situations we encounter. Thus, our self-image is, in many ways, the key to our personalities.

To say that our self-image is distorted means that it does not correspond to reality, the reality that is within us. Perhaps we have an exaggerated image of ourselves, believing we have talents and abilities we lack in reality. We may, at the same time and in other ways, underestimate ourselves, carrying an unrealistically negative concept of our capacities.

In any case, to the degree that our self-concept is false we will experience unpleasant tensions and difficulties as we become involved in various life situations. The false or unrealistic parts of our self-image will be implicitly judged by our encounter with external reality. We will sense this and begin to perceive, at first vaguely and uncomfortably but then more sharply, that something is wrong. Even though this feedback information from external reality may be from neutral sources and devoid of any value-judgemental quality, we may nevertheless perceive it as a threat or even an attack. If the feedback is not neutral but comes, say, in the form of blatantly negative criticism from others, our sense of being threatened will certainly be much greater.

Moreover, we will perceive the source of these threats as being somewhere outside ourselves. It will not naturally occur to us that the source lies rather within ourselves in

[1] *Some Answered Questions*, p. 300.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid., p. 302.
[5] *Bahá'í World of Faith*, pp. 382–383.
[6] *Divine Art of Living*, p. 19.

the form of an illusory and unrealistic self-concept. Therefore, our instinctive reaction to the negative feedback information will be to resist, to defend our self-image and to strive to maintain it. In defending our self-image, we believe we are defending our selves because we do not view ourselves as a mosaic of true and false, real and unreal. We see only the seamless, undifferentiated whole of 'I' or 'me.' The result is that we begin to bind up more and more of our psychic energies in the defence of our self-image. We confuse egotistic pride, which is our attachment to our limited and distorted self-concept, with self-respect and honour, which are expressions of the deep spiritual truth that we are created in the image of God with an intrinsic value given by Him and without any essentially evil or sinful part.

The 'binding energy' involved in our defence of our self-concept is frequently experienced as various negative emotions like fear, rage, jealousy, or aggression. These emotions are all expressions of our attempt to locate the source of our irritation outside ourselves in objective, external reality. We are also liable to experience considerable anxiety as we cling more and more desperately to whatever false part of ourselves we cannot relinquish. Clearly, the greater the pathology of our self-image and the greater our attachment to it, the stronger will be our sense of being threatened and attacked, and the greater will be the amount of psychic energy necessary to maintain and defend the false part of our self-image.

At this point, an increase in self-knowledge will be represented by some insight into ourselves which enables us to discard a false part of our self-image. This act of self-knowledge is the first stage of the mechanism involved in taking a single step forward in the process of spiritual growth. Such an increment in self-knowledge has one immediate consequence: It instantly releases that part of our psychic energy which was previously bound up in defending and maintaining the false self-concept. The release of this binding energy is most usually experienced as an extremely positive emotion, a sense of exhilaration and of liberation. It is love. We have a truer picture of our real (and therefore God-created) selves, and we have a new reservoir of energy which is now freed for its God-intended use in the form of service to others.

Following this release of energy will be an increase in courage. We have more courage partly because we have more knowledge of reality and have therefore succeeded in reducing, however slightly, the vastness of what is unknown and hence potentially threatening to us. We also have more courage because we have more energy to deal with whatever unforeseen difficulties may lie ahead. This new increment of courage is an increase in faith.

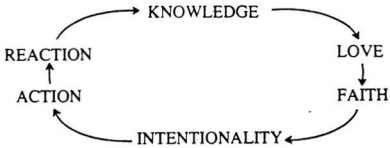
Courage generates within us *intentionality*, i.e., the willingness and the desire to act. We want to act because we are anxious to experience the sense of increased mastery that will come from dealing with life situations which previously appeared difficult or impossible but which now seem challenging and interesting. And we are also eager to seek new challenges, to use our new knowledge and energy in circumstances we would have previously avoided. And, most importantly, we have an intense desire to share with others, to serve them and to be an instrument, to whatever possible extent, in the process of their spiritual growth and development.

Finally, this intentionality, this new motivation, expresses itself in concrete action. Until now everything has taken place internally, in the inner recesses of our psyche. No external observer could possibly know that anything significant has taken place. But when we began to act, the reality of this inner process is dramatized. Action, then, is the dramatization of intentionality and therefore of knowledge, faith, and love. It is the visible, observable concomitant of the invisible process that has occurred within us.

We have taken a step forward in our spiritual development. We have moved from one level to another. However small the step may be, however minimal the difference between the old level of functioning and the new, a definite transition has taken place.

Whenever we act, we affect not only ourselves but also our physical and social environment. Our action thereby evokes a reaction from others. This reaction is, of course, just a form of the feedback information mentioned above. But the difference is that our action has now been the result of a

conscious and deliberate process. We know why we acted the way we did. Thus, we will perceive the reaction in a different way, even if it is negative (our good intentions certainly do not guarantee that the reaction will be positive). We will welcome the reaction because it will help us evaluate our actions. In short, the reaction to our actions will give us new knowledge, new self-insight. In this way, the cycle starts again and the process of taking another step along the path of spiritual growth is repeated. We represent this by the following diagram:



As is the case with any new discipline, so it is with learning spiritual growth. Our first steps forward are painfully self-conscious and hesitant. We are acutely aware of each detail, so much so that we wonder whether we will ever be able to make it work. We are elated at our first successes, but we tend to linger on the plateaus, becoming sufficiently motivated to take another step only when negative pressures begin to build up intolerably, forcing us to act.

Yet, as we pursue the process, we become more adept at it. Gradually, certain aspects become spontaneous and natural (not unconscious). They become part of us to the point of being reflex actions. The feedback loop resulting from our actions becomes more and more automatic. The rate of progress begins to pick up. The steps merge imperceptibly. Finally, the process becomes almost continuous. In other words, the rate of progress increases as we go along because we are not only making progress but also perfecting our skill at making progress.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has said:

> *'It is possible to so adjust one's self to the practice of nobility that its atmosphere surrounds and colours every act. When actions are habitually and conscientiously adjusted to noble standards, with no thought of the words that might herald them, then nobility becomes the accent of life. At such a degree of evolution one scarcely needs try any longer to be good—all acts are become the distinctive expression of nobility.'*[1]

A process in which the rate of progress is proportional to the amount of progress made is exponential (see note 52). Thus, an analysis of the mechanism of the spiritual growth process allows us to understand why this process, though remaining a gradual one, is exponential: It is because we perfect the process of growing spiritually as we grow, thereby increasing the rate at which growth occurs.

The above diagram, and the detailed analysis of each stage of the mechanism involved in the hierarchical relationship between knowledge, love, and will, should not lead us to forget the other fundamental point, namely that all of our spiritual faculties must function together at each stage of the mechanism. In order to gain self-insight, we must will to know the truth about ourselves, and we must be attracted towards the truth. When we act, we must temper our actions with the knowledge and wisdom we have already accumulated at that given point in our development.

Moreover, when we begin the process of conscious, self-directed spiritual growth, we do not start from absolute emptiness but rather from the basis of whatever knowledge, love, faith, and will we have developed at that point in our lives. Thus, the spiritual growth process is lived and dramatized by each individual in a way which is unique to him even though the basic mechanism of progress and the rules which govern it are universal.

5. Tools for Spiritual Growth

Our understanding of the process of spiritual growth and its dynamics does not guarantee that we will be successful in our pursuit of spirituality. We stand in need of practical tools to help us at every turn. The Bahá'í Writings give a clear indication of a number of such tools. In particular, prayer, meditation on and study of the Writings of the Manifestations, and active service to mankind are repeatedly mentioned. For example, in a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi it is stated:

> 'When a person becomes a Bahá'í, actually what takes place is that the seed of the

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Star of the West*, Vol. 17, p. 286.

spirit starts to grow in the human soul. This seed must be watered by the outpourings of the Holy Spirit. These gifts of the spirit are received through prayer, meditation, study of the Holy Utterances and service to the Cause of God . . . service in the Cause is like the plough which ploughs the physical soil when seeds are sown.'[1]

Some of the points mentioned briefly in the above passage are amplified in the following statement from the same source:

'How to attain spirituality is indeed a question to which every young man and woman must sooner or later try to find a satisfactory answer. . . .

'Indeed the chief reason for the evils now rampant in society is the lack of spirituality. The materialistic civilization of our age has so much absorbed the energy and interest of mankind that people in general do no longer feel the necessity of raising themselves above the forces and conditions of their daily material existence. There is not sufficient demand for things that we call spiritual to differentiate them from the needs and requirements of our physical existence. . . .

'The universal crisis affecting mankind is, therefore, essentially spiritual in its causes . . . the core of religious faith is that mystic feeling which unites Man with God. This state of spiritual communion can be brought about and maintained by means of meditation and prayer. And this is the reason why Bahá'u'lláh has so much stressed the importance of worship. . . . The Bahá'í Faith, like all other Divine Religions, is thus fundamentally mystic in character. Its chief goal is the development of the individual and society, through the acquisition of spiritual virtues and powers. It is the soul of man which has first to be fed. And this spiritual nourishment prayer can best provide.'[2]

With regard to meditation, the Bahá'í Writings explain that it has no set form and that each individual is free to meditate in the manner he finds most helpful. Statements by 'Abdu'l-Bahá describe meditation as a silent contemplation, a sustained mental concentration or focusing of thought:

'*Bahá'u'lláh says there is a sign (from God) in every phenomenon: the sign of the intellect is contemplation and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at one time—he cannot both speak and meditate. . . .*

'*Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself: in that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things-in-themselves.*'[3]

'Abdu'l-Bahá leaves no doubt concerning the importance of meditation as a tool for spiritual growth:

'*You cannot apply the name 'man' to any being void of this faculty of meditation; without it he would be a mere animal, lower than the beasts.*

'*Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit—the bestowal of the Spirit is given in reflection and meditation.*'[4]

And Bahá'u'lláh has said that '*One hour's reflection is preferable to seventy years of pious worship.*'[5]

The Bahá'í Writings suggest that the words and teachings of the Manifestations provide a helpful focus for meditation. Also, while giving considerable freedom to the individual concerning prayer, they likewise suggest that the prayers of the Manifestations are especially useful in establishing a spiritual connection between the soul of man and the Divine Spirit. Prayer is defined as conversation or communion with God:

'*The wisdom of prayer is this, that it causes a connection between the servant and the True One, because in that state of prayer man with all his heart and soul turns his face*

[1] Excerpt from a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi in *The Bahá'í Life*, p. 20.

[2] Excerpt from a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi in *Directives From the Guardian* (New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust), pp. 86–87.

[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1979), pp. 174–175.

[4] ibid., p. 175.

[5] *Book of Certitude*, p. 238. These strong statements of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá concerning meditation should not, however, be taken as implying an absolute faith in man's intuitive powers. See note 35.

towards His Highness the Almighty, seeking His association and desiring His love and compassion. The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing. That is why the greatest hope of every soul who is attracted to the kingdom of God is to find an opportunity to entreat and supplicate at the ocean of His utterance, goodness and generosity.'[1]

'Abdu'l-Bahá has elsewhere explained that the spirit in which one prays is the most important dimension of prayer. A ritualistic mumbling of words or a mindless repetition of syllables is not prayer. Moreover, the Bahá'í Writings enjoin the spiritual seeker to make of his whole life, including his professional activities, an act of worship:

'In the Bahá'í Cause arts, sciences and all crafts are counted as worship. The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability, conscientiously, concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God. Briefly, all effort put forth by man from the fullness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity. This is worship: to serve mankind and to minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer.' . . .[2]

Thus, it is the spirit and motive of service to others which makes external activity a tool for spiritual progress. In order to pursue the goal of spirituality, one must therefore maintain a persistently high level of motivation. Prayer, meditation, and study of the Words of the Manifestations are essential in this regard:

'The first thing to do is to acquire a thirst for spirituality, then Live the Life! Live the Life! Live the Life! The way to acquire this thirst is to meditate upon the future life. Study the Holy Words, read your Bible, read the Holy Books, especially study the Holy Utterances of Bahá'u'lláh. Prayer and Meditation, take much time for these two. Then will you know the Great Thirst, and then only can you begin to Live the Life!'[3]

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Divine Art of Living*, p. 27.
[2] ibid., p. 65.
[3] 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Bahá'í Magazine*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1928.

Thus, while the quality and maturity of one's relationship to others remain the best measure of spiritual progress and growth, acquiring the capacity for such mature relationships depends essentially on an intense inner life and self-development. Moreover, the individual's actions are experienced both by himself and by others, whereas inner life is experienced only by the individual and is thereby more properly 'his.' The sense of 'that mystic feeling which unites Man with God' becomes to the spiritual seeker the most precious of experiences. It is that part of spirituality which lies at the centre of his heart and soul.

In this inner dimension, spirituality becomes a sort of dialogue between the human soul and the Divine Spirit as channelled through the Manifestation. It is within this subjective but nevertheless real dimension of inner spirituality that one finds all the passion, the exaltation of spirit, as well as the terrible but somehow precious moments of despair, of utter helplessness and defeat, of shame and repentance. It is here that one learns with the deeply certain knowledge only personal experience can bestow, that the ultimate category of existence, the absolute and transcendent God who guides and oversees our destiny, is an infinitely loving and merciful Being.

III. The Collective Dimension of Spirituality

1. The Social Matrix of Individual Growth

Until now in our discussion, we have viewed the process of spiritual growth as being primarily an individual one, a process which effects changes within the individual and in his behaviour towards his social and natural environment. However, it is obvious that individual spiritual growth does not and cannot take place in a vacuum. It takes place within the context of a given society that is bound to have a profound influence on the individual in his pursuit of spirituality. Indeed, there are many intricate, subtle, and complex interactions between any society and each of the individuals composing it. These interactions produce reciprocal influences that operate on different levels of behaviour, life experience, and consciousness. It is therefore

more accurate to view the spiritual growth process as an organically social one having several identifiable but related components. Some of these are: (1) an individual component, which has been the main focus of our discussion in the previous sections, (2) a collective or global component, involving the evolution of society as a whole, and (3) an interactive component, involving the relationship between the individual and society. In this section, the global and interactive dimensions of the spiritual growth process will be briefly examined.

The Bahá'í Writings make clear that, just as the individual has a basically spiritual purpose to his existence, so society also has a spiritual *raison d'être*. The spiritual purpose of society is to provide the optimal milieu for the full and adequate spiritual growth and development of the individuals in that society. In the Bahá'í view, all other aspects of social evolution, such as technological innovations, institutional structures, decision-making procedures and the exercise of authority, group interactions, and the like, are to be judged positive or negative according to whether they contribute to or detract from the goal of fostering a favourable milieu for spiritual growth.

Such a concept of society and its meaning is certainly a radical departure from the commonly held view that society serves primarily as a vehicle for economic activity to provide for the conditions of material existence. However, the inherent limitations of this common viewpoint become readily apparent when one reflects that nature itself already provides the basic conditions for material existence. Therefore, providing such conditions can hardly be the fundamental purpose of human society, for society then becomes redundant at best and possibly harmful.

Of course, economic activity is an important part of society's function since a certain level of material well-being and stability provides opportunities for spiritual growth. A social milieu in which large segments of the population are starving or living in other such extreme conditions is hardly a milieu which is favourable to the full and adequate spiritual development of its members, although spiritual growth can take place under such conditions. Also, a just, well-organized, and efficient economy can serve to free man, at least partially, from boring and excessive labour and thus provide time for higher intellectual and artistic pursuits.

Another spiritual implication of economic activity is that it requires intense human interaction and therefore provides many of the challenges and opportunities necessary to stimulate spiritual growth among its participants. It is in the market place that questions of justice, compassion, honesty, trust, and self-sacrifice become living reality and not just abstract philosophy. We therefore cannot safely neglect the 'outer' dimension of society in the name of our basic preoccupation with spiritual growth. Indeed, if the prevailing structures and behavioural norms of society are such as to inhibit or discourage spiritual growth, the individual will be impeded in his personal growth process. The occasional moral hero will succeed in spiritualizing his life against all odds, but the vast majority will eventually succumb to the prevailing negative influences.

Also, one of the important characteristics of personal spiritual maturity is a highly developed social conscience. The spiritually-minded individual has become intensely aware of the many ways he depends on society and has a keen sense of social obligation. Society thus benefits from the spiritualized individuals within its fold because of the unselfish quality of their service to the collectivity, and because their particular talents and capacities are relatively well-developed. At the same time, the individual spiritual seeker's relative dependence on society fosters his humility, and the energy and effort he contributes towards the solution of social problems helps prevent the (necessary) attention he gives to his inner spiritual struggles from leading to an unhealthy degree of self-preoccupation. Bahá'u'lláh has said that the individual in the pursuit of spirituality should be anxiously concerned with the needs of the society in which he lives and that '*All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization.*'[1]

2. Unity

In our discussion of the principles governing

[1] *Gleanings*, p. 215.

individual spiritual growth, we have seen that certain attitudes and behaviour patterns are conducive to spiritual growth whereas others are not. In the same way, certain social norms and types of social structures are conducive to the spiritual growth process whereas others are not. One of the fundamental features of the Bahá'í Faith is that its teachings include detailed prescriptions regarding social structures and their relationship to spiritual growth. Broadly speaking, Bahá'u'lláh teaches that those social and economic structures which favour co-operation and unity are conducive to the spiritual growth process while those structures based on competition, conflict, power-seeking, and dominance-seeking hierarchies are destructive to the growth process. The unity taught by Bahá'u'lláh is not simply a formal juxtaposition of disparate parts, but an organic unity based on a spiritual quality of relationship between groups and among individuals working within a given group. Nor is it a uniformity or homogeneity, but a 'unity in diversity,' a unity in which the particular qualities of the co-operating components are respected in a way that enables these qualities to contribute to the unity of the whole rather than detracting from it as so often happens in the case of social structures based on competition and dominance-seeking.

The Bahá'í focus on unity, and the attention which the Bahá'í Writings give to the social and collective dimension of the spiritual growth process probably represent the most original contributions of the Bahá'í Faith to the collective spiritual consciousness of mankind, for the individual dimension of the spiritual growth process has been a part of every revealed religion. Indeed, some revelations, for example those of Jesus and Buddha, have focused almost entirely on the individual. Other revelations, such as those of Moses and Muḥammad, have treated the social dimension to a greater degree, giving laws governing the behaviour of groups as well as that of individuals. However, in the case of the Bahá'í Faith, we see for perhaps the first time in religious history the spiritual growth process in its full collective dimension.

3. Social Evolution; World Order

In the Bahá'í view, the whole of mankind constitutes an organic unit which has undergone a collective growth process similar to that of the individual. Just as the individual achieves his maturity in stages, gradually developing his abilities and enlarging the scope of his knowledge and understanding, so mankind has passed through different stages in the as yet unfinished process of achieving its collective maturity. According to Bahá'u'lláh, each occurrence of revelation has enabled mankind to achieve some particular step forward in its growth process. Of course, every revelation has contributed in a general way to mankind's spiritual awareness by restating and elaborating those eternal spiritual truths which are the very basis of human existence. But Bahá'u'lláh affirms that, besides this general and universal function common to all revelations, there is a specific function by which each revelation plays its particular and unique role in the total growth process. Here are some of the ways that these two dimensions of revelation are described in the Bahá'í Writings:

> *'The divine religions embody two kinds of ordinances. First those which constitute essential or spiritual teachings of the Word of God. These are faith in God, the acquirement of the virtues which characterize perfect manhood, praiseworthy moralities, the acquisition of the bestowals and bounties emanating from the divine effulgences; in brief the ordinances which concern the realm of morals and ethics. This is the fundamental aspect of the religion of God and this is of the highest importance because knowledge of God is the fundamental requirement of man. . . . This is the essential foundation of all the divine religions, the reality itself, common to all. . . .*
>
> *'Secondly: Laws and ordinances which are temporary and non-essential. These concern human transactions and relations. They are accidental and subject to change according to the exigencies of time and place.'*[1]
>
> *'God's purpose in sending His Prophets unto men is twofold. The first is to liberate the children of men from the darkness of ignorance, and guide them to the light of true understanding. The second is to ensure the*

[1] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Faith For Every Man* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1972), p. 43.

peace and tranquillity of mankind, and provide all the means by which they can be established.'[1]

'*These Manifestations of God have each a twofold station. One is the station of pure abstraction and essential unity . . . If thou wilt observe with discriminating eyes, thou wilt behold Them all abiding in the same tabernacle, soaring in the same heaven, seated upon the same throne, uttering the same speech, and proclaiming the same Faith. . . .*

The other station is the station of distinction, and pertaineth to the world of creation, and to the limitations thereof. In this respect, each Manifestation of God hath a distinct individuality, a definitely prescribed mission, a predestined revelation, and specially designated limitations. Each one of them is known by a different name, is characterized by a special attribute, fulfils a definite mission, and is entrusted with a particular Revelation.'[2]

Bahá'u'lláh associates His 'particular revelation' with the transition from adolescence to adulthood in the collective life of mankind. He affirms that the social history of mankind from its primitive beginnings in the formation of small social groups until the present day represents the stages of the infancy, childhood, and adolescence of mankind. Mankind now stands poised on the brink of maturity, and the current turbulence and strife in the world are analogous to the turbulence of the ultimate stages of preadulthood in the life of the individual.

> 'The long ages of infancy and childhood, through which the human race had to pass, have receded into the background. Humanity is now experiencing the commotions invariably associated with the most turbulent stage of its evolution, the stage of adolescence, when the impetuosity of youth and its vehemence reach their climax, and must gradually be superseded by the calmness, the wisdom, and the maturity that characterize the stage of manhood.'[3]

> 'The principle of the Oneness of Mankind —the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve—is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope. . . . Its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family. . . . It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced. . . .
>
> 'It represents the consummation of human evolution—an evolution that has had its earliest beginnings in the birth of family life, its subsequent development in the achievement of tribal solidarity, leading in turn to the constitution of the city-state, and expanding later into the institution of independent and sovereign nations.
>
> 'The principle of the Oneness of Mankind, as proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, carries with it no more and no less than a solemn assertion that attainment to this final stage in this stupendous evolution is not only necessary but inevitable, that its realization is fast approaching, and that nothing short of a power that is born of God can succeed in establishing it.'[4]

Because Bahá'u'lláh conceived His fundamental mission to be that of realizing world unity, His teachings contain detailed proposals for the establishment of institutions and social forms conducive to that end. For example, He proposes the establishment of a world legislature and a world court having final jurisdiction in all disputes between nations. He proposes the adoption of a universal auxiliary language, of universal obligatory education, of the principle of equality of the sexes, and of an economic system which would eliminate the extremes of poverty and wealth. All of these institutions and principles He sees as essential to building a society that encourages and promotes the full spiritual growth of its members.

> 'The emergence of a world community, the consciousness of world citizenship, the founding of a world civilization and world

[1] *Gleanings*, pp. 79–80.
[2] ibid., pp. 50–52.
[3] Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1955), p. 202.
[4] ibid., pp. 42–43.

culture—all of which must synchronize with the initial stages in the unfoldment of the Golden Age of the Bahá'í Era—should, by their very nature, be regarded, as far as this planetary life is concerned, as the furthermost limits in the organization of human society, though man, as an individual, will, nay must indeed as a result of such a consummation, continue indefinitely to progress and develop.'[1]

Bahá'u'lláh gave the term 'world order' to the new system He envisaged. Bahá'ís believe that the establishment of this new world order is ultimately the only answer to the quest for spiritual growth. For if the stability, harmony, and morally progressive character of human society are not assured, the individual's goal of achieving spiritual development will be frustrated and his basic purpose in life thereby undermined.

The change in focus which results from this global perspective on the spiritual growth process is succinctly and clearly expressed by Shoghi Effendi:

> '. . . the object of life to a Bahá'í is to promote the oneness of mankind. The whole object of our lives is bound up with the lives of all human beings; not a personal salvation we are seeking, but a universal one. . . . Our aim is to produce a world civilization which will in turn react on the character of the individual. It is, in a way, the inverse of Christianity which started with the individual unit and through it reached out to the conglomerate life of men.'[2]

4. The Bahá'í Community

The social structures and behavioural norms of present-day society are largely those we have inherited from the past. For the most part, they have not been consciously chosen by the collectivity through some deliberate process, but rather have evolved in response to various temporary and sometimes contradictory exigencies. They most certainly have not been chosen according to the criterion of fostering spiritual growth.

Especially in the industrialized West, but even in more technologically primitive societies, the currently existing social forms are largely based on competition and on dominance-seeking hierarchies. Such social forms tend to promote disunity, conflict, aggressive behaviour, power-seeking behaviour, and excessive preoccupation with purely material success. The following passage from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh powerfully conveys the destructive effects mankind has suffered as a result of these social forms and behaviour patterns:

> *'And amongst the realms of unity is the unity of rank and station. It redoundeth to the exaltation of the Cause, glorifying it among all peoples. Ever since the seeking of preference and distinction came into play, the world hath been laid waste. It hath become desolate. Those who have quaffed from the ocean of divine utterance and fixed their gaze upon the Realm of Glory should regard themselves as being on the same level as the others and in the same station. Were this matter to be definitely established and conclusively demonstrated through the power and might of God, the world would become as the Abhá Paradise.*
>
> *'Indeed, man is noble, inasmuch as each one is a repository of the sign of God. Nevertheless, to regard oneself as superior in knowledge, learning or virtue, or to exalt oneself or seek preference, is a grievous transgression. Great is the blessedness of those who are adorned with the ornament of this unity and have been graciously confirmed by God.'*[3]

Given Bahá'u'lláh's affirmation that unity is the necessary social basis for spiritual growth, it follows that we are now living in a society which is largely indifferent and in many ways detrimental to the spiritual growth process. Indeed, the historical events of the twentieth century and the moral quality of our day to day lives provide powerful confirmations of this hypothesis. The social structures of present-day society are vestiges of past forms which may have been helpful in stimulating certain kinds of growth during previous stages

[1] ibid., p. 163.

[2] Shoghi Effendi, quoted in *The Spiritual Revolution* (Thornhill, Ontario: Canadian Bahá'í Community, 1974), p. 9.

[3] Quoted in a letter from the Universal House of Justice published in *Bahá'í Canada*, June–July 1978, p. 3.

of mankind's spiritual evolution but which have now outlived their usefulness.

This situation obviously poses a deep problem to any individual who is serious in his pursuit of spiritual growth. Even if one accepts Bahá'u'lláh's model of world order and is willing to strive to bring it about as the best hope for mankind, how is one to pursue successfully the spiritual growth process in a milieu that is so unconcerned with it?

The answer the Bahá'í Faith offers to this dilemma is the Bahá'í community. Bahá'u'lláh has not only offered a vision and a hope for the future, He has established a living community which already functions on the basis of the unity principles. This community is conceived as a prototype or an embryo of the future world society. By relating properly to this community and participating in it, the individual finds himself capable of developing his spiritual capacities in a significant way, even if the enveloping society-at-large remains indifferent to the growth process. Bahá'ís view the Bahá'í community established by Bahá'u'lláh as a precious and necessary tool for this transition period from the old to the new social order. At the same time, the growth and development of the Bahá'í community are part of the progressive establishment of the world order itself. Moreover, the Bahá'í community functions as an entity and as a constructive force within the larger community to stimulate the movement of society as a whole towards unity.

The individual's participation in the Bahá'í community is not passive. There is no priesthood, clergy, or ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Bahá'í Faith. Spiritual growth is a self-initiated, self-responsible process, and the individual's participation in the Bahá'í community in no way diminishes his responsibility for his personal development.

In order to understand more clearly how participation in the Bahá'í community fosters spiritual development, let us focus for a moment on the spiritually negative features of modern-day society. It is in the contrast between the Bahá'í community, based on unity and co-operation, and the larger society based on competition and dominance-seeking, that we can gain insight into the interactive dimension of the spiritual growth process.

It is the essence of the relationship between an individual and the society to which he belongs that the individual is strongly motivated to succeed according to the prevailing norms of success in the given society. Security, status, material well-being, social acceptance, and approval are the main things the individual seeks from society, and success in satisfying societal norms yields these rewards. Society wants the individual's productive effort, his collaboration and support in the realization of collective goals. Society applies both incentives and threats to induce the individual to accept social norms and goals.

To say that an individual accepts the norms and goals of a society means that he uses his understanding capacity to learn the skills necessary for success. He must also cultivate those emotional patterns, attitudes, and aspirations which characterize socially successful individuals in the given society. Finally, he must act in a way conducive to success. Such a pattern of behaviour will involve producing certain goods or services as well as a certain kind of relationship with other members of the society.

The norms of modern industrialized society largely revolve around material success through competition, dominance-seeking and power-seeking. The goal is usually a high level of economic productivity coupled with a high ranking and status in the social hierarchy. To succeed, the individual must learn those skills and techniques which enable him to best others in competitive struggle and to obtain power over them. He must learn how to manipulate, control, and dominate others. The knowledge which is useful to these ends is often diametrically opposed to the kind of knowledge involved in spiritual growth. We have earlier seen that the self-knowledge which is equivalent to the knowledge of God amounts to knowing how to submit to the will of God: The individual must learn how to be the conscious instrument of a force that is his moral and spiritual superior. Thus, virtually all the skills he develops in the pursuit of social success in a power-oriented society will be useless and, in fact, detrimental to his spiritual growth. The spiritually sensitive individual in modern society is therefore faced with a dilemma. He will either become a split personality, trying to be spiritual part of the time and to manipulate others for the

remainder, or else he will ultimately have to choose between the two goals of social success and spiritual progress.[1]

It is not only the development of the knowing capacity that is falsified by the pursuit of success in competition, but the heart's feeling capacity as well. One must continually give priority to one's own needs and desires and become increasingly insensitive to the needs of others. Genuine compassion towards and love for other individuals undermines the will to dominate because such empathetic emotions lead one to identify with and to experience the feelings of the dominated other.

The giving and receiving of love is a reciprocal or symmetric relationship. It is a positive and satisfying experience for both parties. Dominance, however, is asymmetrical, yielding positive emotions and a sense of exhilaration for the dominant one, but generally negative, depressed, angry and self-deprecating emotions for the one dominated. It is therefore logically and psychologically impossible to seek to dominate someone whom we genuinely love, since the empathetic emotions of love allow us to feel the unpleasant emotions of being dominated, and this experience undermines our willingness to become the conscious agent of producing such negative emotions in one we love and respect.

In other words, we cannot be successful in competitive struggle with others without hurting them, and we cannot deliberately hurt others if we love them. It is thus easy to see how a person who dedicates himself to success in competitive struggle with others will increasingly become alienated both from himself and from others. His heart will become atrophied and hard. The development of his feeling capacity will be stunted and distorted.

The will capacity is also misused in the pursuit of power and dominance. The force of the will is turned outward towards others and used against them rather than being turned inward towards self-mastery and self-dominance. The will is used to oppose others, to limit their field of action, rather than being applied to develop the internal capacities of the self in the pursuit of spirituality and excellence.

Excellence represents self-development, the flowering of the self's capacities and qualities. It involves comparisons between our performance at different instances and under various circumstances (so-called 'self-competition'). But competition and power-seeking are based on comparisons with the performance of others. Such comparisons usually lead either to mediocrity, arrogance, undeveloped potential and unrealistically low self-expectations or else to depression, jealousy, aggressive behaviour and unrealistically high self-expectations, depending on the capacities of those with whom we choose to compare ourselves. Neither of these is conducive to excellence.

In pursuing power, we tend to manipulate others, to use them as means to our ends. This is the very opposite of serving others and of acting towards them in such a way as to contribute to their spiritual advancement—the proper, God-intended expression of the will in action. In fact, unselfish service to society and true self-development go hand-in-hand, for a high degree of development makes us secure in our identity. It gives us inner peace and self-confidence. Moreover, we have more to give others, and our service is therefore more valuable and more effective.

Thus, spirituality and the pursuit of excellence reinforce each other while power struggle and competition are inimical to both. The pursuit of dominance may stimulate some development on the part of the 'winners,' but such development is often at the expense of others and of society as a whole. And even for the winners, it frequently produces an unstable, artificial, and imbalanced kind of development.

A society based on unity, co-operation and mutual encouragement allows everyone to pursue spirituality and excellence while contributing significantly to the society itself. Just as love is satisfactory to both giver and receiver, so unity is beneficial both to society and to the individual members of the society. Such is the interactive dimension of the spiritual growth process.

Unity, co-operation, and mutuality constitute the norms and goals of the Bahá'í com-

[1] Success in the pursuit of dominance must be distinguished from success in the pursuit of excellence. Striving for excellence is highly encouraged in the Bahá'í Writings. That the two pursuits are different, and that competitive struggle with others is not necessary to attain excellence, are important spiritual and psychological insights.

munity and form the basis of its institutions. Therefore, all the spiritual benefits which derive from a society based on unity principles accrue to those who participate in the Bahá'í community. There is, first of all, the association with other people who are also committed to the process of self-aware, self-initiated spiritual growth. Since no two people have exactly the same experiences or have attained an identical level of development in all areas of their lives, the individual participant receives much stimulation and help from others. When facing a spiritual crisis in his personal life, he can usually find those who have already faced a similar crisis and can give helpful advice and loving encouragement. He therefore overcomes many difficulties which, under other circumstances, might have discouraged him to such an extent that he would have abandoned the struggle for spiritual growth. He consequently attains a much higher level of development than would have been the case had he been deprived of such helpful associations and fellowship.

At the same time, the mutuality and reciprocal nature of association based on unity means that the relationship with the community is not unidirectional: The individual is not a passive recipient of spiritual advice from experts, but has opportunities to contribute to the growth of others and of the community. His own qualities, experiences, and opinions are respected and valued by others. He is constantly being called upon to sacrifice purely selfish interests in the path of service. This acts as a check on pride and arrogance. Since sincerely motivated service to others is the real fruit of the spiritual growth process, the individual is provided almost daily with concrete situations which enable him better to evaluate the level of spiritual development he has attained.

The spiritual seeker in contemplative isolation can easily fall victim to the subtle pitfall of spiritual pride. Preoccupied with his perception of his internal mental processes, he can quickly acquire the self-generated illusion that he has reached a high degree of spiritual development. Constant and vigorous participation in a hard-working community can help to dispel such conceits.

Participation in the Bahá'í community enables one to acquire certain specific skills that cannot be easily acquired elsewhere. For example, the basis of group decision-making in the Bahá'í Faith is *consultation*, a process involving a frank but loving expression of views by those involved on a basis of absolute equality. Consultation represents a subtle and multifaceted spiritual process, and time and effort are required to perfect it. Similarly, the electoral processes in the Bahá'í community involve many unique aspects which will not be discussed in the framework of this paper.

Another important dimension of the Bahá'í community is its diversity and universality. One is called upon to associate intimately with people of all social, cultural, and racial backgrounds. In society at large, our associations tend to be based on homogeneity: We associate with people with whom we feel the most comfortable. If most of our associations are on this basis, it will be difficult for us to discover our subtle prejudices and illusory self-concepts. Our friends will be those who are congruent with the false as well as the true aspects of our personality. The immense diversity within the Bahá'í community makes the discovery of prejudice and self-deceit much easier.

Thus, the Bahá'í Faith views the spiritual growth process as both collective and individual. The collective dimension involves the principles by which human society can be properly structured and ordered so as to optimize spiritual and material well-being and to provide a healthy growth milieu for all individuals within it. The individual bears the primary responsibility for prosecuting his own growth process and for working to create a unified and healthy social milieu for everyone. This involves working towards the establishment of world unity. In particular, it involves active participation in the ongoing life of the Bahá'í community which, though forming only a part of society as a whole, already functions on the basis of the unity principles and seeks to implement them progressively in society.

IV. Summary and Conclusion

In the Bahá'í conception, spirituality is the process of the full, adequate, proper, and harmonious development of the spiritual capacities of each human being and of the

collectivity of human beings. These spiritual capacities are capacities of a nonphysical, indivisible and eternally lasting entity called the soul. The soul of each individual, with its particular characteristics, is formed at the moment of the conception of the physical body. The process of spiritual development is eternal, continuing in other dimensions of existence after the death of the physical body. The body and its physical capacities serve as instruments for this process of spiritual growth during the period of earthly life when the body and soul are linked together.

All of man's initially given capacities, both physical and spiritual, are good and potentially helpful to the spiritual growth process. However, there is a certain tension between the body's physical needs and the metaphysical needs of the soul. Physical needs and desires must therefore be disciplined (not suppressed) if they are to contribute to the process of spiritual development in an effective way. Through the misuse or improper development of his initially given capacities, man can acquire unnatural or inordinate capacities and needs inimical to the spiritual growth process.

Among the basic spiritual capacities to be developed are the understanding or knowing capacity, the heart or feeling capacity, and the will, which represents the capacity to initiate and sustain action. The beginning stage of the process of spiritual development in childhood is one in which the individual is primarily the passive recipient of an educational process initiated by others. As the individual attains the full development of his physical capacities in adolescence, he becomes the active and self-responsible agent of his own growth process.

The goal of the development of the knowing capacity is the attainment of truth, which means that which is in conformity with reality. The ultimate reality to be known is God, and the highest form of knowledge is the knowledge of Him. God is the self-aware and intelligent force (Creator) responsible for man and his development. This knowledge of God takes the form of a particular kind of self-knowledge which enables the individual to become a conscious, willing, and intelligent instrument for God and for his purposes.

The goal of the development of the heart capacity is love. Love represents the energy necessary to pursue the goal of spiritual development. It is experienced as a strong attraction for and attachment to God and the laws and principles He has established. It also expresses itself as an attraction to others and in particular to the spiritual potential they have as beings like ourselves. Love thereby creates within us the desire to become instruments for the growth process of others.

The goal of the development of the will capacity is service to God, to others, and to ourselves. Service is realized by a certain kind of intentionality (good will) which is dramatized through appropriate action (good works). All of these basic capacities must be developed systematically and concomitantly, or else false or improper development (unspirituality) will result.

Our condition during the period of earthly life is one in which we have direct access to material reality but only indirect access to spiritual reality. The proper relationship to God is therefore established by means of recognizing and accepting the Manifestations or prophetic figures Who are superhuman beings sent by God for the purpose of educating and instructing mankind. These Manifestations are the link between the visible world of material reality and the invisible, but ultimately more real, world of spiritual reality. Acceptance of the Manifestations and obedience to the laws They reveal are seen to constitute an essential prerequisite for the successful prosecution of the spiritual growth process.

The human race constitutes an organic unit whose fundamental component is the individual. Mankind undergoes a collective spiritual evolution analogous to the individual's own growth process. The periodic appearance of a Manifestation of God is the motive force of this process of social evolution. Human society is currently at the stage of the critical transition from adolescence to adulthood or maturity. The practical expression of this yet-to-be-achieved maturity is a unified world society based on a world government, the elimination of prejudice and war, and the establishment of justice and harmony among the nations and peoples of the world. The particular mission of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is to provide the basis for this new

world order and the moral impetus to effect this transition in the collective life of mankind. Relating effectively to this present stage of society's evolution is essential to the successful prosecution of the spiritual growth process in our individual lives. Participation in the world-wide Bahá'í community is especially helpful in this regard.

Such, in its barest outlines, is the process of individual and collective spiritual growth as found in the Bahá'í Writings. Undoubtedly, what remains to be discovered and understood in the vast revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is infinitely greater than what we can now understand and greater still than what we have been able to discuss in the present article. But the only intelligent response to this perception of our relative ignorance is not to wait passively until such future time as these deeper implications will have become evident, but rather to act vigorously and decisively on the basis of our limited understanding. Indeed, without such a response to the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, we may never arrive at the point where we will be able to penetrate the more subtle and deeper dimensions of the spiritual growth process.

No true knowledge is purely intellectual, but spiritual knowledge is unique in the breadth of its experiential dimension: it must be lived to become part of us. Nowhere does this truth appear more clearly than in the succinct and powerful coda to Bahá'u'lláh's *Hidden Words*:

> '*I bear witness, O friends! that the favour is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavours in the path of detachment will reveal.*'[1]

[1] Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1954), pp. 51–52.

5. ONE KIND DEED

DIPCHAND KHIANRA

Be thankful to God for having enabled you to recognize His Cause. Whoever has received this blessing must, prior to his acceptance, have performed some deed which, though he himself was unaware of its character, was ordained by God as a means whereby he has been guided to find and embrace the Truth.

Bahá'u'lláh
The Dawn-Breakers, p. 586

NOTHING new or exciting ever seemed to happen in the village of Maryamábád, in the district of Yazd, in Írán. Although it was a fair size, the village was far removed from civilization and lacked the hustle and bustle of a large urban centre. The populace led rather quiet and simple lives. And in all the area there probably could not have been found a more simple, quiet and unsophisticated man than Mihrabán Rustam Bulbulán.

From the moment of his birth Mihrabán, whose name means 'Kind', had known only a rural life. Farming had been the occupation of his forefathers and it was to become his, as well. Even as a child he saw more of farm and field, mule and plough, tilling and cultivation, than he did of school. For a couple of years he attended the nearest Zoroastrian fire-temple where he learned the alphabet and, without truly understanding them, committed to memory some prayers from the Avesta, the sacred books of the religion of his forebears. But that was all the education he received.

As a young man Mihrabán began to work in the fields and from that time on he lost touch with the world outside his own immediate neighbourhood. At the break of day he would go to his fields and there he would remain until sunset, day after day, summer and winter. He had no companions except the birds that flew overhead making shrill cries and those which chirped from the trees as he worked.

Zoroastrians in Írán did not then enjoy the rights of first-grade citizens. They could not go about in the town unless they wore their coloured uniforms which served to identify and set them apart. They could not mount a donkey and pass through the bazaar without some ruffian taunting and abusing them. They dared not go out on a rainy day for it was believed by their Muslim neighbours that they would pollute the rain, the symbol of God's mercy. On certain nights word would be passed in whispers through the Zoroastrian quarter: 'Tonight the sacred fire will be lit.' One by one, all would go to the fire-temple and pray in undertones in order not to arouse the wrath of the fanatical element.

With all Mihrabán's simplicity, rustic manners and lack of formal education, he had implicit faith in God. He would often look up at the sky and marvel at the greatness of the universe. The beauty he saw in nature confirmed his devotion to the Unseen. He would visit the fire-temple as often as he could and pray with a great intensity of heart and soul. Often he would ask the priests questions about God, the Prophet Zoroaster, Avestic Gathas, and the advent of Hooshidar and Shah Bahram Varjavand, but he found the replies of the priests confusing and his perplexity was compounded. Occasionally doubts would arise in his mind: Will the Promised One come? Will the Muslims accept Him or treat Him as they treat us? Will He come only to emancipate the Zoroastrians or to unite mankind? Are the priests offering us true spiritual guidance? Shall we adhere to our Faith or leave our ways and follow the Promised One as did those who chose to follow Zoroaster? Many such questions arose to trouble Mihrabán.

Then something happened which proved to be the turning-point in his life. One afternoon while he was working on the land Mihrabán's attention was attracted by two persons who were running towards him in obvious distress. He observed them silently. When they drew near they raised piteous voices saying, 'Save our lives; give us asylum; we are being pursued by assassins.' Without a word, he

took them into his barn, showed them a place of concealment and then locked the door. No sooner had he done so than an angry group appeared, their eyes glazed with violent hatred and excitement. They interrogated him as to the whereabouts of the two persons he had sheltered. Sensing their animosity he denied all knowledge of the existence of the fugitives, and the danger was averted.

Towards dawn, the two refugees borrowed Mihrabán's donkey and, with expressions of gratitude, left his fields in safety. They returned the next day in order to pay him the price of the animal but he would not accept. Instead, he requested them to accept it as God-sent. Then he asked them why they had been hounded and pursued. They explained that they were followers of Bahá'u'lláh, the Manifestation of God, Who was exiled and imprisoned in 'Akká; they were going to leave Írán in order to pay their respects to Him and seek His blessing. Mihrabán really did not understand their explanation but in his simple and pure-hearted way said, 'When you reach your destination, be so good as to remember me to Him, as well.'

After a long and arduous journey the pilgrims at last reached 'Akká. Bahá'u'lláh was still in prison and it was not possible for them to attain His presence immediately. Consumed with love for Him they would gaze up at His prison cell, content with but a glimpse of His waving hand and yearning to gaze upon His adored countenance. For this they had exposed themselves to every risk and hazard, had journeyed for months, had walked hundreds of miles—just for one glance. They resolved to stay in the Holy Land as long as they could, content to glimpse Him when they could and longing to enter His presence and transmit messages from the friends.

When, at last, the pilgrims attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, they stayed for some days pouring out their hearts and relaying the messages of the friends who were unable to come. When they sought Bahá'u'lláh's permission to return home He astonished them by saying, 'But you did not deliver unto Us all that with which you were entrusted.' What was meant by that statement, the pilgrims asked themselves, and spent a sleepless night fearing that they had incurred the displeasure of their Beloved. At last one of them recalled the Zoroastrian farmer who had saved their lives and had requested to be remembered to the Blessed Beauty. In their ecstasy at finding themselves in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh they had quite forgotten the incident and Mihrabán's act of kindness in sheltering them from their pursuers. They hastened to Bahá'u'lláh and narrated the whole episode.

The compassionate heart of the Beloved of the World was moved. He said to the pilgrims that one who wishes to love God must show love to the friends of God. Mihrabán had extended love spontaneously to these two and had risked his own life to protect them without thought of favour or reward. Now the ocean of divine grace surged and Bahá'u'lláh revealed a Tablet for Mihrabán and arranged for it to be sent to him. Thus this simple farmer was immortalized in a Tablet of extreme beauty and forcefulness which has been given a place in a compilation of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets published under the title *Ad'íyih-i-Maḥbúb* (Prayers of the Beloved). The Universal House of Justice has approved the following English translation of this Tablet:

In the Name of God, the All-Loving

O Mihrabán! One of the friends hath evoked thy remembrance; thus have We remembered thee.

In this glorious Day everything that can be seen is a witness, and calleth all men unto the one true God. Say! This is the Day in which the sun of spiritual discernment is shining forth in the heaven of true understanding. Blessed is he that hath perceived and recognized it. Whatsoever was foretold in former times hath now been fulfilled.

Say, O friends! Suffer not yourselves to be far removed from the ocean of heavenly grace. He is come astonishingly near unto you. He Who had been concealed from men's eyes is now come. How good is His coming! In one hand He is carrying the water of life and in the other the charter of true liberty. Cast ye away one thing and take hold of another. Cast away whatsoever pertaineth to the world and take firm hold of that which the hand of divine providence

imparteth unto you. Lo, that which no eye hath ever beheld is now revealed. O friends! Hasten ye, hasten ye, hearken ye, hearken ye!

The deeds of the high priests have caused the people to be estranged from Almighty God. Instead of evincing self-denial they have given themselves up to inordinate desires and strayed far from the path of the Lord God. They have grievously erred, yet fondly imagine themselves to be treading the right path. We have, however, warned the leaders of religion and taken them to witness, that they might in this day solemnly affirm His truth and guide His creatures unto the Spirit of Purity.

Say, O high priests! Shake off your slumber, rouse yourselves from unconsciousness, incline your inner ears to the melody of the All-Sufficing and conduct yourselves in a manner that beseemeth the Day of God Himself.

Great is the station of him who hath in this Day perceived and become aware of the truth, and wretched is he who hath failed to comprehend the utterances of the Lord of wisdom and to recognize the newly-arrived Friend in His new attire.

Behold, the Ocean of true knowledge hath appeared and the Day-Star of wisdom shineth resplendent. Incline your ears to the Voice of the Eternal Lord of Utterance and purge yourselves from whatsoever is deemed unseemly, that ye may become worthy to gain admittance into the court of your Creator. Say, in this Day the Almighty hath unloosed His tongue before the assemblage of men. It behoveth you to draw nigh unto Him and to grasp the truths of His weighty utterance. Indeed His utterance is a messenger that beareth the token of His presence. It delivereth you from darkness and guideth your steps unto the effulgent light of His glory.

Thy name was mentioned before Us and We have remembered thee in Our Tablet. This remembrance is like unto a sapling that We have planted with the hand of loving-kindness. Ere long will it grow verdant and flourishing, laden with abundant fruits. Thus hath the Lord God ordained, and thus hath He shown the way;

He is the Mighty, the Seeing, the Lord of Utterance and Wisdom.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, too, ever thoughtful of the friends, immortalized Mihrabán in a Tablet which He revealed in honour of his kinsmen and in which He bade them to become intoxicated with the love of God, to offer the wine of the Revelation to the people and to rest assured that this is the Day of Victory.

After a few years Mihrabán Rustam Bulbulán, now a confirmed believer, settled in India where his daughter, also a staunch and firm Bahá'í, had married and made her home. One of his grandchildren, Mrs. Shírín Núráni, was named by Shoghi Effendi a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for her service in opening to the Faith during the Ten Year Crusade the territory of Karaikal in southern India. His grandson, Ṣhápúr Khujastigán pioneered there as well.

Mihrabán was of a retiring nature and he loved Bahá'u'lláh above all else. He passed away in 1940 when he was past eighty years of age. From his life we glean the important lesson that a good deed performed selflessly may confer immortality upon a humble soul and result in his name being honoured throughout the ages.

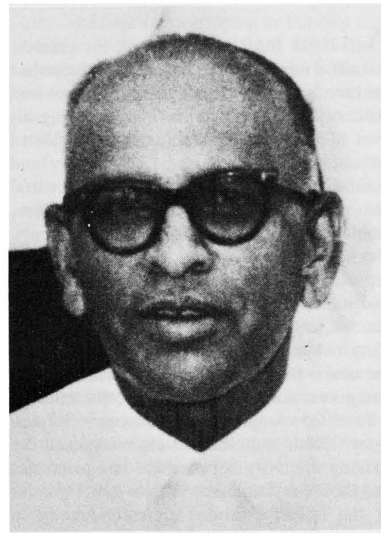
6. KAUSHAL KISHORE BHARGAVA: AN APPRECIATION

BASED ON A MEMOIR BY DIPCHAND KHIANRA

DR. KAUSHAL KISHORE BHARGAVA was born in 1896 into an orthodox Brahmin family in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. At an early age he showed religious inclinations and reputedly ran away from home on several occasions to become a holy man (*sadhu*). He studied at Agra and then went on to earn his Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Allahabad. It was during this time, while still a young man, that he met Professor Pritam Singh[1] who was lecturing at the university. Under the influence of this renowned Bahá'í teacher, he accepted the Bahá'í Faith.

There was at once a change in his life. After obtaining his Master's degree at the Hindu University of Benares, he received a scholarship from the Indian government to study for his doctorate abroad. This he proceeded to do; but *en route* to Europe, he stopped off in Haifa and was received by the Master. 'Abdu'l-Bahá advised him to change his intended field of study, and he became, as a result, a skilled technologist in the sugar industry. On his return to India from the United Kingdom, where he met Shoghi Effendi and Dr. John Esslemont, Dr. Bhargava began his career, and was instrumental in introducing the Bahá'í Faith to many people, including the employees under him and the foreign technologists whom he met in the course of his work. His wife, Shyamdulari Bhargava, a pious and high-minded woman who came from a very orthodox Brahmin family, also became a follower of Bahá'u'lláh.

Dr. Bhargava became a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of India and served on that body for many years. He was fearless in his espousal of the Bahá'í Cause, even though this brought him the enmity of powerful figures. Yet this audacity also impressed, as in the case of Jawaharlal Nehru, who, having received books and information from Dr. Bhargava, was able to intervene to defend the Bahá'ís from persecution in Kamarhati village, near Calcutta. Although asked to join the Congress Party, Dr. Bhargava remained staunch in his adherence to Bahá'í principles, and his stand was respected. When his wife died he insisted upon her being accorded Bahá'í burial rites. She was the first Bahá'í from a Hindu background to be buried according to Bahá'í law, though this action caused something of a stir at the time. Occurring as it did at the height of the impassioned riots between Hindus and Muslims, this was a courageous and dangerous act on his part.



Kaushal Kishore Bhargava

Dr. Bhargava was active in speaking tours introducing the Bahá'í Faith to the people of India. He was an excellent speaker who had made a deep study of the Sacred Scripture. He placed great store on prayer; for him the Bahá'í Faith came first and last. On his passing the Universal House of Justice cabled on 20 March 1974:

> SADDENED PASSING DR. BHARGAVA. LONG RECORD SERVICE INDIA LOVINGLY REMEMBERED. ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS OUR ARDENT PRAYERS SHRINES BESEECH PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

[1] See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 874.

7. AUGUST FOREL DEFENDS THE PERSECUTED PERSIAN BAHÁ'ÍS: 1925–1927[1]

JOHN PAUL VADER

AUGUST FOREL was one of the greatest scientific minds of the latter half of the last century and the beginning of the present century. He gained world renown during his own lifetime for his studies in the fields of entomology, brain anatomy, psychiatry and mental hygiene. He was active in many social reform movements such as temperance, women's rights and world-peace movements. He has been described as 'one of the last representatives of a generation of encyclopedists, of open and curious minds, who took interest in almost all human activities', as 'a glory not only to his Swiss fatherland, but to the whole human race', and as 'the strongest and purest voice of the world's conscience'.[2]

In 1920 August Forel encountered the Bahá'í Faith and immediately recognized the striking similarity between his own principles and those proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith.[3] He wrote directly to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son and appointed successor, expressing his admiration for the Bahá'í principles and asking whether he could be considered a Bahá'í with his agnostic and Darwinian tendencies. The answer he received constitutes one of the most comprehensive statements of the Bahá'í conception of the nature of God, of man and of the universe.[4]

Forel became a member of the Bahá'í Faith in 1921 and in August of that year he added the following paragraph to his will and testament (which he had written in 1912):

> 'I wrote the preceding lines in 1912. What must I add today, in August 1921, after such horrible wars have reduced humanity to fire and blood, and at the same time, unmasking as never before, the terrifying ferociousness of our hateful instincts? Nothing, except that we must remain all the more steadfast, all the more unshakable in our struggle for the common good. Our children must not become discouraged; on the contrary, they must take advantage of the present world chaos in order to further the painful organization, higher and supranational, of mankind, with the help of a universal federation of peoples.
>
> 'At Karlsruhe, in 1920, I first came to know of the supraconfessional world religion of the Bahá'ís, founded in the East more than seventy-five years ago by the Persian Bahá'u'lláh. This is the true religion of human social good, without dogmas or priests, uniting all men on this small terrestrial globe of ours. I have become a Bahá'í. May this religion live and prosper for the good of mankind; this is my most ardent wish.'[5]

For the next ten years, until his death in 1931, he undertook activities supporting the Bahá'í teachings that are truly impressive. Nothing thwarted his resolve to fulfil his 'most ardent wish'. Among his many activities in favour of these teachings was his defence of the Persian Bahá'ís during the wave of persecutions against them in the 1920s. This is particularly interesting when one considers that this community is, at present, once again the target of barbaric cruelties, pogroms, persecutions and martyrdoms. Ever since its inception in the middle of the last century, the Bahá'í Faith has been subjected in Persia to waves of open and ruthless persecution. These outbreaks are often associated with periods of

[1] This article was adapted by the author from a chapter of his book *For the Good of Mankind: August Forel and the Bahá'í Faith* (Oxford: George Ronald, Publisher, 1984) and is here printed with the publisher's permission.

[2] Oscar Forel, *Auguste Forel* (Lausanne: Imprimerie Populaire 1928), p. 3; Julius Donath, 'August Forel', *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie*, 136 (1931), 642–644; Arthur Kronfeld, 'August Forel, der Mann und sein Werk', *Psychotherapeutische Praxis*, 1 (1934), 227–228.

[3] The Bahá'í Faith is a monotheistic religion, founded in the 19th century by Bahá'u'lláh (The Glory of God) and based on the principles of the oneness of God, the oneness of religion and the oneness of mankind. Cf., e.g., *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980).

[4] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Tablet to Dr. Auguste Henri Forel', *The Bahá'í World, Volume XV, 1968–1973* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1976), pp. 37–43.

[5] 'Oraison funèbre', *Fonds Forel*, Document no. IS-1925, I–12, Département des Manuscrits, Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire, Lausanne.

political upheaval, as at present, when the Bahá'ís in particular are singled out as scapegoats. In the 1920s Persia had recently deposed the Qájár dynasty and chosen, with the support and sanction of the Shí'ih ecclesiastical hierarchy, Reza Pahlavi, father of the late Sháh, as hereditary sovereign. Such an initial period of instability and uncertainty afforded the traditional enemies of the Bahá'í Faith their longed-for opportunity to give open vent to their evil schemes.[1]

The first stirrings of the persecutions occurred almost simultaneously in several provinces in the first months of 1925. Forel learned of these persecutions through Shoghi Effendi, great-grandson of Bahá'u'lláh and head (Guardian) of the Bahá'í Faith from 1921 until his death in 1957. He undertook immediate action to call the atrocities to the attention of the European public. In the following undated letter, sent to the French Foreign Minister and received on 10 April 1925, Forel wrote:

> The universal religion of the Bahá'ís, whose twelve principles are enclosed, was founded in 1851 by Bahá'u'lláh. It is spreading more and more throughout the world. In spite of the persecutions to which the Bahá'ís have been subjected by Muslims, the Bahá'í Faith has gained about 500,000 followers in Persia. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá was forced to take refuge in Haifa in Palestine; he died there in 1922.[2] 'Abdu'l-Bahá's successor, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, is presently head of the movement in Haifa. Two years ago, during an international congress, a Persian *Muslim* affirmed to me personally the high esteem which the Bahá'ís have gradually won in Persia.
>
> But, alas! The world war has brought in its wake personal, economic and regional discords which have ignited, once again, the irrational and fanatical hatreds of the Muslims against innocent Bahá'ís. Shoghi Effendi writes us that among other things, in the provinces of Fars, Yazd and Khurasan, etc., Muslims are destroying or burning the houses of the Bahá'ís, and murdering, mutilating or martyring the Bahá'ís themselves who offer only passive resistance in keeping with their broad principles. At times they must flee.
>
> I will not go into the details of these atrocities. I will merely attempt, with the weakening forces of a crippled old man, to call the attention of the European press and governments to these sad happenings, requesting them, urgently, to exert themselves, wherever possible, in order to put an end to these unspeakable cruelties, or at least to limit them as much as possible. I can hereby attest that *all* the Bahá'ís I have known have deeply impressed me as pure and shining examples of high moral standards, of disinterested devotion and of truly international bounty.
>
> The following address is sufficient: Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Haifa, Palestine.
>
> (signed) Dr. A. Forel
>
> P.S. I had the honour of hearing your talk in Geneva in 1923 on the subject of world peace and international arbitration.[3]

We do not know what the reaction was to this appeal. The minister in question was none other than Edouard Herriot, Premier of France at the time.

A few days later Forel addressed an almost identical plea to the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna. This was published on 26 April 1925 under the title 'A Persecuted Religion: Islamic cruelties against the Baha'is', and contains Forel's explanation of the Bahá'í teachings:

> The Bahá'í Religion, which was born in Persia, now has followers the world over. It is a religion with neither dogmas nor priests. Its twelve principles were proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh in the year 1851. Among other things one finds: *All mankind is to be considered as one*; all prejudices

[1] For a detailed treatment of the present-day persecutions, see *The Bahá'ís in Írán: A report on the Persecutions of a Religious Minority* (New York: Bahá'í International Community, 866 U.N. Plaza, 1982).

For a treatment of the persecutions in the 1920s, see Douglas Martin, 'The Bahá'ís of Írán Under the Pahlavi Regime, 1921–1979', *Middle East Focus* (March 1982), 7–17.

[2] 'Abdu'l-Bahá did not flee to Palestine. Rather, as an exile, He shared the successive banishments of His Father, Bahá'u'lláh. Palestine was for Them the final destination of a series of exiles decreed by the Sháh of Persia and the Ottoman sultan. 'Abdu'l-Bahá died in 1921, not 1922.

[3] August Forel to French Foreign Minister, 10 April 1925 (date arrived), Archives diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires étangères, Paris, Document no. NS E, Asie, Perse, 1918–1929, vol. 22—Questions religieuses, cote E—368—1.

against other peoples, other nations, other races must be abolished. All religions must unite in a superior unity which represents the Godhead. A firm federation of all peoples with an international tribunal must establish and maintain a universal and lasting peace. In addition to the different national languages an international language must be introduced and taught everywhere. Every human being has the same rights to the spiritual and physical necessities that his existence requires. All have the duty to seek out the truth for themselves; between true religion and true science there can be no contradictions. Both sexes should receive the best possible education corresponding to the development of their individual talents. Men and women have the same rights everywhere; all forms of slavery and subservience are strongly forbidden. All human beings have the duty to work; for invalids and people without a means of livelihood, the state must provide the latter through the enacting of laws.[1]

On 11 May Dr. J. E. Esslemont[2] wrote Forel on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, thanking him for the helpful article and inquiring if arrangements could be made to have it published in other newspapers. Forel replied, according to notes on the letter, and authorized translation and reproduction of the article. According to Forel himself, an 'impartial Turkish translation of this article was published in a "progressive" Istanbul newspaper'. On 20 May Shoghi Effendi cabled Forel: DELIGHTED YOUR ARTICLE VIENNESE JOURNAL IT ACHIEVED NOTABLE RESULT.[3]

During the following year persecution of the Bahá'ís in Persia intensified, and Forel wrote the following article, which appeared in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (23 May) and *Droit du Peuple* (15 May), in slightly different versions:

New Persecutions and Martyrdoms of Bahá'ís

I have learned from Shoghi Effendi, the present Head of the interdenominational Bahá'í religion, that, alas! in spite of their innocence, twelve precious members of the Bahá'ís have just been subjected to a long and atrocious martyrdom and were killed in southern Persia. This is a repetition of previous persecutions without any justification, for the Bahá'ís refrain from provoking anyone, in keeping with their sacred principles. They accept in their midst Muslims as they do all other confessions.

When, I ask, will Western Europe awake from its indifference and its heedlessness towards this flower of humanity which, by its principles, is fervently exerting itself in order to achieve, all over the earth, a true and effective love of one's fellow man, regardless of his religion.

The press of all parties is urgently requested to help us by publishing these lines in order to awaken the consciences.

The governments are requested to act with all their power in order to prevent the renewal of such atrocities: they can do this if they wish, of a common accord, by putting pressure on the Persian government.

The League of Nations is also requested to take up this matter. This is part of its international and supranational duty of keeping peace among all peoples. In unity there is force. Let us not lose this wonderful opportunity for unity in common action for the good. I will say no more—that should be sufficient.

Whoever has doubts can write to the Bahá'í Bureau . . . in Geneva for information and documentation.

Dr. A. Forel
former Professor at the
University of Zurich[4]

The same appeal was also sent to the League of Nations, addressed to Sir Eric

[1] August Forel, 'Eine verfolgte Religion: Islamitische Grausamkeiten gegen die Bahá'ís', *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna (26 April 1925).

[2] J. E. Esslemont, M.D. (1874–1925). Medical director of Home Sanatorium, Bournemouth, England, from 1908 to 1923, author of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* (see note 3), now translated into fifty-eight languages.

[3] J. E. Esslemont to August Forel, 11 May 1925, Shoghi Effendi Letters, International Bahá'í Archives, Haifa; August Forel to Mustapha Kémal Pacha, 18 November 1927 (draft), *Fonds Forel*, Document no. IS-1925, V A.39, Lausanne; and Shoghi Effendi to Forel (telegram), 21 May 1925, *Fonds Forel*, Document no. IS-3765, IV-52, Lausanne.

[4] Auguste Forel, 'Nouvelles Persécutions et Martyres des Bahá'ís', *Droit du Peuple*, Lausanne (15 May 1926).

Drummond, Secretary-General, along with the following handwritten message:

Yvorne (Vaud) Switzerland
12 May 1926

Honoured Sir,

I am sending you herewith a short but urgent appeal on behalf of the poor Bahá'ís, urgently requesting that you take note of it as well as of the explanations on the other attached sheet. I would particularly like to draw your attention to the penultimate paragraph of my appeal which concerns especially the League of Nations. I have been a Bahá'í since 1921; the Bahá'ís number today over 500,000 adherents. I am counting on you to inform *as rapidly as possible* the organs of the League of Nations, whom it concerns, of the plight of the persecuted Bahá'ís in Jahrum; there is no time to lose.

Please accept, honoured Sir, the expression of my noblest sentiments.

Dr. A. Forel

P.S. Please excuse my bother and my poor handwriting; my arm is paralysed and I am 78 years old.[1]

Forel's letter and a copy of the answer he received are on file in the archives of the League of Nations. The reply must have been a disappointment:

> . . . I am obliged to inform you that, concerning petitions on behalf of minorities, the League of Nations is only competent if the concerned States have accepted an international agreement concerning the protection of minorities and if this agreement has been placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations. Such is not the case of Persia, and the League of Nations is thus not competent to undertake action concerning the facts submitted in your request.

The following year, in a letter dated 27 April 1927, Shoghi Effendi again appealed, through his secretary, to Forel for his assistance and intervention on behalf of the persecuted Bahá'ís in Persia.

My dear Dr. Forel,

I am taking the liberty of sending you enclosed a copy of Shoghi Effendi's letter to the Assemblies in the West, in connection with the martyrdom of still another brother of the Faith in Persia.

The horrible news of this evil happening has just broken upon us and Shoghi Effendi would be very grateful if you could communicate the news to some papers in Switzerland and Germany for publication. With all our grief and feelings we can extend no helping hand to our fellow-Bahá'ís in that distracted country. All that we can do is to help through publicity, and acquaint humanity in the civilized world with such terrible tales of horror.

In the event of publication of the news contained in the enclosed letter, Shoghi Effendi would deeply appreciate it if you could send him a copy of it.

Shoghi Effendi added in his own handwriting:

My dear and valued co-worker:

Your letter dated March 24 and the copy of 'Der Freidenker' have safely reached me and I thank you warmly for your continued efforts for the spread of the Bahá'í Faith. I trust that the journals with which you are in touch will publish the account given in my letter, and I shall be pleased to receive copies of such publications. Their sufferings, so heroically borne, surely deserve the most strenuous efforts on our part to give them the widest possible publicity.

Your true and grateful co-worker,
Shoghi[2]

Forel's notes on the letter indicate that the news was sent to the 'Freidenker', to his printer and to Vienna. An account of the execution appeared in the *Neues Wiener Abendblatt* on 10 June 1927 under the title 'Martyr of a new Religion: Murder of a Bahá'í'.[3]

Forel had earlier published in the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna still another article entitled 'Persecution of the Bahá'í Religion: A Letter from Persia'. In it he quotes portions

[1] August Forel to Sir Eric Drummond, 12 May 1926, Archives of the League of Nations, Geneva, document no. 41/51398/51398 (also contains answer to Forel from G.C., Directeur de la Section des Minorities, pour le Secrétaire général).

[2] Shoghi Effendi to August Forel, 27 April 1927, Shoghi Effendi Letters.

[3] 'Märtyrer einer neuen Religion: Ermordung eines Bahais,' *Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, Vienna (10 June 1927).

of a letter from a Bahá'í in Hamadán that describe the various forms of open and subtle persecution to which the Bahá'ís there were being subjected daily. The article ended with this paragraph:

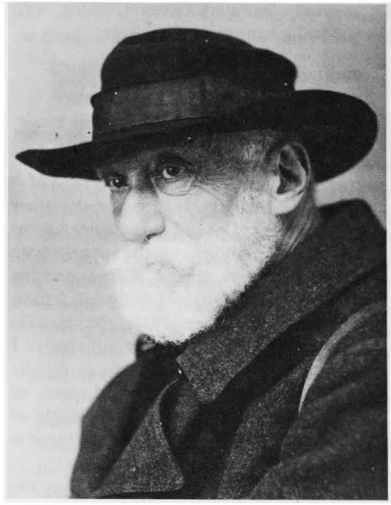
> Be happy, friends. You are the free servants of God. Fly free, sing happily, serve joyously, remember us always—and pray for us.
>
> We all look forward to the day when we will, unhindered, be able to practise our Faith. This hope is strengthened through our Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, that the thick clouds oppressing the horizon of Persia will be dissipated and the sun of freedom will shine on our land, for it is the homeland of Bahá'u'lláh.[1]

Forel seems to have taken this request for prayer to heart. In the unclassified documents of the Forel papers at the University of Lausanne there exists a small scrap of paper on which he wrote, in French on one side and in German on the other:

> Bahá'í Prayer for October 1927.
>
> O Thou, universal and unknowable God! Suffer us, poor humans on this small terrestrial globe, to work *relentlessly* for the *social good* of all mankind, just as Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and so many other courageous martyrs have done before us. Suffer us to struggle against our hereditary, voracious, hypocritical and egotistical instincts. No sweet-sounding slogans, whether spoken or written. Rather good, great and resolute acts. Only then, shall we overcome.
>
> Amen.
> (signed) A. Forel[2]

[1] August Forel, 'Die Verfolgung der Baha'i-religion: Ein Brief aus Persien', *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna (21 February 1926).

[2] August Forel, 'Notes Diverses', *Fonds Forel*, Document no. IS-1925, II-G.46, Lausanne.



August Forel; 1924. This photograph was chosen for reproduction on the present-day 1,000 franc Swiss banknote.

On the French copy of this prayer there is a note: 'sent, 8 September 1927', but there is no indication to whom it was addressed.

It is a tragic coincidence that, in 1978, shortly before the recent recrudescence of cruel persecutions against the Persian Bahá'í community, August Forel's portrait and symbols of his awe-inspiring lifework were printed on the new one-thousand-franc Swiss banknote. Though efforts to alleviate the sufferings of these innocent servants of humanity often seem (today as in Forel's day) fruitless and frustrating, we can, and certainly must, follow Forel's example and continue to do our utmost to awaken the world's conscience to this crying injustice.

8. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AND THE FOURTH ESTATE

ROGER WHITE

IT is little known in the West among students and adherents of the Bahá'í Faith that Bahá'u'lláh addressed Himself to the public press. It is necessary to set aside squeamishness to depict the circumstances which brought about His doing so.

A spring day in Yazd, a Persian city dating from the fifth century, the seat of numerous mosques, an important centre for the production of silk carpets. It was the 19th of May, 1891.

Exhilarated by the violence it had witnessed, the excited mob called for the shedding of more blood of the hated Bahá'ís. Only two victims remained, young brothers in their early twenties.

Already the crowd had been treated to a thrilling spectacle. A young man of twenty-seven, 'Alí-Aṣghar, had been strangled and his body dragged through the streets to the accompaniment of drums and trumpets. Then Mullá Mihdí, a man in his eighty-fifth year, had been beheaded and his corpse hauled in similar manner to another quarter of the city where a considerable throng of onlookers, their frenzy mounting with the music, witnessed the decapitation of Áqá 'Alí, the youthful brother-in-law of the two young men who had thus far escaped harm. From there the people rushed to yet another sector of Yazd where they relished the sight of Mullá 'Alíy-i-Sabzivári having his throat slashed. They then fell upon his body, hacking it to pieces with a spade while he was still alive, and pounded his skull to a pulp with stones. At the moment he was seized he had been addressing the tumultuous gathering, exhorting them to recognize the truth of the New Day, fully aware of his imminent martyrdom and glorying in it. Then, in yet another quarter, the townsfolk rejoiced in slaying Muḥammad Báqir.

It is reasonable to feel compassion for this rabble. Theirs was a profound and manipulable ignorance easily inflamed by fanatical rhetoric and capable, with encouragement from figures of authority, of finding expression in acts of depravity and barbarism. The calculating would be among them—those with vested interests, fearful of loss of power and office—and ruffians and idle thrill-seekers; but no doubt many of their number were utterly convinced that their actions were meritorious in the sight of God, would win the approval of His Prophet and priests, and secure their position in the all-important afterlife. And so their sincere devotion led them to participate in these murders of supposed enemies of the established order. It is a classic example of what scholars of the phenomenon call 'enantiodromea', the principle by which any extreme—even virtue—if pushed to the limit, grotesquely crosses over into its opposite.

Five had died. But two young men remained and these were to receive the full force of the crowd's savage fury. The music grew wilder, drowning the shouts of the swirling mob which propelled the youths brutally to the public square, Maydán-i-Khán, where an especially theatrical fate, matched to the mood of the crowd, awaited them.

The youths, sons of Áqá Ḥusayn-i-Káshání, known as Baktáshí, were silk weavers. They had been raised by affectionate parents and had always lived close to the bosom of their family. Everything about them was conventional for that time and place save that they and their parents had embraced the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It was this circumstance which brought them to the horrific scene on that spring day in Yazd. The young men, with the five other Bahá'ís whose deaths they had just witnessed, had gathered for a meeting when a surprise raid was conducted on the house and all were carried off. It is said that some ill-disposed neighbours had alerted the authorities. Good citizens, these, for the pogrom had been instigated by the mujtahid of the city, Shaykh Ḥasan-i-Sabzivárí, acting on instructions of the Governor, Jalálu'd-Dawlih, and the slaughter of the victims—sanctioned sport for the Muslim populace—could be averted only by their denial of faith. The seven were, in a caricature of trial, invited to renounce their religion. How can the true believer barter or dissemble? Having spurned the offer, all seven were condemned to death

and surrendered to the executioner and the mob who were eager to aid him in his grisly task.

The elder brother, age twenty-three, bore the same name as his friend who had died earlier that day—'Alí-Aṣghar. He had recently married and was the father of an infant daughter. The younger, Muḥammad Ḥasan, age twenty-one, has been described by those who knew him as a youth of extreme beauty, delicacy and masculine grace. The official executioner, Afrásíyáb, and the chief constable, Mubárak-Khán, had been urged by the Governor to spare Muḥammad Ḥasan's life, if possible, by persuading the young man to recant. Were he to do so, he would be welcomed at the residence of the Governor and showered with favours.

'Alí-Aṣghar was dealt with first. Having swiftly affirmed his refusal to recant, he was beheaded. Then it was his younger brother's turn. The Governor's enticement was extended by the constable to the handsome young man from whom it drew an impatient reply: 'Hurry up! My friends have all preceded me! Do what you are charged to do!' He was then decapitated. In a burst of showmanship—playing to the cheering crowd —the executioner slit open the boy's stomach, plucked out the heart, liver and intestines, and held them aloft. This exhibitionist gesture inspired the audience to commit further atrocities. The head of Muḥammad Ḥasan was impaled on a spear and paraded through the city— again with the accompaniment of music—and suspended on a mulberry tree. The multitude stoned it so viciously that the skull was broken. His body was then cast before the door of his mother's house. Some women darted from the crowd, danced into the room where the mother sat, and mocked her. Pieces of the boy's flesh were carried away to be used as a medicament. Then the head of Muḥammad Ḥasan was attached to the lower part of his body and borne with the remains of the other martyrs to the outskirts of the city where they were pelted with stones and finally thrown into a pit in the plain of Salsabíl.

The elder brother, 'Alí-Aṣghar, was not spared ignominy. In an especially cruel gesture, the crowd carried his head to the home of his mother and cast it into the room where she sat with her son's young wife. The mother arose, bathed her son's head, and set it outside, admonishing her jeering torturers not to attempt to return to her what she had given to God.

The frenzy had at last reached its climax, and now a carnival atmosphere prevailed. The Governor declared a public holiday and by his order the shops were closed. When evening came the city was illuminated and the populace gave itself over to festivities.

The name of the mother of the two young men has not come down to us; we know her only as Umm-i-Shahíd, the mother of the martyr, though she lost more than one member of her family that day. But the magnificence of her gesture will fire the imagination of generations to come. She lived on into the period of the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and received from Him at least one Tablet extolling her courage and fortitude, and consoling her in her loss. The young widow of 'Alí-Aṣghár, Sakínih Sulṭán, chose not to remarry, though she had offers and was urged to do so. Apprised of her plight, 'Abdu'l-Bahá invited her and her infant daughter, Fáṭimih Ján, to come to the Holy Land where she had the bounty of serving in His household.

Thus all seven lost their lives. It was not, alas, the only occasion upon which a septet of believers was slain in Yazd; similar episodes occurred in July 1955 and as recently as September 1980. There were also many isolated martyrdoms in that city over the years, and an especially devastating upheaval took place in 1903 when many Bahá'ís lost their lives in various ways, including stabbing and axeing, and one even being shot from a cannon by a direct order of Jalál'ud-Dawlih, the Governor. Bahá'u'lláh stigmatized this man—son of Ẓillu's-Sulṭán 'The Infernal Tree', and grandson of Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh—as 'The Tyrant of Yazd'.

The deaths of the seven plunged Bahá'u'lláh, then living out the penultimate year of His life in the mansion of Bahjí, into profound grief. The late Hand of the Cause H. M. Balyuzí, in *Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory*, recounts:

'When news of the death of the Seven Martyrs of Yazd reached them, it brought great sorrow to Bahá'u'lláh. Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥabíbu'lláh [a great-nephew of the wife of the

Báb] writes that for nine days all revelation ceased and no one was admitted into His presence, until on the ninth day they were all summoned. The deep sorrow that surrounded Him . . . was indescribable. He spoke extensively about the Qájárs and their deeds. Afterwards, He mentioned the events of Yazd; thus sternly did the Tongue of Grandeur speak of Jalálu'd-Dawlih and Ẓillu's-Sulṭán . . . Then He said: *Do not be sad, do not be downcast, do not let your hearts bleed. The sacred tree of the Cause of God is watered by the blood of the martyrs. A tree, unless watered, does not grow and bear fruit . . .*'

Bahá'u'lláh also revealed a Tablet, as yet not fully translated into English, honouring the seven martyrs. Sometimes popularly referred to as the 'Tablet to *The Times*' because of its reference to the most respected and influential newspaper of the day—*The Times* of London—it is a document of astonishing power. The tone is one of impassioned anguish, the 'Tongue of Grandeur' giving divine expression to our human responses, reflecting even our indignation and bewilderment, our sense of outrage and inconsolableness. Specific reference is made to the two young brothers and an unusually full description is given of their torture and martyrdom. The Governor's offer of protection for the younger man is mentioned and even the sector of the square where the youths died is named. Such atrocities, Bahá'u'lláh exclaims, have not been witnessed in the past nor will again be seen in future. He describes the mutilating of the bodies, alludes to the reward given to the executioner, the taunting and reviling of the families of the victims, the parading of the head on spear-point through the streets to celebratory musical accompaniment, the lighting of the city by night, the festival air which prevailed. God knows, He laments, what the oppressed innocents suffered.

Then He calls upon the public press of the world—newspapers, in the Bahá'í Revelation are exhorted by Bahá'u'lláh to mirror truth, and all those responsible for their production 'to be sanctified from malice, passion and prejudice, to be just and fair-minded, to be painstaking in their enquiries, and ascertain all the facts in every situation'—to take note of these happenings, to launch an enquiry, to faithfully record these facts and,in effect, to aid in awakening human consciousness to these sacrifices. The Tablet was not delivered to *The Times* (nor perhaps was intended to be), but in the following excerpt that newspaper is singled out, it would seem, as representative of the rational spirit of enquiry, of all that is true, praiseworthy and humane in Western thought:

O 'Times', O thou endowed with the power of utterance! O dawning place of news! Spend an hour with the oppressed of Írán, and witness how the exemplars of justice and equity are sorely tried beneath the sword of tyrants. Infants have been deprived of milk, and women and children have fallen captive to the lawless. The blood of God's lovers hath dyed the earth red, and the sighs of His near ones have set the universe ablaze.

O assemblage of rulers, ye are the manifestations of power and might, and the fountainheads of the glory, greatness and authority of God Himself. Gaze upon the plight of the wronged ones. O daysprings of justice, the fierce gales of rancour and hatred have extinguished the lamps of virtue and piety. At dawn, the gentle breeze of divine compassion hath wafted over charred and cast out bodies, whispering these exalted words: 'Woe, woe unto you, O people of Írán! Ye have spilled the blood of your own friends and yet remain in ignorance of what ye have done. Should ye become aware of the deeds ye have perpetrated, ye would flee to the desert and bewail your crimes and tyranny.'

O misguided ones, what sin have the little children committed? Hath anyone, in these days, had pity on the dependants of the oppressed? A report hath reached Us that the followers of the Spirit [Christ]*—may the peace of God and His mercy be upon Him—secretly sent them provisions and befriended them out of utmost sympathy. We beseech God, the Eternal Truth, to confirm all in accomplishing that which is pleasing to Him.*

O newspapers published throughout the cities and countries of the world! Have ye heard the groan of the downtrodden, and have their cries of anguish reached your ears? Or have these remained concealed? It is hoped that ye will investigate the truth of what hath occurred and vindicate it.

In His *Tarázát* Bahá'u'lláh, Who had, on more than one occasion, been personally slandered and maligned in the press, and His Cause misrepresented in stories fabricated by His avowed enemies, recorded His awareness of inaccurate, perhaps even irresponsible, reporting:

> *Concerning this Wronged One, most of the things reported in the newspapers are devoid of truth. Fair speech and truthfulness, by reason of their lofty rank and position, are regarded as a sun shining above the horizon of knowledge. The waves rising from this Ocean are apparent before the eyes of the peoples of the world and the effusions of the Pen of wisdom and utterance are manifest everywhere.*
>
> *It is reported in the press that this Servant hath fled from the land of Ṭá* [Ṭihrán] *and gone to 'Iráq. Gracious God! Not even for a single moment hath this Wronged One ever concealed Himself. Rather hath He at all times remained steadfast and conspicuous before the eyes of all men. Never have We retreated, nor shall We ever seek flight. In truth it is the foolish people who flee from Our presence. We left Our home country accompanied by two mounted escorts, representing the two honoured governments of Persia and Russia until We arrived in 'Iráq in the plenitude of glory and power. Praise be to God! The Cause whereof this Wronged One is the Bearer standeth as high as heaven and shineth resplendent as the sun. Concealment hath no access unto this station, nor is there any occasion for fear or silence.*

In the same Tablet He extols knowledge and describes the integrity and regard for truth which should govern those who write for newspapers:

> *Knowledge is one of the wondrous gifts of God. It is incumbent upon everyone to acquire it. Such arts and material means as are now manifest have been achieved by virtue of His knowledge and wisdom which have been revealed in Epistles and Tablets through His Most Exalted Pen—a Pen out of whose treasury pearls of wisdom and utterance and the arts and crafts of the world are brought to light.*
>
> *In this Day the secrets of the earth are laid bare before the eyes of men. The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing.*

Among the indicators that 'appear as the outstanding characteristics of a decadent society', corruption of the press is cited by Shoghi Effendi, together with 'the degeneracy of art and music' and the 'infection of literature', in his masterful and succinct analysis in 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization'. In that same essay, in sketching the broad outlines of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, whose goal is the unification of the planet, he does not fail to mention the lofty and constructive role to be played by a truly free press. 'The press will, under such a system,' he writes, 'while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples.'

No 'mirror of the world' more dramatically reflects the emergence of the Bahá'í Faith from obscurity than the press. With the renewed persecution of the Bahá'ís in the land where the Faith was born—persecution which, despite its instigators' seeming sole concession to enlightenment in the adoption of polite refinements such as closeted firing squads, private hangings and diabolical, exquisitely designed secret tortures, has the same demonic force and malicious purpose as earlier episodes—the media, and particularly the press of the world, on an unprecedented scale, locally, nationally and internationally, has sympathetically, emphatically, eloquently, insistently and for the most part accurately

reported the situation, expressed shock and dismay editorially, striven to alert readers to the gravity of the oppression, condemned its barbarity and demanded its cessation. Among them, it is noted with gratification, is *The Times*.



Bahai communities worried about fate of members seized in Tehran and accused of role in coup plot

Eleven vanish into unknown jail

By Michael Coleman

Though short of political or economic muscle, Bahai communities throughout the world are vigorously trying to draw attention to the fate of nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of Iran who were seized in Tehran on August 21 and dragged off to an unknown ... Two other ... military officers, certain Bahai and other counter-revolutionaries. Mr Behzadnia said he had documents to prove his accusations.

The British Embassy has dismissed the documents as forgeries but this still leaves the British Anglicans and the more defenceless ... hands ...

... and ... until, in deten... others pending trial, were unexpectedly taken out of their cells while having dinner and within an hour executed at the unusual time of 11 pm.

Hence the Bahais' concern at what they see as further evidence of a deliberate scheme to eliminate the pacifist Bahai community, some 450,000 strong, in the land of its birth.

British Bahais have addressed appeals to, among others, the British members of the EEC Parliament and to the European Council of Ministers, but they can be forgiven for feeling in advance that they are fighting a losing battle. Though fully sympathetic towards the 52 American hostages, they consider that the fate of 450,000 Bahai hostages is of equal importance.

It is acknowledged that a number of Bahais were assigned, during the Shah's regime, to important posts in medicine, management ... administration ... because ...

... and its ... are relegated to ...oslem citizens, a practice which the present regime has easily inherited.

One of the charges against Dr Samandari, for instance, had he come to trial, would have accused him of "the promotion of prostitution". The evidence for this was his signature as a witness on Bahai marriage certificates.

In a telegram addressed to both President Bani Sadr and to the new Prime Minister, Mr Mohammad Ali Rajai, British Bahais described the arrest of their leading Iranian colleagues as further evidence of the rising tide of persecution despite the Iranian Government's assurance that peaceful law-abiding citizens need have no fear.

For their part, the British Bahais assured President Bani Sadr of the unquestioned loyalty of the Iranians who happened to be Bahais.

The Times *of London, 30 August 1980, reported the seizure of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán.*

9. AUGUST RUDD: THE FIRST BAHÁ'Í PIONEER TO SWEDEN

AUGUST RUDD was privileged to plant the banner of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in Sweden and to lay the foundation for its development and expansion in that country. He was born on 7 August 1871 in Värmland, near the Norwegian border. His parents had many children and the family lived with meagre economic resources. Around 1890 August moved to the Norwegian side of the border to live with two of his brothers, Edvin and Otto, who were inventors and who achieved some recognition for their designs for a boat engine and typewriter.

In 1893 the three brothers emigrated to the United States. They settled first in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and later in Chicago, Illinois, where they received the Bahá'í message. August wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the autumn of 1919 expressing his wish to return to Sweden and not long thereafter received the following Tablet from the Master:

> 'O thou son of the Kingdom!
>
> 'Thy letter was received. Thy desire is to return to Sweden, thy home. In the country of Sweden the call of God is not yet raised. God willing, thou mayst be confirmed to raise the divine call in that country and be the cause of guidance unto a large multitude. Let not this statement look strange to thee, because the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abhá are powerful. They make the feeble strong, and give feathers and wings to the featherless bird.
>
> 'The maid-servant of God, Miss Knobloch,[1] went from America to Germany. Of course thou hast heard how she stirred Germany and consequently how many souls were guided! Now I supplicate to God that thou mayest be more (than she) confirmed, so that that dark country of the world of nature may be illumined with the heavenly luminosity. Feel assured that confirmation will reach thee . . .'[2]

In spite of physical weakness as a result of illness, August sailed from New York on 25 June 1920 and arrived in Sweden the following month. He settled in Boda, Värmland, where he became, according to all available information, the first Bahá'í pioneer in Sweden. Records show that there had been periodic and temporary Bahá'í visitors to Sweden from as early as 1908, but now the country had a resident believer. The following year, 1921, Edvard Olsson also came to Sweden from the United States as a pioneer and settled only a few miles north of Boda. The men had known one another in the United States and they kept in contact with each other until August Rudd's death.

Not long after his arrival at his post, August wrote to his fellow believers in the United States through the editors of *Star of the West*:

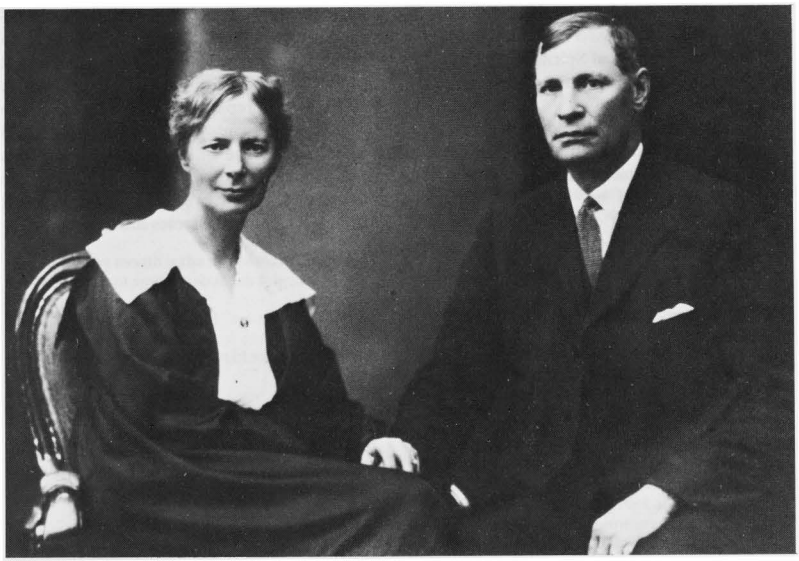
> 'Friends of the Kingdom of El-Abhá!
>
> 'Your humble co-servant in the great Cause of God arrived in Sweden the 8th of July. Went to the most remote corner of the country to begin spreading the great Truth, and there I found a pure-hearted soul, who in three weeks accepted the Truth. Highly educated in both Swedish and English, she began to work with me in the Cause. Naturally, progress is very slow, but hope by the grace of God and our beloved Master, will soon grow faster . . .'[3]

The 'pure-hearted soul' to whom he alluded was Miss Anna Gustavsson, a teacher at Bovikens school, to whom August turned for assistance in translating Bahá'í pamphlets into Swedish and to help him improve and refine his knowledge of the language. Within a short time of her acceptance of the Faith they were married. The couple became widely known in their surroundings, due in part to their purchase of both a motor-boat and an automobile which they used for teaching trips in both Sweden and Norway. They also established good relations with the newspapers and had published many articles about the Bahá'í Faith and its progress in the world.

[1] Alma Knobloch (1863–1943) pioneered in July 1907 to Germany where she was from time to time assisted by her sister, Fanny. See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 641.

[2] *Star of the West*, vol. 11, no. 16, December 1920, p. 270.

[3] ibid., p. 272.



Anna and August Rudd.

In 1923 the Rudds were paid a visit by Mrs. Louise Ericksson from the United States who presented them with a copy of Dr. John E. Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, the first edition of which had just been published under the imprint of George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. As soon as he took the book in his hands, August exclaimed, 'Anna, we shall translate this book!' This they did, and the Swedish translation was published in 1932.

The activities of the Rudds in Sweden and Norway were reported in *Star of the West*, vol. 17, no. 1, April 1926: 'These teachers, together with Mrs. Louise Ericks[s]on of Brooklyn, N.Y., who has spent much time in Sweden, and who even while in this country constantly assists the work of the Bahá'í Cause in her native land across the sea, have given of their time, effort and all of their resources in ardent devotion to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the divine plan of teaching which He gave to the world. They have not only lived and worked in the large centers of population, but during summer vacations always go by automobile for long teaching tours through the country.

'The people of these far northern climes are always much attracted to the Bahá'í Teachings for world unity, and when they are awakened, they become very strong adherents of the Faith. They say with one accord, "The Teachings and Principles of the Bahá'í Cause are so high and noble, so pure and holy, that we cannot do anything else but work and spread them, and you can count on us as co-workers . . ."'

August Rudd died on 13 February 1926. Anna continued her intensive teaching and translating work. She published several pamphlets and in 1936, under the direction of Shoghi Effendi, she published the Swedish translation of a second book, the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*. Anna also furthered the planning which she and August had begun for the visits of travelling teachers and the settling of pioneers in Stockholm and Gothenburg with the aim of establishing Local Spiritual Assemblies in those centres as quickly as possible. Sadly, she

did not live to experience the fulfilment of these goals as she passed away on 27 August 1943 and the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Sweden (Stockholm) did not come into being until April 1947.

August and Anna Rudd are forever inseparably associated with the establishment and early development of the Bahá'í Faith in Sweden. In one of his letters to them the Guardian said, in effect, that the reports of their activities which they sent to him testified eloquently and powerfully to the dynamic all-conquering spirit of Bahá'u'lláh working so astonishingly through them. It is for present and future generations of Bahá'ís in Sweden and Norway to repay their debt of gratitude to these early servants of the Bahá'í Cause in those lands by the brilliance of their exploits in its service and their willingness to become increasingly effective channels of that spirit through which all obstacles are vanquished.



Some participants in the first Winter School of Sweden, held on Gotland Island in the Baltic Sea; December 1979.

II

VERSE

On Hearing of Enoch's Murder

The sunlight is black
The sunlight is black
What raven wing
Covered my sun at noonday?

In my mouth is the salt of tears
I cannot swallow so much salt . . .

Blood is so beautiful
Blood is so pure
Why do the people let blood
Run in the street?

So long it took
To make this man
Noble and good
His mind and his soul
Expanded like sunlight
At noonday.

Why did you kill him?
Are you pleased at this riddled shell,
This mangle of bone and flesh?
Did you think your deed in the dark
Was a bright light?

Everything is pulsing,
Throbbing and throbbing!
There is no answer
And the sunlight is black.

Go Enoch go!
Go to Musa on the hill
Go to your Master
Go to your Guardian
Go to the Kingdom of Light!

But ask not of us
Nor of your people
Who have plucked a sin
Big enough and dark enough
To blot out the noonday sun!

Woe to Africa!
Weep as you have not wept before,
Weep on your knees,
Weep your eyes blind,
You have murdered Abu'l-Futúḥ,
The Father of Victories is dead
At your hand, at your hand!
Your jewelled crown
Placed by God on your head
Is rolled into the grave—
Weep, weep, weep your heart away.

Rúḥiyyih (Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum)
(Limassol, Cyprus) 17 September 1979

Tribute

A translation from Persian of a poem written by a Muslim woman who was a cell-mate of one of the recent Bahá'í women martyrs. For the author's protection, her name is withheld.

Do you remember that you told me
'How tight is our cage! How difficult
to breathe in this close and terrible place!'
You wanted to sacrifice yourself.
I wanted to be freed from prison,
but you wanted to sacrifice yourself.
You looked at the door of the cell
in such a strange way, as though
someone called you from heaven.
I saw in your gaze the look of a
fulfilled and proud lover.
I saw the desire for flight in your eyes,
as though you were going back to the nest.
At that moment you murmured into my ears,
'Life is vanity; why should we stay
till we rot?' We both said the same thing,
that life is meaningless, that at the end
we have to go in any case. But behold
how beautifully you spread your wings,
broke your cage. Your umbrella was of flowers.
Now even the Seven Heavens are not vast enough
under your feet.
How well you knew that to take wing
is the best way to go home.
You had a power equal to the whole world;
your heart was like an ocean.
It is my humiliation to see that you are up there
and I am still here.
I am in this swamp of the earth
and you are with your Beloved.
I am still drowned in wonderment
and you have arrived at your destiny.

Do you remember that you told me,
'How tight is our cage! How difficult
to breathe in this close and terrible place!'
Are you aware that I cannot erase your
memory from my heart throughout eternity?
You are a proud eagle. My heart
is a captive bird.

Even if it were not imprisoned,
it is a captive in the world.
You are not here
but have taken to your wings.
I stay, and I rot, and I die.

Translated by Hushmand Fatheazam

From an Iranian Prison

In mid-1982, a Bahá'í was told that the Islamic court had decreed that he should be put to death. On hearing the decision, he composed the following poem for his son.

My Soroush, behold your father and see how
perplexed he is.
He keeps to himself and muses.
He is captive in the hands of the oppressors,
like Joseph in the well of Canaan.
My Soroush . . .
I miss your love and your sweet voice.

See how the enemies ruined our home,
at this fall season which is followed by winter.

You trembled like autumn leaves in the bosom of
your mom,
when you heard that your father was in the hands of
the enemies.

They attacked our home . . .
Books, pamphlets and notebooks were all taken,
picture of the Beloved too, which was so dear . . .
At this time I heard a sweet message:
Why is the bird of your heart so sorrowful?
Don't be so sad; this is the bounty of the Beloved
that you are in this prison corner.
His calamity is His providence, rejoice.
Good for the head which is given for His path.
Drink the everlasting wine from the cup-bearer's
hand.
If they took 'Abdu'l-Bahá's picture, why worry?
it is engraved on the wall of my heart.
If they took the prayer book,
many tablets are hidden in my heart,
If they broke the tapes of the voices of the friends,
the bird of my heart is a sweet-singing bird.

They cannot drain the fountain of the Sun,
even though clouds are now ruling in this region.
Look at the tiny prison cells
which are filled with the melodies
of prayer and the mention of God.
Listen to the cry of 'O Bahá, O my God',
which echoes like a thunder and roars.

The sound of the 'remover of difficulties' chanted by
the friends, flies to the Heaven of God like an
eagle.

One friend is saying the song of 'Praise be to my
God the exalted',
and the other is chanting the verse of 'O Beloved
look at Thy lovers',
One is full of joy from the song of 'O God',
and the other is weeping at the chanting of 'Al-
Mustagháth'.
One is drunk with the wine of 'Our God the Most
Pure',
and the other is astonished at the inebriety of the
wine of 'if there were no calamities'.

We must make the most of these various-colored
wines,
since the cup-bearer is the beauty of the Beloved.
I wonder from which cup I should drink, since there
are so many wines in this happy feast.
Although the cell is filled with absolute darkness,
the beauty of the Beloved is shining in the garden of
my heart.
If the judge finds out about my joyous state,
I am sure that he will regret his decree.
Drink from the wine of true understanding in
secret, O friends,
and whip lashes will be your punishment.
Look at the degree of the ignorance of the guard,
I am fully drunk and he wants order.
Thanks to God since with the help of the Beloved
prison has become a palace to His lovers.

E al calar della notte
quella strada scintillante sul mare
mi portò in un mondo diverso
dove l'oro è nei cuori e le gemme nel petto.

Giuseppe de Marco (Sicily)

La Ballade de Mullá Ḥusayn

Yá Ṣáḥibu'z-Zamán! à cheval, ô héros de Dieu!

Bien-aimé, avec humilité, j'ai orné ma tête de ton turban vert
Avec orgueil, j'ai hissé bien haut l'étendard noir, en marchant à découvert.

Avec mes trois cent treize compagnons, pour Toi, j'ai chevauché dans les ténèbres
L'ennemi a fui; pourtant, Tabarsi m'accueillera avec des cris funèbres.

Avant que mon âme ne s'envole, à mon confident qui extirpa mon doute
Au Tabernacle vivant de Dieu, je dis en mourant: mon bien-aimé, écoute!

Avec mon sabre, l'arbre, le fusil et l'homme, je les ai coupés
Avec ton nom, Báb, j'ai fendu l'erreur de tes ennemis regroupés.

Avec mon cheval fougeux, j'ai porté l'épouvante chez les impies
Avec ma foi, j'ai effacé la honte de ma patrie assoupie.

Sous la pluie et les balles, j'ai combattu le vice et la corruption
Sous les malédictions, j'ai découvert ton ineffable dilection.

Sous les outrages, sans faiblir, j'ai combattu ces mullás éhontés
Sous le lourd tourment de ton absence, j'ai bu au miel de tes bontés.

Sur mon corps amaigri, mes vêtements flottent comme des oripeaux
Sur mes lèvres, tes prières vibrent, pour claquer comme des drapeaux.

Sur mes os, ma peau livrée aux morsures de la glace s'est tannée
Sur le feu ardent de mon amour, mon reste d'égo fut calciné.

Avec mes frères, j'ai bu longuement au calice de la souffrance
Avec eux, j'ai humé au champ de l'oblation ta subtile fragrance.

Avec nos poitrines nues, nous avons couru au-devant du danger
Avec joie, nous offrons notre sang pour que Toi, tu puisses l'engranger.

Pour la vérité, nous avons rongé le cuir, mangé l'herbe et l'écorce
Pour ta Cause, j'ai voulu te servir jusqu'à l'extinction de ma force.

Pour ta lumière, j'ai chargé les canons, afin qu'elle puisse éclore
Pour le monde qui attend, nous avons brisé la gangue de l'aurore.

La poitrine trouée, mourant, je retourne au fort, au pas, l'âme inassouvie
Maintenant, bien-aimé, maintenant, puis-je frapper à la porte de la vie?

Gilbert Robert (France)

Ṭáhirih

Bridal-white and calm
this was her hour.

'Yield or be death's cold sister!'
And she:

'Beyond this point—no quest.
Beyond love's talk—no tale.'

For she would be victor
by the silk scarf she carried

when the execution knot
would close love's halter home.

Martyn Burke (Belgium)

Paul Haney: A Reflection

No one will stand that tall
among the columns of the Báb's Shrine,
Your back in its lean grey coat
bending to us in the dark,
Ushering us delicately into firm belief,
like a benediction,
like the long, arched curve of humility
that bows from self to nothingness
before Him.

No one will approach the Threshold
from such special height,
Nor in that same long-boned, sparse-stepped way—
Sway so like the reed to the darting currents
of God's will,
More obediently gather greatness
down to the scattered petals there.

Oh, blessing—that once we witnessed this,
Witnessed you backing to the door
so awkwardly graceful,
That we were privileged to walk
the gravelled path beside you from the Shrine,
Pacing our steps with yours
over the acquiescent stones . . .

No one will walk that tall.

Audrey Marcus (Israel)

Bahíyyih Khanum
15 July 1982

We zijn
over donkere paden gegaan;
zacht knerpend grind
onder de voeten;
een knikje, een glimlach,
maar allen zwijgend
in de stille cypressenlaan.

Verzameld
bij de marmeren koepel
in schijnwerperlicht
dat schaduwen werpt
hoger dan de bomen reiken
herdenken wij haar
met ons gebed.

Daarna stilte,
aandachtig zwijgen,
allen naar haar toegewend
terwijl boven ons
de motten fladd'ren,
aangetrokken, als wij,
door haar licht.

Anneke Buys (The Netherlands)

The Gift

. . . somewhere in the list could we perhaps slip a plea for consideration that we surrendered our lives that men may be happy and free?
From last letter of Mihdí Anvarí
executed in Shíráz 17 March 1981

Do you remember now as you went
on your way many a holiday
with your rogue children running on
and the whole world blue and gold
under the blazening sun
and the ornamental streams whispering
paradisal promises in Sa'dí's Garden
and the scintillating roses scented
like rose-water—do you remember
if perchance you saw him—
that silent man who gave his life for you?

Geoffrey Nash (United Kingdom)

Alláh-u-Abhá

Aux enfants bahá'ís de par le monde

Chantons
enfants du monde
le royaume d'Abhá
au royaume d'Abhá
enfants du monde
seules les danses et les joies
chantons
enfants du monde
le royaume d'Abhá
sont sujets d'amour
d'unité et de fêtes
au royaume d'Abhá
chantons
enfants du monde
le royaume d'Abhá
le royaume est à nous
qui taisons nos préjugés
et qui aimons les autres
au royaume d'Abhá
chantons
enfants du monde
le royaume d'Abhá
de par le ciel de sa Beauté
Regardons Bahá nous sourire
et le Maître nous appeler
au royaume d'Abhá
chantons
enfants du monde
le royaume d'Abhá.

Kaluba Dibwa Lumbaya Muadiamvita (Zaïre)

Bemba Song

Ilelolíne Nasumina
Mulinani, Bahá'u'lláh

Chorus: Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá (4 ×)

Natutashe kuli lesa
Watupele nkombe ipya

Bushe chinsi tulolela?
Nkombe ipya naise lelo.

In this day I believe
In Whom? Bahá'u'lláh

Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá (etc.)

We give praise to God.
He has given us a new
Messenger.

Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá (etc.)

Why then do we still seek?
The new Messenger has now come!

Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá (etc.)

Simon Chanda Fesenge (Swaziland)

Bahá'u'lláh

Words sung to a Quechua melody

Ya Bahá Tu reinarás.
Anunciamos siempre Tu Reino.
Unidos siempre en rezar,
Unidos siempre en cantar.

Viviremos en nuestra Fe,
Con la ayuda de Bahá'u'lláh,
Con la luz de un nuevo día,
Que brilla en nuestras almas.

Con la luz de la verdad,
Quitarás nuestra tristeza,
Con el pan de vida eterna,
¡Perdonad, Señor, perdón!

Hacia Ti levanto mis ojos.
En Dios pongo mi esperanza,
Por la justicia social.

Rufino Gualavisí Farinango (Ecuador)

Does the brand go to the burning,
or the yearning brow
Go to the brand?

Does the knife curve to the killing
Or the willing flesh
Curve to the knife?

Does the rope coil to the hanging,
Or the martyr's neck
Coil to the rope?

Audrie Reynolds (Alaska)

Cup of Martyrdom

This is no tepid milky tea-drink
for swallowing mildly in shallow conversations.
This drink burns strong and bold on tongues yet
tastes as sweet as honey.

It gathers courage thrusting forward
the prior timid towards lands of crawling grasses
and stands them under flying bat-wings
to test the bitterness.

The hearts beat louder with each deep drink
slowly drawn from the cup of golden utterances.
A zealous song begins its bleating
on lovers' battlefields:

'Loving, loving' (in new translation)
'for dying ties the lovers' knot,
in a chain a dancing chorus
chasing down a worldly rot.
Slipping through the hangman's fingers
from the noose escapes the sigh;
they cannot slice a soul in splinters;
they cannot quell the joyous cry.

Churning, churning' (amalgamation)
'the bones can pile to the sky.
They cannot break the throbbing spirit;
they cannot char the name, Bahá'í.'

Judith Partelow Provost (U.S.A.)

Die Seele

So zart und klein
bin ich, so rein
und so vom All durchglüht
Du gibst dem Keim
den Leib, das Heim.
O, bleib' um mich bemüht!

Ich wachse hier,
Du, glaub' es mir,
was heimlich in mir ruht.
Da leuchtet Er,
und das ist mehr
als Hirn und Herz und Blut.

Noch ferner Klang
zum schweren Gang
ins Zeitliche gebannt,
zu Freud und Zwang,
zu Jubelsang,
zu dir, mein Heimatland.

Adelbert Mühlschlegel (Greece)

The Banishment

Accompanied by a number of frail-bodied men and children of tender age[1] . . .

It is how one imagines
that long winter trek
over bleak and wind-scarred ranges
as this day, reaching its sparing light
forces us to spend another night
against a whispering mountain.

Three months the journey lasted
through hardships and hunger
and the sharpest embrace of cold,
sometimes He rode in the howdah
ill after being so long in chains,
into that frigid strangulating air
whose sharpest gales extended
so negligently against them
through sweeps of drifting snow
that often blocked their passage—
until the single officer
from the Imperial guard
yearned only to turn back.

Caught in the currents of air
we slip into the deep
crevice of blue-gray rock
as the evening advances,
all manner of thoughts
retreating somewhere
out there above the tree line.

One sees—
the opal mists gathering them in
drawing together like glassy pearls
the cluster of frozen tents
so stark in the scaling wind,
the pungent scent of horses
breathing heavier than before
their frosted manes now silver
against the extending dark.

His eldest Son, barely a youth
chanting in chilled air
within a frugal atmosphere,
everyone lapsing to silence
as the gentle sounds of the prayer
ascend the lamplight shadows.

Through purple daybreak
between rain and singing wind
we descend, impatient to catch
the sun's clear warmth
continually caught up
by that deliberate banishment.
One is overwhelmed by just the thought—
a throat accustomed to the touch of silk
scarred and insensibly maimed
by rusted iron fetters.

And there—
His daughter-child
cloaked in the mistral morning
a shield to the negative cold,
her attitudes transform the day
rekindle their tranquillity.

Beyond each obscure summit
they move so slowly forward
into a dazzling austere sun
which soon expands to merge
one vague plateau into another.
The world, like those callous heights,
indifferent to His journey.

Yet picture—
the peasantry blinking
into the white light, no doubt
insensible to frost bite
leaning forward, anxious
to meet those Exiles:
to see His face—
to touch His robe—
to catch one glimpse—
might soften the untamed heart
obliterate the harshness.

One overhears—
'The gentle Lady offered us
golden buttons in exchange
for a little cooking oil
and a small amount of rice.'

The village people sensed
a Great One passed among them
accepting deprivation
that man might gain
immaculate Fire . . .

Believing—
When He departed
they would see Him again and again
in memory, recalling it
through an ever-changing light,
the arching winter sun
framing His shoulders.

Crossing this icy scree
each pebble seems to shine
in pristine glaze
a mass of beauty—
but oh, how profusely
in the flush of spring
can one visualize
the fragile mountain flowers
blooming where He had rested!

Larry Rowdon (Canada)

[1] Bahá'u'lláh, referring in part to His exile towards 'Iráq. See *God Passes By*, pp. 106–109, and Balyúzí, H.M., *Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory*, pp. 102–105.

Indivisible from Us

I believe many of us share today deep pain for the waste of the precious lives of children everywhere . . .

Indivisible from us, these children walk
their last inevitable miles—
a marathon from no free choice—
hoping to snap the finish line
alive. When they cross bridges
they cannot recall a starting
point, nor see how near
to the race end: just catch their
breath, and take one further step.

They die and live in us, these children,
holding spirit tight to body, as if
a loosening grasp might mean a stop,
an end too soon—without
a second chance, no way to travel back.
Tomorrow, brothers, sisters,
may well not start the trek, lie
under blankets at some camp, having
overslept their human time.

Victor de Araujo (U.S.A.)

Lullaby

—for the sleeping ones—

In the heart of a stone
A bird grew wings
Grew eager to break
From gravity to flight.
He thought: 'there, in the air's open cage,
Is my realm—my first and natural domain.'
Bird into bird he then became,
His wings opening in ecstasy
The stone ceasing to function about him.
The air became a kingdom of waves and paths
And he had motion to express, to celebrate
Becoming a truth in the joy of a truth found
As much as you in the empire of dreams may know.

Martyn Burke (Belgium)

Despertar

Un mundo mortecino
extiende sus alas hacia
la Infinita Luz del Alba.
¡Pobre humanidad adormecida!

Ya llegó el Día
con resplandores de fuego,
ardiendo en alegría.

Ya el Gallo cantó
con clara y profunda voz,
dando la Buena Nueva,
inundando los corazones
desde las Altas Ramas
del Reino de Abhá.

Pero ellos . . .
¿Sienten la Luz en sus entrañas?
Desesperados, bostezan los hombres.

¡Oh tú, Pueblo!: Amanece,
puntea el Sol en las colinas.
Nunca más podrás cerrar los ojos
ante la belleza del Paisaje.

Ábrelos, pues . . .
No dejes que el egoísmo
nuble tus pupilas
y no veas más que
transfiguradas apariencias,
cayendo en el fango
de tu existencia.

Ábrelos, pues . . .
Y que tu espíritu vivificado
por el Esplendor de la Aurora
aleje, día tras día,
las vanas fantasías
de un ego moribundo.

¡Vuela hacia la Luz, Hermano!

Mary Carmen Lozano (Spain)

Elegy

Here in the Gardens, on the paths
Where sparrows with brown tabby wings
Skip bright and simple
Catching up each pilgrim's crumbs,
On the shaded sward where blackbirds
Prance and cock their saffron beaks,
Where a red crowned woodpecker, upside down,
Hammers at silver twisted bark—

Here in these Gardens we walk and grieve
The scars on one child's downy leg,
The mark of every stone that's flung,
The deaths in prison, told,
The loss of every dear and helpless man.

Yet in these gentle Gardens, at dusk
A robin trebles undisturbed,
And, at dawn, surprised by prayers,
Frail ears flick, a rabbit scuds
Breathless among roses, unpursued—

And stories weep from lip to lip,
The honour of dishonoured names,
A peasant woman's burning hair,
Raped innocents, their souls unstained,
And payment for each bullet used.

While here, in our sweet Gardens, still,
Green wood-sparrows will bow the twigs
Of Cypress trees, and sunbirds
Flicker among shifting leaves
Where purple bougainvillaea teems,
And blossoms ripen into fruit, even
As the broad summer's flame tree flourishes.

Shirin Sabri (Cyprus)

Having loved Thee first
in contemplation
sweet prayer
and my soul's debauch
(drunken with Thy wine);
dropping daily to the knee
in adoration
to all things as I thought
preferring Thee
(or else that uterine sensation);
I was none the less rocked,
held in holy arms and fed.
Filled were all the empty places
deserts, grey desolate dead
stretches of loneliness
and my bloodless heart
devoid of all graces,
blessed and brought to
moist and beating life.

A living heart, pulsing
with the rhythmic dance of feeling
servant of a serving soul
finds less time for kneeling.

Carol G. Handy (U.S.A.)

Why I Like Religion

Some people say it's an existential guilt reaction
Due to anxiety repressed during childhood,
And only now coming to the fore.

Some people say it's a miracle.

Some people tell me it's related
To being helpless, and wanting to change the system.

Other people are *very* sure
That it's because I have a sense of my own mortality,
Or perhaps a vague awareness
Of some of the larger themes in life.

Some people say it's because I hate my mother.

I say it is waking to wind chimes,
The sound of rain,
The smell of bacon,
The sudden jolt of spiders on my skin,
And the knowledge that sometimes
People aren't enough.

I say it comes from dying,
And living again.

Charles P. Martin (U.S.A.)

Passando in Treno Davanti a Portofino

Pensieri
come bianche vele
sull'azzurro mare
nel sole
di Portofino vanno
sulle ali del vento . . .

E l'eco,
di rimando,
in un sussurro
di preghiera,
col treno in corsa
ripete e va:

Alláh'u'Abhá! . . .
Alláh'u'Abhá! . . .
Alláh'u'Abhá! . . .

Agnese Boerio (Italy)

A Glance at History

If there is yet time
My children will play by the fireside.
And someday they may
Shake their heads in disbelief
As they stride forth from these ruins
With hands clutching tightly
Their children's hands
And their hearts clinging to
A larger blueprint,
A greater Revelation.
The future is assured:
Millenniums are
More lasting than decades.

Ron Beavers (Israel)

Naw-Rúz

Hoje é Naw-Rúz
um dia mais
de Amor
um dia mais
de Luz
em cada coração

Hoje é Naw-Rúz
neste mundo dos homens
meus irmãos

Hoje
amai a Unidade
no Profeta
que está junto de nós
na participação
das orações
na verdade de Abhá

Hoje não estamos sós

Hoje é Naw-Rúz

Carlos Salomão (Portugal)

Aunque Somos Así

Somos los cimientos de una nueva tierra,
somos las semillas de un nuevo jardín.
Ingenuos, sencillos, humildes y pobres,
con mil problemas, con mil deficiencias,
hemos sido escogidos para ser transformados,
para ser portadores de una nueva luz.

De negros carbones nos ha hecho Dios sus diamantes;
de granos de arena, ahora somos sus perlas mejores;
somos las gotas de agua transverberadas por la Gloria del Sol.

Ninguno se puede gloriar de sí mismo,
nada de mérito es nuestro.
No ha hecho falta casi ni valor.
Sólo dejarse llevar como la hoja en el viento
por la Fuerza Suprema que todo lo elige,
lo cambia, lo eleva, lo orienta a su fin.

Somos las piedras de la celestial Kaaba,
Somos los ladrillos de una nueva Jerusalén.
Nuestra fuerza es la esperanza
de que el Día ha llegado,
la obra está en marcha
y surge radiante una Nueva Ciudad,
la ciudad sin santuario, sin sol y sin luna
porque sólo la alumbra la Gloria de Dios.

José Luis Marqués (Spain)

¿Qué Pudiera Yo Decir?

– Para el Báb –

¡Oh! ¿Qué pudiera yo pensar después de conocer tu vida y tu ejemplo, tu prisión y tu martirio; después de ver tu cuerpo perforado por la descarga brutal de setecientos cincuenta fusiles infernales?

¿Qué pudiera yo sentir, al ver el santísimo santuario de tu cuerpo colgando destrozado (como péndulo inmolado), marcando el tictac del tiempo venidero cuando todos los hombres tendrán que regirse por la hora exacta del reloj universal que tú echaste a andar a la hora de tu muerte?

¿Qué pudiera yo decir, cuando siento en mí el reflector potente de tu amor, que atraviesa lado a lado cual espada enmorada, mi alma triste y torturada por el mundo y el dolor?

¿Qué pudiera yo decir, cuando siento que me envuelves en tu hálito divino y me llevas tras de tí; que me arrastras con tu manto, tu mirada y tu bondad, y me llevas al sendero de una gran tranquilidad?

Báb—Heraldo, Puerta, nacido en Oriente y fulgor de Occidente, rayo matríz de la unidad, espejo radiante que proyecta el fulgurante anhelo de la humanidad; yo te declaro protector, iniciador, canalizador, orientador, océano inmenso que baña con sus olas la maravillosa tierra que nos vió nacer. Sos el precursor de la armonía y de la maravillosa gracia que Dios manifestó, sos la base principal y punto de apoyo espiritual de la fuerza redentora. Sos el lazo universal que une corazones, sos el alma de 'cristal' que riega bendiciones.

¿Qué pudiera yo decir?

Dennis Pilarte Arcia (Nicaragua)

Lines from Last Letters

(On reading letters written in 1980–1981, by Bahá'í prisoners in Írán, to their families, within an hour of their execution for refusing to recant their faith.)

How simply the fictive hero becomes the real;
How gladly with proper words the soldier dies
If he must . . .

Wallace Stevens

I leave a wristwatch and a blanket; please collect them . . .

Brought to the extremes of our commitment
let us not speak of torture but say
death simplifies our gestures, pries us from abstractions.
The cloak and flourish put aside we seek
a humble order, a final dignity,
our testament the cordial instruction
of vacationing householder to milkman.

If I have offended anyone I ask forgiveness . . .

Finality too has its protocol.
If we die well and decorously
it is our sanctioned custom.
We are reconciled to our convention
though no one sees
and the world's cameras and microphones distractedly
avert their glance. We have heroic models in these matters,
know our end has meaning if only light and shade
come clear again in a blurred age.

I had no time to finish weaving bracelets for our daughters . . .

Reasonable men desire to leave mementoes
and we are reasonable men,
moderate even in our regret and gladness.
Death might blush to call us from our innocent concerns
but nothing checks that wastrel's rasher whims.

Kiss the children for me and beg them not to mourn . . .

How simple it all is, the human pang
domesticated in a penstroke.
Even the callous might not deplore
our final modest question,
the one we cannot put to God:

My dearest wife, are you well pleased with me?

Lord, Lord! accept these as the proper words.

Roger White (Israel)

On Time

Riding my days like hump-backed whales
or dolphins that dauntlessly dart,
wondering when it will start:
the Day of Light with its timeless sails.

Riding leviathan-style—
above, beneath, and in-between—
can't view the sun-struck scene
or see supernal smile.

Riding the creature He formed for me
that dies when we once arrive,
hoping to get there alive
where the sun is the essence of sea.

Dolphins, whales, must you dive,
must you plunge so endlessly?

Bret Breneman (U.S.A.)

Dedicated to Det Norske Solist-kor and its conductor Knut Nystedt

VELATUS

NORWAY — Bahá'u'lláh — LASSE THORESEN




(b.c.)
dim.
ae - ter - ni - ta - te
ae - ter - ni - ta - te
ae - ter - ni - ta - te
(= 64)
(b.c.)
ni - ta - te
ae - ni - ta - te e -
ter - ni - ta - te
in ae - ter - ni - ta - te me -
in ve - tu - sta - te se - m - pi -
ve - tu - sta - te se - e
in se - e - . sem - pi -
e - e - et
(b.c.)
a


pp
-ter - na ve - tu - sta - te sem - pi - ter - na
pp
-ter - na - tu - sta - te sem - pi - ter - na
pp
ess - en - ti -
pp
ess - en -
ve - e ve
Alto Solo I
pp mp
di - lec - ti - o - nem me - am in
Alto Solo II
pp mp
di - lec - ti - o - nem me - am in
mp ppp
me - a - am
- ae ess - en - ti - ae - me - ae
- ti - ae
tu


te sci - e - bam di-le - cti - o - nem
te sci - e - bam di-le - cti - o - nem
rit. pp
me - a - m
rit. pp
me - a - m
rit.
mp
Un - de un -
rit.
p
mp
Un un - de un -
rit.
pp
p
mp
Un un un - un -
rit.
pp
p
mp
Un un un - un -


mp
cre - a - vi
mp
cre - a - vi
f
- de te cre - a - a - vi ti -
ti -
f
- de te cre - a - a - vi ti -
ti -
f
- de te cre - a - a - vi ti -
f
- de te cre - a
3 3
ti - i - bi
i - ma -
ti - i - bi
i - ma -
bi
- i - bi
mf cresc.
i - ma - gi - nem me - a - am
- i - bi
mf cresc.
- bi
i - ma - gi - nem me - a - am
- bi
mf cresc.
- bi
i - ma - gi - nem me - a - am
f
im - pres - si


- gi - nem
- gi - nem
et ti - bi me -
et ti - bi me -
i - ma-gi-nem me-am (b.c.) ti - bi
im - a - gi nem - me - am ti - bi
me - am
ritenuto
(a tempo)
me - am
me -
sub.p
- e - a - a - am
pu - u - ul - chri - tu - di - nem
sub.p
- e - a - am
pu - u - ul - chri - tu - di - nem
me - am
me - am


ritenuto
(a tempo)
mf
p
- e - am
me -
(b.c.)
ppp
pp
mf
mp
pul - chri - tu - di - nem pul - chri - tu - di -
pul - chri - tu - di - nem pul - chri - tu - di - nem
- am
me - am
la -
ve - la -
re - ve - la -


(♩ = M.M. 96)
(♩ = M.M. 96)
f
ffp
- vi re - e - ve - la -
(♩ = M.M. 144)
mf
(b.c.)
(♩ = M.M. 144)
ff
sffz
- a - vi.
p
mp
cresc.
dim.
- vi re - ve - la -
fp
mf
- vi re - ve - la - vi


pp (sempre)
(b.c.)
pp (sempre)
(b.c.)
dim.
p
- vi re - ve - la - vi
p
mf
re - ve - la - vi
pp
p
dim.
pp
re - ve - la - la - vi.
mp
dim.
pp
p
re - ve - la - vi.

PRAYER BY ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

UNITED STATES

LEE ANNE ERRINGTON



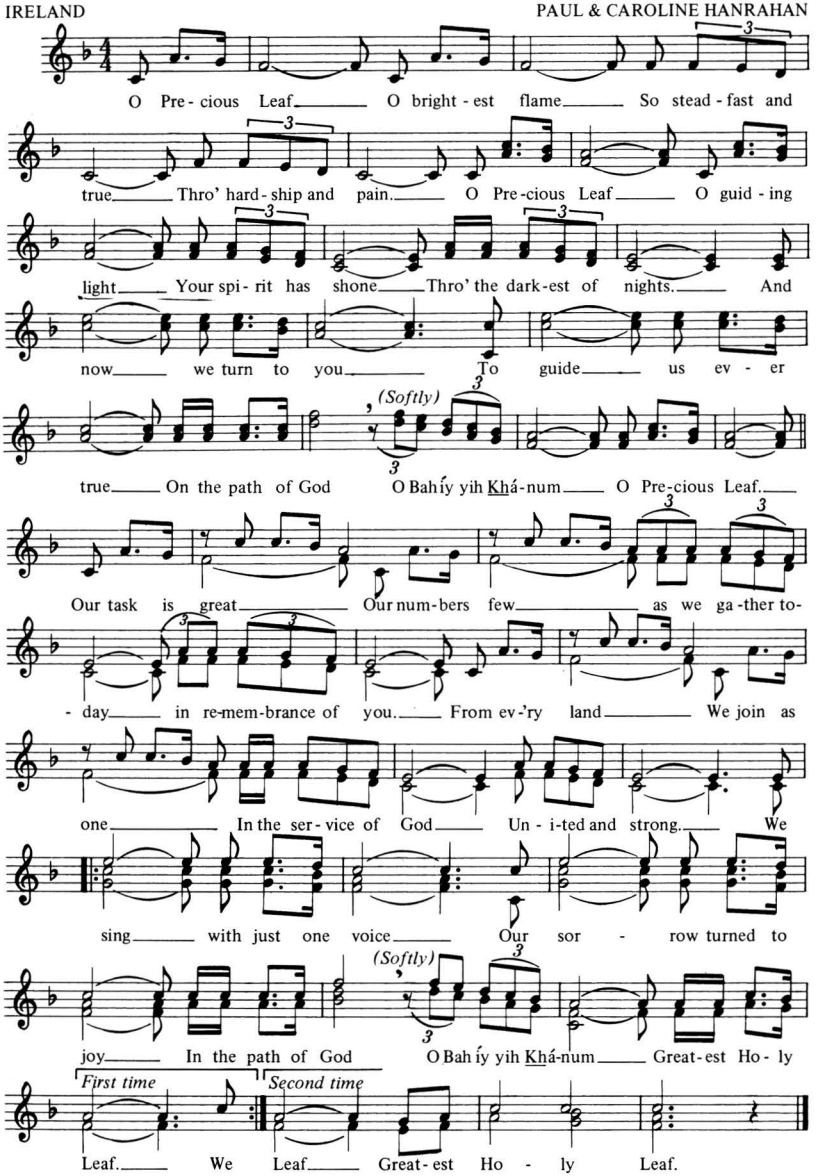
Note: in quartet, Soprano goes to ‘D’, Bass goes to ‘A’.

For the Bahá'í International Conference, Dublin 1982

O PRECIOUS LEAF

IRELAND

PAUL & CAROLINE HANRAHAN



Dedicated to the martyrs of Iran

NO!

UNITED STATES

ROGER WHITE

MIMI McCLELLAN




slay to slay us flesh and bone.
We are sim-ply flesh and bone; flesh and bone.
♩. = 48
mp
Here my
p
Here is my wife my chil-dren
pp
rit.
p
chil - dren, my chil - dren
Here is the
mf
mf
our home
Here is the kind-ling


kind - ling, here the kind - ling, the kind - ling, the flame.
cresc.
there the rea - dy flame.
A little faster ♩ = 66
mp
With your con -
cresc.
ff
mp
- tempt to feed and fan the heat
mp
With your con -


mf
we will quick - ly
- tempt to feed and fan the heat
f
fall to ash, and our name soon
mf
we will quick - ly
f
fall to ash
and our home soon
van - ish, from the vill - age.
van - ish, from the vill - age.
♩ = 48
pp


p
cresc.
But to buy breath with de - nial
p
cresc.
To buy breath with de - nial
p
cresc.
ff
would be shab - bi - er death!
ff
would be shab - bi - er death!
8
ff
♩= 58
p
Strike the match then,
Quietly
p
Strike the
pp


if that is your de - sire.
match, that is your de - sire.
What shall we fear who know the un - dy - ing
What shall we fear who know the un - dy - ing
f
fi - - re.
f
fi - - re.
f

THE SONG OF KHADÍJIH-BAGUM

FINLAND

ROGER WHITE

YRJÖ MIKKONEN




Song
mp
All in green went my Love
a tempo
p
Ped.
mp
simile
ri - ding
My heart sank ful-ly sore To
poco rit.
a tempo
cresc.
mf
know the One Whose stir - rup I kissed
a tempo
cresc.
mf
cresc.
I would see no more no more see Him Whom I a -
cresc.
mf


mp
ten.
- dore.
mf
Aa - -
p
mf
p
mf
p
- - - - - - - aa.
poco rit.
Ah, aa ah, aa
poco rit.
(♩ = 60) più mosso
aa. To know Him clad in rope and chain And
più mosso


crescendo
hung a-bove the throng The world's One Light by e - vil quenched And
crescendo
f
mf
I be left but long but long left sor-row as my song.
f
mf
L'istesso tempo (= 54)
ritard.
p
mp
Ped.
mp
All in green went my Love
simile


ri - ding
His coun sel
my sole
balm
Be pa - tient_un - der God's_
de - cree_
This par - ting speeds
the
dawn the dawn
f
smf
cresc.
mf



Originated by
Halstan & Co. Ltd., Amersham, Bucks., England